

DMS Social Media Awareness

One of the biggest struggles that parents, teachers, and legislators face is teen usage of Social Media. Educating ourselves about Digital Citizenship is our best way of combatting this. Featured here are Apps that most teens and even adults use. From FaceTime, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter (Now known as X), Twitch, Tinder, Tik Tok, Telegram, Spotify, Snapchat, Messenger, Instagram, Gmail, Facebook or Discord. These apps can help to connect people from all over the world. There are also negatives to this. As we progress through the year, we have had more instances of students struggling due to Social Media issues. That is one of the many reasons that DMS does NOT allow phones during the school day. Here are some resources that may help while students are not at school.

Do you know what these apps are?

What their purpose is, how they work, or the dangers of them?



Why Social Media is Not Smart for Middle School Kids

- 1. Social media was not designed for them.** A tween's underdeveloped frontal cortex can't manage the distraction nor the temptations that come with social media use. While you start teaching responsible use of tech now, know that you will not be able to teach the maturity that social media requires. Like trying to make clothes fit that are way too big, **they will use social media inappropriately** until they are older and it fits them better.
- 2. Social media is an entertainment technology.** It does not make your child smarter or more prepared for real life or a future job; nor is it necessary for healthy social development. **It is pure entertainment attached to a marketing platform** extracting bits and pieces of personal information and preferences from your child every time they use it, not to mention hours of their time and attention.
- 3. A tween's "more is better" mentality is a dangerous match for social media.** Do they really have 1,456 friends? Do they really need to be on it nine hours a day? Social media allows (and encourages) them to overdo their friend connections like they tend to overdo other things in their lives.
- 4. Social media is an addictive form of screen entertainment.** And, like video game addiction, early use can set up future addiction patterns and habits.

- 5. Social media replaces learning the hard social "work"** of dealing face-to-face with peers, a skill that they will need to practice to be successful in real life.
- 6. Social media can cause teens to lose connection with family** and instead view "friends" as their foundation. Since the cognitive brain is still being formed, the need for your teen to be attached to your family is just as important now as when they were younger. Make sure that attachment is strong. While they need attachments to their friends, **they need healthy family attachment more.**
- 7. Social media use represents lost potential for teens.** While one can argue that there are certain benefits of social media for teens, the costs are very high during the teen years when their brain development is operating at peak performance for learning new things. **It is easy for teens to waste too much of their time and too much of their brain in a digital world.** We know from many studies that it is nearly impossible for them to balance it all.

How Can Kids Slow Down?

First, we need to **slow down and rethink** what we are allowing our kids to do. We need to understand the world of social media and how **teens use it differently from adults.** Here are a few tips that work well for many parents.

- 1. Delay access.** The longer parents delay access, the more time a child will have to mature so that he or she can use technology more wisely as a young adult. Delaying access also places a greater importance on developing personal authentic relationships first.
- 2. Follow their accounts.** Social media privacy is a lie: Nothing is private in the digital world, and so it should not be private to parents. Make sure privacy settings are in place but know that those settings can give you a false sense of security. Encourage your teen to have private conversations in person or via a verbal phone call instead if they don't want you to read it on social media.
- 3. Create family accounts.** Create family accounts instead of individual teen accounts. This allows kids to keep up with friends in a safer social media environment.
- 4. Allow social media only on large screens.** Allow your teens to only use their social media accounts on home computers or laptops in plain view, this way they will use it less. When it is used on a small private phone screen they can put in their pocket there are more potential problems with reckless use. The more secret the access, the more potential for bad choices.
- 5. Keep a sharp eye on the clock; they will not.** Do you know how much time your child spends on social media a day? Be aware of this, and reduce the amount of time your child is on social media across all platforms. The average teen spends nine hours a day connected to social media. Instead, set one time each day for three days a week for your child to check their social media. Do they benefit from more time than that?
- 6. Plan face-to-face time with their friends.** Remember that they don't need 842 friends; four-to-six close friends are enough for healthy social development. Help them learn how to plan real, in-person, social get-togethers such as a leave-phones-at-the-door party, a home movie night, bowling, board games, cooking pizza, or hosting a bonfire. They crave these social gatherings so encourage them to invite friends over and help them (as needed) to organize the event.
- 8. Spend more real non-tech time together.** Teens who are strongly attached to their parents and family show more overall happiness and success in life. They still need us now more than ever. It is easy to detach from them: Teens can be annoying! But attaching to family allows them to detach from the social media drama. Your child needs to feel like they can come home and leave the drama of their social

world behind for a few hours. They want you to help them say no to social media and yes to more time with the family. They are craving those moments to disconnect, so make plans and encourage this at home. Don't give that smartphone all the power in your home; help tweens choose healthier forms of entertainment. **They have the rest of their life to be entertained by social media, but only a limited time with you.**

Article above taken from *Psychology Today*, written by Victoria L. Dunckley, M.D. an integrative child, adolescent and adult psychiatrist, the author of *Reset Your Child's Brain*, and an expert on the effects of screen-time on the developing nervous system.

FIFTEEN APPS

PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

MEETME



MEETME IS A DATING SOCIAL MEDIA APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY. AS THE APP'S NAME SUGGESTS, USERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO MEET EACH OTHER IN PERSON.

GRINDR



GRINDR IS A DATING APP GEARED TOWARDS GAY, BI AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE. THE APP GIVES USERS OPTIONS TO CHAT, SHARE PHOTOS AND MEET UP BASED ON A SMART PHONE'S GPS LOCATION.

SKOUT



SKOUT IS A LOCATION-BASED DATING APP AND WEBSITE, WHILE USERS UNDER 17-YEARS-OLD ARE UNABLE TO SHARE PRIVATE PHOTOS, KIDS CAN EASILY CREATE AN ACCOUNT USING A DIFFERENT AGE.

WHATSAPP



WHATSAPP IS A POPULAR MESSAGING APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO SEND TEXTS, PHOTOS, MAKE CALLS AND VIDEO CHATS WORLDWIDE. WHATSAPP USES AN INTERNET CONNECTION ON SMART PHONES AND COMPUTERS.

TIKTOK



TIKTOK IS A NEW MOBILE DEVICE APP POPULAR WITH KIDS USED FOR CREATING AND SHARING SHORT VIDEOS. WITH VERY LIMITED PRIVACY CONTROLS, USERS ARE VULNERABLE TO BULLYING AND EXPLICIT CONTENT.

BADDOO



BADDOO IS A DATING AND SOCIAL NETWORKING APP WHERE USERS CAN CHAT, SHARE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS AND CONNECT BASED ON LOCATION. WHILE THE APP IS INTENDED FOR ADULTS ONLY, TEENS ARE KNOWN TO CREATE PROFILES.

BUMBLE



BUMBLE IS SIMILAR TO THE POPULAR DATING APP 'TINDER' HOWEVER, IT REQUIRES WOMEN TO MAKE THE FIRST CONTACT. KIDS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO USE BUMBLE TO CREATE FAKE ACCOUNTS AND FALSIFY THEIR AGE.

SNAPCHAT



SNAPCHAT IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR APPS IN RECENT YEARS. WHILE THE APP PROMISES USERS CAN TAKE A PHOTO/VIDEO AND IT WILL DISAPPEAR, NEW FEATURES INCLUDING 'STORIES' ALLOW USERS TO VIEW CONTENT FOR UP TO 24

KIK



KIK ALLOWS ANYONE TO CONTACT AND DIRECT MESSAGE YOUR CHILD. KIDS CAN BYPASS TRADITIONAL TEXT MESSAGING FEATURES. KIK GIVES USERS UNLIMITED ACCESS TO ANYONE, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME.

LIVE.ME



LIVE.ME IS A LIVE-STREAMING VIDEO APP THAT USES GEOLOCATION TO SHARE VIDEOS SO USERS CAN FIND OUT A BROADCASTER'S EXACT LOCATION. USERS CAN EARN 'COINS' AS A WAY TO 'PAY' MINORS FOR PHOTOS.

HOLLA



HOLLA IS A SELF-PROCLAIMED 'ADDICTING' VIDEO CHAT APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO MEET PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD IN JUST SECONDS. REVIEWERS SAY THEY HAVE BEEN CONFRONTED WITH RACIAL SLURS, EXPLICIT CONTENT AND MORE.

WHISPER



WHISPER IS AN ANONYMOUS SOCIAL NETWORK THAT PROMOTES SHARING SECRETS WITH STRANGERS. IT ALSO REVEALS A USER'S LOCATION SO PEOPLE CAN MEET UP.

ASK.FM



ASK.FM IS KNOWN FOR CYBER BULLYING. THE APP ENCOURAGES USERS TO ALLOW ANONYMOUS PEOPLE TO ASK THEM QUESTIONS.

CALCULATOR%



CALCULATOR% IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL SECRET APPS USED TO HIDE PHOTOS, VIDEOS, FILES AND BROWSER HISTORY.

HOT OR NOT








HOT OR NOT ENCOURAGES USERS TO RATE YOUR PROFILE, CHECK OUT PEOPLE IN THEIR AREA, AND CHAT WITH STRANGERS. THE GOAL OF THIS APP IS TO HOOK UP.

Awareness is Key for Parents. Know the apps, know the parental settings & know what your child is doing on Social Media. Set Boundaries.

Here are some of the Apps that Middle School Students have found to get around Parents Controls.

BE SMART ABOUT YOUR KID'S APPS

These apps have been directly involved in cases involving children. It is highly recommended that you are adding parental controls to your children's smart phones to keep them from downloading these apps without your supervision.

SNAPCHAT  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: People of all ages can send explicit photos and videos that "disappear" after received but can still be saved by screenshot.	INSTAGRAM  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: Children are vulnerable to getting messages from strangers through the direct message (DM) feature.	TIK TOK  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: Accounts are set to "public" so strangers can contact your children.	FACEBOOK  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This app allows predators access to your children through video and private chatting and Instant Messaging.	TINDER  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: People of all ages look to "hook-up" with users and browse profiles based on location.	WHISPER  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: Anonymous accounts are created where users can share secrets and meet new people.	CALCULATOR%  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This ghosting app allows children to store and hide images, photos, videos and files on their phones.
ASK.FM  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This site has been linked to cyberbullying, it has loose regulation and there is a lack of administrative monitoring.	OMEGLE  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This app randomly selects one-on-one meet-ups with strangers in video chat rooms. It is completely anonymous.	LIVE ME  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This live-streaming video sharing app uses geolocation to share videos. This site has limited administrative monitoring.	GRINDR  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This app allows people of all ages to "hook-up" or share photos with strangers based on location.	HOLLA  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This video chatting app randomly matches people worldwide for instant meet-ups.	MEET ME  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This social app encourages meeting up in person. It gives adults access to children.	KIK.  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This site can be used for hidden communication to and from your child.

Have that conversation with your student.

Tell them to THINK before posting anything online

T - Is it True? H - Is it helpful? I - Is it Inspiring? N - Is it Necessary? K - Is it Kind?

Remember that anything you post online has a chance of staying online FOREVER.

Take control of your student's privacy & help keep them safe.

If you or your student need any more resources or guidance please feel free to reach out to us here at DMS.

Lora Champlain- DMS Building Principal

Gregory Harris- DMS Building Assistant Principal

DMS School Counselors- Jessica Reynolds & David Emma

DMS Social Workers- Ellen Stelick & Nina Panzer