The "Grown Folks" Guide to Popular Apps in Social Media

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Youth and Social Media

Technology moves fast and so does social media. Like most tools, technology itself is neutral. All the sites listed can be used for many constructive purposes, linking youth to their friends and interacting in positive ways. Many youth use social media to create vibrant communities and engage in social action and ally behavior. Schools and educators are increasingly using social media to communicate with students about assignments and create learning communities. However, we know that sometimes youth (and adults) choose to use the same

technology in negative ways. And people sometimes use others' identity and differences as a basis to disrespect others online.

It is important to understand the technology and teach young people how to engage safely and respectfully on social media. Do not assume that just because they know more than you about specific apps that they know more than you about how to engage online in thoughtful and respectful ways. Encourage young people to think about their personal values and actions as they relate to online spaces overall—not just specific apps.

Social Media Apps and Sites Kids are Using

Social media plays a big role in kids' lives and they love to try out new apps. It can be a challenge for adults to keep up with the latest apps and know what's "hot" and what's not. Below, we have listed popular social media sites and applications (apps) young people are using. The information is not exhaustive but focuses on the trends and is updated periodically as new apps and sites emerge and others disappear.

Listed age ratings are what Common Sense Media assesses as age appropriate. Common Sense Media is a leading independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids thrive in a world of media and technology.

0-C
D-H
I-O
P-S
T-V
W-Z

4chan. An image board (see definitions below) website where users generally post anonymously, 4chan is split into various, topic-specific boards and many popular memes (see definitions) have been originated on the site. Given its anonymous nature, there are very few rules for posting. *Age rated 17+*

After School. An anonymous, private message board for specific schools. As with other anonymous sites, there are concerns about youth posting mean and hurtful material, as well as sexually explicit content. *App rated 17+*

Amino. A social network of communities. Users create or join communities based on interests. Users can also chat with other members of a community by text, voice or video chat. *App rated 15+*

ASKfm. A social networking site where users set up a profile, ask questions and answer those posted by others using a text message or video. Users are allowed to be anonymous, which has led to some youth using it to engage in hurtful and cyberbullying behavior. *App rated 13+*

badoo.* A free "meet up" app that connects users based on their hobbies and interests to make new friends, chat or date. Allows users to search for people in close geographic proximity, called geosocial networking (see definitions below). *App rated 18+*

Blendr.* A location-based dating app that connects like-minded people to one another. Users share messages, videos or communicate in real time. *App rated 18+*

Boomerang from Instagram. This app creates animated GIFs by recording ten quick images. Users share these GIFs to Facebook, Instagram or other social media platforms connected on the device. All videos made with Boomerang are automatically saved to the device's camera roll. *App rated 14+*

Bumble.* A location-based dating or hookup app. In heterosexual matches, only women are allowed to message males, but in same-sex matches either party can initiate a chat. Users must access the app via Facebook, and photos and profile information are pulled from there. There is a "BFF feature" (best friends forever) for users seeking platonic relationships. *App rated 18+*

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*Dating Apps

Although dating or "meet up" apps are intended for adult users only, young people can gain access to these sites and apps by falsifying their birth date or creating a fake profile and account. It is important to make young people aware of the potential dangers and inappropriate content that these apps can contain. Be sure to include ground rules specific to dating apps when talking with young people about safe internet use, such as they should never make plans to meet up with someone that they do not know.

What Parents Can Do To Support Young People

It's important to be aware of the social media sites and apps your children use. It's also important to be aware of the perks and potential risks. Here are some ways you can help your children use social media wisely and enjoy apps safely.

- Communicate clearly and directly to young people that the values and standards for how we treat one another are the same regardless of whether you are communicating in person or online, and that they will be held to your expectations of treating others with respect and dignity.

- Keep open lines of communication. Ask open-ended questions to gain more information about the sites and apps young people are using and why. Try to better understand the importance of social media in their world and engage in open dialogue that builds mutual trust and critical thinking about what is

appropriate and why. Check out ADL's resource for having discussions about technology use: Table Talk: Teenagers and Technology.

- Discuss with young people the advantages and disadvantages of social media. Teach them the importance of being cautious about the information they share online and the risks of apps that can share their current locations along with their photos.

- Talk with your children about cyberbullying, not just about what to do if they are a target, but also about how to respond or act as an ally if they witness or experience cyberbullying. Explain that apps such as kik and ASKfm that allow anonymity and the ability to erase messages can lend themselves to cyberbullying so they should be used with care and caution.

- Share with your children ADL's Navigating a Digital World: Tips for Youth so they can have a positive online experience and know how to effectively respond to negative online behavior and cyberbullying.

- When necessary and appropriate, help youth report cyberbullying or online hate to appropriate authorities.

- Contact ADL if you have more information on social networking apps and sites creating a buzz in your community.

Definitions

Algorithm: A detailed set of instructions to reach a result based on given inputs, data or information. An algorithm can be digital or non-digital. In social media, people often use 'algorithm' as a shorthand for 'feed algorithm', which is the set of rules a social network uses to automatically decide which posts come first in your feed.

Blog and Microblog: A website on which someone writes about personal opinions, activities and experiences. A microblog is a one that has very short posts relative to traditional blogs and/or may only be imagery such as a photo or meme.

Challenge: Internet users record themselves performing a "challenge" and then distribute the resulting video through social media sites, often inspiring or daring other users to repeat the act. A hugely popular challenge was the ice bucket challenge.

Dark social: Social sharing of content that analytics tools have difficulty tracking. This is often due to users sharing links privately on social in chats or direct messages.

Direct message (DM): A private form of communication between social media users that is only visible to the sender and recipient(s).

Doxxing: Refers to the search for and subsequent online publication of private personal information of people without their consent, often with malicious intent and to "punish" them for something they did.

Flaming: A hostile and insulting interaction between persons over the internet, often involving the use of profanity. It can also be the swapping of insults back and forth or with many people teaming up on a single target.

Geosocial networking: Allows social network users to connect with local people, sites, venues or events that match their interests in their general geographic vicinity. Location data is collected from users directly or other methods, such as Twitter posts.

Geotargeting: In social media marketing, it is the technique of adjusting users' ad content based on the location of a user. Users can be included or excluded from a target audience based on their region, country, state, city, postal code or address. Advertisers can create and target ad sets to appeal to users in a certain geographic location.

GIF (Pronounced with a soft g like "jif"): Commonly known as a short video that plays on a loop, GIF stands for Graphics Interchange Format, an image format that

supports animation and graphics well.

Hashtag: A word or phrase preceded by a hash or pound sign (#) and used to search for social media posts on various platforms that have a common topic and to begin or continue a conversation. For example, if you search on #THISISUS (or #ThisIsUs or #thisisus, because it's not case-sensitive), you will get a list of tweets related to the TV show.

Image board: An image board is a type of internet forum which operates mostly via posting images, like an online bulletin board.

Instant messaging (IM): A type of chat where an electronic message is sent in real time via the internet or cellular data and is therefore immediately available to the recipient.

Meme: A humorous image, video or text that is copied (often with slight variations) and spread rapidly online.

Push to talk (PTT): an option offered by some mobile carriers, that allows subscribers to use their phones as walkie-talkies with unlimited range. This functionality allows one user to connect with a group with a single button press instead of making multiple calls to different uses. When one user transmits, the other(s) receive. Some services also work on laptops, desktops and tablets.

Social networking site: A website that allows subscribers to interact by forming or joining groups based around shared interests, backgrounds or school sites. One can publish content so that specified groups of subscribers can access it.

Traffic: The number of users who visit a given website or page.

Trending topic: A subject or event that has a sudden surge in popularity on social media. Several social networks track the top hashtags or subjects people are posting about and include a "trending topics section."

WiFi (Wifi or wifi): A wireless local area network (WLAN) that allows an electronic device (i.e., computers, smartphones, etc.) to connect to the internet or communicate with one another wirelessly within a particular area and often times at no cost to the user. Some are more secure than others so a discussion about WiFi settings and privacy should be included in any conversation with young people on the topic.

Viral: A digital video, image, social media post, blog or challenge "goes viral" when it gains in popularity and reaches a large number of users in a short period of time.