

# Counselor Connection

Special Addition on Digital Safety



Teenage years are a time when young people are figuring out who they are, how they connect with others, and what goals they have for their future. Social media fits nicely with these developmental goals because it allows for connections with other youth who are struggling with these same issues. Social media allows teens to develop better social skills, feel less isolated, and share their own ideas with friends. However, with these benefits there are some risks of which parents should be aware. The best way to monitor your teen's Internet use is to experience it yourself by watching with them and talking with them about what they are seeing. Encourage your teen to be a responsible Internet user and talk about digital safety with them. This includes never talking to someone online that you haven't first met or know in person and NEVER giving out personal information online.

Parents should expect the same of a teens online life as they do of their offline life. Please talk to your teen about how to use social media or the Internet responsibly. Establish family rules related to social media, including consequences for too much use or inappropriate use, and let them know if you plan to monitor online activities. Establish "no screen time" such as no screens at dinner, no screens after a certain time or only in specified rooms of the house. Remind your teen to turn off their location enabled services on their devices.

Let your teen know they can talk to you if anyone says or does something online that makes them feel uncomfortable. If they see something that makes them uncomfortable let them know they can talk to you about it. Pay attention to any behavioral changes that might be related to Internet use such as secretiveness, spending increased amounts of time on the Internet, inappropriate sexual knowledge, or sleeping problems. For further information about digital safety [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org) has articles on technology use from two blogs: "Connect Safely" and "Net Family News." I am including some apps that parents should know about on the next page.

If you have further questions or would like to discuss any of this in more detail, please feel free to reach out at [maryjo.andersen@jp2schools.org](mailto:maryjo.andersen@jp2schools.org) or 701-893-3200.

~Your School Counselor, Mary Jo Andersen, Sacred Heart Middle School Counselor

# 16 Apps Parents Should Know About

ATTORNEY GENERAL  
LESLIE RUTLEDGE  
ARKANSASAG.GOV

## TIKTOK



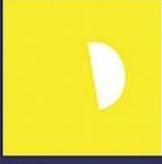
TIKTOK is a popular app among kids that is used to create and share short videos with limited privacy controls. Users are vulnerable to explicit content and cyberbullying.

## SNAPCHAT



SNAPCHAT is a photo & video sharing app that promises users their photo or video will disappear even though it doesn't. Snapchat stories allow users to view content for up to 24 hours and share their location.

## YUBO



YUBO is a social media app that allows users as young as 13 to create a profile, share their location, view other users' profiles in their area and view livestreams. Substance use, profanity, racial slurs and scantily clad people are common.

## TUMBLR



TUMBLR is a blogging app and website that allows users as young as 13 to create an account. There are very few privacy settings and pornography is easy to find. Most posts are public and can't be made private. This app was removed from the Apple App Store in '18.

## DISCORD



DISCORD is a voice and text chat tool that allows gamers to communicate in real time. Users can chat, add friends one-on-one or in larger groups. This app discusses content geared towards adults, but allows users as young as 13.

## YOUTUBE



YOUTUBE is a video sharing app that may not be age appropriate for kids. Inappropriate content can be found using innocent search terms, but with parental controls this can be avoided.

## WHISPER



WHISPER is a social network that allows users to share secrets anonymously and it reveals the users' location so strangers can meet.

## CALCULATOR%



CALCULATOR% is one of several "vault" style apps that appears to be a harmless app, but is used to hide photos, videos, files and even browser history.

## WHATSAPP



WHATSAPP is a popular messaging app allowing users to text, send photos, make calls and leave voicemails worldwide.

## MONKEY



MONKEY is an app that allows users as young as 12 to chat with people all over the world during a brief introductory call, then users are given the chance to add each other on SNAPCHAT.

## CHATOUS



CHATOUS is a messaging app that allows users to chat and share images. This app makes it easy for predators to engage in age-inappropriate conversations with potential victims.

## HOUSE PARTY



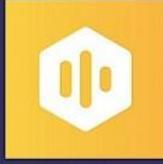
HOUSE PARTY is a group video chat app that allows users to communicate via live video chats and texts. There is no screening and the video is live. Users can also communicate with people they don't know.

## LIVE.ME



LIVE.ME allows users to livestream videos using geo-location to share the videos so other users can find the broadcaster's exact location. Users can earn "coins" to "pay" minors for photos.

## BUMBLE



BUMBLE is a popular dating app that requires women to make the first contact. It is common for minors to use this app and falsify their age.

## TINDER



TINDER is a dating app that allows users to "swipe right" to like someone and "swipe left" to pass. Users can falsify their age, share photos, messages, and meet.

## GRINDR



GRINDR is a dating app for LGBT adults, not children. The app gives users options to chat, share photos, and meet with people based on a smartphone's GPS location.