youth service bureau

Social Media Resource Guide

Tips and Tools for Talking to Your Kids About Social Media

Youth Service Bureau helps youth and families learn the skills they need to be more successful at home, in school and throughout the community.

Table of Contents

General Tips and Reminders

Set Expectations

- Let your children know that you will require access to their devices.
- Encourage them to be good friends and keep an eye on what their friends are doing online.

Talk About Online Activities

- Ask what sites and apps they are using, what they like about them, how they use it and what others might think of their activity (employers, colleges, coaches, teachers, etc.)
- Encourage your children to let you know if anything they see online makes the uncomfortable, scared, or confused.

Encourage Internet Safety

- Remind them NOT to share passwords, except with parents and other trusted adults.
- Teach them to know they are talking to online and not to respond to requests for personal information, especially requests from pop-up ads, spam emails, etc.
- Help them steer clear of sites that allow users to avoid responsibility for what they post.
- Remind them that nothing is ever *truly* private or anonymous, and content never *truly* disappears.
- Tell them to NEVER meet face-to-face with someone they met online

Check and Update Settings

- Review and update online information and settings frequently (passwords, friend lists, privacy settings, etc.)
- Check ratings and age limits for websites and apps – or set your own!

Stay in the Know

- Google the sites and apps your kids use and check out their terms, privacy, and safety settings (usually found at the bottom of the page)
- Watch for new apps and sites – what might be popular now could be replaced with something new tomorrow.

Popular Social Media Sites: An Overview

Kids use social media to connect with friends, express their creativity, and to explore their interests and meet others who share them.

While social media sites and apps can help them achieve these goals, they can also lead to inappropriate behavior or expose them to bullying or other risky situations.

On the following pages we outline some general information about the most popular sites and apps used by kids today. This information is designed to help you understand what sites and apps are used for and the benefits and risks of using them.

Sites and apps are constantly evolving, with new ones popping up all the time.

While we do our best to stay on top of these changes, the information contained in this guide may not be the most current information available. We encourage you to search these apps online to learn more. And don't forget to talk to your kids about what you find!

Facebook

www.facebook.com
Also available as an app

Purpose
A social networking site on which users can share status updates, pictures, videos, etc., originally developed for college students only

How it works
Users create an account with an email address and create a profile. They can then post a status update on their "wall," post on friends' walls, and share pictures and videos. Facebook can link to other sites and has built-in games.

Benefits
- Privacy settings are pretty good and are updated regularly
- Users must add a friend and the friend must accept the invitation before they can post on their wall
- Users can be blocked easily (but this does not block them on Messenger)
- Parents and other adults are starting to use Facebook more, which means there are more eyes monitoring youth's activities

Potential Risks
- Users can comment on pictures, "like" comments and pictures, and private message and "poke" non-friends
- If privacy settings are set to public, anyone can see your page and all your media and content
- Users can still message you even if you aren't friends
- May be able to make in-app purchases (games, etc.)
- The "Nearby Friends" feature shows which friends are nearby, and encourages users to meet face-to-face. This feature needs to be turned on by the user.
- Developers are working on a "dislike" button, which could lead to cyberbullying
- Facebook "Livestream" allows users to broadcast live videos from their wall

Age Requirement
Facebook asks that users be over the age of 13. However, all it requires to sign up is an email address.

Facebook Messenger

www.messenger.com
Also available as an app

Purpose
A social networking site created by Facebook so users can "text and so much more."

How it works
Facebook now has a "Messenger" app that can be used without creating a Facebook account. It features messaging, voice and video calling, photo and video sharing, friend-to-friend payment services, and more.

Benefits
- Many of the added features need to be turned on by users in "Settings"
- Users do not need to create a Facebook account to use Messenger – only a phone number is needed
- Users can sync their phone contacts with the app to find more friends to connect with
- It can be an easy way for friends to connect via texting, phone, or video
- Users can "mute" a conversation for a specified amount of time
- User can block other users if necessary (but this does not block them on Messenger)

Potential Risks
- The friend-to-friend payment feature allows users to send money to each other via a debit card linked to the account (whether or not they actually know the person)
- Messenger can be used to share pictures and videos, which can lead to issues with bullying and/or sexting
- Messenger tags your location by default, so users need to turn this setting off
- Users can see when a message has been read – this can lead to frustration or anxiety when a friend doesn't respond right away after reading

Age Requirement
Facebook asks that users be over the age of 13. However, all it requires to sign up is an email address.

Twitter

Also available as an app

Purpose
To get information quickly from a variety of sources in short messages.

How it works
Users post 140-character messages called "tweets." They can follow other users, mark tweets as favorites, and re-tweet posts from other users.

Benefits
- Great way to network with others
- Connects user to countless networks, people, organizations, companies, etc.
- Twitter now has a photo-tagging feature, allowing users to share photos
- Users can "protect" their tweets, which are only visible to approved followers
- Easy-to-follow instructions for "taking control of your Twitter experience": https://support.twitter.com/articles/20170134#

Potential Risks
- Users can post their location along with their tweet
- Some users use Twitter for promotional and marketing purposes, so teens may not be getting the best influences
- Updates appear immediately, and although they can be deleted, followers can still read what is tweeted until it's gone
- Default settings make tweets public – users must manually switch over to "protected" tweets
- There is a new "Re-tweet with Comment" feature in which users can embed another user's tweet in their own tweets and add their own comments. This can get particularly risky when it comes to celebrities, bullying, etc.

Age Requirement
There is no age minimum to use Twitter, but their services "are not directed to persons under 13."

YouTube

Also available as an app

Purpose
According to YouTube*, "YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos."*

How it works
Users create an account and can then view and like videos, add them to playlists, subscribe to channels, and upload their own content.

Benefits
- Users can share their own content
- Users can find unique, old, or "lost" videos and connect with other users who have the same interests
- Videos can be flagged for adult viewers only and only users who are older than 18 can view them
- The "comments" section can be disabled
- Inappropriate comments can be flagged as "spam"

Potential Risks
- Easy to search for and "favorite" inappropriate videos
- YouTube is linked to Google account, and content can sometimes be automatically linked too
- If not disabled, the comments section, can lead to rude or inappropriate comments, bullying, and fighting
- Easy to lie about your age when you sign up

Age Requirement
The minimum age allowed to have a YouTube account is 13. Some videos are flagged for 18+.

Instagram

www.instagram.com
Must download app to use

Purpose
Users share pictures and short videos with other users. Instagram is owned by Facebook.

How it works
Users take a photo or video, add a filter and do additional editing. They can then share the edited image with users either publicly or privately. There is also a new feature where users can create and share 15-second videos.

Benefits
- Built-in reporting features
- Profiles can be set to private so only friends can see and comment on pictures
- Adult hashtags have been banned (#NSFW)
- Good monitoring of sexually explicit and suggestive photos

Potential Risks
- Users can search for keywords and hashtags that reveal inappropriate photos
- Poor monitoring of images involving drugs, alcohol, swearing, and violence
- Photos and videos can easily be shared to Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- If settings are not private, anyone can see or comment on photos
- Users can add locations to their photos
- Instagram technically owns all posted photos and can use them for promotional purposes
- Ads are now "clickable"
- Users can directly send photos to specific people, similar to Snapchat

Age Requirement
Instagram does not "knowingly" allow users under 13 to register for an account.

Snapchat

www.snapchat.com
Must download app to use

Purpose
To send pictures and videos that will get deleted automatically after a set amount of time (usually no more than a few seconds).

How it works
Users take a picture with his or her device and can draw or add text to it before sending it on to other users. The user specifies who the Snapchat is sent to and how long the message stays open (though it cannot be more than a few seconds).

Benefits
  • Kids usually use Snapchat as a way to send silly and harmless photos and videos to each other
  • Fun way to connect with friends other than a text message
  • Users can report inappropriate snaps, spam, etc. in the app

Potential Risks
  • Users can easily take a screenshot using their devices and other apps – so media that was sent "privately" can be saved and forwarded
  • There are many third-party apps that allow Snapchats to be automatically saved - Snapchat is working on disabling these
  • "Stories" feature allows photos to be visible for 24 hours
  • Teens may be more likely to send inappropriate photos if they think the photo will be deleted automatically
  • Can be used to bully users – users can receive a threatening/inappropriate snap
  • "SnapCash" is a way for users to send each other money directly via the app
  • Users can now pay money to replay snaps
  • The "Stories" feature can connect users to possible inappropriate content from other corporations (Comedy Central, Cosmopolitan Magazine, etc.)
  • Some filters are inappropriate and can reference drug use and sexual content

Age Requirement
Snapchat policy says that it is intended for people who are 13 years of age or older. However, they do offer a "Snapkidz" account for children under age 13.

Ask.fm

www.ask.fm
Also available as an app

Purpose
Users send questions to each other and answer them anonymously.

How it works
Users post questions and answers to other user's question. These questions and answers can be anonymous but users can also use their webcam to post questions and answers. Users can have "friends."

Benefits
- According to ask.fm, "*It fosters uninhibited, truthful conversations. It encourages opinions. It builds self-confidence.*"

Potential Risks
- Bullying is a big issue. According to nobullying.com and other websites, at least 7 suicides have been direcrtly linked to ask.fm
- No adjustable privacy settings – it's either on or off
- Can sync with Facebook showing users' "anonymous" questions there too
- Anyone can see your profile – even if they don't have an account

Age Requirement
Ask.fm policy is that users must be at least 13 years old.

Ask.fm Example

ask.fm   Create account   Login

Favorite person?

███████ even though she can be a brat I still love herÅ

23 days ago

You're so pretty...! Why can't you be my girlfriend..?

lol aww thank you, if I knew who this was you could have had a chance...

23 days ago

Why were you crying at school? Are you okay beautiful?

Yeah I was fine... Just a rough morning tbh...

23 days ago

You're so pretty.. like can you stop? :) :)

Awh thank you:):):):):) Ō G

23 days ago

Hi I wazz wondering if u have a crush

Yahhhh lol why?!?/

23 days ago

why do u go out with ███ **he can do so much better then you**

Um excuse me?!?
I don't date ███ first of all and second of all he probably could do better but he likes me not the person that hiding behind this question...

23 days ago

Kik Messenger

Must download app to use

Purpose
An app-based alternative to standard text messaging which that includes a social media app. Users may use it instead of text messaging. Accounts are not linked to phone numbers.

How it works
Users create a Kik usernames that is not tied to their phone number. They connect using wi-fi or a data plan. There are no character or message limits and no fees if you use only the basic features. The app works like standard text messaging and does require an internet connection. Messages can only be sent to other Kik users.

Benefits
- Does not use standard text messaging on your device
- Easy to share web links, videos, etc. with friends
- Users can change their username easily, adding some security if needed

Potential Risks
- Teens may not be able to discern when they are texting an individual, a group, or within a social networking environment
- Easy to give out personal information, and even though it isn't tied to your phone number, this can be dangerous
- Not tied to your phone bills so you can't see what your kids are doing via text
- Uses real names instead of phone numbers
- Users can now upload images and videos for sharing
- Kik Messenger is located in Canada, so a Canadian court order is needed to release any records – this can make it difficult if officials need access to records to address cyberbullying, sexting, etc.

Age Requirement
According to the Kik website, they do not "intentionally" gather personal information about anyone under the age of 13, and claim that users cannot create an account if they are under 13.

tumblr.

Also available as an app

Purpose
A blog where users can create, manage and share content they find online or create themselves.

How it works
Users create a profile and customize their page. They can then connect with other users, "follow" other blogs and message individual users.

Benefits
- It's creative! Kids can design and write their own blog, connect with other users who share their interests, etc.

Risks Potential
- Users identify if things are "NSFW" (not safe for work) – but users can also search using this keyword!
- Teens can easily search for keywords, including rather harmless ones such as #HungerGames or inappropriate ones like #Sex or #Marijuana
- Unless there are general web settings blocking this, kids can see tumblrs whether they have an account or not
- The first account users make are automatically public; users need to create a second account if they want to make it private
- Users can post anonymously
- There are many pro-anorexia/eating disorder accounts

Age Requirement
Users must be 13 or older to use Tumblr.

Whisper

www.whisper.sh
Must download app to use

Purpose
A secret-sharing app where users share "whispers" anonymously.

How it works
Users create an account and post their secrets along with an image. If location services are enabled, your whispers can show up in lists of nearby whispers. For a subscription fee, users can like and reply to other users' whispers.

Benefits
- It can help people feel connected, supported, and encouraged (ex: LGBTQ youth, teens who struggle with anxiety and depression)
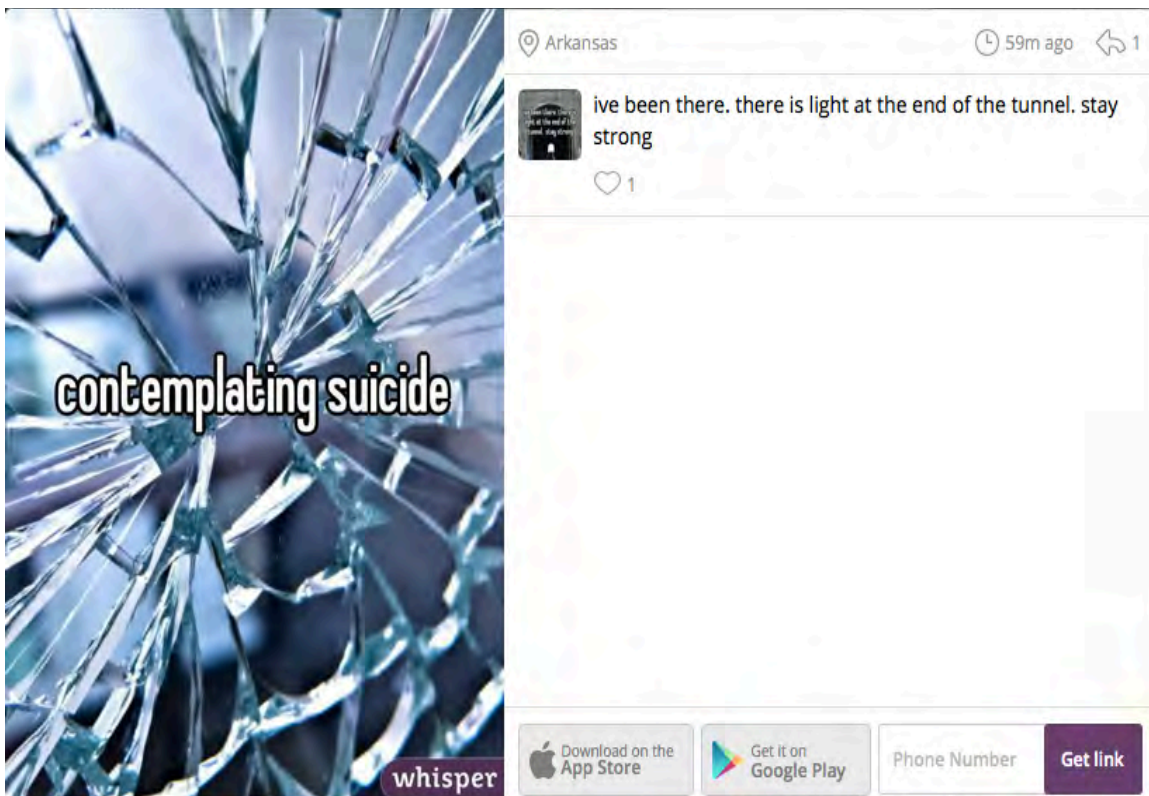
Potential Risks
- Whispers can be inappropriate – both the actual whisper AND the image accompanying the words – nudity, drugs, alcohol, depression, suicide, etc.
- Users can rack up subscription fees
- Adult content, especially on front page of website!!
- It starts anonymously but encourages users to exchange personal information in the "Meet Up" section

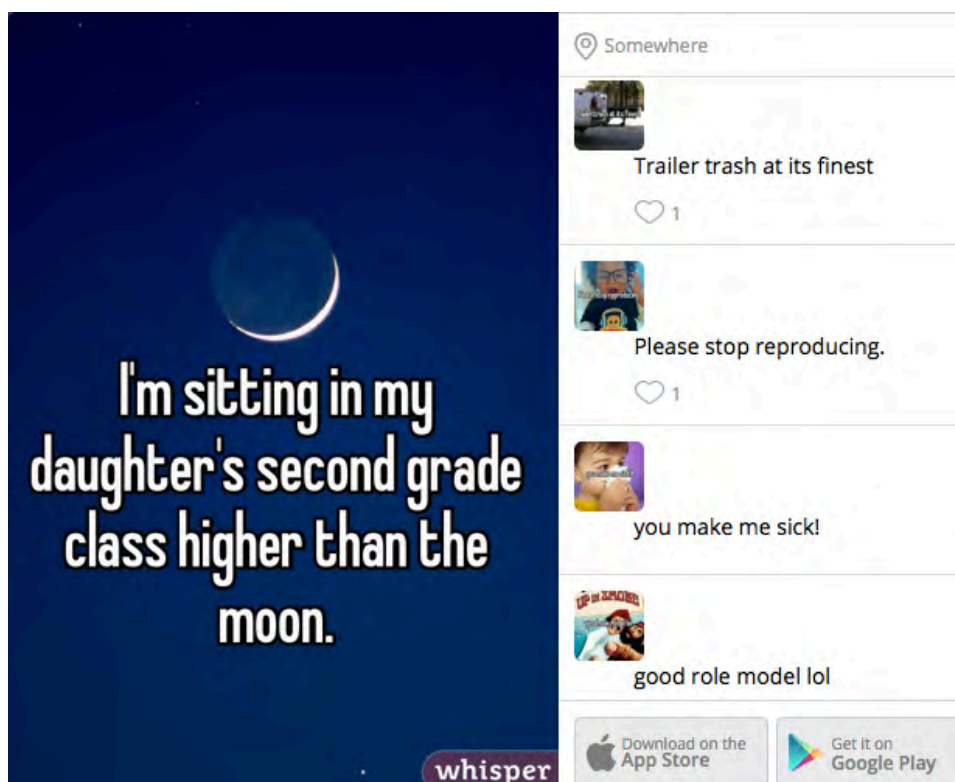## Age Requirement
There is no age minimum.

Sample Whispers

⬆ BACK TO TOP

Vine

www.vine.co
Must download app to use

Purpose
A video sharing app where videos loop and last for only 6 seconds. Vine is owned by Twitter.

How it works
Users create a 6-second video on their mobile device. They can follow other users and find videos through channels based on certain topics (news, comedy, etc.).

Benefits
- Vine recently removed the ability to search for adult hashtags (#XXX, #NSFW)
- "Vine Kids" was developed so young users can find and watch appropriate videos

Potential Risks
- Even though option to do adult searches have been removed, users can still tag videos and there are still inappropriate videos out there
- Users can search for users, follow them, see their locations, leave comments, etc.
- Teens may use Vine to take and share videos of other people without their knowledge
- A new feature lets users to import videos into the app, allowing them to share any video taken at any point in time
- "Vine Kids" was recently under attack for showing inappropriate ads – monitoring may still be needed with young users

Age Requirement
There is no age minimum to use Vine, but their services "are not directed to persons under 13."

Omegle, Chat Roulette, etc.

www.omegle.com
Also available as an app

www.chatroulette.com
Similar apps available

Purpose
Users chat with random strangers through typing, video chat, or a combination.

How it works
Users simply go to the website and click "start chatting." Some sites require a webcam. No registration is required.

Benefits
- It's anonymous (only if you want it to be) – there is no identifying information available, so once the conversation ends you can't find that person again

Potential Risks
- It's all about chatting with strangers!
- There is little monitoring
- Some of these sites can link to Facebook, giving strangers personal information
- Users can also publish a "chat log" to their Facebook account
- Users are starting to ask each other if they can move the conversation to other apps (such as Kik Messenger), removing anonymity and making it easier to stay connected

Age Requirement
Users under 18 and nudity are prohibited, but there is little to no monitoring. NO registration required for Omegle.

Omegle Homepage

Try our mobile site or... **Download on the App Store**

Omegle is a great way to meet new friends. When you use Omegle, we pick someone else at random and let you talk one-on-one. To help you stay safe, Omegle keeps you anonymous unless you tell someone who you are (not suggested!), and you can stop a chat at any time.

If you prefer, you can add your interests, and Omegle will look for someone who's into some of the same things as you instead of someone completely random.

By using Omegle, you accept the terms at the bottom. You must be 18+ or 13+ with parental permission.

Keep it clean and friendly ⚠️   *

18+:   (Adult)   (Unmoderated Section)

What do you wanna talk about?

Add your interests (optional)

☐ Add my Facebook likes as topics

▶   **College student** chat

Start chatting:

Text   or   Video

Spy (question) mode   Unmoderated section

Tinder, Grindr, Blendr, etc...

www.tinder.com
Must download app to use

Purpose
To meet and connect with people around you in order to date or hook-up.

How it works
Users see potential matches based on their preferences for age and gender. They can "like" or "pass," and if someone "likes" you back it's a match and you're connected. The site limits searches to a geographical area.

Benefits
- For ADULTS, it can be a unique way to find potential matches within your geographical area
- Users can't actively search for "users under 13"
-

Potential Risks
- Claims to be a dating app, but it's known for hooking up
- There are rumors that celebrities and musicians in town for shows and filming will use Tinder to find hookups in the area – this can be a great prospect for excitable teens!
- Requires a Facebook login, so anonymity is unlikely
- New premium services charge a fee and removes geographical limitations
- Users can now connect with other users' Instagram accounts, allowing them to see photos they have posted
- Youth may create a fake Facebook account and say they are older than they really are in order to meet more matches

Age Requirement
Tinder's minimum age is 13.

Reddit

www.reddit.com
Also available as an app

Purpose
According to reddit, it's a "*source for what's new and popular on the web*"

How it works
Users (called "redditors") post stories, pictures, and discussions and can vote (upvote or downvote) on which ones are the best or most important. Comments can be posted on everything.

Benefits
- Lots of information on practically any topic
- Ability to connect people with similar interests
- Can be a place for encouragement, support, and help (example: parenting advice, dealing with depression or grief, etc.)

Potential Risks
- Although reddit has a list of "reddiquette" rules, it is known to not have the best monitoring system
- There are no rules about age minimums to use the site – all you have to do is click "yes, I am over 18" to access inappropriate pages
- Users can join a premium membership program for a monthly or annual fee
- *"We take no responsibility for, we do not expressly or implicitly endorse, and we do not assume any liability for any user content submitted by you to reddit."*

Age Requirement
Reddit is "not intended" for users under age 13.
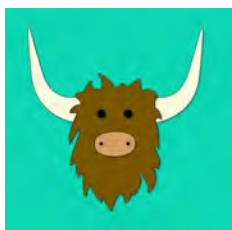
Yik Yak

Must download app to use

Purpose
Users post "anything and everything" anonymously and other users vote it up and down. Yik Yak was originally developed for college students.

How it works
Users download the app and enable the device's GPS to locate the closest 500 users. Users then post a 200-character message that other users view and vote up or down. It's essentially an online bulletin board.

Benefits
- For college students, the app can be used to share info about campus events, parties, deals, etc.
- Claims to have a filter that automatically deletes posts that contain racist and homophobic comments, or other hate speech
- Yik Yak actively blocks middle and high schools from accessing the app by setting up geofences, but it's not perfect – some students still have access

Potential Risks
- Users must enable GPS to use the app
- Messages can contain explicit content
- Has been banned in some schools due to threats of violence
- Anonymity can lead to cyberbullying – and if users are out of GPS range, they can still read posts from bullies but can't respond or protect themselves
- Can include costly in-app purchases
- Users can now include photos in their posts

Age Requirement
Users must be 17 years or older.

Yik Yak Sample

Get a live feed of what people are saying around you.

Upvote what's good & downvote what's not.

No profiles, no passwords, it's all anonymous.

New | Hot

My GPA
Help I've fallen and I can't get up.
3h ago | 3 replies | ⌃ 38 ⌄

That awkward moment when you're in the bathroom stall and you make eye contact with the person checking to see if the stall is empty.
2h ago | ⌃ 25 ⌄

tydrollics
I tried to FaceTime campus police last night.
1h ago | 13 replies | ⌃ 24 ⌄

Shout out to the girl in the red sweater on the library steps. Looking real good.
2h ago | 5 replies | ⌃ 17 ⌄

I hate when my phone says "searching," but when it does I hold it to my heart... And whisper "Me too phone, me too."
30m ago | ⌃ 15 ⌄

The guy next to me in the library is smacking so loud. It's infuriating.

⇧ BACK TO TOP

Burn Note

www.burnnote.com
Must download app to send notes; can view notes without downloading the app

Purpose
According to the website, "A Burn Note is an online message with a timer that can only be viewed once by the recipient." It's a way to communicate with others in a safe, private way.

How it works
Users write a message and send it to the recipient. A timer starts when the recipient opens the note and automatically destroys the Burn Note once they're done reading it.

"When a Burn Note is deleted, it's deleted everywhere — the device it's sent to, the device it's sent from, and our servers — thanks to Multi-Device Deletion. Deleting a Burn Note anywhere deletes it everywhere."

Benefits
- You can send a Burn Note to anyone, even if they don't have the app
- Features "The Spotlight" in which you user your finger to reveal a small amount of text at a time; protects your message from spying eyes and helps prevent recipients from taking a screenshot of the message
- Is a fun, "spy-like" way to communicate with friends

Potential Risks
- It claims messages are deleted from everywhere permanently, but it may still be possible for recipients to save a screenshot (even with the Spotlight feature)
- With a promise of privacy and immediate deletion, users may feel like they can send personal information to the recipient – but doing so is still taking a huge risk ("However, no data transmission over the Internet, wireless transmission or electronic storage of information can be guaranteed to be 100% secure.")

Age Requirement
Burn Note is not "directed to or intended for individuals under 13 years of age."

Jott

www.jott.com
Must download app to use

Purpose
Jott is a messaging app that allows users to chat anywhere, even without wi-fi or cellular data.

How it works
Users can send individual and group messages, even when not connected to wi-fi or cellular data, using a local Bluetooth network. Users can also connect to school and/or work networks to easily connect with friends and coworkers.

Benefits
- There are some built-in features to protect users' privacy (screenshot detection, disappearing chats, etc.)
- You can connect to other users without needing their phone number
- It's easy to block users and report inappropriate behavior
- Similar to Snapchat, a user can set a timer to delete an image or photo after a certain amount of time
- Because messages can be sent without wi-fi or cellular data, users don't even need a cell phone to use the app – an iPod or similar device can be used instead

Potential Risks
- The app cannot totally prevent other users from saving a screenshot of the messages, which decreases safety and security
- Using an iPod or similar device to chat can raise issues and concerns for parents who don't want their kids texting, and for schools who have limits on cellular devices
- Users may need to share personal information in order to gain access to group networks
- Contacts can be linked through Instagram, so kids may be chatting with someone they don't actually know but have "met" on Instagram
- Just because a photo or image is deleted automatically after the timer runs out, it doesn't mean it's deleted permanently – users could still capture a screenshot

Age Requirement
Jott Messenger is not intended for user under the age of 13.

What's App Messenger

Also available online (WhatsApp Web)

Purpose
According to the website, "WhatsApp Messenger is a cross-platform mobile messaging app which allows you to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS…Because WhatsApp Messenger uses the same internet data plan that you use for email and web browsing, there is no cost to message and stay in touch with your friends."

How it works
It's free to download for the first year; after the first year, users can extend their subscription for $.099 USD per year.

Benefits
- There is no cost to communicate via "texting" with friends (for the first year)
- An easy way to group text, send images, and network
- Might be beneficial for families who rack up texting fees

Potential Risks
- Just like with traditional texting, messages can be read by and shared with anyone, and users can take screenshots of messages, images, and other content being sent
- Users could rack up subscription fees
- User can share their location
- There have been concerns about the actual level of security of WhatsApp, which can put users and their information at risk

Age Requirement
WhatsApp Messenger is not intended for people under 16 years of age.

Periscope / Meerkat
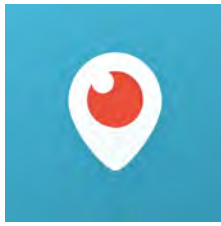
https://www.periscope.tv/   http://meerkatapp.co/
Must download app to use / can view   **Must download app to use**
videos online but cannot comment

Purpose
With Periscope, users can "discover the world through someone else's eyes." Users broadcast live video from their phone and share it with others around the world. Periscope is owned by Twitter.

How it works
Users take a live video and stream it through the app, publicly or privately, and can send hearts to videos they like. They can also chat through the app by sending thoughts and questions to the user, who can respond in real time.

Benefits
- It's a unique way for users to see what is happening around the world in real time
- Users can connect with friends, colleagues, celebrities, newscasters, pen pals… just about anyone across the world
- Users can select who to follow and can block users from seeing their broadcasts
- Users have the ability to set some privacy settings on their broadcasts
- Users can report inappropriate broadcasts directly through the app

Potential Risks
- Because the streaming is live, users don't have time to consider whether or not this content needs to, or should, be shared with others
- Youth are still developing a sense of judgment and may broadcast something they'll regret later
- Users can turn location services on, letting people know exactly where they are at that moment
- Broadcasts can be replayed over and over again
- With the chatting feature, it can be easy for youth to encounter inappropriate comments and questions
- Individuals may not know they are being filmed and can be broadcasted without consent

Age Requirement
Periscope does not directly outline any age requirements, but there is no age minimum to use Twitter, and their services "are not directed to persons under 13."

Wishbone
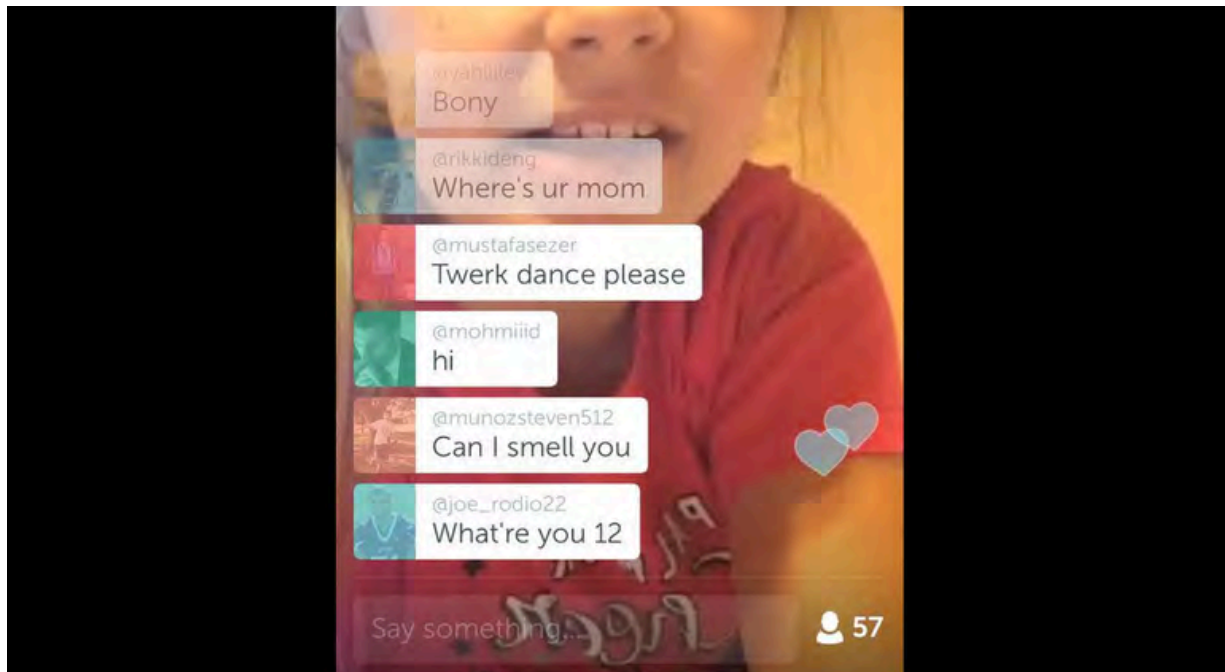
http://getwishboneapp.com/
Must download app to use

Purpose
Wishbone is a survey app that asks teens to choose between two various things, with the idea that teens can decide the hottest trending topics in pop culture. It's also very much a marketing app for businesses.

How it works
Users create an account and are asked to choose between two things, such as "Sneakers vs. Boots." They can see answers from other users in real time and a percentage of how many picked one thing over the other.

Benefits
- The comparisons are mostly harmless, such as "Ice Cream vs. Cake"
- The app claims to forbid inappropriate content
- It can be a fun way for youth to get feedback on trends
- Youth can create their own comparisons to get feedback on anything from fashions to decorating ideas.

Potential Risks
- The app was first developed in June 2015, so it is still relatively new – this means there are not many built-in security features
- There is no in-app way to report inappropriate content or block users
- Some of the comparisons can be inappropriate and could lead to issues with body image or self-esteem ("Who Wore it Better?")
- Any user-generated content can be hard to monitor and control
- Users are prompted to connect with other accounts, such as Facebook and Instagram, which decreases security
- There are ads everywhere, including video ads that users cannot skip through – Wishbone promotes itself as a marketing app for businesses. "Promote your products to the cool kids."
- Wishbone collects a LOT of information, such as the device's geographical location, the last URL visited before opening the app, etc.
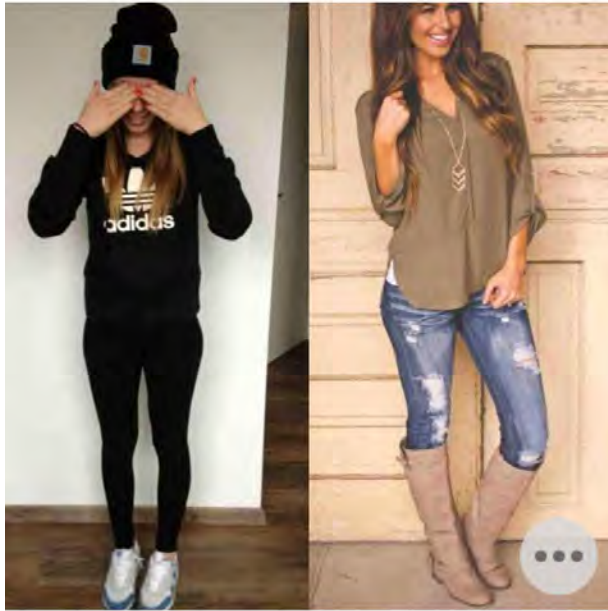
Age Requirement
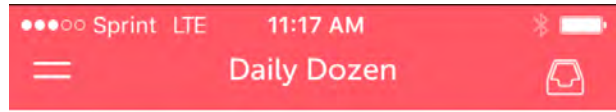Users must be 13+ to use Wishbone

Wishbone Examples
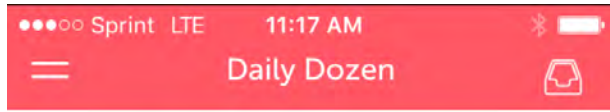
© Youth Service Bureau 2016
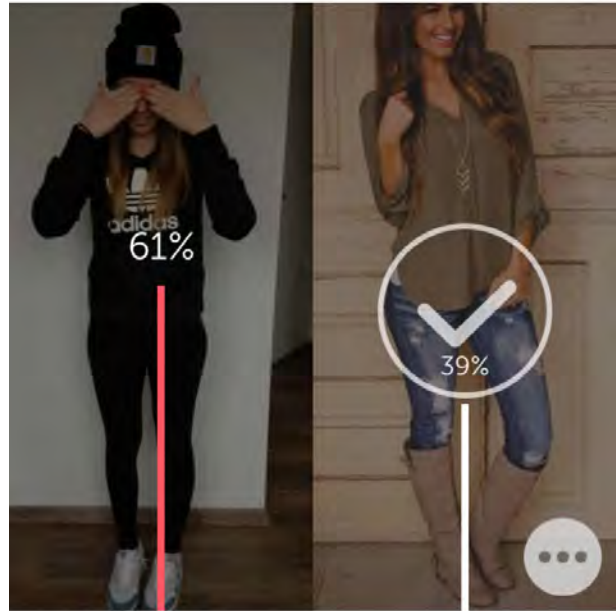Last updated 04.2016

BACK TO TOP

Pinterest

Also available as an app

Purpose
Pinterest is a digital pinboard that people use to share, save, and categorize images and ideas for everything from recipes to home décor.

How it works
Users create an account and can start "pinning" right away – they scroll through their main feed and can save ("pin") links they like. Users create "boards" which categorizes the pins. For example, a user may pin recipes to a "Cooking" board. Users can follow friends, create shared boards, and send pins to other users

Benefits
- It's a creative way for teens to organize their thoughts and ideas
- Can encourage creativity with crafting, cooking, decorating, etc.
- It's easy to flag inappropriate content
- Users can unfollow and block users if necessary
- Users can create "secret" boards which hide their pins from other users

Potential Risks
- Users can pin images and content from other websites, or they can create their own pins – any user generated content has the possibility of being inappropriate
- Some pins and boards can have inappropriate content, such as nudity or drug references
- Users can also write their own captions and comments for pins, which can be inappropriate
- Pinterest can target users through ads, a setting which needs to be turned off manually
- It encourages you to connect with friends from other sites
- There is no way to make your account private – only specific boards
- Users can now make payments through Pinterest with a credit card or PayPal

Age Requirement
Users must be 13+ to use Pinterest

Minecraft

https://minecraft.net/
Also available as a "pocket edition" app

Purpose
According to the website, "Minecraft is a game about breaking and placing blocks. At first, people built structures to protect against nocturnal monsters, but as the game grew players worked together to create wonderful, imaginative things."

How it works
Minecraft is an open-ended "sandbox" game that allows users to create virtually anything inside their Minecraft world. Users can play in "creative" mode, which is basically all about building structures, or "survival" mode, in which monsters come to destroy your creations and you must defend yourself. It's so much more than just a website or app, so we recommend checking out the Minecraft website for additional information, MineMum.com, and CommonSenseMedia.org for additional tips and tools.

Benefits
- It encourages creativity, problem-solving, and strategy skills – independently or with a team
- It can be a fun, creative outlet for young kids, and a great alternative to other, more violent games

Potential Risks
- Much of the content is user-created, which means that it's possible to come across inappropriate content
- The popularity of this game has led to many versions and spinoffs, including unlicensed products and downloadable content which may be inappropriate
- There is some mild violence, but the blocky visual style makes it seem less realistic
- There are multiplayer settings which can put kids into contact with strangers
- Young kids may enjoy watching Minecraft videos on YouTube, but this can also lead to inappropriate user-created content and videos
- Minecraft can be incredibly addicting and all-consuming for young kids

Age Requirement
The ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board) rating is E10+ (Everyone ages 10 and up) for Fantasy Violence.

Location Services Setup Guide

All apps utilize **location services** (services that take into account your device's location using GPS). Location services on devices will be turned **on** by default.

Some apps, such as any map service, need location services on in order to work. However, some apps which automatically use location services don't necessarily need location services turned on and simply use it to track data. For example, a device's camera will automatically use location services to track where a photo was taken.

Other apps, like Facebook and Instagram, allow you to "tag" your location in your posts. For example, your child could take a picture at school and then tag the exact location of the picture.

As a parent, it is important to discuss the safety implications of this with your child. Here are some suggested questions to consider:

- What are the dangers of tagging your location?
- What could happen if an app or website knows your location?
- Who could find that information?
- Is it necessary for this app to use your location services?

It is possible to turn location services on and off.
Android Devices can only turn location services on and off for the entire device.
Apple Devices allow users to turn location services on or off for individual apps.

Continue reading for specific information on how to turn location services on and off for both Android Devices and Apple Devices.

Android Devices

Open **Settings > Location**

Here you can switch location services on or off for the entire device. On this screen you will also see which apps have recently accessed your location data (such as Maps).

You cannot turn location services on or off for individual apps, but if you have location services turned off for your entire device, you may be prompted to change this when you open an app that needs to use location services. For example, when using Google Maps, you may be prompted to turn location services back on.

When posting content within an individual app, users can decide at that point whether or not to tag their location using location services. For example, you can decide whether or not to tag your location when posting a photo on Instagram.

For additional information, visit
https://support.google.com/nexus/answer/6179507?hl=en
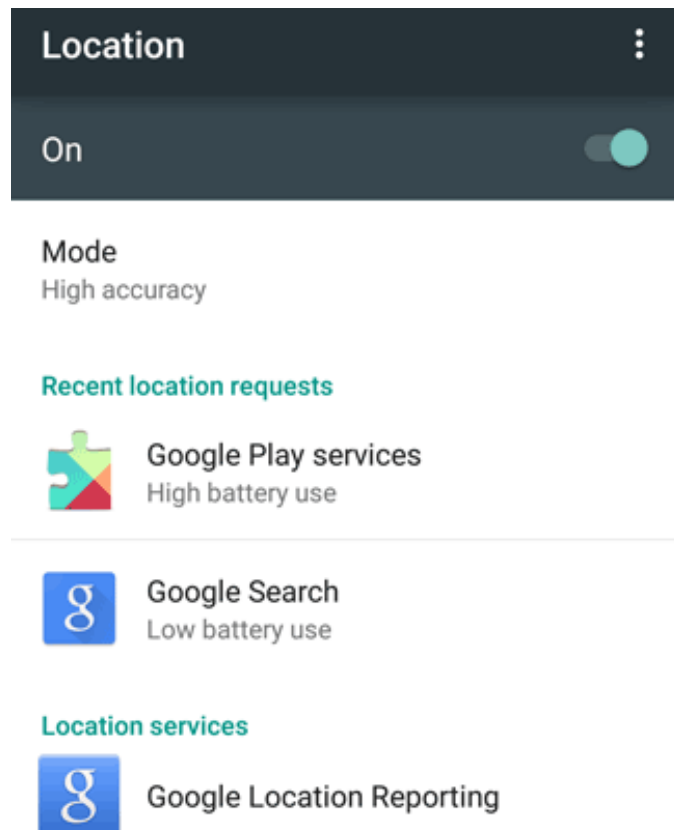
Apple Devices

Open **Settings > Privacy > Location Services**

This setting can be "ON" for the entire device, but it can also be turned on or off for individual apps. Under "Location Services" you will see a list of all apps that utilize location services, and users have the following options:

- **Never** = this app will NEVER use location services even if the app is being used
- **While Using** = this app will ONLY use location services when the app is being used
- **Always** = this app will use location services ALWAYS, even when the app is not being used

When using an app, you may be prompted to update location services. At this time you can select Don't Allow or Allow.

For additional information, visit https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT203033
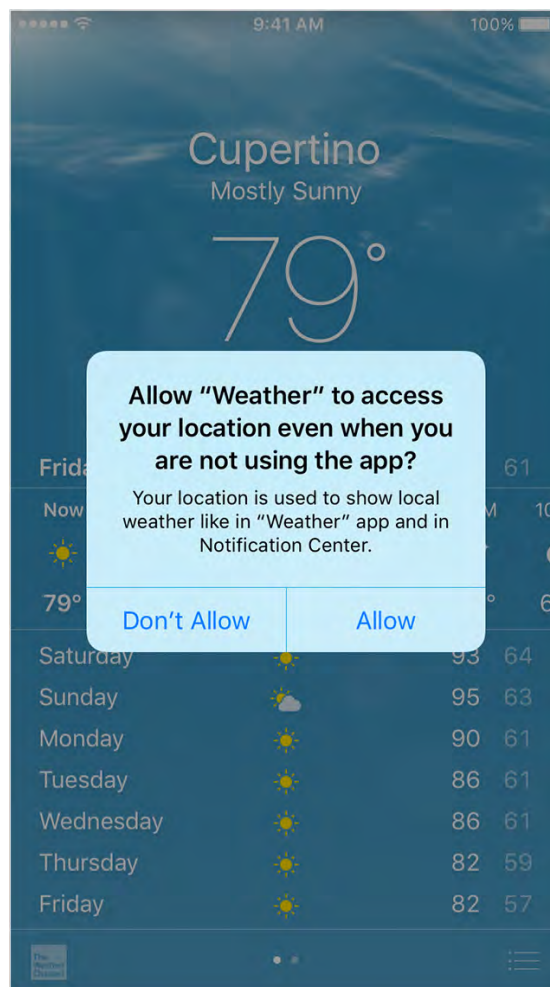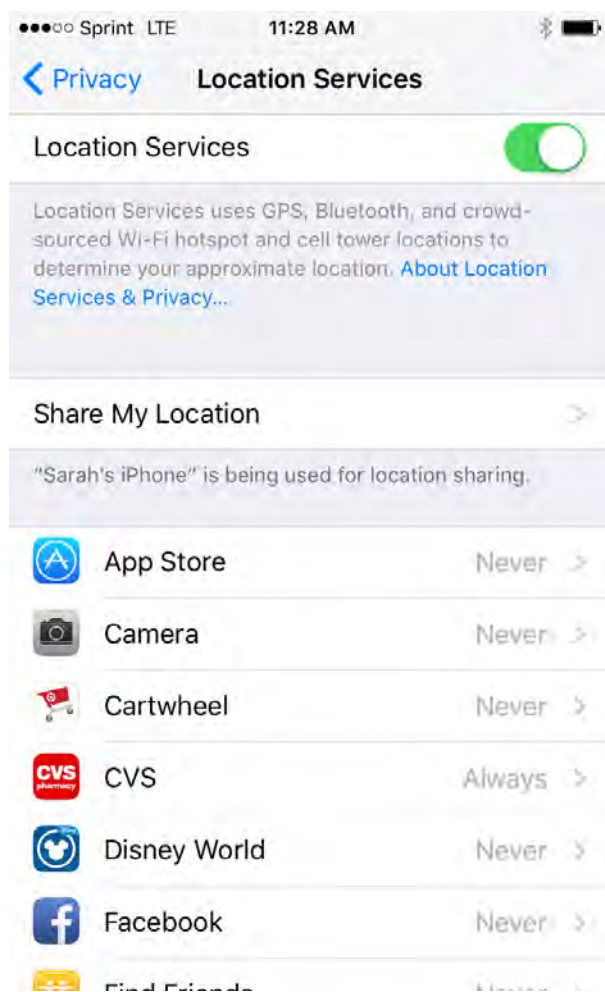
Parental Controls Setup Guide

As parents, it is our job to teach and guide our kids when it comes to social media and technology.

Before using this guide, we encourage you to:

- Start ongoing conversations with your children about their responsibilities online and when texting
- Model appropriate device use
- Communicate your expectations and consequences if those expectations are not met

Using parental controls can be a great supplement to the parenting practices suggested above. It is important not to rely solely on parental controls when it comes to your child's online responsibilities and safety.

Android Phones

Android devices do NOT have built-in parental control settings, but the Google Play store offers a few options and various "parental control apps" you can download. Features, use ratings, and price of these apps vary.

How to Restrict In-App Purchases

1. From your **apps list**, open the **Play Store**.

2. Touch your phone's **menu** button, either as a physical button under your phone's screen or represented as **three dots** in the top-right corner of the Play Store.
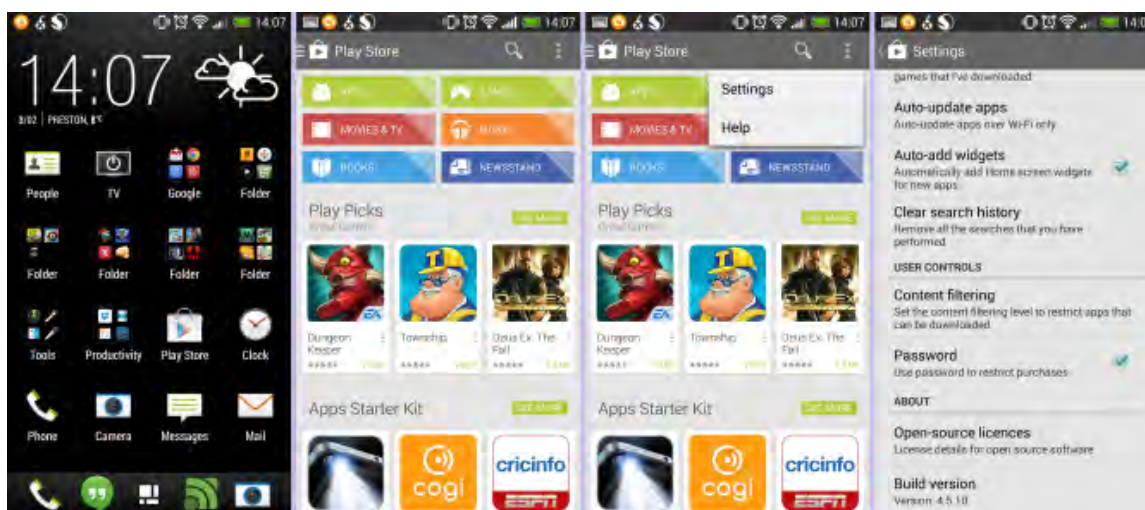
3. Press **Settings**.

4. Find the **User controls** heading and put a tick next to **Password**. Now you will be prompted for your Google password each time you (or your children) attempt to make a purchase through the Play Store. It's worth noting at this point that apps can be downloaded from places other than the Play Store, so we need to make sure that this particular option is disabled.

5. Go back to your **apps list** and open **Settings**.

6. Scroll down the page and touch **Security**.

7. Make sure the option to **allow installation of apps from unknown sources** is turned **off**. This is usually off by default, so just make sure that the box is unticked.

How to Filter Content

1. First, head back in to the **Play Store** app and press the **menu** button.

2. Choose **Settings**.

3. Scroll down to the **User controls** heading and press **Content filtering**. Here, you can choose to allow **all apps** or only those rated as **low**, **medium** or **high maturity**, or for **everyone**. Once you've made your choice you will be asked to enter a PIN. This is to stop your child from finding and reversing the changes we've just made.
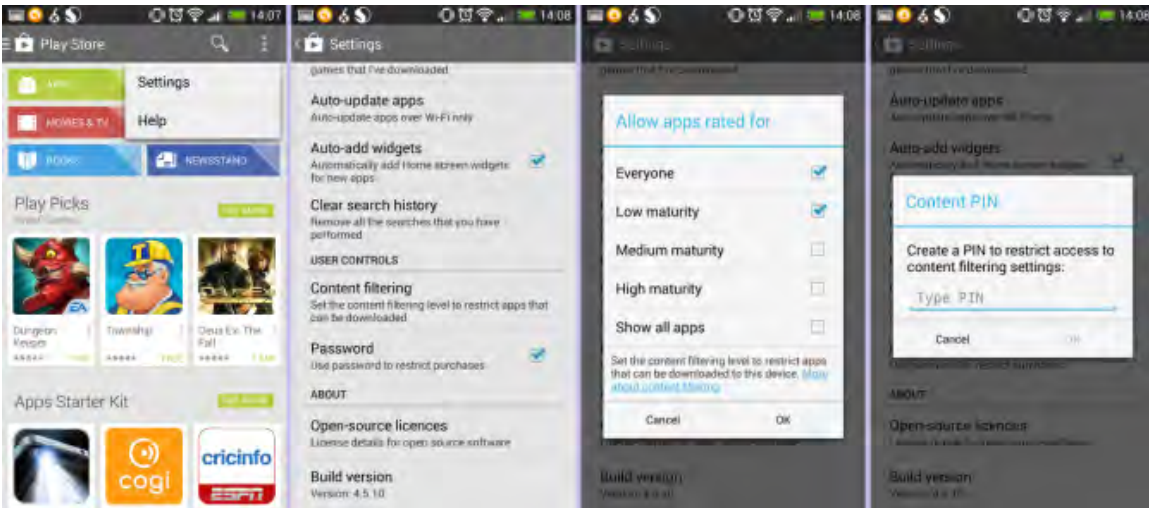
Parental Control Apps

Android phones have a variety of parental control apps that you can download and install for added protection. The following websites have reviewed and suggested various parental control apps and programs. Prices may vary.

"10 Android Parental Control Apps": http://internet-safety.yoursphere.com/2014/04/10-android-parental-control-apps/

"Best 10 Android Parental Control Apps to Check Up on Those Pesky Kids": http://joyofandroid.com/best-android-parental-control-apps/
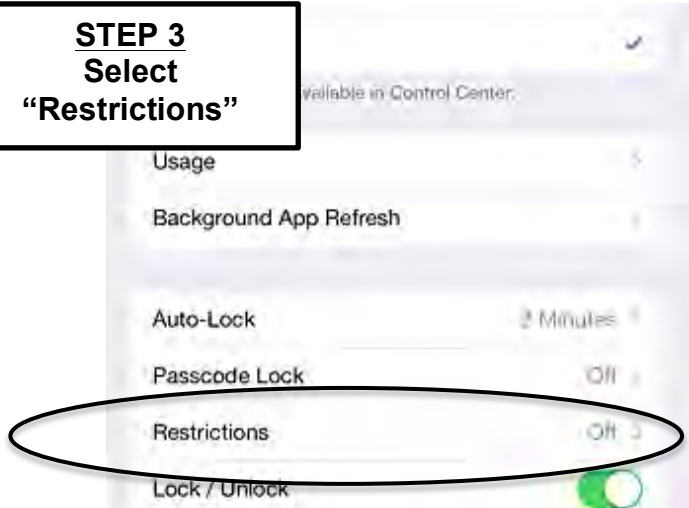
Apple Devices

STEP 1
Click on the "Settings" button

(it looks like gears, and may be in a different place on your device)

STEP 2
Select "General" Category
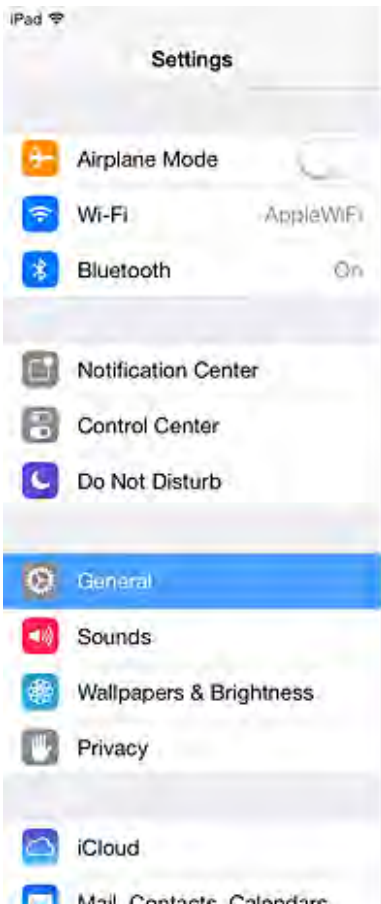
STEP 3
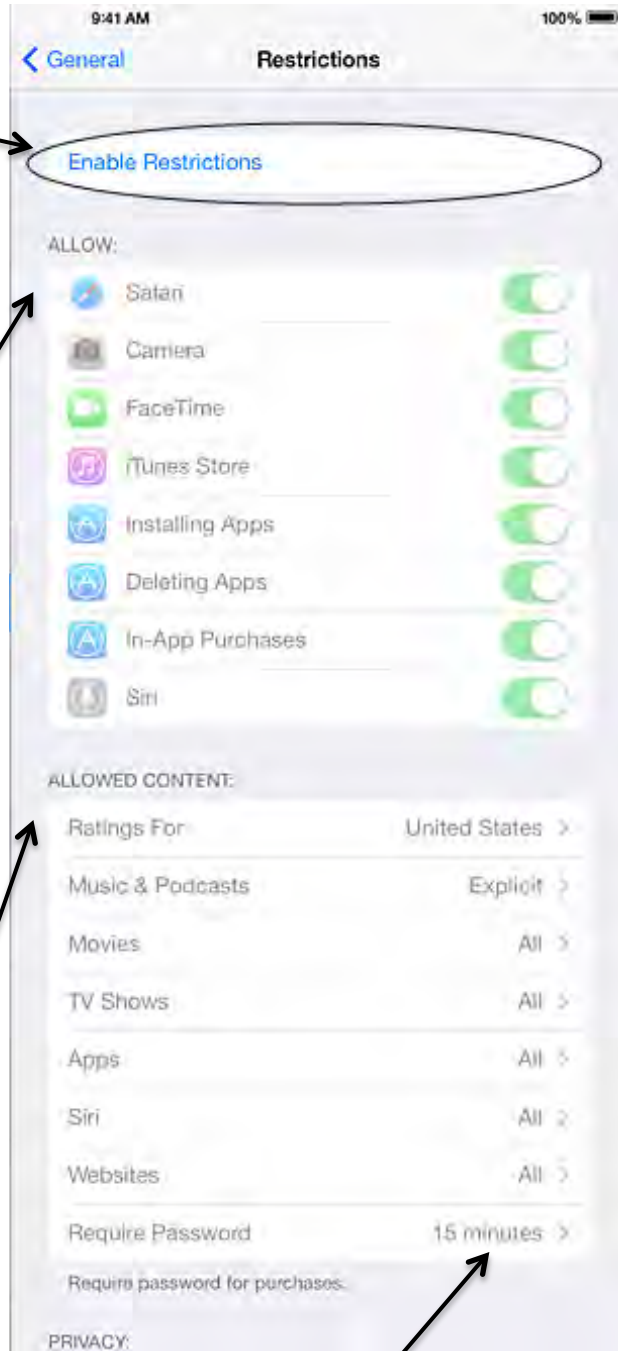**Select "Restrictions"**

BACK TO TOP

STEP 4
Select "Enable Restrictions"
and create a restrictions passcode

- **This passcode is for the PARENT ONLY**

- **You can use the passcode to turn on/off restrictions, change which apps are restricted and what content is allowed on the device, or disable all restrictions**

- **IMPORTANT: If you lose or forget your restrictions passcode, you'll need to perform a "factory restore" to remove restrictions and get a new passcode**

You can restrict access to these applications and features on the device:
- Safari
- Camera (also disables FaceTime)
- FaceTime
- iTunes Store
- iBooks Store
- In-App Purchases
- Siri
- AirDrop
- CarPlay3
- Installing apps
- Deleting apps
- In-App Purchases

Be sure to check restrictions on additional content types, such as ratings, music and podcasts, movies and TV shows, apps, and websites. You can also make changes to privacy settings, including location services, contacts, and photos.

For More Information about Apple Devices, visit:

http://support.apple.com

STEP 5
Tap on "Require Password" and change from "15 minutes" to "Immediately"

This means that every time someone tries to purchase or update an app, they will be prompted to enter the restrictions passcode immediately.

Other Devices

Android Tablets

Android tablets running Android 4.3 and higher now have "Restricted Profiles" which include parental controls.

Note: If you have an older version of Android, the following settings are not available. However, there is some protection available. You can go into the Google Play store, select "Settings", select "User Controls", then add a confirm a PIN number for all tablet purchases.

To learn more about setting up a Restricted Profile on your Android Tablet, visit https://support.google.com/nexus/answer/3175031?hl=en

Macintosh Computers

You can use Parental Controls in Mac OS X 10.5 and 10.6 to help prevent user accounts from accessing inappropriate content on Internet websites. This article describes how this feature works.

The Internet content filter is built into the core of the operating system, allowing it to filter Internet access regardless of which Web browser is used.

For more information about parental controls for Mac OS X, visit https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201813

Windows 8 (PC)

To set up parental controls on your Windows 8 PC, you need to do the following:
1) Set up an administrative account (for the parent)
2) Set up a standard account (for the child)
3) Turn on "Family Safety"

   ***Family Safety monitoring is turned on automatically when you create a new account for a child. You will start receiving reports about when and how your child uses the PC, and you can set or change additional limits at any time.

To learn more about parental controls for Windows 8 PC, visit http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-8/family-safety

Check the following websites for instructions on setting up parental controls on previous versions of Windows:

Windows 7: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/set-parental-controls#1TC=windows-7

Windows Vista: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/set-parental-controls#1TC=windows-vista

Windows Phone

Windows Phones use "MyFamily." MyFamily works with Microsoft Family Safety, a service designed to help you keep tabs on kids' computer and online activities.

To learn more about MyFamily, visit http://www.windowsphone.com/en-us/how-to/wp8/apps/set-up-my-family-for-windows-phone

Additional Resources

General Online/Social Media Safety

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry; "Facts for Families: Children and Social Networking

http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Children_and_Social_Networking_100.aspx

CommonSenseMedia

www.commonsensemedia.org

ConnectSafely

http://www.connectsafely.org

Family Online Safety Institute; "Good Digital Parenting"

https://www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting/

NetSmartz

http://www.netsmartz.org/Parents

South Washington County Community Education Classes on "Get Tech Smart"

https://sowashco.thatscommunityed.com/courses/adult-4/get-tech-smart

Stillwater Area Schools Community Education Classes

https://stillwater.ce.feepay.com/

Cyberbullying

ConnectSafely; "A Parent's Guide to Cyberbullying"

http://www.connectsafely.org/cyberbullying/

Cyberbullying Research Center

http://cyberbullying.org

Sexting

Advocates for Youth; "Sexting – Help Our Kids Think About It Before They Hit Send"

http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/blogs-main/parents-talking-about-sex-blog/1549-sexting-help-our-kids-think-about-it-before-they-hit-send

American Academy of Pediatrics; "Talking to Kids and Teens About Social Media and Sexting"

http://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Talking-to-Kids-and-Teens-About-Social-Media-and-Sexting.aspx

Questions?

Connect With Us!

Email: info@ysb.net

Website: www.ysb.net

Facebook: www.facebook.com/YSBKnowsKids

Twitter: twitter.com/YSBKnowsKids

Our Offices

Cottage Grove
Phone: 651-458-5224

7064 West Point Douglas Road #201
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

Stillwater
Phone: 651-439-8800

101 West Pine Street
Stillwater, MN

Woodbury
Phone: 651-735-9534

7876 Hudson Road, Suite #1
Woodbury, MN 55125