

A Parent's Guide to Social Networks and Apps

This document is intended to provide a parent-friendly guide to some of the more popular social media sites and apps that children are using to communicate. It provides you with the icon that you might look out for on a computer, smart phone or tablet, and explains why they might like to use it, as well as some of the risks. The link at the end of each section will provide more information about the site, as well as providing some assistance with imposing any parental controls that you may think appropriate or necessary.



Facebook is a social network, which lets you create a page about yourself. You can add friends, share pictures and videos, write on people's pages, send instant messages and join online groups.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Facebook are:

- you can communicate with others
- it's fun and entertaining
- you can share with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- talking to strangers
- lack of privacy
- bullying or rude comments

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/safety>



Ask.fm is a social networking site where you can ask other people questions. It's up to you whether you want to ask the question anonymously or not.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Ask.fm are:

- you can communicate with others
- it's fun and entertaining
- you can share with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- bullying and rude content
- anonymity
- talking to strangers

<http://safety.ask.fm/safety-tools/>



BlackBerry's BBM is an instant messaging app. You have your own unique 4 digit PIN and other people can only add you as a contact using this. As well as instant messaging, you can have group chats, voice calls and share voice notes and pictures.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like BBM are:

- free
- easy to use
- you can communicate with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- strangers being able to add you
- lack of privacy
- advertisements

<http://help.blackberry.com/en/bbm-for-blackberry-10/current/>



Bin Weevils is an online virtual world where you can play free online games, chat with friends, adopt a virtual pet, grow your own garden and watch cartoons. You can send messages to other players in the game.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Bin Weevils are:

- you can make friends and meet people
- it's fun and entertaining
- it's a game and you can play

What parents need to know?

The top 3 concerns are:

- payments
- talking to strangers
- lack of privacy

https://www.binweevils.com/parents_overview



Chatroulette is a website which lets you talk to another person anywhere in the world. When you go onto the site, Chatroulette connects you to someone at random. You can talk to people via video or text.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Chatroulette are:

- it's fun and entertaining
- you can make friends and meet new people
- you can communicate with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- explicit and inappropriate images

- talking to strangers
- there are limited privacy settings available

No link for privacy information



Club Penguin is an online multiplayer game where you can explore a virtual world using a cartoon penguin character. You can also talk to other players.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Club Penguin are:

- it's fun and entertaining
- it's a game and you can play
- it's creative

What parents need to know?

The top 3 concerns are:

- the payments
- bullying and rude comments
- talking to strangers

<https://www.clubpenguinisland.com/parents/>



DeviantArt is an online community where you can post your art and comment on other people's work.

Why kids like it:

The top reasons why children and young people like DeviantArt are:

- it's creative
- it's great for sharing

What parents need to know:

The top concerns are:

- inappropriate sexual content
- offensive or rude comments

<http://help.deviantart.com/>



Facebook Messenger is an app which allows users to communicate with their friends from either their Facebook account or their phonebook. Users can instant message, create group chats, share photos and videos, record voice messages, have live video chats, or simply talk to their friends and family.

Why kids like it:

The top reasons why children and young people like Facebook Messenger are:

- it's free
- you can communicate with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- talking to strangers

- bullying and hurtful messages
- need to regularly check privacy settings

<https://www.facebook.com/help/messenger-app/>



Google+ is a space where you can share photos and videos, instant message or make video-calls. The site allows you to create 'circles' of contacts, so you can share different types of content with your different networks. It has a 'Hangout' section, where you can use your webcam to have meetings, group discussions or group catch-ups.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Google+ are:

- it's easy to use
- it's good for learning and research
- you can communicate with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- bullying and nasty comments
- strangers can contact you
- there is no verification needed to sign up

<https://support.google.com/plus/#topic=6320382>



FMyLife is an online community where you can post a short caption about an unfortunate incident that has happened during your day. The caption usually starts with "today..." and ends with "FML". You can also comment on other people's stories.

Why kids like it:

The top reasons why children and young people like FMyLife are:

- it's fun
- you can connect with other people and leave comments

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- inappropriate content
- lack of control over what others post
- there aren't any checks to verify age

No link for privacy information



Habbo Hotel is a social network site where you can communicate and interact in a virtual hotel. You can create your own characters, design hotel rooms, and talk to other players. You can also chat in the public rooms, which can be used by anyone. If you want to chat privately to someone you can create a guest room.

Why kids like it:

The top reasons why children and young people like Habbo Hotel are:

- it's fun and entertaining
- you can meet and make new friends

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- fake accounts
- talking to strangers
- it's easy for a child aged 11 to register

<https://help.habbo.com/hc/en-us/articles/221642468>



Instagram is a picture and video sharing app. Users can post content and use hashtags to share experiences, thoughts or memories with an online community. You can follow your friends, family, celebrities and even companies on Instagram.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like Instagram are:

- you can share with others
- you can communicate with others
- you can follow others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- strangers
- lack of privacy
- inappropriate content

<https://help.instagram.com/154475974694511/>



Kik is an instant messaging app. It lets you create your own username and message others without using your mobile number. You can share photos, organise events, share games, news and anything of interest to you from the internet.

Why kids like it:

The top reasons why children and young people like Kik are:

- you can communicate with others
- it's easy to use

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- inappropriate sexual content
- lack of privacy
- talking to strangers

<https://kikinteractive.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/sections/204000008-Tips-for-Parents->



Snapchat is an app that lets you send a photo or short video to your friends. The 'snap' appears on screen for a matter of seconds before disappearing. There's also a feature called Snapchat Story that lets you share lots of snaps in a sequence for up to 24 hours.

Why kids like it:

The top reasons why children and young people like Snapchat are:

- you can communicate with others
- you can share with others

What parents need to know:

The top 3 concerns are:

- lack of privacy
- talking to strangers
- inappropriate content

<https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/privacy-settings>



YouTube is a place to watch, create and share videos. You can create your own YouTube account, make a music playlist, and even create your own channel, which means you will have a public profile, and it allows you to comment on videos and create video playlists. For younger children there is a separate YouTube for Kids site, with child friendly videos.

Why kids like it:

The top 3 reasons why children and young people like YouTube are:

- good for videos
- it's fun and entertaining
- it's good for music

What parents need to know?

The top 3 concerns are:

- advertising
- inappropriate content
- bullying or rude comments

<https://support.google.com/youtubekids/?hl=en-GB#topic=6130504>

The above 15 are currently the most popular used by children, there are many more that are available. This information was obtained from <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/> which is part of the NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Sexting

What is sexting?

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.

They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

(NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>)

The NSPCC provide a very good guide on Sexting, please use the below link for further information:
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/>

Below is a list of codes that could be used for sexting (Humberside Police):

THE SEXTING LIST PART ONE (1-57)	THE SEXTING LIST PART TWO (58-112)
1. I43 – I love you	58. OIC – Oh I see
2. 2DAY – Today	59. OMG – Oh my God
3. 4EAE – For ever and ever	60. ORLY – Oh, really?
4. ADN – Any day now	61. OT– Off topic
5. AFAIK – As far as I know	62. OTP – On the phone
6. AFK – Away from keyboard	63. P911 – Parent alert
7. ASL – Age/sex/location	64. PAW – Parents are watching
8. ATM – At the moment	65. PCM – Please call me
9. BFN – Bye for now	66. PIR – Parent in room
10. BOL – Be on later	67. PLS or PLZ– Please
11. BRB – Be right back	68. PPL – People
12. BTW – By the way	69. POS – Parents over shoulder
13. CTN – Can't talk now	70. PTB – Please text back
14. DWBH – Don't worry, be happy	71. QQ – Crying. This abbreviation produces an emoticon in text. It's often used sarcastically.
15. F2F or FTF – Face to face	72. RAK – Random act of kindness
16. FWB – Friends with benefits	73. RL – Real life
17. FYEO – For your eyes only	74. ROFL – Rolling on the floor laughing
18. GAL – Get a life	75. RT – Retweet
19. GB – Goodbye	76. RUOK – Are you OK?
20. GLHF – Good luck, have fun	77. SMH – Shaking my head
21. GTG – Got to go	78. SOS – Someone over shoulder
22. GYPO – Get your pants off	79. SRSLY – Seriously
23. HAK – Hugs and kisses	80. SSDD – Same stuff, different day
24. HAND – Have a nice day	81. SWAK – Sealed with a kiss
25. HTH – Hope this helps / Happy to help	82. SWYP – So, what's your problem?
26. HW– Homework	83. SYS – See you soon
27. IDK – I don't know	84. TBC – To be continued
28. IIRC – If I remember correctly	85. TDTM – Talk dirty to me
29. IKR – I know, right?	86. TIME – Tears in my eyes
30. ILY / ILU – I love you	87. WYCM – Will you call me?
31. IM – Instant message	88. TMI– Too much information
32. IMHO – In my honest opinion / In my humble opinion	89. TMRW – Tomorrow
33. IMO – In my opinion	90. TTYL– Talk to you later
34. IRL– In real life	91. TY or TU– Thank you
35. IWSN – I want sex now	92. VSF – Very sad face
36. IU2U – It's up to you	93. WB – Welcome back
37. IYKWIM – If you know what I mean	94. WTH – What the heck?
38. J/K – Just kidding	95. WTPA – Where the party at?
39. J4F – Just for fun	96. WYCM – Will you call me?
40. JIC– Just in case	97. YGM – You've got mail
41. JSYK – Just so you know	98. YOLO – You only live once
42. KFY – Kiss for you	99. YW – You're welcome
43. KPC – Keeping parents clueless	100. ZOMG – Oh my God (sarcastic)
44. L8 – Late	

45. LMBO – Laughing my butt off

46. LMIRL – Let's meet in real life

47. LMK – Let me know

48. LOL – Laugh out loud

49. LSR – Loser

50. MIRL – Meet in real life

51. MOS – Mom over shoulder

52. NAGI– Not a good idea

53. NIFOC – Nude in front of computer

54. NM – Never mind

55. NMU – Not much, you?

56. NP – No problem

57. NTS – Note to self

101. 182 – I hate you

102. 420 – Marijuana

103. ADR – Address

104. CD9 – Code 9 – it means parents are around

105. ILU – I Love You

106. KOTL – Kiss On The Lips

107. LMIRL – Let's Meet In Real Life

108. NIFOC – Nude In Front Of The Computer

109. P999 – Parent Alert

110. PAL – Parents Are Listening or Peace And Love

111. RU/18 – Are You Over 18?

112. WYRN – What's Your Real Name?