

GREEN ZONE: Here are the few apps I consider to be safe for Teens and Young Adults:

Social Media can be a dangerous place for teens. However, these apps are the “lesser of three evils” as they can be used to help a student (14+ years of age) shine online to impress colleges and future employers. When used appropriately, these apps will help students adjust their Google results to create a portfolio of positive online accomplishments. If students want to have a profile on these networks/apps, please consider having a dialogue with them and knowing that these networks are the place to start on social media. At the bottom there is a list of bad apps (red zone) that you should prevent or even **not** allow your children & young adults to access/have/use.



Amazon Rapids **Age:**

4+

Amazon Rapids is a reading app for children ages 5 – 12 that is associated with a Parent's Amazon account. This service is designed to make reading fun, boost reading confidence, and encourage creativity. Parents can utilize Amazon Rapids to start a dialog with their children.



Facebook **Age:**

13+

Facebook is the Godfather of all social media apps (and the largest of all social media networks). Users on Facebook can share to the network from their desktop, tablet and/or mobile phone. Facebook makes their money by selling ads next to the feed (and in the feed) to let advertisers get in front of it's users. Although Facebook has very robust privacy controls, I tell everyone that “everything you post online is going to eventually be public.” This is because networks like Facebook have been known to quickly change their privacy settings without telling people and sometimes secrets are shared. That being said, I believe Facebook is a great place to start a positive online footprint. It's a great place for a student to have a public presence (since Google will find a Facebook profile and place it above other results at times). Information is often visible for college admissions officers & future employers when they search for them.



Facebook Messenger **Age:**

13+

Facebook messenger (owned by Facebook) allows you to chat with anyone on Facebook. To initiate a conversation with users you need to add them to your Facebook friend list. We suggest for parents to add their students on Facebook and to monitor who they are adding as friends. Facebook Messenger is tied to a Facebook account, which is tied to a student's real identity, reducing the amount of bullying and anonymous messaging.



Instagram (Owned by Facebook)

Age:

13+

Instagram is a free photo (and video) sharing application that allows users to take photos (and one-minute videos), apply a filter, and share it on the app. Instagram became very popular, and so Facebook bought them. Parents should know that Instagram also has private messaging feature which some students can use instead of texting. Instagram has also added some “disposable” features to try and copy Snapchat. Instagram can potentially be great if it is used in a positive manner for showcasing one's accomplishments. Students can post from a mobile device (but not a desktop). That's because Instagram is designed to be used on a mobile phone (but can be discovered by Google)



LinkedIn

Age:

14+



LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network. It is an important tool for teens that want to improve their Google results when applying to college. It is the best place to start an online image to impress colleges and future employers.



Pinterest

Age:

13+



Pinterest is a visual discovery tool that helps users find and save ideas. It's a great source of inspiration for students. They can use Pinterest to find studying tips, DIY's and more. Kids can have fun on Pinterest, but know there can be some adult content on the network, so parents should be close by to observe activity..



Twitter

Age:

13+



Twitter allows you to send messages with up to 140 characters in length (and include photos and videos). Twitter is a place where students feel they can diary their feelings, not realizing their Tweets are tied to their identity and able to be seen by colleges and employers. When a student is ready to be online, we suggest they consider Twitter but share very positive and constructive content on the network. They should leave negative talk to texting and phone calls.



You Tube (Owned by Google)

Age:

13+



YouTube (owned by Google) is the world's second largest search engine (their parent company is the largest search engine, Google). Statistics highlight that Youtube is used by more students than almost any other network. You don't have to login or register to see the benefits of Youtube. Parents should know that if your student is under 13 years of age they should be present when their kids are watching videos on Youtube, since some content can be worse than late night TV. Positive videos can turn a student's Google results into a three dimensional version of their college resume. YouTube also has a multitude of educational videos you can learn from.



ZeeMee

Age:

13+



ZeeMee is a free app that allows students to showcase themselves for college admissions, through photos and videos. Students can connect with each other on the app, based on i nterests and passion. Profiles can be made private and unsearchable online, so that only those with the link will be able to see them. The college admissions process can become overwhelming, especially if your student wants to showcase extracurricular activities such as sports, drawing, or dancing. This app offers students the chance to showcase their passions for their college application.

GRAY ZONE: These apps can be good (and bad) for your Teens and Young Adults.

The gray zone is a place where your students WANT to hang out, but if they post in a way that's anything less than wise, it could hurt them. I recommend you have a dialogue with your kids about Sexy Selfies (Sexting) and inappropriate content if your kids have these apps. Although some people are very scared of Snapchat and Vine, I'm not against them (since there more inappropriate apps that kids could be using). Every parent should put in the time each month to have a dialogue with their kids about the apps they are using. This is the best way to keep your kids safe (not by restricting the kids, but by talking with them).



Google Hangouts

Age

13+

Google Hangouts is a messaging platform that is tied to your Gmail address. Users can message friends, start free video or voice calls, and start a conversation with one person or a group. Some parents have found predators targeting their kids through Google Hangouts to try and entice them into partaking in video calls or sending photos of themselves..



Houseparty App

Age

14+

From the creators of Meerkat (an early Periscope competitor), Houseparty is a video chat app that lets teens video chat with 2-8 people at the same time. All chats are unmoderated which means students can come in contact with inappropriate content or cyberbullies.



Minecraft

Age

7+

Minecraft is the best selling PC game of all time. While Minecraft may be used for educational purposes, players can encounter bullying, inappropriate content and even viruses when playing this game



Musical.ly

Age:

13+

Musical.ly is a popular app that let's users create lip-syncing videos to their favorite songs. While this app may be fun for teens it may be scary for young adults due to the adult content that can be found on this app.



ooVoo

Age:

13+

ooVoo is one the world's largest video and messaging apps. Parents should be aware that ooVoo is used by predators to contact underage kids. The app can allow users to video chat with up to twelve people at one time..



Periscope

Age:

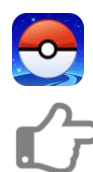
13+

(Owned

by

Twitter)

Periscope is a live video app that was bought by Twitter. It allows users to watch and broadcast real time videos from their phones. It's easy to find your kids on Periscope if you know their Twitter usernames. Most of the content on this app is unmonitored and students can watch live videos from all over the world..



Pokemon Go

Age

9+

Pokémon Go is an augmented-reality mobile game for iOS and Android devices. While quickly becoming one of the most popular apps of all time, it has raised some safety concerns. Find ways your kids can have fun and still stay safe if they play Pokémon Go. Consider playing as a family and remind your child that they can always contact you if they encounter anything suspicious while playing Pokémon Go.



SMS Text Messaging Age: No age limits

SMS text messaging is one of the primary apps that each phone has. All accounts are connected to phone numbers. SMS messenger is relatively safe for students – trackable and least difficult for parents to monitor.



Snapchat Age: 13+

Snapchat promises your kids they can take a photo/video, send it to a friend and the content will only be viewed once and then will disappear. We as adults know that's not true, but students feel ok sharing very personal moments on Snapchat as they begin to trust people. Snapchat also has a "story" feature that lets users share some videos/posts for 24 hours on their feed. Snapchat is quickly growing and is one of the more valuable social media startups we have seen. It's not going away anytime soon. Parents should add their students on the app and occasionally view their content.



tbh.App (Owned by Facebook) Age: 12+

TBH stands for "to be honest", and the tbh app is a social networking platform where users anonymously answer questions/polls about their classmates. Even though the questions/polls are approved by the developers, tbh can still promote bullying and make it easier for students to become a target.



Vine Age: 17+ (Owned by Twitter Closed in 2016)

Vine is owned by Twitter and was a 6 second video sharing app. Kids often post videos of their everyday life and blunders. Much of the content on Vine is crude humor and carefully crafted to get views. Some users of this app have become Vine Celebrities and moved onto other networks. Students who want this can end up hurting their reputation.



WhatsApp Messenger (Owned by Facebook) Age: 16+

WhatsApp is a mobile messenger that allows students to use wifi to bypass their SMS/Text messaging feature and directly message other users on the app. This app is owned by Facebook. It is very popular with people who have international friends/family. Users can share their location and contacts with other users. WhatsApp allows kids to communicate with their friends using the app and bypass text messaging



Roblox Age: 8+(According to Roblox)

ROBLOX is a user-generated gaming platform where you can create your own games or play games that other users have made. There is also the option to chat to other players. 16% of the children and young people who reviewed ROBLOX thought that it can be risky, it allows In-app purchases , being able to talk to strangers, people you don't know adding you. Popular because, the range of games, playing with other people, creating your own games and character . It is easy to set the privacy settings and the default security settings for under 13s are strong but you **need to monitor. 36% of young people who reviewed ROBLOX said they know how to** change their privacy settings on this site. 20% said they know how to turn off their location settings.

RED ZONE: ANONYMOUS APPS – Here are some apps I consider NOT safe for Teens and Young Adults.

These are the apps not recommended for Teens or Young Adults. These apps usually have inappropriate and un-moderated content. Also, they lend themselves to online bullying. Often, these apps are anonymous and will encourage students to behave in a way we have never seen before. When students use an app in anonymous mode (without it being tied to their real identity) they tend to behave badly. They are also more prone to bullying and predators in this zone.



After School App

Age:

17+

AfterSchool App is an anonymous app that creates a separate chat group for every school. It has been removed twice from the AppStore because of threats and arrests. Messages often include bullying, pornography, and alcohol or drug references.



Ask.fm

Age:

13+

Ask.fm is a social networking website where people can ask questions, with the option of anonymity. Kids often reveal too much personal information on this site, and cyberbullying is very prevalent.



The Blue Whale Challenge

Age:

10+

The Blue Whale Challenge creates new opportunities for predators to target victims on social media by forcing teens to perform harmful tasks over 50 days, with the last task urging the victim to commit suicide. The challenge as a whole is meant to harm students and slowly get them to trust the game. Get involved, have a healthy dialog with your students about their day and social media. Pay attention to any changes in your teen's behaviour, especially if they become reserved, withdrawn, or fearful of social media. Consider contacting your teen's school. If your child has engaged with anything like the Blue Whale Challenge, other students might be engaging with it too.



Bumble

Age:

17+

Similar to Tinder, Bumble is a mobile dating app. However, on the Bumble app women must be the first to make contact. Tweens and teens have been known to lie about their age and create fake accounts on apps like Bumble. Also, Bumble makes it easy for predators to target victims.



BurnBook

Age:

18+

BurnBook is an anonymous app for posting text, photos and audio rumor messages about others. The app compiles messages by school, so the app requires access to your location. It encourages students to screenshot the rumors and save them to their phone, which causes bullying issues.



Calculator% Private Photo App

Age:

4+

The "Private Photo (Calculator%)" app is designed to help students hide photos and videos behind an innocent looking calculator app. This application looks like a calculator but entering a passcode opens a private area.

**Finstagram Age:****13+**

Finstagram (Finsta) is a fake (or second) Instagram account. Students get a second Instagram account along with their real Instagrams (Finstagrams), to post silly pictures or videos.

**Gather Age:****13+**

The Gather app is an event planning app that makes it easy for users to create and share real life events. Invitations can be sent to anyone in a user's phone contacts, even if they don't have the app. The app uses a method of spamming that creates false credibility since users think their friends are suggesting they use the app..

**IMVU Age:****17+**

IMVU is an app where users create custom avatars and use them to chat with strangers in random chats or 3D chat rooms. This app can be used by predators to try and get victims to share their phone number, send photos, and video chat off of the app. Content on IMVU is inappropriate for teens and avatars can be used to simulate explicit activities.

**Jott Messenger App Age:****13+**

Jott Messenger is an app that allows students to send messages without a data plan or a WiFi connection. Jott messenger creates a closed network with other devices (usually using a direct bluetooth signal) and can reach other users up to 100-feet. Like Snapchat, Jott includes a "self-destructing" feature that lets the user decide when a message, photo, or video will disappear

**Kik Messenger App (Based in Canada) Age:****17+**

Kik allows anyone on the app to contact your child and directly message them. It has been known to allow adults to communicate with preteens, and is very difficult to discern who is a predator and who is real. Some adults have been known to use this app to pretend like they are tweens and teens. Kik allows students to bypass text messaging features of their phone. Users can connect with anyone on the network and aren't limited to their phone's contact list.

**Live.me App Age:****17+**

Live.me is a live streaming video app that allows users to watch or broadcast live-stream videos. Parents need to know that the app uses geo-location to share videos, so users know broadcasters exact location. Users earn coins on Live.me and some predators are using coins as a way to pay minors for pictures. Be aware that anyone can watch your students videos and access their information on the app.

**MyLoL App Age:****13-19**

MyLOL is the #1 teen dating app in the US, UK, and Canada and is designed for students 13-19 years old. Built-in features of MyLOL encourage users to send private messages to random strangers. While people over 20 years old are not permitted to create an account, MyLOL makes it easy to enter another birth date, if you're not a teen.

**Ogle Age:****17+**

Ogle is an anonymous app that automatically searches your location for nearby schools downloaded. View and interact with school feeds, engage on any campuses content, and share or ask anything anonymously. Since there is little formal registration, bullies and predators can easily masquerade as students and friends.

**Omegle****Age:****18+**

Omegle is an anonymous text and video chat room that connects strangers to talk with each other. The app allows you to share personal information, and also contains inappropriate and un-moderated content.

**Phhhoto App: Age****12+**

Phhhoto is a camera app that shoots moving pictures that continually loop to make short movies. Learn why we put the Phhhoto app in our Red Zone, how to keep your students safe if they use Phhhoto, and other photo sharing apps that can positively impact a student's digital footprint.

Sarahah App: Age**17+**

Sarahah is a popular new app and website that allows users to send and receive anonymous messages. Since this is an app that promotes anonymity, teens and tweens feel like they can hide behind their anonymous screen names and bully others without repercussions. There is no way to report inappropriate content or threats. Discuss the dangers of anonymous apps and have your student delete their Sarahah account. Ensure that your child knows what is appropriate to send in private messages, even if they are anonymous.

**Secret Age:****17+**

Secret is an app that allows people to share messages anonymously within their circle of friends, friends of friends, and publicly. Students often hide behind the anonymity when posting, and forget that anonymous does not mean untraceable.

**Slingshot App Age:****13+**

Slingshot is a comparison app, marketed to boys, that allows users to vote or create polls. Slingshot users can create any type of poll, including polls that are not appropriate for teens. This app is popular with students, and the comment section is used to bully other students.

**Street Chat Age:****14+**

StreetChat is a live photo-sharing board designed for middle school, high school and college students. Kids feel more freedom to send mean posts because they do not have to confirm their identity within the app. This leads to students often posting about real people.

**Tango App Age:****17+**

The Tango app is a social network and messaging app for phones or tablets that uses geo-location. Tango encourages users to talk to strangers which is very dangerous. Since the app utilizes geo-location, strangers can get access to your child's location if they are using the app.

**Tumblr Age:****(Bought****by****Yahoo!/Verizon)****13+**

Tumblr is one of the world's most popular blogging platforms. Users tend not to use their real names, so it can be hard to find blogs without knowing a specific username. All accounts are public and content goes unmonitored.

**Whats Goodly Age:****17+**

WhatsGoodly is an anonymous, location-based, social polling application designed for college students. It has a 17+ age restriction, but younger students can still see polls and vote. There are a lot of questions about dating, relationships, alcohol, and smoking on the app.

**Whisper****Age:****17+**

Whisper is an anonymous social network that allows people to express themselves. Whisper reveals a user's location, which makes it easy for people to arrange to meet up. This also makes it easier for predators to locate and connect with users.

**Wishbone****Age:****13+**

Wishbone is a comparison app, marketed to girls, that allows users to vote or create polls. Wishbone users can create any type of poll, including polls that are not appropriate for teens. This app is popular with students, and the comment section is used to bully other students.

**Yik Yak****Age:****18+**

Yik Yak acts like a local bulletin board for your area by showing the most recent posts from other users around you. Many bomb threats were made on this app. Students forget that being anonymous on an app does not mean being untraceable. Police departments are quickly able to locate students at home and address them after a threat to school safety. Once students are in college, they seem to be much more mature on this app.

**You Now****Age:****13+**

YouNow is a popular broadcasting platform where kids watch and stream real-time videos. Users decide whether broadcasters should continue their live videos with thumbs up and thumbs down voting. Anyone can record the videos posted, take screenshots and bully others with the recordings.

**Wattpad****Age****17+**

Wattpad is a relatively unmoderated online storytelling community. One of the major concerns with Wattpad is that teens are posting explicit and inappropriate stories that are connected to their personal Facebook profiles (and shows their profile photo). Learn how easy it is for your student to access explicit content on Wattpad, how predators are using this site to contact teens, and more.

**Yellow****Age****13+**

Nicknamed "Tinder for Snapchat" and "Tinder for Teens", the Yellow app markets itself as a way to make friends even though it's mostly used as a dating app. This can be confusing for teens and tweens who are just getting access to Instagram and Snapchat.

**Tinder App****Age****18+**

Tinder is a dating app, marketed to adults, that allows users to connect with other Tinder users. Despite the app increasing its age restrictions, many parents are wondering "what is Tinder?" So we created this parent guide to bring you up to speed. Learn how Tinder works, what the news has to say it, why it's dangerous, and what you can do if your teen has Tinder.

**Voxer App****Age****13+**

Voxer is a free messaging app that allows users to send real-time voice messages (like a walkie-talkie) to other users. Teens like using Voxer because their activity on the app doesn't appear on their parents' phone bills. By default, profiles are public on Voxer which can be very dangerous. We recommend that you have a discussion with your student about how anonymous apps can have a negative affect on their digital footprints.

