

“Children represent the future.
Encourage, support and guide them.”

– Catherine Pulsifer



SAFETY TIPS

Gaming

- Know which safety features the game offers; the headset may have features to mask your voice.
- Do the games have moderators or reporting features?
- Keep gaming consoles in common areas so it is easy to monitor usage and set usage rules.
- Never give out personal data and never meet anyone outside the game (NetSmartz.org).

Social Media

- Never post where you are going, only where you have been. Be careful about Checking In and know what apps are sharing your location.
- Check privacy settings frequently.
- Do not post threats or nudity. Know what your friends are posting.
- Never meet anyone you meet online in person without parental supervision.
- Do not accept friend requests from people you do not know.

TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- In 2018, the Pew Research Center found that 95% of teens have access to a smartphone and 45% are online all the time (pewinternet.org, 2018).
- Pew found that on average, a child gets his or her first smartphone at 10.3 years old. By age 12, a full 50% of children have social media accounts (primarily Facebook and Instagram).
- Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) is made more accessible by technology, e.g., social media, the internet, and online gaming apps.
- Thorn recently published a survey in 2018 that found that 55% of DMST survivors who entered the life in 2015 or later met their trafficker for the first time using a mobile app, website (online), or by text message.
- 63% of traffickers used online platform to groom potentially vulnerable victims (Thorn, 2018).

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SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TEENS

Mobile apps can be used for cyberbullying, accessing pornography, and sexting at home or in school. Parents must be aware of the risks these apps potentially pose and their use by some traffickers as a way to recruit and exploit.



KEEK

Allows users to upload video status updates and share video content through major social media networks; no privacy settings.



DOWN

This app was rebranded after it was removed from the App store; intended to match Facebook friends for, among other things, casual sexual encounters.



TWITTER

Another network with worldwide popularity, Twitter is also liable to contain adult and other inappropriate content that is easily accessed.



ASK.FM

Allows users to ask questions from other ASK.FM users with the option of anonymity; often used for cyberbullying (Utah Attorney General Task Force, Internet Crimes Against Children).



OMEGLE & CHATROULETTE

Chat services that allows anonymous users to randomly chat with strangers using instant messaging, video (webcam), or microphone.



SNAPCHAT

Photo messaging app; a user takes photos, records videos, and text and drawings, and send them to recipients with a set time limit to view "snaps," 1-10 seconds, content is deleted from device but not the snapchat servers.



INSTAGRAM

Adult content can frequently appear on this photo and video sharing app.



VINE

Twitter video app that allows users to create and share 6-second videos; age limit set at 17+ after pornographic and suggestive clips began appearing.



TINDER

Online dating app allows users 12+ to view profiles and connect with users within a geographical area.



MEET ME

MeetMe is the app version of the online flirting and social networking website formerly called MyYearbook. The primary uses of MeetMe are to meet new people and interact with them online. Much of the communication has "flirty" overtones.



WHISPER

Users submit anonymous questions or confessions as text over a photo or graphic; other users are allowed to comment and send private messages; carries a 17+ rating.



TUMBLR

Microblogging service that allows users to create content and post media on a short-form blog; high amount of pornographic material.



SECRET CALCULATOR

Vault or "ghost" apps show up on a smartphone as a normal app such as a calculator, but enter a password and you'll unlock a vault of secret photos and videos.



YIK YAK

Allows users to post anonymous comments to other users in a 10-mile radius; used for threats and cyberbullying; app was intended for "college age and above."



JOTT

Messaging app that works without a data plan or WiFi network; users can send texts using iPads or iPods on a closed network within a 100-foot area.



POOF

Allows users to hide apps from their home screen.