# Helpful Online Safety Guide

## Popular Apps/Websites and their Risks
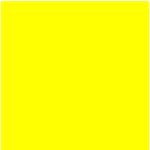
| App/Websites | Age | What is it used for? | Potential Risks/Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Snapchat | 13+ | To send time limited to pictures or videos to friends. | Once an image has been shared, you can never be sure who has seen it, saved it or shared it. Personal or embarrassing pictures in the wrong hands can lead to bullying. Knowing that others have seen embarrassing images can cause stress and anxiety, and affect a child's confidence and self-esteem. Unwanted pictures online could affect educational and job opportunities later in life. Sharing images, particularly sexualised images, can increase the likelihood of a child receiving inappropriate sexual contact from strangers online. |
| Facebook | 13+ | To make friends, post pictures, or statuses, and share news stories etc. Create pages and connect with like minded people. | Being exposed to adult humour, inappropriate content. Becoming friends and chatting with strangers. Group chats - group bullying. Tagging or mentioning people in hurtful posts. Publicly posting about people when arguing. Personal information being public without the right security settings. |
| WhatsApp | 13+ | WhatsApp is a messaging service that lets users exchange unlimited text, audio, photo and video messages over the Internet. Users like it because it doesn't have ads, it costs nothing to use and it works on the same data plan used for email and web browsing. | The application is designed to send customizable photos or video clips to anyone in a user's contact list, providing the perfect platform for sexting and sharing inappropriate photos.<br><br>Online predators often use a technique called "grooming," where they identify and target vulnerable or unprotected teens on "safe" platforms like Facebook. Once they've established a connection, developed a rapport and made the naive teenager feel comfortable with their new "friend," they suggest moving the conversation over to a more private messaging platform like WhatsApp. Here, the discussion often devolves into something inappropriate or becomes exploitative. WhatsApp is even more attractive to predators because it allows users to share their contacts and even their location with other users. |

*Reference: https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/16-apps-and-websites-kids-are-heading-to-after-facebook and Childnet*

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| Ask.Fmf | 13+ | Followers ask you questions and you can choose to answer them and post it on your Facebook account | Many questions can be inappropriate, offensive or encourage young people to reveal information about themselves. Even the account user doesn't choose to respond to a nasty message the user will still be affected. |
| Instagram | 13+ | To post your own photos with tags and captions. You can follow others and view their photos. | Similar to the way they use Facebook, kids may measure the "success" of their photos -- even their self-worth -- by the number of likes or comments they receive. Photos and videos shared on *Instagram* are public unless privacy settings are adjusted. Hashtags and location information can make photos even more visible to communities beyond a teen's followers if his or her account is public. Instagram Direct allows users to send "private messages" to up to 15 mutual friends. These pictures don't show up on their public feeds. Although there's nothing wrong with group chats, kids may be more likely to share inappropriate stuff with their inner circles. |
| Youtube | Account holders to be 18, but a **13**-year-old can sign up with a parent's permission. Content has different restrictions. | Upload, Subscribe and watch videos. Good range of educational, entertainment news content etc. | YouTube is a relatively harmless app/website, if the parental controls are accurate with the age restriction and controls kids can't access inappropriate content however they can still comment and read comments with harmful, abusive and can often contain profanity. |

| App/ Websites | Age | What is it used for? | Potential Risks/Outcomes |
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| Twitter | 13+ | Post brief, 140-character messages -- called "tweets" -- and follow other users' activities | Even though you can remove tweets, your followers can still read what you wrote until it's gone. This can get kids in trouble if they say something in the heat of the moment. |
| Kik | 13+ | Lets children text for free. It's fast and has no message limits, character limits, or fees if you only use the basic features. Texts won't show up on your children's phone's messaging service. | *Kik* allows communication with strangers who share their *Kik* usernames to find people to chat with. The app allegedly has been used in high-profile crimes. There's also a *Kik* community blog where users can submit photos of themselves and screenshots of messages (sometimes displaying users' full names) to contests. It's loaded with ads and in-app-purchases. |
| Omegle | 13 -18 Parental permission with text chat only. Strongly recommended only 18+ | To text/video chat to strangers online. | Despite appearing as a fun and exciting website in popular YouTubers videos. This website is not suitable and can be extremely dangerous to children. Even on safe chat, there is explicit content. Many people have been  bullied, blackmailed and groomed on this website. |
| musical.ly | 13+ | Performance and video sharing social network that mostly features teens lip syncing and to famous songs but also includes some original songwriting and singing. | Remember to make the account private. Accounts are public by default. Because it features popular music and a mix of teens and adult users, swearing and sexual content are commonplace. Many users want a public profile to get exposure and approval, and many are highly motivated by getting more followers and likes for their videos. |

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| Tumblr | 13+, Has 18 rated content if not on 'safe search' | A blogging site, a scrapbook of text, photos, and/or videos and audio clips. | Blogs can contain, pornographic material and depictions of violence, self-harm, drug use, and offensive language, when not on safe search. Posts are copied and shared - digital footprint. |
| Netflix | Any age so long as the correct parental controls are in place. | Nearly everyone has come into contact with Netflix. It is an app/website used to watch television programmes. | If parental controls are not in place, then it would be easy for children to access videos that contain inappropriate content of all levels. The parental controls are extremely easy to change and can be changed to be relevant to the maturity of your child. A pin can also be added to any profile on your account to prevent unwanted app access whether it is to your account of theirs. |
| Dubsmash | 13+ | Dubsmash is an app which lets you create your own music videos dubbed with famous sounds and quotes. Once you've finished you can share the video with your friends or with people from around the world. | Some of the songs and film quotes contain swear words and inappropriate content that cannot be filtered. Communication with strangers is also possible if relevant privacy settings have not been changed. It can also be used as a platform for online bullying. |

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| Club Penguin Island | 6-14 | Club Penguin Island is a virtual world where children can play games, interact with friends, attend parties and special events, and participate in creative and imaginative activities. | By default you cannot access other members personal information. They have filters which stop the use of inappropriate language, although stringent rules and regulations are in place there is still contact with strangers which always imposes a risk. |
| Moshi Monsters | No age restrictions advised for 6-12 year olds. Parents email required to join. | Moshi Monsters is an online social game popular with 6-12 year olds that allows children to choose, customise and nurture a pet monster. Children can play games, solve puzzles and explore Monstro City with their pet. There are a range of safety features and advice available. | Potential contact with strangers is a risk but all chat is moderated by human moderators. This can be used as a tool for online bullying within peer groups. Although this appears as a safe, child friendly site, it is important that you are aware of what they are doing on Moshi Monsters and who they are in contact with. |

| App/ Websites | Age | What is it used for? | Potential Risks/Outcomes |
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| Yubo (Formely yellow) | 12+ but anyone can easily gain access. | Similar to dating app Tinder, it allows people to connect with others on based on their location, with users 'swiping' to accept or decline to talk to someone based on their profile picture. It is linked to photo-sharing app Instagram. If you swipe right on a person who has swiped right on your profile, you can then chat and automatically follow them on Instagram. This means that they can begin sending each other photos right away – even if they don't know each other. You can also live stream with friends or 'Anyone' on the app. | The app is rated 12+. Anyone can sign up and post inappropriate content that breaks Yubo's community guidelines. It is important to note that if you enter a birthday under 13 your child will get a message to say 'Sorry, it looks like you're not eligible for Yubo…but thanks for checking us out'. So there is the potential that they could go back in and enter a false date to access the app.

Although you don't need to share your location to use the app, it is an integral part of the way the app is used.  If you have locations enabled you can find friends nearby. Your location is then shown to other potential 'friends' along with your name and age.

You can 'Go live' during a chat with friends or choose to live stream 'Anyone' on Yubo. This option allows anyone to see the live broadcast and send messages, not just their friends. You can also choose whether to add viewers as new friends.

This app allows a lot of communication with strangers and has been considered an extremely dangerous app for children of any age to use. |
| Tinder | 18+ (recently raised from 13) If your child lies about their age on Facebook, this allows them to access Tinder. | Online dating app using location to connect you with people nearby. You swipe on peoples pictures to 'like' or 'dislike' them. If people 'like' each other it becomes a match and they can private message eachother. | This app should not be used by children. It has a dangerous reputation in the adult world, let alone when used by a child. It is an app built on connecting and talking to strangers.

It also is based on the idea that you 'like' someone entirely on the way they look which can encourage self insecurities. |

# COMMON FEATURES ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

### 1. Profile

Allows the member to have a home page which has their personal information and can contain a bio, likes, interest, pages etc. There are extensive privacy settings on profile pages so be sure to go through all of them. Never put your address or phone number on there, strangers may try to contact you.

### 2. Upload content

Most sites allow members to upload text messages, photographs, audio and video files free of cost. This is nice way of sharing memories such as holidays or birthdays with your family and friends however, remember to use the privacy settings and do not upload a picture with someone else in it without their permission.

### 3. Chats

Chats are very common in social media and can range from private 'direct messaging' to a group chat. Members in a group chat can add new people to the group.
Useful for group work but risky as group chats could be set up to exclude and bully someone. Direct messaging is dangerous as well, people who are not on your friend's list can attempt to contact you. Messaging can also contain videos and photos.

### 4. Pages

Many apps allow you to create pages where you post articles or photographs etc and connect with people who are interested in the same things. Pages can be made member only and private, this may encourage people to use them to talk about someone and exclude them.

### 5. Tagging/Mentions

Tagging someone or mentioning the in a post by typing their user name into a comment or photo can be fun when sharing with your friends. However, you can not control who tags you in post and there is a risk of being associated with a controversial or inappropriate article or post. You can remove yourself from the tag and report if necessary but people will still be able to see it if you do not remove it straight away.

### 6. Live Streaming

Live streaming is like live TV. You can film and it will show online for people to view in real time . You can also post short videos or pictures online instantly after they have been taken. These are often posted in a 'story' on apps such as Instagram, Facebook or Snapchat and are often viewable for 24 hours.

### 7.Geo-tagging

Geo-tagging is a way to link information you are sharing to where you are or were. For example you can add a location to a picture, status or video. Geo-tagging is also used on apps such as Snapchat to view other peoples location or for them to view where you are.