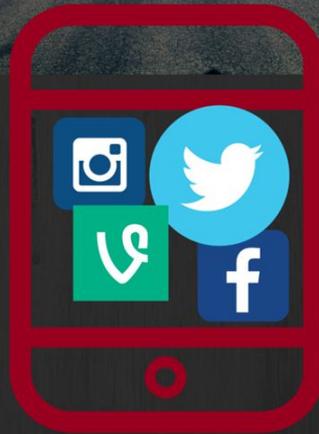
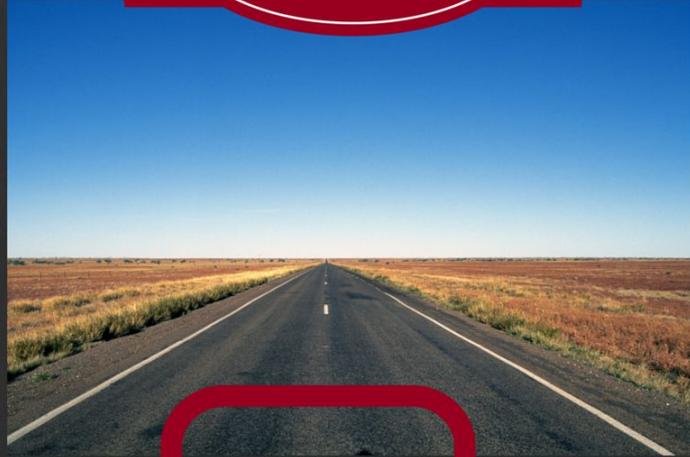


Digital Footprint

Where is it going to lead you?



12 SOCIAL MEDIA APPS ALL PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

by: www.familyeducation.com

1. YIK YAK



The producers of this app call it "the anonymous social wall for anything and everything." All users are anonymous (registration requires no personal information, other than a user's location), and their posts are called "Yaks" and show up in a live feed for other users – or "Yakkers" – in their area.

2. TINDER



Tinder's developers describe the app as "the fun way to connect with new and interesting people around you." But it's mainly used as a dating tool or an anonymous hook-up (read: one-night stand) locator by 20-somethings, college students, and even younger teens and tweens. (Yikes!) The app is rated ages 17+ but Tinder's privacy policy allows teens as young as 13 to register (the app connects with Facebook – which is also technically for ages 13+ – to pull in photos for users' Tinder profiles).

3. ASK.FM



This app allows users to interact in a question-and-answer format — with friends, peers, and anonymous users alike. The app is rated ages 13+ and is most popular in Europe but is catching on in the U.S. Some kids have used the app for hurtful cyberbullying that has been linked to suicides, including the death of 12-year-old Rebecca Sedwick of Florida. British schools have sent homeletters calling for students to stop using ask.fm because of its use in several cyberbullying incidents there, and its loose regulation and lack of monitoring.

4. KIK MESSENGER



Kik is a mobile app that people can use to text with friends at high speed and with more of a "face-to-face feel" than regular texting (users' profile pictures appear in a little bubble next to their text, and they can quickly text photos, sketches, or even pre-designed greeting cards to individuals or groups). The app is rated ages 17+, but there is no age verification so anyone can download it. Like some other instant messenger apps, Kik allows your teen to connect with others using just a username .

5. VOXER



voxer

This walkie-talkie PTT (push-to-talk) app allows users to quickly exchange short voice messages. They can have chats going on with multiple people at a time and just have to tap the play button to hear any messages they receive. Although it largely has an adult following, including some people who use it for their job, it's becoming popular among teens who enjoy its hybrid style of texting and talking.

6. SNAPCHAT



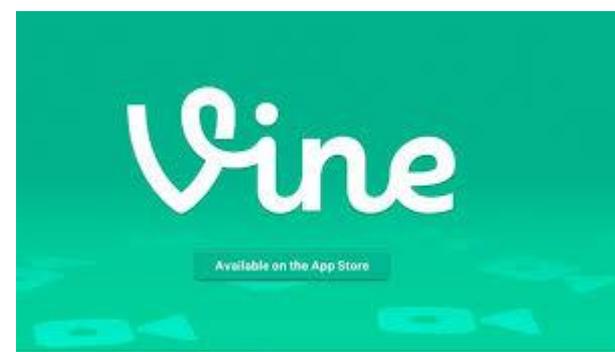
Snapchat is an app that allows users to send photos and videos that disappear from view within 10 seconds after they're received. It's rated ages 12+. Some kids are using the app to send racy pics because they believe the images can't be saved and circulated. But it turns out that Snapchat pics don't completely disappear from a device, and users can take a screenshot before an image vanishes in the app. And while recent studies revealed that "sexting" (sending sexual messages and images, usually via text message) is not as popular as parents had feared, "disappearing photo" apps like Snapchat might embolden kids to send more explicit photos and texts than they would have before through traditional texting.

7. POKE



Poke is Facebook's app that, similar to Snapchat, promises that photos sent will "self-destruct" within seconds after they're received. While Poke isn't nearly as popular as Snapchat, it is still gaining young users who can use it for sexting. Also like Snapchat, the images sent via Poke can be saved or viewed with certain workarounds.

8. VINE



Vine is Twitter's mobile app that allows users to shoot and share short loops of video (6 seconds or less). It's rated 17+, but children and teens are still downloading it. As with any multimedia app, the content on Vine runs the gamut from naughty to nice. "With the most basic creative searching, kids can find nudity, sex, drug use, offensive language, hardcore sexuality, and more," Common Sense Media says in its review of the app. "While there are plenty of cute, fun videos, even adults might be shocked at some of the things they find."

9. WHISPER APP



This 17+ app's motto is: "Share Secrets, Express Yourself, Meet New People." It has a similar feel to the now-defunct PostSecret app, which was discontinued shortly after its release because it filled up with abusive content. Whisper lets users set up anonymous accounts to make their messages or confessions overlap an image or graphic (similar to e-postcards), which other users can then "like," share, or comment on. While it allows for creative expression, it can also take overly personal content viral. The app also shows a user's location. Although the app is geared toward older teens and adults, younger children are finding their way to it. A 12-year-old girl in Washington was reportedly raped by a 21-year-old man who met her on Whisper.

10. TUMBLR APP



Many children and young teens are also active on this 17+ photo-sharing app. It can also be used for sharing videos and chatting. Common Sense Media says Tumblr is "too raunchy for tykes" because users can easily access pornographic, violent, and inappropriate content. Common Sense also notes that users need to jump through hoops to set up privacy settings and until then, all of a user's photo and content is public for all to see. Mental health experts say that Tumblr can be damaging to adolescents' mental health because it tends to glorify self-harm and eating disorders.

11. INSTAGRAM APP



This hugely popular photo-sharing site is owned by Facebook, so you may be more familiar with it than with other photo-sharing apps. Users can add cool filters or create collages of their photos and share them across Facebook and other social media platforms. The app is rated 13+ and may be slightly tamer than Tumblr, but users can still find mature or inappropriate content and comments throughout the app (there is a way to flag inappropriate content for review).

12. AFTER SCHOOL APP



The app, which allows users to post anything they want for anyone within 2 miles of their location to see. It is crazy popular at high schools and colleges around the country. After School uses kids' Facebook profiles to verify they're students at a specific high school before granting access to the school's page within the app. From there, teens see images and posts created anonymously by other students or can create anonymous posts themselves.

FREE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS:

1. Net Cetera Booklet
2. Edutopia (website)
3. Common Sense Media (website)