

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

social media

POTENTIAL RISKS FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS



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letter from the ceo



DEAR FAMILIES,

We have created What You Should Know About Social Media — Potential Risks for Children and Teens to help parents and families better understand the warnings of the most popular social media apps. Included in this guide is advice on what steps you can take to protect your children's mental health.

More information is coming out arguing that there is a correlation between the increased use of social media and poor behavioral health. It has become clear that educating parents and families would be helpful and impactful.

It is important to understand that children and teens who use social media are at a higher risk of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and even suicide. For some, social media has become the catalyst for their social anxiety disorder. Compounding the problem is the fact that social media apps can lure children in and become addictive. Behavioral health challenges may worsen with more time spent on social media. Some people are unable to avoid social media for more than three hours. When users start sharing and comparing their lives to others, the challenges mount and the social anxiety grows. Parents now find themselves in a place that is both unfamiliar and frightening.

The behavioral health challenges facing children and teens is a growing public health crisis and it worsens without a proper mental health infrastructure to address it. What You Should Know About Social Media is a basic information tool to help you better understand the world of social media, how it can affect your child, and what this may mean to their mental health. Review it, share your comments with us, and start a conversation with your children.

As we learn more about how children and teenagers are using social media, we can further our understanding of how to protect them. And we, as parents, can continue to stay in front of this public health crisis.

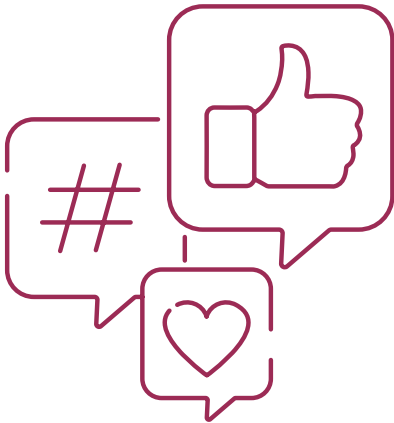
If you have questions or comments, please email me at jeffrey@legacyhealthendowment.org.

Thank you,

President and CEO
Legacy Health Endowment

overview

This comprehensive guide was developed with the mission of educating parents and families on the apps that their kids are most likely using, the potential risks that these apps carry, and offer tips to protect children’s mental health. Here’s what parents wish they knew about the nine most popular social media apps.



50%

of lifetime mental illnesses begin in individuals 14 years and older.



Suicide is the second leading cause of death in the U.S. among 10-14 year olds.

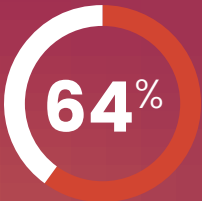
NEARLY
1 in 5

teens ages 12-17 experienced a major depressive episode in 2023. An even larger percentage (23%) had either a major depressive episode or a substance use disorder within the previous year.

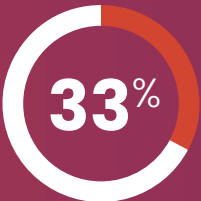
40%

of high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless in 2023, with rates being higher among girls (53%) and LGBTQ+ youth (65%). This is a 10% increase from 2013.

In 2023, the US Surgeon General declared a national youth mental health crisis and identified social media as a driver of that crisis. His findings around the issue noted:



of adolescents are “often” and “sometimes” exposed to hate-based content.



of girls ages 11-15 say they feel “addicted” to certain social media platforms.



of teenagers report that it would be hard to give up social media.



On a typical weekday, nearly 1 in 3 adolescents report using screens (most commonly social media) until midnight or later.

The last two years have been filled with increased concern for children’s health and well-being, especially with influential leaders like Jonathan Haidt, author of *The Anxious Generation*, and his research on social media and phone use among youth. As of December 2025, 35 states and Washington, D.C. have signed or enacted laws that limit cell phone usage in K-12 classrooms. The goal? Reduce distractions, improve mental health, and address classroom disciplinary problems reported to be the result of phone and social media use.

most downloaded social networking apps of 2025

YouTube	Facebook	Reddit
TikTok	X	WhatsApp
Snapchat	Telegram	Threads
Instagram		

2007
iPhones were introduced.

2019
The number of adolescents ages 12-17 who experienced depression increased by more than 64% since 2009.

2021
Young people ages 10-24 attempted suicide at a rate 62% higher than in 2007.

2024
95% of teens ages 13-17 have smartphones and 96% use the internet daily.



YouTube is a video-sharing platform where users can watch and upload videos. Teens often use YouTube to watch music videos and shows and subscribe to their favorite vloggers (video bloggers).

In 2025, 92% of U.S. kids ages 13 to 17 said they have used YouTube.

As of January 6, 2020, YouTube made changes to follow federal children's privacy laws. Targeted ads can no longer run on kids' videos, commenting or engaging in other community features on kids' videos is turned off, and YouTube Kids is being advertised to children under 13. However, YouTube's automatic filters are not perfect, making parental controls all the more important.



ADJUST THE PRIVACY SETTINGS

For Mobile and Tablet:

Go to the profile icon > Click the gear icon or Settings > Change the preferred Privacy settings. The privacy settings on YouTube are limited. However, YouTube profiles can be created through email accounts that have their own privacy settings.

Go to the profile icon > Click on Google Account > Select Data & privacy > Review the Privacy suggestions available and choose the settings that are best for your child.

Go to the profile icon > Click on Google Account > Select People & sharing > Select Choose what others see – About me to control who can see your child's account info.

Go to the profile icon > Click on Google Account > Select Get started under "Your family on Google" to create a Family Group. This feature helps parents guide their children's internet use and set ground rules.

install restricted mode

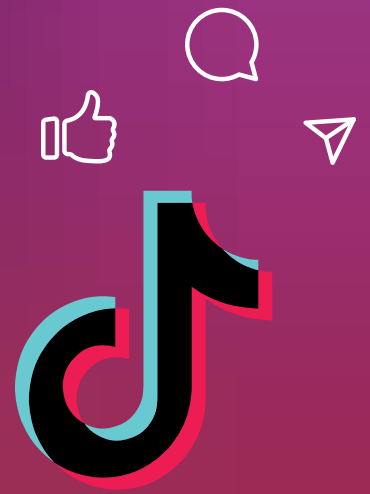
Click on your profile picture in the top right corner > Select Restricted Mode > Click Activate Restricted Mode so that the dot becomes blue.

install youtube kids

Screen time management, turning off the search function, pausing watch history, choosing an experience, and viewing what your child watches are all available settings for parents. Installing YouTube Kids adds an additional filter to the content your child may see on the YouTube app.

tip

Video thumbnails (the cover photo on a video) could contain clickbait to entice a user to click on the video. Clickbait is a form of advertisement used to grab attention with overexaggerated titles or images. Talk to your kids about clickbait and how the content may not be what it appears. If you still have concerns, prescreen the content your child watches.



TikTok is a video-sharing platform that allows users to share up to 60-minute videos of themselves. Pranking, dancing, and comedy videos tend to get the most views on the platform. In 2025, 68% of U.S. kids ages 13-17 said they have used TikTok, with teens reporting an average of 1.5 hours per day on the app.

ADJUST THE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Go to the profile page of the account > Click the three lines in the top right corner > Settings and privacy > Select Privacy > See the available settings to make your child's account safer. Recommendations include Private Account, Comments, Mentions, Direct messages, Reuse of content, Following list, and Liked videos.

hide sensitive content (in-app only)

Click Profile in the bottom right corner > Hit the three lines in the upper right corner > Settings and Privacy > Content

preferences > Choose Restricted Mode and turn on. This setting requires a passcode that should not be shared with your child. An additional setting to explore is Filter keywords to limit specific content.

set time limits

Click Profile in the bottom right corner > Hit the three lines in the upper right corner > Settings and privacy > Time and well-being > Choose Screen time to set time limits.

family pairing

Family Pairing allows parents to link their account with their child's to control their settings remotely. For example, parents can turn on Restricted Mode and disable direct messages right from their own phone. These settings cannot be changed without parental approval.

How to turn on Family Pairing (Mobile and Tablet):

Go to your (parent or family's) TikTok account > Click Profile in the bottom right corner > Hit the three lines in the upper right corner > Settings and privacy > Family Pairing > Select Parent under "Who is using this TikTok account?" > Send an invite to your teen to link accounts > Accept the invitation through your child's TikTok > Adjust the settings to your liking.

you should know

TikTok, the most downloaded app in 2024, has a major flaw when it comes to the mental well-being of its users. This is due to the algorithm TikTok uses to decide what content appears on the For You Page (FYP). The algorithm is based on what content your child interacts with through likes, comments, and shares and whether they follow accounts with specific content. The more your child interacts with certain videos, the more they appear on their FYP. This can be detrimental if the content they are viewing is inappropriate, hateful, or otherwise harmful to your child's mental health and well-being.

tip

Every account belonging to a user under the age of 18 is automatically set to a 60-minute daily screen time limit. Once the 60-minute limit is reached, teens must enter a parent-created passcode to keep scrolling. Make sure to create a password that only you know to limit screen use.

snapchat



Snapchat is an app where users can send photos and videos that disappear after they have been viewed. It serves as a place for people to send messages, connect with friends, family, and celebrities, and share daily experiences in the moment. Snapchat now offers a subscription at \$4.99/month with features like app customization, information on how often friends watch your Stories, and early access to Snapchat's newest features. In 2025, 55% of kids said they have used Snapchat.



ADJUST THE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Click the profile picture in the top left corner > Select the gear icon in the top right corner > Go to App & Privacy settings > Change the setting to your preference to best protect your child. Recommendations include See My Location, View My Story, Contact Me, See Me in Find Friends, and Comment Settings.

Change Location Settings

Click the profile picture in the top left corner > Select the gear icon in the top right corner > Go to App & Privacy settings > See My Location > Enable Ghost Mode. This ensures that your child's location is not available on Snap Map.

set up family center

Family Center allows you to see who your child communicates with on Snapchat and set content controls. You can view your child's privacy and safety settings, manage parental controls, and report any concerns on the app.

Set up a Snapchat account as a parent or guardian > Add your child as a friend on Snapchat > Search Family Center using the search bar > Invite your teen to join the Family Center and ensure they click Accept > Open Family Center and browse features.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

Snapchat's Discover Page is a great place for businesses to attract viewers and consumers. However, it is also an easy place for your child to view inappropriate titles and images. To prevent this, make sure to set up Family Center on your child's Snapchat account.

The app's disappearing photos and videos (a.k.a. "Snaps") make it feel easier to send inappropriate photos with less risk of being caught. Despite being temporary, receivers of snaps could screenshot the image, which notifies the sender, or take a picture using another phone or device. This is important to discuss with your child.

tip

Video thumbnails (the cover photo on a Discover Page video) may contain clickbait to entice a user to click on the video. Clickbait is a form of advertisement used to grab attention with overexaggerated titles or images. Talk to your kids about clickbait and how the content may not be what it appears. If you still have concerns, prescreen the content your child watches.

instagram



Instagram is a platform primarily for sharing photos and videos. Users can also send private messages and follow friends, family members, public figures, and brands. In 2025, 63% of U.S. kids ages 13–17 said they have used Instagram.

ADJUST THE PRIVACY SETTINGS

For Mobile and Tablet:

Go to your profile in the bottom right corner > Tap the menu (three horizontal lines) in the top right corner of your screen > Adjust the Account privacy and Story and location settings.

report inappropriate or unwanted interactions

To report an account on mobile and tablet:

Click on the three dots in the top right corner of someone's profile or a specific post > Click Report > Choose the reason why you want to report the post or account (bullying, inappropriate content, triggering content, etc.).

To report a comment on a mobile device or tablet:

Tap and hold on the comment you would like to report > Choose the reason why you want to report the comment.

adjust how others can interact with you

For Mobile and Tablet:

Go to your profile in the bottom right corner > Tap the menu (three horizontal lines) in the top right corner of your screen > Select Messages and story replies, Tags and Mentions, Comments, Limit Interactions, and Hidden Words and change the settings as desired.

set up family center

Mobile and Tablet:

Go to your profile in the bottom right corner > Tap the menu (three horizontal lines) in the top right corner of your screen > Select Family Center to allow for parental supervision of your child's Instagram account.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

When anyone creates an Instagram account, their profile is automatically public to all users, allowing anyone to follow or message them. If the user does not adjust their privacy settings, the user is at risk of exposure to inappropriate content, harassment, and cyberbullying in the comment section of their or other's posts.

tip

Some teenagers utilize "finstas," or fake Instagram accounts, to post private content. Talk to your child to ensure they are posting appropriately.

facebook



Facebook serves as a way for people to connect with family and friends, be alerted of local events, share personal photos and videos, send private messages, and keep in touch with people from all over the world. In 2025, 31% of U.S. kids ages 13 to 17 said they have used Facebook.



ADJUST SETTINGS

For Mobile and Tablet:

Click on the Menu page at the bottom right > Select the gear icon > See the available options for enhancing the privacy of your child's account. Recommendations include adjusting the Default audience settings, Content preferences, Time management, and many of the settings under Audience and visibility, especially How people find and contact you, Posts, Stories, and Followers and public content.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

Facebook's default settings make accounts public to all users. With a public account, anyone can view what your child is posting and reply with comments. Personal information is also accessible to the public, including the city where they live and their phone number. Most websites now allow you to log in using your Facebook account and this could also put your child at risk of having their personal information collected.

tip

Facebook Groups have become very popular, with more users posting in groups than on their personal profile. Groups can be private or public. Make sure your child is respecting the privacy settings and guidelines of the groups they are in, while also being mindful of the sensitive or personal nature of discussions that may occur.

take the privacy checklist

For Mobile and Tablet:

Click on the Menu page at the bottom right > Select the gear icon at the top right > Privacy Checklist > See the available options.

set up family center

For Mobile and Tablet:

Click on the Menu page at the bottom right > Select the gear icon at the top right > Family Center > Share the invite link with your child and make sure they accept. This setting improves parental supervision on Facebook, Messenger (Facebook's messaging platform), and Instagram, which is now part of Meta, Facebook and Instagram's parent company.





X (formerly known as Twitter) is a communication platform where users can post short or long messages and hours of video content. Users can follow each other, like and repost others' content, and be informed about what is going on in the world. It is one of the most popular platforms used mainly for mass communication. In 2025, 16% of kids said they used X.



ADJUST THE PRIVACY SETTINGS

For Mobile and Tablet:

Click the profile in the top left corner > Click Settings and Privacy > Choose Privacy and safety > Check Audience and tagging, Content you see, Mute and block, Chat, and Discoverability and contacts.

*To change Data sharing and personalization settings, we recommend Ad preferences, Inferred identity, Data sharing with business partners, Location information, and Grok.

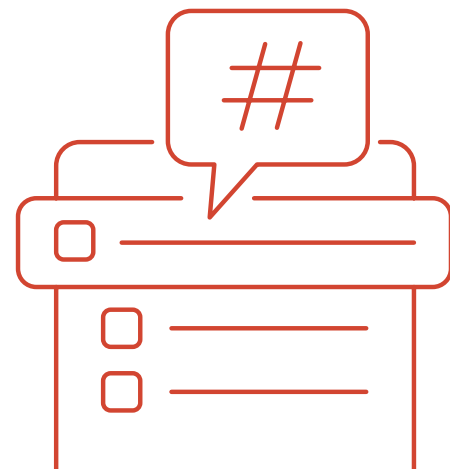
hide sensitive content

For Mobile and Tablet:

Click on the profile in the top left corner > Go to Privacy and Safety > Click Mute and Block under Your X Activity > You can choose to mute words, accounts, and notifications so they no longer appear in notifications or on the account's timeline.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

X has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of child sexual exploitation, violent content, hateful conduct, abuse/harassment, and adult content. However, X's commitment to free speech opens the door for anyone to experience harassment and cyberbullying and encounter inappropriate content. Simple clicks on a hashtag or username could lead to material that may be detrimental to your child's mental health. If you come across an account or content you wish to not see, you can block this user by clicking on their profile picture, selecting the three dots in the top right corner, and clicking "Block" or "Report".



tip

Be aware that topics on the Explore page, where trending topics are typically featured, cannot be filtered through the muted words feature.

reddit



Known as “the front page of the Internet,” Reddit is an enormous message board composed of millions of smaller message boards that cover any topic you can imagine — from TV shows, sports teams, and movies to dogs, .gifs, and politics — that users can read, contribute to, and share with other people. Reddit is the fifth-most visited website in the U.S. and its never-ending stream of content draws kids and adults alike to the platform. In 2025, 17% of U.S. kids ages 13–17 said they have used Reddit.



Reddit is a site made by and for adults and, as such, there’s an incredible amount of content that is inappropriate for children. While there is some moderation, the sheer volume of content, including text and links to articles, images, or videos, means that almost anything can be found, including pornography, violent material, hate speech, and suicide tips.

HOW TO KEEP KIDS SAFE ON REDDIT

It is important to have regular conversations about the communities your child is visiting. Ask your child about things that happen on Reddit and what kind of content they see in their communities. If they are comfortable to speak with you about the positive things, they might be more likely to come to you with concerns. Implement privacy and security settings where possible. Although Reddit has minimal privacy and security settings, some are useful. Browsers, app stores, and broadband also have parental controls you can set to encourage safety. You can consider the following as well:

On both iOS and Android, use the Reddit app without logging in. You can browse subreddits, but Not Safe For Work (NSFW) content will be blocked by default.

adjust privacy settings

For Mobile and Tablet:

Click the profile in the top right corner > Settings > Click Profile > Change Display name and Content and activity settings. Most importantly, make sure to turn off NSFW (Not Safe For Work) to blur inappropriate content on Reddit.

more privacy settings

Click the profile in the top right corner > Settings > Click Privacy > Adjust the Allow people to follow you, Who can send you chat requests, and turn off the two Discoverability settings.

filter content on reddit

Click the profile in the top right corner > Settings > Click Preferences > Turn off Show mature content and make sure Blur mature (18+) images and media is turned on.

whatsapp



WhatsApp is a free messaging app that allows reliable messaging on all phones around the world. Users can send a variety of media, including texts, photos, videos, documents, and their location. More than 2 billion people across 180 countries use this app. In 2025, 24% of U.S. kids ages 13-17 said they have used WhatsApp.

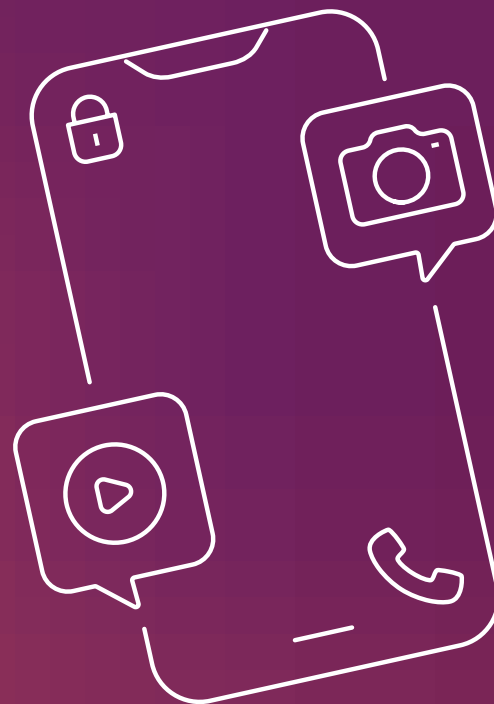
WhatsApp contains many features, one of which is private messaging. This ensures that personal messages stay between you and the user you are interacting with. Community-building is also promoted on WhatsApp through group chats. To manage these chats, users may remove group members and delete inappropriate chats.



YOU SHOULD KNOW

There are several important aspects of WhatsApp for parents and families to know and be cautious of.

- The default setting is that anyone can see your child's profile photo, status, and "last seen" timestamp. To fix this, adjust the privacy settings on the app to "My Contacts" or "My Contacts Except..." to reduce the visibility of your child's account.
- Only the sender and recipient can see the content of messages, which limits WhatsApp's ability to monitor for inappropriate behavior or scams.
- WhatsApp allows users to send "disappearing messages", which makes parental monitoring more difficult.



ADJUST PRIVACY SETTINGS

Go to Settings in the bottom right corner > Choose Privacy > Click Privacy Checkup.

Under the Privacy settings, make sure that only My contacts, My contacts except..., or Nobody is selected for each of the settings. Additionally, check that Live location is not being shared in any chats.

tip

Make sure only "My Contacts" can add your child to a group. Otherwise, the default settings allow anyone to do so.

discord



Discord is a free communication platform for mobile and PC that allows users to chat via text, voice, or video in real-time. Originally designed for gamers, Discord is now widely used by teens for socializing, school projects, and interest-based communities called “servers.” While Discord offers valuable community features, it has minimal content moderation, making it easy for predators to target minors and for children to encounter explicit content. In 2023, 28% of U.S. kids said they have used Discord.



ADJUST PRIVACY SETTINGS

For Mobile:

Click You in the bottom right corner > Select the gear icon in the top right corner > Content & Social > Choose Filter from non-friends to have direct messages from non-friends be labeled as spam. Additionally, make sure to turn on Message requests to filter messages from server members you may not know.

Set up Family Center on Discord

Click You in the bottom right corner > Select the gear icon in the top right corner > Family Center > Confirm your age as the parent > Choose Connect with Teen and follow the instructions provided.

With Family Center, you will be able to see new friends your teen adds or accepts, the servers they are in, who they direct message and call, and total purchases. One limitation of Family Center is that parents cannot see the contents of their teen’s messages or calls.



tip

For more comprehensive monitoring on Discord, use third-party parental control apps like Bark.

telegram



Telegram is a cloud-based messaging app known for its emphasis on speed, security, and privacy. It offers encrypted messaging, chats with up to 200,000 members, and channels for broadcasting to unlimited subscribers. Users can send texts, videos, photos, and files, with messaging self-destructing after a specified time.

Telegram has minimal content moderation and no built-in parental controls, making it easy for minors to access inappropriate content, join unmoderated groups with thousands of strangers, and communicate with predators.



WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Since Telegram offers no parental controls, parents must rely on third-party parental control apps like Bark along with Apple and Android management settings to block Telegram use and set time limits. Make sure to emphasize to your child that even though messages can be deleted or set to self-destruct, screenshots and forwards can preserve content permanently. Discuss the risks of communicating with strangers and joining large public groups where content is unmoderated.



critical information: youth, sexting, and child pornography laws



WHAT PARENTS AND KIDS MUST KNOW

Many parents and kids do not realize that taking, sending, or possessing sexually explicit images of anyone under age 18 – including images kids take of themselves – can be prosecuted as child pornography under federal and state laws. The consequences can be devastating and life-altering.

The shocking reality most people don't believe

Even if it's a picture you took of yourself, if you are under the age of 18, creating, possessing, or sharing a sexually explicit image can result in felony child pornography charges.

Below is key information to be aware of:

- A teen who takes a nude selfie has “produced” child pornography.
- A teen who sends that selfie has distributed child pornography.
- A teen who receives and keeps that image “possesses” child pornography.
- Everyone who forwards that image can be charged with “distribution” of child pornography.

These charges apply even when the image is of yourself, it was created and shared consensually between kids, both people are the same age, the relationship is romantic, or the image shows only partial nudity.

WHAT COUNTS AS CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

The definition is broader than most think. Under federal law, child pornography includes any “sexually explicit” or “sexually suggestive” images of anyone under the age of 18. This can include:

- Full or partial nudity if posed sexually.
- Images in underwear, swimwear, sports bras, or gym shorts if the context is sexual.
- “Lewd exhibition” even if clothed.
- Any image depicting or suggesting sexual conduct.

Federal law explicitly states: “sexually explicit conduct does not require that an image depict a child engaging in sexual activity.” California Penal Code section 311.1 states that it is illegal to knowingly duplicate, copy, send, produce, or transport child pornography with intentions to distribute it.

California penalties include:

- Production: 3–8 years in state prison depending on circumstances and criminal history.
- Distribution: 2–6 years in state prison with up to \$100,000 in fines
- Possession: 1 year in county or state prison with fines up to \$2500
- Mandatory sex offender registration

The legal consequences are severe.

Federal penalties include:

- Production: 15–30 years in prison (first offense)
- Distribution: 5–20 years in prison (first offense)
- Possession: Significant prison time and fines
- Mandatory sex offender registration

what you can do as a parent

Have frank conversations with your kids about sexting and its legal consequences, explain that child pornography laws apply to kids' own images, monitor device usage and who communicates with your child, and make sure kids can come to you if they receive unwanted images from others.

A moment of poor judgment can result in felony charges, years in prison, and a lifetime on the sex offender registry. The law may seem harsh when applied to consensual youth behavior, but it is the reality. Parents must educate their kids about the serious legal consequences. Awareness and prevention are the best protection.

screen time management



To make sure kids aren't spending an unhealthy amount of time looking at a screen, parents can use screen time management tools on their children's smartphones. Although Android devices are limited in their ability to manage screen time, Google has created two apps, Google Family Link and Digital Wellbeing, that can be installed. Apple devices have built-in screen time management settings that include options for individual app limits and alerts when time is up.



install apple screen time settings

Go to Settings:

- Click Screen Time
- Choose App Limits to manage daily time limits on specific app categories.
- Choose Content & Privacy Restrictions to turn on restrictions for specific phone settings.
- Choose Communication Limits and Communication Safety to set limits for calling and messaging and protect your child from sensitive content.
- Make sure to Lock Screen Time Settings once they've been set.

install google family link on android devices

- Open the Google Play Store
- Search for "Family Link"
- Tap Install
- Tap Family Link to open
- Tap Continue
 - If your child has a Google Account, tap Yes and follow the instructions.
 - If your child does not have a Google Account, tap No and follow the instructions to create an account.

how to manage screen time for microsoft windows, xbox, and games on android

Microsoft releases a new app called Family Safety in 2020 that is available for both Apple and Android. You use it to limit screen time across Microsoft Windows and Xbox devices, as well as games and apps on Androids.

The app lets you limit how much time your family members can spend across Xbox, Apple, and Microsoft Windows devices. You also have the option to set time limits on specific apps or games on Xbox, Microsoft Windows, Apple devices, and Androids. Your kids can request time extensions too, which you can approve or deny in real time via the app.

additional devices

Refrigerators:

Refrigerators with screens, like Samsung's Family Hub models, have parental controls to restrict apps. This reduces the likelihood that your child will be exposed to inappropriate content.

Restrict App Access:

Select Settings on the home screen gear icon > Security > Enable Restrictions > Set a 4-digit when prompted > Confirm your PIN and press Set > Select the apps or widgets you want to have the PIN restrict access to.

keeps these apps on the radar



calculator%

Calculator vault apps, commonly disguised as regular-looking apps like the calculator app, have been around for a long time. Many young people have discovered these are a great way to hide inappropriate content from the prying eyes of their parents.



capcut

CapCut is a free video-editing app developed by the same company as TikTok, allowing users to create and edit short videos using filters, transitions, music, and templates from the app. CapCut appears to be a simple video editing app, but functions as a hidden social media platform through its “Templates” feature, exposing children to explicit content, profanity, and suggestive videos without parental controls and content filtering.



grindr

Grindr is an application used by men looking to connect with other men for friendship, companionship or sexual encounters.



groupme

Users can direct and group message for free, while sending photos and videos. Users have access to an in-app Internet search bar that increases the likelihood of exposure to sexualized content.



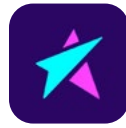
hinge

Hinge is a dating app with more than 23 million active users. Your child may be using this app if they falsely list their age as 18 or older when making an account.



kik messenger

Users can text each other for free. The messages are only visible through the app and offer greater anonymity than normal texting.



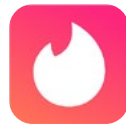
live.me

LiveMe is a popular live-streaming social network. It allows you to livestream your special moments, watch live streams, and video chat online with people worldwide.



locket

Locket allows users to instantly send photos to each other's home screens. Users are limited to 20 friends, who they can add only if they have their phone numbers.



tinder

Tinder is one of the most popular dating apps primarily used by teens and young adults. Over the past few years, parents have become more aware of their children using this app.



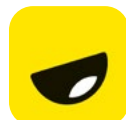
threads

Threads is a text-based social media app that is connected to Instagram. It was designed to share real-time text updates and engage in public conversations. Threads has limited parental controls and no age verification beyond self-reporting, with easy opportunities to access unfiltered content from millions of users.



tumblr

Tumblr gives users the ability to create blogs and share them with followers and friends across several social platforms.



yubo

Yubo is a social discovery feature that encourages friendship with people from all over the world. Users swipe between profiles and videos being live-streamed to meet new people with similar interests.

parental control apps



While built-in parental controls like Apple's Screen Time and Google's Family Link have improved significantly and now offer robust free options for basic monitoring, they have important limitations.

- Easy for tech-savvy teens to bypass
- Only work within their respective platforms (Apple or Android)
- Cannot monitor social media content or messaging apps
- Reliability issues, with settings spontaneously turning off

Paid parental control apps may be worth the investment if your teen is likely to bypass controls, if they use multiple device platforms (Apple and Android), or if you are concerned about cyberbullying, predators, or inappropriate content. Premium apps like Bark offer strong security against tampering, cross-platform management, social media and messaging monitoring with alerts, detailed activity reports, and more comprehensive web filtering than built-in options provide.



bark

- Bark App: \$14/MONTH PER FAMILY OR \$99/YEAR PER FAMILY
- This plan provides the most comprehensive coverage. Its difference

from Bark Jr is that Bark Premium allows parents to monitor and receive alerts from their child's social media apps, phones, computers, and tablets.

- Bark Jr: \$5/MONTH PER FAMILY OR \$49/YEAR PER FAMILY
- Bark Phone with built-in parental controls: \$10/MONTH for 24 months.

- Bark monitors social media, texts, and emails on Android and Apple devices for signs of cyberbullying, self-harm, violence, sexual predators, and more. The app notifies parents of any red flags it comes across.
- No limit on the number of accounts, devices, or kids.
- Unlimited apps
- 24/7 monitoring
- Can use across every device.



qustodio

- FREE VERSION OR \$54.95-\$99.95/YEAR PER FAMILY (depending on plan level)
- With more than 6 million parents using Qustodio, many parents are happy

with the screen time management, safety filtering, and reinforcement of positive habits this software presents. Additional controls include monitoring activity, tracking calls and texts, locating your children, and daily/weekly/monthly reports of your child's online activity.

- Available on a wide range of platforms (Microsoft Windows Kindle, Chromebook, and more).
- Provides many services for parents to monitor their child's online activity.

parental control apps



intego

- \$69.99–\$89.99/YEAR PER MAC DEVICE
- Intego blocks problematic websites, allows for time limits to be set per user, and anti-predator chat monitoring.
- For Mac devices only, this software provides parental controls specific to this device. It also has a 30-day money-back guarantee for any parent looking to test out how the software works for their family.
- Per Mac device, but family plans (3–5 Macs) are available for purchase at a higher price.



familytime

- \$29–\$69/YEAR PER FAMILY (depending on number of devices covered)
- FamilyTime is a dynamic application that offers innovative ways to keep kids safe online. It appeals to the parental community due to its compatibility, easy-to-use design, affordability, and extensive features. For instance, parents can block games and apps and set daily time limits. They can also do web filtering and location, call and text, and social media monitoring.



aura

- \$13–45/MONTH PER FAMILY OR \$100–240/YEAR PER FAMILY
- Aura provides both social media and gaming coverage. Parents can customize what they monitor to keep their child safe, while also setting healthy time limits and filtering content. Aura provides anti-virus, anti-malware, anti-spyware protection, a password manager, dark web monitoring, and data breach alerts.
- Can use across every device.
- 24/7 monitoring



norton

- \$50–\$190/YEAR PER FAMILY (discount codes often featured)
- Norton Family helps parents foster a healthy balance for their children. Through location services, time limit management, and filtering of the internet, parents can establish healthy habits for their children.
- Manages home, school, and online classwork.
- Limited controls compared to apps like Bark and Qustodio.

resource guide*

- Common Sense Media
- Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI)
- Know2Protect, US Department of Homeland Security
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America
- Family Zone
- Healthy Children
- Child Mind Institute
- Organization for Social Media Safety

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

recommended read

- *"The Anxious Generation"* by Jonathan Haidt

*The digital copy of this Guide includes hot links to each of these resources.

glossary of terminology



AI

Artificial intelligence

Algorithm

The system that determines what content appears in a user's feed based on their past behavior, likes, and interactions.

App

An application on a mobile device.

Bio

A small section in a profile that gives a glimpse of who the user is. The user can customize what they want their bio to say.

Block

A term used when the user prevents others from viewing their profile. This includes preventing others from following you, messaging you, and more.

Catfishing

When someone creates a fake online identity to deceive others, often for romantic purposes.

Clout

Social media fame or influence. "Clout chasing" means doing things for attention or likes.

Comment

A response to a post or message.

Deepfake

AI-generated fake videos or images that realistically depict someone doing or saying something they never did.

Digital Wellbeing

A TikTok feature that allows users to enable Restricted Mode. This filters out inappropriate content and allows parents to place a limit on the amount of time their child can spend on the app. This is also the name of a feature developed by Google. Designed for Android devices, this tool helps with screentime management.

Direct Message

A private message that only the user can see. It may also be referred to as a "DM."

Discord

A messaging app that allows users to communicate via text, voice, or video in real-time.

Doxing/Doxxing

Publishing someone's personal information (address, phone number, real name) online without their consent, often with malicious intent.

Duets

A TikTok feature that allows a creator to collaborate with another user's video.

End-to-End Encryption (E2EE)

A privacy feature where only the sender and recipient can read messages and the platform (and parental control apps) cannot access them. This is seen in WhatsApp.

Facebook

An app that lets users keep in touch with friends and family through photo sharing and status updates.

Fans

The term used to describe people who like your Facebook business page.

Feed

The content that appears on the home page of a social media platform.

Finsta

Short for "fake Instagram", a secondary, private Instagram account where teens post content they don't want on their main account.

Follower

Someone who can view a user's profile and what they share.

FOMO

Short for "fear of missing out." Users may experience this when they can see what everyone is doing on a social media app.

For You Page

A page on TikTok that recommends videos based on the users, creators, and videos your child has liked or interacted with.

glossary of terminology



Friend

A person you connect with on Facebook or another social platform. A friend is a two-way connection. Both you and your friend have to endorse the relationship by accepting follow requests.

GIF

A file in GIF format appears as an animated or moving image.

Ghosting

Suddenly cutting off all communication with someone without explanation.

Grooming

When an adult builds an emotional connection with a minor online to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Handle

The term used to describe someone's username.

Hashtag

A word or phrase that comes after the “#” sign. These make it possible for others to find content with specific themes.

Header Image

The large photo displayed at the top of a profile.

Influencer

A social media user with a large following who can influence others' opinions and purchasing decisions.

Instagram

A social media app used to share photos and videos.

Like

An action taken by a social media user that shows approval or enjoyment of a post.

Live streaming

A video that is being displayed in real-time.

Lurker

A person who reads discussions but rarely or never participates.

Meme

A humorous photo or piece of media that spreads from person-to-person via sharing.

Mention

The inclusion of a username in a post to attribute a piece of content to someone or start a discussion.

Messenger

An app that allows Facebook users to send messages through a smartphone. Facebook's Messenger app is now a necessity to access messages from a Facebook profile.

PIN

A numeric code to verify an individual's identity or authorize access to a device or application. Stands for Personal Identification Number.

Post

A social media status update, photo, or anything shared on a profile.

Private

A setting on a social media account that protects content from the public. Users must request to follow private accounts to see the content.

Reactions

An emotion or emoji that the user chooses to react to a post.

Reels

Short-form videos on Instagram and Facebook (similar to TikTok videos).

Retweet

The action of taking another user's tweet and making it available on your account. Users can choose to repost the tweet as it is or repost the tweet with a comment.

Screenshot

A photo that captures what is on a computer or smartphone screen in an instant.

Snapchat

A social media app used for sharing photos and videos. Once you view a message received on Snapchat, it is gone forever unless saved.

Snapchat Discover

A page on Snapchat that displays a collection of videos from news outlets.

glossary of terminology



Snapcode

A unique, scannable code provided to each Snapchat user. Users can point their phone's camera at another person's snapcode to add them as a friend on Snapchat.

Snapstreak

When two Snapchat users send posts to each other for a consecutive number of days.

Stories

A post on Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat that disappears after 24 hours.

Tag

When a user mentions another account in a post or comment.

Telegram

A messaging app used to share photos, texts, and videos between users.

TikTok

A social media app used to create, share, and discover short videos.

Trend

A topic or hashtag that is popular on social media at a given moment.

Troll

A social media user who posts offensive comments to anger others.

Unfollow

The action of removing a friend on a social media platform to no longer see the content they post.

Unfriend

To remove someone as a follower of your account and vice versa. After unfriending someone, you will no longer see their content on your home page or feed.

Views

The number of users who have seen a post.

Viral

A term to describe an instance where a photo or video achieves massive popularity.

WhatsApp

An instant messaging app similar to Messages on iPhones and Google Messages on Android.

Widget

Small application that allows for quick access to specific features, functions, or information from an app without having to open the app itself.

X

Formerly known as Twitter, a social media app that allows users to broadcast posts to followers or a wider audience.

YouTube

A social media app and website that allows users to upload videos.



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LEGACY HEALTH ENDOWMENT MISSION



To improve the health and healthcare of all residents residing within Stanislaus and Merced Counties (19 specific cities and zip codes) under Legacy Health Endowment's (LHE) jurisdiction, by increasing access to various healthcare services and educating people about healthy lifestyle decisions.

Our objective is to dramatically improve the quality of life within the Greater LHE Community by bringing together resources, expertise, vision and the belief we can – and will – make a difference.

