Online Dangers and Your Children

When using a computer, smart phone, or tablet, your children may be exposed to sexual predators, cyberbullies, identity theft, and irreparable damage to his/her reputation and future success. Children need your help to become wise to the dangers they can experience online, especially through social media.

As a parent or caregiver, for the sake of safety you must keep current with your children’s online activities and communicate with each other often. Social media apps and sites are a particular concern. The 14 apps outlined on the other side of this guide currently are among the most popular sites used by tweens and teens. But new apps and websites are constantly being introduced. Stay diligent about keeping up with what your children are doing online.

Internet Safety Checklist

- Learn about popular sites for young people, especially social media sites, apps, and terms. Know the ones your children use.
- Talk to your children about the Internet and the importance of being safe while online. Remind them that posts and images can be downloaded and shared by others.
- Become familiar with parental control programs. These can filter or block content and activities that are inappropriate for children.
- Monitor your children’s Internet use. This includes maintaining access to their social networking and email accounts.
- Periodically search Google for your children’s names to find any profiles and postings about them.

© Positive Promotions, Inc. BO-253
Popular Apps Parents Should Know

**Ask.fm**: A site with a question-and-answer format that can be anonymous.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying

**Blender**: A dating site that allows users to send photos and videos and connect with others nearby.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, stranger danger

**Down**: A dating app that hooks up users who can rate each other's sexual appeal.
- **Potential Dangers**: Graphic images and content, focus on sexuality

**Instagram**: Users can share photos and short videos either publicly or privately.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, stranger danger

**Kik Messenger**: Allows users to text and send images and videos anonymously.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, sexual content, stranger danger

**MeetMe**: Uses GPS to allow users to meet new people who live nearby.
- **Potential Dangers**: Stranger danger

**Omegle**: Pairs two strangers in an audio or video chat room.
- **Potential Dangers**: Stranger danger, nudity, sexual content

**OoVoo**: A video and messaging app.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, stranger danger

**Snapchat**: Allows users to post time-limited pictures and videos.
- **Potential Dangers**: Sexting, bullying, images can be saved by others

**Tinder**: Combines online dating, instant messaging, and GPS so users can meet one another.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, stranger danger

**Tumblr**: Users create and follow short blogs made up of text, photos, videos, and audio clips.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, stranger danger, porn, images of violence

**Vine**: Users can post and follow 6-second video clips.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, images of nudity and drug use

**Whisper**: A site where users can post "confessional" text and images anonymously.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexting, focus on negative or depressive behavior, nudity, stranger danger

**Yik Yak**: Lets anonymous users post brief comments to other nearby Yik Yak users.
- **Potential Dangers**: Bullying, sexual content