

E-safety for schools



Up to date with the new apps?

Yes it is a fast changing landscape. Add to that the way fickle users flock to the latest offering and within a few months, just as fast, drop it and move on.

Into this mix add a dollop of teenage secrecy and sprinkle with adults' lack of awareness. It can be hard to know where to focus your efforts.

What is the picture now?

The old favourites, the established mobile message sharing apps and older Internet calling services such as Skype are increasingly competing with upstart mobile apps.

As I write this, new ones are flooding in and clever kids want it all for free. They turn to apps that can offer them sharing capacity without using their phone account and data allowance. Sometimes the established giants simply gobble up the newcomers and that way, images videos or messages can be streamed or shared via your Facebook or Twitter or YouTube account too, instantly reaching a wider audience and inviting all your friends, friends of friends and contacts. Some apps encourage you to connect with other users nearby. Dating sites can entice children by using cute cartoon imagery. Did you know that some apps hide inside or behind others?

It's all about video

It's all about video and the chance to be a filmmaker – making stop-motion videos or flipbooks, your creativity knows no limits. But the general trend is away from using your phone account and data allowance for messaging or sharing and towards using apps that can get round this.

What this means is that for teachers or parents trying to establish the identity of the sender of cyberbullying or other cyber aggression – things just got that much more difficult. Equally, parents may not recognise the apps their child is using and even if they do, they're often unaware of what the app can do or how risky it might be.

A measured approach

While we must be aware of the risk of a young person meeting random people nearby or sharing intimate videos made in their bedroom, there are some strikingly enabling features of new tech which can be thrilling and creative to use for young people. We should beware of putting the

frighteners on and scaring kids away from the digital world. We want skilled problem solvers who can take care of themselves online. So it is a case of striking a balance. Lock-down and spying on teenagers or warning them so much they fear the Internet, is not the way to go.

Try urging parents to consider the risks of any new app with their child and teaching problem-solving skills. Adults should adopt the route of 'Dialogue and Discovery' and be very aware of how young people feel about themselves. Our research shows some children and young people are more vulnerable than others. Please read about our messages for those who are vulnerable offline even before they get connected and those who are depressed, never feel they are 'good enough' or 'never feel happy and confident'. Their time online can have an intense and harmful impact especially if they are spending many hours online every day. Here are some apps to be aware of:



Boomerang belongs to Instagram and takes bursts of photos and puts them into a min-video that can be played forward or backward.



Calculator % This is a sneaky app that looks like a genuine calculator guaranteed to put parents off the scent. But beyond the calculator functions is a hidden secret vault which stores images and videos. The app needs permission to access user's photos and camera. The high risk potential here should be considered. The Secret



Galaxy Chat and Play. This app is a virtual world with cartoon-like images. It allows users to create their own avatar, cute virtual pet and customise their chatroom. These features are designed to appeal to children.



HeyTell by Voxilate is a push-to-talk app for instant voice messaging. It's for iPhone, iPad, Windows Phone, and Android devices. It works via a big "hold and speak" button you click to speak. Easy and simple. As with Voxer, you don't have to sign up or create an account. Social networking features allow you to friend people and easily send voice messages.



Instagram is a photo and video sharing network. Users can add different filters, and make your photos look very cool and professional. You can link your Instagram to other networks, such as Facebook, so your posts appear on both accounts.



JotMessenger. This messaging app allows users to send and receive messages without a data plan or Wi-fi because it uses a mesh network operating on Bluetooth. It uses the Airchat feature. Jott also offers disappearing messages like Snapchat.



Kanvas is a photo sharing app with creative options—creating GIFS, flipbooks, paintings, all of which can be shared to Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and many others. Record 15 second stop-motion videos. Adjust speed and add text. (Only on IOS at this time).



Kik is a messaging service that makes it hard to verify the identity of senders, although popular, it carries risks linking teenagers with people seeking to hook up with youngsters.. It links to their Instagram account enabling people to find them more easily. For age 17+ but used by younger teens. Creepy reviews and a recent murder allegedly linked to it suggest it is best for adults. Hard to report bullying.



Meerkat is an instant live stream video app similar to Periscope. It has a feature called Cameo which allows users to invite others into their stream. As many children and young people love the image of meerkats and may even own meerkat toys, this could attract quite young children.



MessageMe launched early in 2013 allows you to create by drawing on photos and sending instant messages that blend media types. Its slick interface is designed to simplify the process of creating and sharing multimedia messages in real time. MessageMe is available for iPhone/iPad and Android devices.



Meow Chat - like a cross between matchmaking apps Tinder and Grindr, coupled with instant chat, with cutesy images of cats which could mislead you into thinking it is for little kids. Like industry leaders WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger, users swap text and photo messages with friends or hook up with *random people* - something to be alert for. It will connect to users' Facebook account and then it has access to users' friends list – it sends them pop-up invitations. It also offers to match you up with nearby people.



OoVoo is a video chat/instant messaging app for Android and iOS. Similar to Microsoft's Skype and Apple's FaceTime. Calls can be recorded in real-time and twelve-way video chatting is supported. Like many other sites the terms and conditions are well hidden and predators are taking advantage of a site supposedly intended for simple way to chat with friends and family over the Internet. A group can talk together at once.



Periscope Yet another video streaming platform – it belongs to Twitter. Launched in 2015 allows you to stream live videos to your Twitter account.



PewDiePie - the online alias of a Swedish web based comedian vlogger. One of the most subscribed channels on YouTube with over 40 million subscribers, a fan base is called the Bro Army and has raised money for charities and reviewing indie games. Content is described as goofy, obnoxious and profane. Our survey has begun to pick up teen users here in the UK.



Riff is from Facebook and allows users to create a 20 sec video which friends can add to. It allows collaboration with friends and it offers the idea of sharing with a wide audience through your Facebook friends.



Snapchat is an app for sharing disappearing photos and videos with friends. The images last for a few seconds, then automatically delete. You can add text, drawings, and emojis to images. Optional funny filters can make you look like a cat, a cartoon, a policeman etc. You can also use the 'Face Swap' feature to swap features with another person in the photo.



Viber. Users use WiFi or a paid mobile data plan on a smart phone to avoid the limits of a paid for voice-calling plan or paid SMStext messaging plan. Voice calls use voice over the Internet. Easily set up by children and young people as it reads your phone's settings and contacts to immediately enable the app. There's no password or special set-up process.

Messages can include photos as and text. (Private) group messaging is available.



Teamspeak is a voice- over-internet type app that is often used by gamers to talk to other players. There are no restrictions on contact.



Vine, Twitter owned, this app allows users to create and share 6 second clips which might be a series of images or video played back in stop motion. Users can add captions and locations before sharing. These are displayed on a Vine channel and can be shared via Twitter or Facebook



Voxer is known as a "walkie talkie" or "push-to-talk" app because when you click on its little talk button, you can send an instant voice message or multimedia message. The message is either instantly played through your friend's phone speakers if their phone is turned on and the app is running, or it is received as a recorded message like voicemail. Voxer also enables text and photo messaging, like most mobile messaging apps do. It also enables VOIP voice calling like Skype does, and group messaging. Voxer is free for individuals and works with Android and iOS devices.



Waggle it. A UK start- up has similar features to the old Ask.fm app allowing you to post questions. Described as: 'Crowdsource your everyday dilemmas!' You can anonymously poll your local area with multiple-choice questions, and see questions posted by other users in the locality. There were many serious cases linked to this type of app when Ask.fm was anonymous and had few safety features. While Ask.fm has now improved, apps of this type can be risky for some children.



WeChat is a voice and text message app with location and Bluetooth functions. Users contact other people at random when they are nearby.



WhatsApp is a mobile text messaging app launched in 2009. It's designed to let mobile phone users send text messages without having to pay SMS fees to their providers. The messages are sent via the Internet so the user must have a data plan on their mobile. Messages can include video, audio and photos, not just text. WhatsApp is a cross-platform app, meaning it's available for a variety of mobile operating systems and allows messaging across them all-- including the iPhone, Android, Nokia, Windows Phone and BlackBerry.



Whisper. An anonymous messaging app encouraging you to share stories you would not want to put your name to on your phone. It contains a Meet Up function. There can be sexual images and although rated 17+ many younger teens use it.



YIKYAK is an anonymous messaging app aimed at college campuses, it uses GPS tracking to link people up. There is a lot of sexually explicit and abusive language used. It has potential to spread online cruelty to the offline world via the geolocation which works within a 1.5 mile radius so likely to spread among classmates for example



YouNow. Live streaming is all the rage among teens and here is another option. It is promoted as helping you to get a big fan audience and broadcast live. It encourages chat and meeting new people so it is taking users out of a circle of friends and pushing them towards a global reach and thoughts of fame!

Although no list can contain every app, I hope you have found this useful. [Learn more about age limits on apps.](#)

Why not book a training session to explore what schools need to have in place and how to deal with cases, or try our distance learning?



Adrienne Katz is an author and CPD accredited trainer.

School INSET days and group training sessions.

Books published by www.JKP.com

akatz@youthworksconsulting.co.uk

The CPD Standards Office

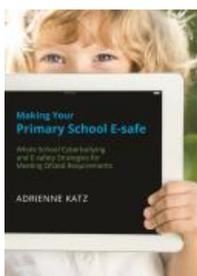
CPD PROVIDER: 21042
2016 - 2018

www.cpdstandards.com



Latest BOOKS

ORDER HERE



Making your primary school e-safe

‘A comprehensive guide for primary school audiences. Packed full of practical tools.’ — Lorna Jackson, MA, BA (Hons), AASW, CQSW, CPOD Professional Advisor and E-Safety Officer

£15.99 232 pp. ISBN: 978-1-84905-542-0



Making your secondary school e-safe

‘Bursting with useful resources and clear explanations, it is a must have.’ – Heather Jeavons, DGfL Senior Education Development Manager, Dudley Grid for Learning, UK

£22.99 320 pp. ISBN: 978-1-84905-541-3

Disclaimer: These views are my own and, as it is impossible to be entirely up to date, I urge teachers and parents to check for themselves. This is intended as an outline only and no responsibility or liability can be assigned for information given. Every effort is made to provide helpful information as a guide to helping young people stay safe. If you wish to alert me to information, innovative practice or errors please email us.