

# Social Media Awareness for Parents of Teens

“Technology is rapidly expanding daily with new apps popping up all the time. Most Apps are fun and useful when in the hands of adults. We want our kids to have a phone for safety and communication, but we need to make sure they are aware of the possible dangers.” Fulshear Police Department

## Dating Apps That Target Teens

'**MeetMe**,' an app where teens can easily be in contact with users much older than them, with an emphasis on dating.

'**Badoo**' and '**Bumble**' are dating apps for adults, but teens can still find ways to join

'**Grindr**' is geared towards the LGBTQ community. It allows users to share photos and meet up based on the phone's GPS location.

'**Skout**' is a flirting app that is used to meet and chat with new people. Teens and adults are in different groups, but ages aren't verified.

## Concerning Apps That Target Teens

'**WhatsApp**' and '**SnapChat**' are for messaging, but what you should know is teens can send unlimited messages, have video chats, and even share their live location with other users, people they may not even know.

'**Kik**' is specifically for kids, but anyone can join, and anyone can contact or direct message your child

'**Holla**' is all about connecting strangers around the world through video chat. Enough said

'**ASKfm**' encourages people to allow anonymous users to ask them questions, which opens the door for online bullying.

“**Discord**” is a free chat, text, and call application that is used by a lot of gamers. It uses interests to connect people through its servers. While most servers are private and invite only, there are many of the large serves that allow contact with anyone around the world that has a similar interest or plays the same game.

'**TikTok**' is used for sharing user created videos that can contain foul language and even adult oriented content.

'**Instagram**' is a video and picture showing app that allows for messaging and video/phone calls. Kids may come across inappropriate content, share locations, receive unsolicited messages, and experience cyberbullying. There is also a concern for mental health with Instagram users.

'LiveMe' is a live streaming app, but you don't know who's watching and your kid's location is revealed.

'Whisper' is a social confessional where kids can remain anonymous, but still share their feelings. And it can reveal your child's location for a meet up.

'Hot or Not' rates users on attractiveness. There's no age verification and users can send each other messages.

And lastly, 'Calculator%' apps are several secret apps that allows kids to hide their photos, videos, even browser history.

### **Apps for Parents to Monitor Social Media**

"My Mobile watchdog" is an easy-to-use app to monitor your child's phone, apps, messaging and have control.

"Teen Safe" monitors your child's correspondence including Instagram.

"Qustodio" is a free parental control app that can monitor and control web filtering and search activities, set time limits, keeps track of social media, and tracks your child's location.

Most providers have tools that track your child's phone location and more. Check with them on what they offer.

### **Tips for Monitoring Your Teens Social Media**

- Look through your kid's devices and monitor them regularly.
- Acknowledge the child privacy act of social media sites. (Required age of 13 for most sites)
- Check your internet privacy settings and make sure they are set appropriately on a regular basis.
- Set boundaries on use of social media and the types of information shared. (Friend your child on all platforms where they have an active presence)
- Keep computers and devices in a public place.
- Remind kids that image is not everything and pay attention to their mental health as they use social media.
- Make sure your kids are aware of cyberbullying and its impacts.

