Popular SOCIAL MEDIA SITEs

# what parents should know

[**Kik**](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/website-reviews/codecademy) **– Kik messenger is a free chatting and messaging site where you can add images, video and texts. You can sign up with only a username so is much more public than strict SMS texting, which is connected to your phone number. This app is connected to other apps that cost money and are age-inappropriate.**

**Snapchat –** Snapchat is a free messaging app where you can send texts, pictures, and videos that you program to disappear after a few seconds. Snapchat also offers fun, easy-to-use instant-editing tools that let you add cool effects to your "Snaps," such as captions, drawings, and emojis. Parents be aware that it's not actually true that Snaps disappear forever. It's possible that the receiver could take a screenshot using his or her phone or another app to capture Snaps.

**Instagram**- Instagram is a free photo sharing app where you can apply effects and captions to your photos and videos and easily share them across a number of social media platforms. Instagram Direct allows users to send "private messages" to up to 15 mutual friends. These pictures don't show up on their public feeds. Parents also should know that, on *Instagram*, photos and videos are public by default and can contain location data. So it's important for kids to use privacy settings to limit their audience.

**Vine**-Vine is a social video-sharing website and app that features six-second looping videos created by its users. In general, most of what you'll find on Vine is harmless and creative, however there are videos that are age-inappropriate. But Vine doesn't have a setting to filter out content. For younger kids, there's a curated version of the service called [Vine Kids](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews/vine-kids) that serves up only age-appropriate content. All content on the site is public by default, so kids should use privacy settings to limit who can find and follow posts.

**Tumblr-** Tumblr is a free site and app where users have unending streaming access. Not only can they text and post photos, they also can offer up quotes, links, music, voice messages, and videos. It all shows up on a member's page along with a stream of posts from people they're following. However, it's easy to find both mature content (which you can't filter) and "native advertising" -- ads designed to look like regular content.

**Twitter-**Twitter is a free site that allows users to post brief, 140-character messages -- called "tweets" -- and follow other users' activities. It's not only for adults; teens like using it to share tidbits and keep up with news and celebrities**.** But Twitter has some safety, privacy, and digital-footprint issues. Tweets appear immediately, and -- though you can delete them -- it's possible that other users could repost or take a screenshot in the span of time it takes to hit delete. Twitter's location-sharing features also make it too easy for users to post their whereabouts. This app does feature mature and age- **inappropriate** content.

**Steam-** Steam is a social gaming network were users can buy, play, discuss, and learn about games on the internet on various devices. It works differently from other websites in that it requires you to download the Steam "engine" to run the games. There are mature games, but steam offers parental controls to limit what is downloaded.

**Periscope-** Periscope is a live-streaming app that lets anyone broadcast anything they want to the internet as it's happening. Users can watch a live stream of anyone from around the world. Periscope lets you interact with other broadcasters either by text or live video, as well as broadcast yourself. There are many cons such as all content is public by default, there is no monitor, and streams can be recorded. Whatever you're broadcasting can be recorded by anyone who's tuned in. That means a stranger could save video for their own use.

**WhatsApp-** WhatsApp is an app thatlets users send text messages, audio messages, videos, and photos to one or many people with no message limits or fees. WhatsApp are for users 16 and over, and after you sign up it automatically connects you to all the people in your address book who also are using WhatsApp. It also encourages you to add friends who haven't signed up yet.

**GroupMe-**GroupMe is an app that doesn't charge fees or have limits for direct and group messages. Users can also send photos, videos, and calendar links. There are GIFS and emoji’s that **are age-inappropriate.**

**Musical.ly-** is a performance and video sharing social network that mostly features teens lip syncing to famous songs but also includes some original songwriting and singing. Musers, as devoted users are called, can build up a following among friends or share posts publicly. However because it features popular music and a mix of teens and adult users, there are age-inappropriate content.

**YouNow**- YouNow is a live streaming app that lets you stream and watch live broadcasts. As you watch, you can comment and make requests or buy gold bars to give to other users. Ultimately, the goal is to get lots of viewers, start trending, and grow your fan base.

**Tinder-**Tinderis a photo and messaging dating app for browsing pictures of potential matches within a certain-mile radius of the user's location. It's very popular with 20-somethings as a way to meet new people for casual or long-term relationships. The app is all **about swipes.** You swipe right to "like" a photo or left to "pass." If a person whose photo you "liked" swipes "like" on your photo, too, the app allows you to message each other. Meeting up is pretty much the goal. Geolocation means it's possible for users to meet up with nearby people, which can be very dangerous.