

The Big Three



Instagram: 13+

Hugely popular picture sharing app available on iOS and Android devices. It allows users to upload images and videos to their feed, like an online gallery. Images and videos can be transformed with an array of filters to edit before sharing. Anyone with an account can see others' online galleries' if their account is not private. At the end of 2017, Molly Russell, 14, took her own life and her parents put partial blame on the platform due to the vast amount of self-harm and suicide content Molly was able to view on Instagram. Throughout 2018, Health Secretary Matt Hancock has been calling for stricter sensitivity screenings on the app to prevent this content from being easily viewed.



YouTube: 13+ (for an account)

An online platform- owned by Google – where anyone can upload & watch video content. All different types of information, advice & entertainment are uploaded and billions of people tune to watch, rate and comment. As a parent it is important to check what content your child is viewing as the auto play feature allows videos to be recommended and may become a bit far removed from the original content being watched.



Snapchat: 13+

A photo sharing app for mobile phones and tablets. The app allows users to share images, videos and chat with friends. Users can share images and videos directly to specific friends or through a 'story' shared with their entire friends list, which lasts for 24 hours. There is a part of the platform called 'Snap Maps' which shares the users exact location in real-time through a map on the app. The user's location updates when the app has been opened on the device.

Messaging Apps



WhatsApp: 16+

One of the most popular messaging apps in the world with more than 1.5 billion people using it to send and receive text, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls through an internet of Wi-Fi connection. The app offers end-to-end encryption, which means that messages can only be read by the sender and the recipient in one-to-one chats, or all members in a group chat. Since May 2018, the minimum age was increased to 16+ in the European Union, including the UK.



Telegram: 17+

A private, encrypted messaging (identical to WhatsApp); but with disappearing messages (just like Snapchat). Known to be used by extremist groups and have attempts of radicalised grooming on the platform.



Tango: 16+

A social-networking app that includes many ways to connect and share information, including video calls, group chats, games, phone calls, music, and more. It can be used to make video and regular calls across many platforms, including iPhone, Android, and Windows Phone. It's free, but there are many opportunities to make in-app purchases, Parents need to know those users' profiles default to public; a teen's profile must be changed to private to restrict it to people on his or her contact list.



Facebook Messenger: 13+

Standard messaging that requires a Facebook Profile to enable the Facebook Messenger app. uses location services, meaning that the messaging app can inform the person who receives a message where the user was located when they sent their message. Not a great idea for children's privacy. It is therefore a good idea to turn off location services for this app in the privacy settings of your phone, to protect your child from divulging their location.

Video and Live Streaming Apps



TikTok: 13+

Global video community where users create and share short video clips – usually about 15 seconds long, usually lip-syncing to songs. Currently one of the world's most popular apps, TikTok was formerly known as Musical.ly before it was rebranded by the Chinese company ByteDance in November 2017. If your child previously had a Musical.ly account, all of their videos and personal settings will have automatically moved to TikTok. By default, the app is public with anyone with an account potentially being able to see the users video unless they set privacy restrictions. India temporarily banned TikTok throughout the country and they stated it claimed, "inappropriate adult content".



HouseParty: 13+

Live streaming app described as a face-to-face social network where people 'drop in' on each other to video chat, leave messages and hang out in groups. Houseparty is available for iOS, Android and macOS, and it's important to note that children under the age of 13 must have parent's permission to access the services, however no proof of age is required to create an account. Each time the app is opened, your child will be instantly connected to other users who are also on the app. Users can create group conversations of up to eight people at one time. Each time a person joins, the screen splits to show everyone who is part of the conversation. Your child can add contacts via phone numbers, search for their usernames, and share a link to their profile. They can have as many rooms as they want and move from chat to chat by swiping across the screen.



Monkey: 12+

Live streaming app where users are randomly matched with others users for a brief, introductory video call. When matched with a new person, you add more time with them by double tapping the screen after 10 seconds and if long enough passes, you will have them as a friend on Snapchat. The reviews to this app state that there is a lot of inappropriate with men revealing themselves.



Zoom: Cloud Meetings: 4+

Currently the number 1 most downloaded business app. **(17/07/2020)**

A live streaming app where you can connect with individuals and host meetings with up to 100 people for 40minutes at a time. Zoom is available on all devices. To note the app is 4+ and does not have age verification. The app works by require a meeting number ID, you can add individuals via email or phone number if they have an account also (you can also invite users to use the app via text message). There is the option to either host a meeting or join a meeting, you can share the meeting ID and users that have an account and you have sent this to will be able to join, however this can be public and not require the meeting ID. Once the meeting has commenced users can see and hear one another, they can also share their screen.

'Honesty Apps'



Sarahah: 17+

Let's you receive comments from friends and strangers anonymously. You can also comment on friends' and strangers' profiles without them knowing it's you. The app's name means "honesty," roughly, in Arabic, and was supposedly designed to allow employees to share feedback with each other anonymously. Huge backlash as cyberbullying was occurring on the platform.



Honesty Anonymous Messenger: 17+

Newer version of Sarahah, experiences the same issues and backlash.



Tellonym: 17+

Designed for older teens that allow users to leave anonymous comments for other users. People can register using either an email or a phone number and can search for friends via phone contact lists. The app can be linked to Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat accounts, which means inappropriate messages can be accompanied by inappropriate visual content (images containing references to sex, drugs, violence, alcohol, or smoking). Users can block other users and can set a filter to block messages containing specific words. They can also report inappropriate messages through a built-in reporting system. With anonymity as the point of the app, the potential for cyberbullying is high.



YOLO: 17+

Currently the number one most downloaded social media app it is an anonymous questions app that works in conjunction with popular app Snapchat. Built with Snapchat's free online tool Snap Kit, YOLO lets users receive and respond to anonymous questions from their Snapchat friends and keeps a record of both questions and responses. Beyond a warning that neither "objectionable content" nor abusiveness will be tolerated, and simple block and report tools, the app has no safety measures built in, and a high alert for concerns of abuse have been reported regarding this app.

'Dating' Apps



Tinder: 18+

Tinder is a photo and messaging dating app for browsing photos of potential matches within a certain mile radius of the user's location. Swipe right to "like" a photo or left to "pass." If a person whose photo you "liked" swipes "like" on your photo, the app allows you to message each other. Along with seeking and messaging matches, users can post "moments," which are images and messages that exist for 24 hours and then disappear. As of 2016 Tinder's terms of use indicate that it can only be used by anyone 18 and up, though it previously allowed teens over 13.



MyLol: 17+

An app and website advertised for "teen dating" but is really meant for users over the age of 17. Users often post provocative, half-naked pictures of themselves and engage in flirty or even sexually explicit conversation. Chat topics also can include references to drug use, alcohol, or violence. Some users post their real names, IM handles, email addresses, and phone numbers. MyLol's own advertising photos show a 16 y/o profile indicating that younger people can download and use the app.



Yubo: 17+ (formerly Yellow - Make New Friends)

A social media app for iOS and Android devices that lets users create a profile, share their location, and flip through images of other users in their area. You can either scroll through the current livestreams or browse individual profiles by swiping Tinder-style -- right on profiles you like and left on profiles you don't. On this app, it is easy to find substance use, profanity, racial slurs, and scantily clad people.

Age Restrictions

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