

# SOCIAL MEDIA

## *(Who) Let the Parents Out!?*



**What is it?** Social media platform to talk to friends, mostly through pictures | You can also use it to text friends.

**Age Rating:**13

**Pros:** Able to keep in contact with friends easily | Can send pictures instantly | Draw setting so people can be creative and draw pictures

**What are some of the risks?** 'snapmaps' - anyone can see your location | anyone can add you as a friend | anyone can see your story | potential for easy cyberbullying - snaps disappear after 24 hours on stories and can be deleted from memories history with no trace | pictures sent can be set to a specific length of time (3 seconds - 10 seconds - infinity) | once a snap has been opened it disappears forever | 'discover page' - news articles - may not always be appropriate - this can't be turned off | messages sent using the text-like function aren't saved automatically and are deleted once the chat is left.

**How can some of the risks be mitigated?** You have control over who you add as a friend | story settings can be changed so only friends can see them | you can screenshot the snaps or save ones without a time limit | 'snapmaps' settings can be changed - 'ghost mode': no one can see your location; 'my friends': anyone who you are friends with on snapchat; 'my friend except': choose who you don't want to see your location and 'only these friends': you can pick which friends you want to be able to view your location | save message conversations manually so that there is a record - especially in cases of cyberbullying.

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**What is it?** Social media platform used to watch up to 60 second videos | you can create your own videos and post them | 'following' page: everyone whom you follow – all their videos in one place | 'for you' page: the app creates a page of videos, that you might like, from looking at videos you like and have watched.

**Age Rating:**16

**Pros:** Able to watch quick videos easily | sounds/music and filters are built into the app making it easy for you to create videos | able to show creative side to yourself | duet videos - friends could make videos 'together' if unable to physically be together

**What are some of the risks?** Your video could end up anywhere - especially if following a trend | anyone can watch your videos (especially through use of hashtags) (although not if your account is private) | anyone can duet a video from an account which isn't private and anyone can see this | anyone can see videos from an account that has not been made private and comment on them | when looking at the specific sounds, anyone can save your videos | anyone can view your likes.

**How can some of the risks be mitigated?** Having a private account | not using hashtags | turn off the duet feature in the app settings | turn off the setting for saving videos, so no one is able to download your videos | change liked videos to private | turn off comments on your videos.

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**What is it?** Social media platform used to share pictures on 'feed' with followers | can have stories - these disappear after 24 hours- can be saved forever on highlights | can have direct message conversations - kept forever unless sending a photo which disappears after being viewed | you can broadcast live videos.

**Age Rating:** 13

**Pros:** Able to share photos with followers | able to instantly add to your story | good way to keep in touch with friends | can follow celebrities - easy way to see what your favourite celebrities are doing

**What are some of the risks?** anyone can follow you | comments are public | location can be tagged showing where you are | anyone can see photos you're tagged in | all followers can see live videos - they are notified when you go live | anyone can see when you're online | public accounts can be found easily through use of hashtag.

**How can some of the risks be mitigated?** Accounts can be private - you control if people follow you or not | not tagging specific locations if you're at e.g. home/friend's house | if tagged, you can remove your tag | turn off activity status to hide if you are currently active or not.

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**What is it?** Social media platform used to watch videos

**Age Rating:** 13

**Pros:** You can watch videos about anything & everything | educational videos | easy way to access music for free | free to use

**What are some of the risks?** Can lead to long sessions of screen time | 'trending' videos may not always be appropriate | everything is public | often used by teens to view 'vloggers' who capture their lives on camera. These people could be idolised and advocate destructive lifestyles - anyone can make a YouTube video.

**How can some of the risks be mitigated?** Screen time limits can be placed on the app | you can limit content (see Restricted Mode)

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As with most elements of adolescence, growing in safe and healthy ways of doing things with open communication channels is a helpful approach

## Each teen and each family are different

### Things you could consider:

- Conversations around why a teen/tween wants to use certain platforms.
- Conversations around what is appropriate to share online and what isn't.
- An understanding of digital identity and its importance.
- Are they ready/capable of self-regulating usage and making wise choices with content? If not, could we work together with some protective software and a process of loosening this as trust grows?  
<https://www.tomsguide.com/uk/us/best-parental-control-apps,review-2258.html>
- Extension to friendship that these connecting platforms are is important to my teen/tween.
- Conversations around private accounts vs public accounts
- Conversations around usage boundaries - mealtimes, family time, bedrooms etc. As a teen grows, understanding a need to have elements of life that do not include parents, balanced with accountability and safeguards.
- Data usage caps - to grow in responsible usage and defend against large, unexpected bills
- Conversations around the difference between 'knowing' someone online and 'knowing' someone in person
- Conversations to help understanding of location-sharing settings on multiple platforms
- Conversations around responsibility - cyber bullying is an easy trap to fall into, if you feel as though you have no accountability and no one will know actions and words were yours.
- What doors of communication could be established in the home where, if a child felt as though they were in a difficult situation, they could approach you as a parent/carer?
- Conversations around content they choose to share - how might this make others feel? Is this my or someone else's view I am sharing and do I know enough about a subject to be this outspoken?
- Am I able to model the boundaries I am insisting on?
- Are there healthy rhythms I would love them to have into adulthood that we can begin to lay the foundations for now?

Resources for parents on E-Safety and to report online abuse:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents>