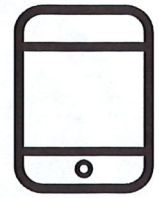




# CYBER-WORLD

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUTH PRESS SEND?



### What Should We Focus On?

What are they exposed to?

Who are they speaking to?

How are they being treated or treating others?

How is their character development being influenced?



### First Things First!

**Do Your homework and Check Out:**

MediaSmarts.ca - digital and media literacy

HighTechDad - reviews

KidsHealth.org - social media and internet safety tips

CommonSenseMedia.org - parent vs. child reviews, conversation starters

TheCyberSafetyLady.com.au - set up information

Google - "parental concerns with..." top 10 social media apps

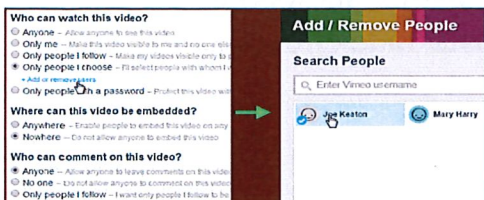
### What Are They Doing?



#### 1. YouTube

This website is full of great resources. You can find a ton of 'how-to' videos. It also has a wide selection of entertainment. However, it can also be a source of misinformation and inappropriate content. 300 hours of content is posted every minute, making it impossible for moderators to stay on top of it.

The minimum age to use YouTube is 13. Check out YouTube Kids, if they are younger. If your youth does have an account, be sure to disable the comments section and change videos to private. You can also consider 'restricted mode.' When this setting is on, it will help screen out potentially mature content and you will not be able to see the comments section on videos.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Internet and Cell Phone Providers can keep a record of usage. Every company is different - how they store the information and for how long

#### 2. Google

Probably the most popular search engine out there! It is great for finding exactly what you need even if you have no idea where to start. However, similar to YouTube, it can provide suggestions of inappropriate content and lead to websites that may be violent, pornographic, or promote unhealthy behaviours. For all devices, go into google settings and turn on safe search. It will filter out adult content. Other recommended search engines for children that are younger include Kiddle, KidzSearch, KidRex, Kid Info, and Quintura.

Suggested reading:

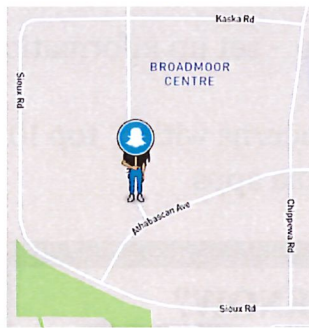
<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/kiddle-aims-be-google-kids-7-features-every-parent-should-know-1556687>



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Intended for those 13+ years of age.

Check out the terms and conditions for all apps!



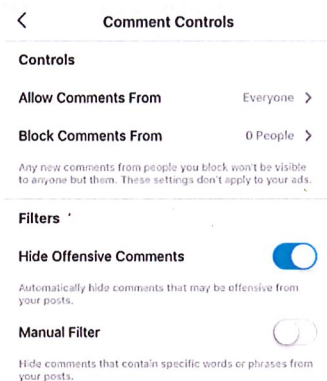
### 3. Snap Chat

Snap Chat is a widely used app that allows users to take images and send them to individual friends for a few seconds or post as their story. Posting an image as a story allows everyone on the user's friends list to see the image for a period of 24 hours. With public accounts, anyone is able to see the user's story. Youth say that they use this app due to low commitment. They are able to take a picture and send it to specific people for just a few seconds and then it expires. "It disappears," they often tell us. This 'disappearing' concept makes the app highly attractive. According to Snap Chat's terms of service, they will store and use any and all users' content. Many users also screen shot images to view and keep for longer periods. Does it really disappear? Talk to youth about setting a private account so only friends can see their stories. Encourage them to avoid adding people they do not know. Often, youth are sharing personal information in snap chats and accepting requests from strangers means strangers will have that information as well. Instruct youth to turn off their location settings and avoid the Snap Map. It is highly accurate, giving away information like a home address and school location.

### 4. Instagram

Instagram is another popular app that allows for sharing of images. Unlike Snap Chat, it is associated with higher commitment, as the images are posted for followers to see until deleted. In recent updates, Instagram has also created a story feature to post images for a 24 hour period. Setting a private account is key! Without it, any and all users are able to view images that are posted by youth. More often than not, there are screen shots taken of others' images and there are no notifications to alert the user. Some youth have thousands and thousands of followers. Do they know them all? It is also worthwhile to discuss location settings. Turning on location settings allows the user to insert the location of the image taken to be posted with the image itself. Clicking on the location will lead to a map that will show exactly where that location is. Additionally, with location settings on, if an image is taken through Instagram's camera. Taking that image and downloading it onto a computer, allows anyone to see exactly where that image was taken on a map even if it was chosen to not be displayed in the post.

Fortunately, Instagram has comment controls. This feature allows the user to change who can and cannot comment on posts, hide offensive comments, and hide comments with specific words or phrases.



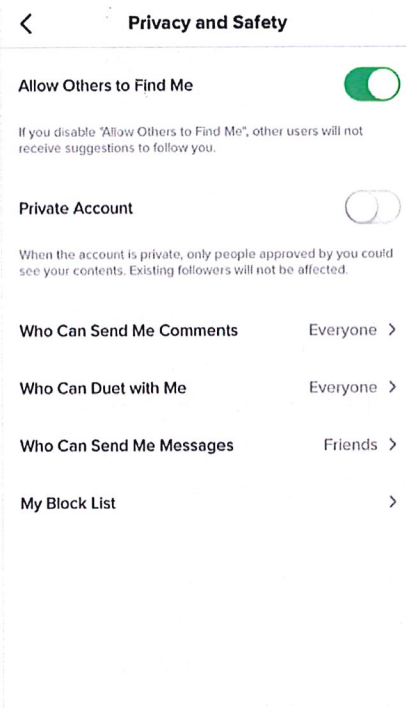




Showcases extreme speech.  
Should platforms have clear standards and consistent regulations in place for threats, discrimination, and foul language?

## 5. ~~Musical.ly~~ Tik Tok

Musical.ly has currently become a part of Tik Tok. It is an app that allows users to create short music videos. Usually, it involves lip syncing to songs and dancing along. It can be a fun and interactive way to express creativity. However, with the freedom to record your own videos, it is also a place for sexually explicit content. Numerous songs have sexually suggestive lyrics that are performed by young children and youth. Additionally, clicking hashtags that are used in videos link to other videos with the same hashtags. This ability can allow users to find more and more content that can be deemed inappropriate. However, this type of content is against their terms of service, so is it actually regulated? Similarly, their terms of service also says that their services are intended for those that are 13 years old and over and those that are younger will have their accounts terminated. How often are user accounts checked for this? Like any other social media platform, it is important to be familiar with and use privacy settings on Musical.ly as well. Encourage youth to disable the "allow others to find me" feature. By disabling, other users will not get suggestions to follow them. Having a private account will allow youth to approve people to see their content. Furthermore, in the same privacy and safety settings, it allows users to change who can send comments and messages as well. Although privacy settings are a must, within this app, changing privacy settings does not filter what they can see. Lastly, there is an option to livestream on this app. Live streaming allows anyone and everyone to view the user in realtime. Unfortunately, this gives strangers the ability to communicate with your youth. Many youth use this feature as a question and answer session. It is vital to talk to youth about what personal information is. It can be very easy to let your guard down in the comfort of your own home and separated physically with the digital boundary.



## 6. Live Stream Sites: Omegle & Chat Roulette



These websites require access to a web camera in order to match up and chat with another stranger online. They advertise their sites as a way to meet new friends. Problematic?



According to a study by RJMetrics, 1 in 8 spins on Chat Roulette resulted in an R-rated experience - a nude individual or an individual engaging in a sexual act. For children and youth, this is a dangerous experience. These websites are not regulated and can be home to individuals who are luring for children and youth. If you come across these websites on your youth's electronic devices, it is definitely time to have a conversation!



## ONLINE GAMING

Can involve playing and communicating with strangers around the globe. Who is on the other end?

### Parental Controls

#### Xbox:

<https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-ca/xbox-one-privacy-and-online-safety>

<https://support.xbox.com/en-CA/xbox-one/security/core-family-safety-features>

#### Playstation:

<https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/get-help/help-library/my-account/parental-controls/ps4-parental-controls/>

<https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/get-help/help-library/my-account/parental-controls/how-to-use-playstation-4-to-limit-who-can-contact-you-over-plays/>

#### Nintendo:

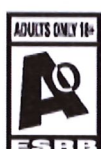
[https://www.nintendo.com/consumer/info/en\\_na/parents.jsp](https://www.nintendo.com/consumer/info/en_na/parents.jsp)



## 7. Computer and Console Games: Fortnite

Gaming is a very popular pass time. There are a wide variety of games out there from educational, to adventure, to strategic. It is also an interactive way to connect with friends and family. Through all the fun and games, it is important to check the age ratings for games that youth are playing. The rating can be found on the physical copy of the game, online, or through app stores. It can also be helpful to research other parental reviews before deciding to purchase specific games. The age ratings give a good idea of game content. The content will affect what children and youth are learning. Whether it be violence or sexually explicit material, the content will influence their thoughts, behaviours, and discussions. It is essential to keep note if their mood changes after playing their games. It is a good idea to join them and play in multiplayer mode or just watch their gameplay. This participation will allow you to not only get a better idea of the game, but also recognize any changes in mood and behaviour and monitor any online discussions. These discussions can be discriminatory and threatening. There can be a lot of harassment between opponents and even teammates. It is important to check who your youth may be talking to online to avoid these conversations. It is also important to have the 'stranger danger' talk. For these talks, be very specific about who is considered a stranger. Often, youth will engage with a new person online a couple times and not consider them a stranger anymore. Strangers may try to build relationships with youth slowly through harmless discussions until the youth begins to trust them with their personal information. These stories are much more common than we think. For this and many other reasons, it is essential to also talk about privacy settings with your youth. These settings will change who can message, talk, and send images to them. Be sure to turn off the location settings of the console as well. Set parental controls for the consoles, so that you get to change all of the settings and view the history.

One of the most popular games right now is Fortnite. It is a strategy-focused game that involves killing with weapons. It does not show any blood or gore. Recently, it has been a trend to livestream yourself playing the game on Twitch - similar to YouTube but for gamers. Is your youth live streaming? What are they showing? Is there any personal information shared on the live stream? Check out the game and online parental reviews to form your own opinion!





# What Else?

## Pornography

How many of us actually sit down and talk to youth about pornography? Probably not many. This keep-it-a-secret-it's-taboo approach can be really problematic for youth. These days, pornography is extremely accessible. It's everywhere. It has now joined mainstream media and as a result, has become normalized. We see it in Netflix shows and YouTube videos. Not to mention, there are tons of free pornography websites. Due to the accessible and affordable nature of it, we need to discuss pornography with youth. The effects on youth from viewing pornography can include changes in behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs. The content misrepresents real relationships. People are shown with no flaws, opinions, needs, or feelings. They are seen as mere objects, where sexual activity is done 'to' them not 'with' them. For youth, viewing can lead to false expectations. Expectations such as, all intimate relationships should be casual and all sexual experiences should be like what is depicted. Pornography also models abusive relationships. 88% of the content is physically violent and 49% is verbal aggression (Bridges et al., 2010). Violent interactions include slapping, punching, spitting, hair pulling, and choking. The depicted emotional abuse includes comments that are racist and sexist. With youth actively viewing this content, it shapes their standards and beliefs about relationships and sexual partners. It is essential to have open conversations about what they have seen or may be watching. Many times youth are exposed to pornography while with their peers. It can be a good idea to set up an exit strategy with a code word. For example, if your youth is at a friend's house who is pressuring them into watching inappropriate content, they can text you a code word. This word means "please come and get me now!" They can tell their friends they must leave now or simply state "family emergency."

Without parental conversations, youth may also rely on pornography for sexual education. According to Smith et al. in a study, searching for websites using sexual health keywords (sex education, sexual health, or sexual intercourse), returned sites in which 63% were devoted to pornography and 4% were sexual education pages. Overall, it is vital to have these discussions with your youth with the increase in online pornography and its presence in mainstream media.



Retrieved from:

<https://visual.ly/community/infographic/love-and-sex/side-effects-pornography>

## Did You Know?

**4 599 000 000 hours  
= 5246 centuries were  
spent on the website  
"Pornhub" in 2016**

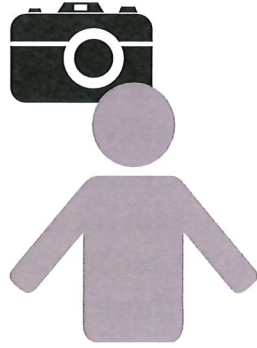
Via Fight the New Drug

Statistics from:

Bridges, A.J, Wosnitzer, R., Scharrer, E., Sun, C., Liberman, R., (2010). Aggression and Sexual Behaviour in Best-Selling Pornography Videos: A Content Analysis Update. *SAGE Journals*, 16(10), 1065-1085. Smith, M. Gertz, E., Alvarez, S., Lurie, P., (2000). The Content and Accessibility of Sex Education Information on the Internet. *SAGE Journals*, 27(6), 684-694.



# What Else?



## Non-consensual sharing of sexts

42% of youth who've sent sexts have had one shared whether by being



shown in person  
(38%)



forwarded electronically  
(38%)



or posted to a public forum  
(30%)

Via MediaSmarts

### Sexting

Sexting is sending nude or semi-nude images via electronic devices. Unfortunately, sharing of intimate images has become more and more popular these days. A new study by University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and MediaSmarts, Canada's centre for digital and media literacy, in partnership with TELUS WISE, demonstrates that 1 in 4 teens are receiving sexts and 1 in 7 are sending them. As younger children now have access to or receive their own cell phone, the average age where children begin sexting is decreasing. We have heard of grade 5 students sharing nude images with classmates. But, why?

When we talk to youth, they give us several reasons why they may want to or feel obligated to send intimate images. These reasons include, to be romantic with a current partner, to impress a crush, to keep a partner, because it's "not risky," or to stop harassment. Many students are pressured to send intimate images by others. An individual may continuously message or call another until they are fed up and send it to stop the repeated requests. Contrary to youth belief, the reason why sexting is risky, is because it is actually against the Criminal Code, specifically section 163.1. If someone under the age of 18, takes nude or partially nude images or videos of themselves or someone else under the age of 18, that is production of children pornography. Sharing these images is distribution of child pornography. If these images and videos are kept on a cell phone, computer, or other device, that is possession of child pornography. Furthermore, many youth send others' nude images around school. Unfortunately, this situation is all too common and we hear about it at almost every school we go to. To protect the targets, Bill C-13, Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act, was announced. According to the Act and Criminal Code section 162.1, it is a criminal offence for anyone to share intimate images of someone else without their consent. It is punishable up to 5 years in prison. However, many times an image ends up online on a pornographic website or social media. NeedHelpNow.ca can help! They can assist in removing the picture from the Internet and can provide guidance and support. Non-consensual sharing of intimate images can also be reported to local police or CyberTip.ca. Check out their website for more information!

Furthermore, managing requests for nude images can be difficult for youth. They may not know how to say "no" or may feel uncomfortable saying "no" to a partner. An app called Send This Instead has amusing images that are responses to someone asking for nudes. It can be an easier and hilarious way to refuse. Although empowering them to say "no" is a great conversation to have.

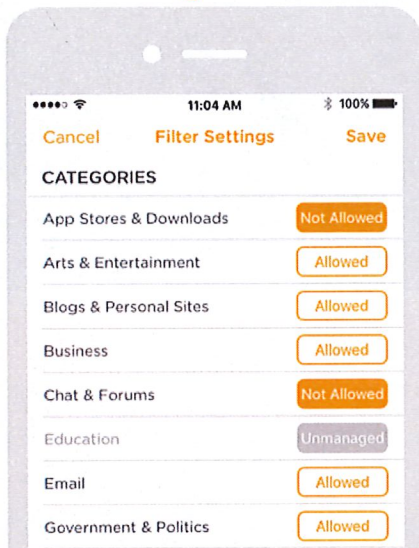


# What Can I Do?

"What I appreciate the most is the ability to monitor without snooping. This allows my children to maintain a sense of independence and privacy, while allowing me the opportunity to involve myself only when necessary to provide guidance. It helps me grow future responsible, productive adults."

-Bark Dad

Retrieved from:  
<https://www.barks/#pricing>



Retrieved from:  
<https://meetcircle.com/filter>

## Filtration and Monitoring Devices

There are many apps, download programs, and plug-in systems in the market that can help with filtering and monitoring. They all have their own costs, subscriptions, and definitely their own pros and cons. It is always best to do your research and find the one that best fits your family's needs and is within your budget. If the company has an option for a free trial, test it out and see if it works for you. One of the most popular plug-in systems for filtering and monitoring is the Disney Circle. With this device, you are able to set filters for each family member based on their age and interests. It also gives a detailed breakdown of what sites were visited throughout the day and an option to set time limits for Internet usage. Kids Wifi is very similar. Qustodio is another option. It is a free parental control app. The same app has to be installed on a child or youth's device in order to allow the parent to manage screen time, filter content, and monitor. Bark is another great app. With Bark, the app sends alerts via email and text if it detects an issue instead of you having to go through history, text messages, and posts. It also gives recommendations for how to talk to children and youth about the issue. Other solutions you can check out are VidAngel, Net Nanny, Mobicip, and McAfee Safe Eyes. Remember these are just a few of the ones that are out there!

## Just to Keep in Mind!

The Internet is not all bad! Technology is an instrumental part of this day and age. For children and youth, it can also be a positive addition to their lives. The Internet allows them to discover new topics and areas of interest. Things they may never ever be exposed to! It also gives great information and resources for important social issues. All this information helps with learning and prepares youth for the future. Technology is something used in many professions. Gaining familiarity and proficiency during their youth years is great preparation. Additionally, social media allows for networking, which creates connectivity and belonging and opportunities for support.



# What Can I Do?



## Listen to Youth

Youth may talk about the online world. Get involved in the discussion. Use it as an opportunity to gain knowledge on the apps they are on and the games they are playing. Pay close attention to the details! They can help you in future discussions. Be sure to also listen for any issues they may be having and how they are feeling online. Do they have anxiety online? Are there pressures from peers? Do they express their high emotions online? Do they know when they need parental help? These are all great conversations to have!

## Communicate with Youth

Be sure to set clear expectations for device usage early on. These expectations can be set well before they receive an electronic device. You and your youth can agree on time allotted on device, when they can use it, where they can use it, and what websites they can visit and what is considered inappropriate. You can also mention how you will regulate their behaviour. You may agree on spot checks and/or filtration and monitoring devices. You may want to consider a cell phone contract that highlights everything you and your youth agreed upon. This document can also include the consequences for behaviour that goes against the contract.

It is essential to talk to youth about healthy relationships, boundaries, online bullying, pornography, and the consequences of sexting. Talk about the permanency of their posts online. Talk about digital footprints. Inform them that all of their posts, pictures, likes, and shares can and will be viewed and used to determine their candidacy for a job, school, and volunteer role.

## Don't be Afraid to Intervene

Tell youth about red flags. These warning signs include someone asking for intimate images or sending them intimate images, bribes and unusual gifts, threats and intimidation, uncomfortable sexual discussions, someone asking for their location, and uncomfortable and terrifying situations at friends' homes. Be sure to speak up if you hear or see anything. Let them know you are there to listen and talk. Tell them and show them that they can trust you.

## Set Aside Tech Free Time

Setting aside some time each day is good for relaxation and sleep! The light from electronic devices limits the release of melatonin - your sleep hormone. It will also allow your family to spend more time together and build a stronger bond. Consider unplugging the router or using an app that will turn off the Wifi. Highly recommend!

## Join Youth!

Whether they are playing games or watching YouTube, participate! It will not only allow you to watch what they are doing, but will create great conversations. They will know that you want to be more involved. It will also make them want to come to you with issues if they know you are familiar with the app, game, or website.

**Think About the Age You Give Them Their First Device!**