The Top Apps Parents Should Know Their Kids Are Using

As kids get older, they become more interested in using apps on their smartphones and tablets. While some apps are perfectly safe and age-appropriate, others can be dangerous for children. As a parent, it's important to be aware of the most popular apps your kids are using so you can make sure they're staying safe.

Understanding the App Landscape

It's no secret that kids love using apps. In fact, a recent study showed that kids under the age of 8 spend an average of 2 hours and 19 minutes per day using mobile devices and teens over 7 hours per day. That's a lot of time spent on screens!

As a parent, it's important to be aware of the most popular apps your kids are using. Some apps are age-appropriate, while others can be dangerous and inappropriate for children. Here is a list of the top 5 app categories parents should know their kids are using:

1. Social Media Apps

Kids love staying connected with their friends and family on social media apps like Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. While there are some great things about social media, there are also some dangers that parents need to be aware of. For example, cyberbullying is a real problem on social media platforms.

2. Messaging Apps

Messaging apps like WhatsApp and iMessage are use by kids to stay in touch with friends. However, these apps can also be used for cyberbullying and other inappropriate behavior.

3. Gaming Apps

Gaming apps are used by kids of all ages. While there are many age-appropriate and safe games out there, parents need to be aware of the dangers of some gaming apps. For example, some games may contain violence, sexual content, or in-app purchases that can add up quickly. Parents should carefully review the games their kids are playing and make sure they are appropriate for their age.

4. Camera Apps

Camera apps like Snapchat and Instagram used for sharing photos and videos with friends. However, these apps can also be used to share inappropriate photos and videos. Parents should talk to their children about responsible use of camera apps.

5. Shopping Apps

Shopping apps like Amazon and eBay are used to buy items online. However, these apps can also be used to make in-app purchases that can add up quickly.

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The Most Dangerous Apps for Kids

The most dangerous apps for kids are those that allow for anonymous messaging and communication. These apps can be used by predators to groom and exploit children. Some of the most popular anonymous messaging apps used by kids are Kik, Whisper and Yik Yak. Predators can pose as other kids on these apps and trick children into revealing personal information or sending them inappropriate pictures. It is important for parents to be aware of these apps and talk to their kids about online safety.

Another app that can be dangerous for kids is Snapchat. While the app does have some safeguards in place, like only allowing snaps to be viewed for a limited amount of time, there are ways for predators to circumvent these measures. For example, predators can take screenshots of snaps before they disappear or use a separate camera to record the video. They can then use these images or videos to blackmail or bully kids.

Some apps, while not necessarily dangerous, can be inappropriate for children. These include apps that allow users to share nude photos or engage in sexual conversations. Some of the most popular apps in this category are Tinder, Grindr and Blendr. While these apps may have age restrictions in place, it is still possible for kids to access them if they lie about their age. Parents should be aware of these apps and talk to their kids about using them safely and responsibly.

Finally, there are a number of apps that can be addictive and cause kids to neglect their studies and social lives. Some of the most popular addicitive apps include Candy Crush, Clash of Clans and Flappy Bird. These apps can be extremely frustrating and cause kids to spend hours trying to beat them. This can lead to isolation from friends and family, as well as poor grades at school. Parents should talk to their kids about time management and setting limits on how much time they spend on these apps.

The Top Apps Parents Should Know Their Kids Are Using

As kids get more and more tech-savvy, it's important for parents to stay on top of the latest apps and games their children are using. While some apps are perfectly safe and age-appropriate, others can be dangerous and expose kids to inappropriate content. Here are five of the most popular apps parents should know about.

TikTok

This video-sharing app allows users to create and share short videos of themselves lip-syncing, dancing or performing other creative acts. While TikTok can be a lot of fun for kids, there have been concerns about its safety, as the app has been known to host inappropriate and even pornographic content.

Snapchat

This messaging app is extremely popular with kids and teens, as it allows users to send disappearing photos and videos. However, Snapchat also has a number of safety concerns, including "Snap Map" which can show your child's location to anyone on their contact list.

Fortnite

This online multiplayer game has taken the world by storm, with kids and adults alike spending hours upon hours playing. While Fortnite can be a fun and harmless game, there have been concerns about its violence and additive nature.

Instagram

This photo-sharing app is used by many youth, but it can also be dangerous. In addition to the potential for cyberbullying, Instagram also exposes users to a constant stream of ads and sponsored content.

YouTube

This video-sharing platform is one of the most popular websites in the world, with billions of users. While YouTube can be a great resource for educational and entertaining content, it's important to monitor your child's activity on the site, as there is a lot of inappropriate and even distrubring content available.

Other Dangerous Apps Parents Might Not Even Know Kids Are Using

In addition to the above five apps, there are a number of other popular apps that can be dangerous for kids. These include:

WhatsApp
This messaging app has a number of safety concerns. In addition to the potential for cyberbullying, WhatsApp also allows users to share their location with others, which can be dangerous.

House Party
This video-chatting app has been known to allow strangers into chats, which can lead to inappropriate content being shared

Hoop
This social media app has been known to allow strangers into chats, which can lead to inappropriate content being shared.
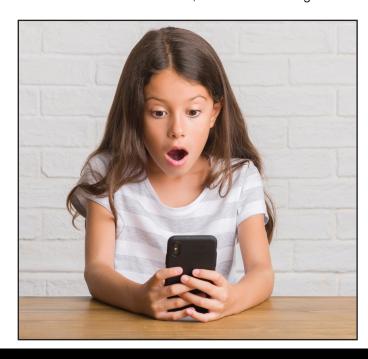
Discord
Used by gamers, this chat app has been used by predators to groom and exploit children. According to Bark's 2021 annual report, Discord is consistently in the top five platforms for bullying, suicidal idealation, body image and more.

Kik
This messaging app has a number of safety concerns. In addition to the potential for cyberbullying, Kik also allows users to share their location with others, which can be dangerous.

Tips for Parents

1. Talk to your kids about the apps they're using and why they like them

2. Set limits on how much time your kids can spend on their devices, apps, games or specific websites

3. Monitor your child's activity on their devices, including their app usage and web browsing history

4. Be aware of the apps your kids are using and research their safety concerns. Block specific apps or limit time on them using Enhanced Parental controls

5. Teach your kids about cyberbullying, inapporiate online behavior, online predators and other dangers associated with the internet, as well as how to report inappropriate behavior

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