

Keeping Your Children Safe from Potential Dangers in Various Apps and on the Internet.

With the rapid development of new apps and new programs on the internet, that are often aimed at grabbing children's interest, many parents desire to learn more about the potential, unintended dangers their children may be exposed to through digital media.

Apps and Websites:

[Common Sense Media](#) is a valuable, reliable, and free resource that parents can access to look up information and recommendations about various apps and websites. If your child wants to use an app or website that you are unfamiliar with, we recommend you visit [commonsensemedia.org](#) for more information. For each app you review on Common Sense Media, there is a section titled "What Parents Need to Know," providing a descriptive overview of what the app is, how it's used, and undesirable consequences that could ensue.

The list curated below provides an overview of popular apps that could expose your children to inappropriate content. You may wish to remain cautious about allowing your children to access these apps and websites described below.

- [Kik](#) - A social networking app that connects children to strangers
- [Snapchat](#) - A photo and video messaging app where content is viewable for a short amount of time before disappearing
- [TikTok](#) - Used to be called musical.ly. Social networking app for sharing user-generated videos, often containing explicit and suggestive material.
- [Omegle](#) - Anonymous chat site where strangers interact in uncensored chat rooms.
- [Roblox](#) - Game creation site that contains violence and inappropriate message exchanges
- [Houseparty](#) - Live group video chat

Social Media Platform Challenges:

The list is growing longer of social media platforms, such as YouTube, YouTube Kids, and other social media, that started with protected environments for children and that now may contain ads or edited materials from unknown sources that include inappropriate content.

One such example is the Momo Challenge. This challenge reportedly appears in videos for children or ads through the use of a scary-looking pop-up that prompts the viewer to engage with a game administrator that lures them into participating in challenges, including self-harm. While some sources are explaining that the challenge is an elaborate hoax, as parents and educators, it can be difficult to discern what is and what isn't an online safety challenge for our children. Regardless, the [Ohio Department of Education says](#) the Momo Challenge can be a teachable moment for parents to have positive conversations with their children and to monitor their online usage.

We want to remind parents of some helpful tips when navigating the online world.

- Remind your child that not everything they see is real. While it may seem obvious, it is important for you to reiterate this message to your child.
- Be present. It's important for you as the parent or caregiver to be present while your child is online. This includes putting away your child's electronic device when you go to bed at night.
- Talk regularly with your child. Have honest and frequent conversations so that your child feels confident to discuss any issues and concerns they may have with you.
- Device settings and parental controls. Ensure that you set up parental controls for your devices at home. This will help you restrict the types of content that your child can view as well as help you monitor their activities.
- Peer Pressure. Viral challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they seem. Make sure you talk to your child about how they shouldn't do anything they are not comfortable with, whether online or offline. If they are unsure, encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult.

The Hudson City Schools implements security measures to help safeguard students by assessing or blocking content online when students are using district-provided devices. Today, more than ever, it is important that we work together to educate our children on Digital Citizenship to create a safe environment at home and at school.