



SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

SAFEGUARDING EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Designated safeguarding Leads

Alison Bolton

Gillian Hayes

Dawn Ashbrook

Useful numbers

Childline	0800 1111
Wigan Safeguarding Hub	01942 486262
Wigan Social care Referral and Assessment team	01942 828 300

Apps to watch out for on smartphones

One of the most alarming things about your child's phone use is that some of the apps on their phones can be a gateway through which [online predators](#), strangers and bullies may enter their lives. The best way to protect your children is to arm yourself with information, so let's take a look at some of the most dangerous apps for kids.

As parents, we work endlessly to ensure the safety of our kids. We check in on them while they're out, teach them important lessons, and keep an eye on them whenever we can. But what about their digital lives?

Parents looking for a solution to ease these worries and to gain visibility into how their kids are using their smartphones should consider using Net Nanny® [parental controls](#). Net Nanny provides parents with the tools they need to manage their child's screen time, including the #1-rated [Internet filter](#), the ability to [block apps](#), and much more. For those parents wishing to keep an eye on what their kids are doing while they're glued to their phones, Net Nanny can be key to unlocking your child's online world.

[Kik](#) is a messaging app that allows your kids to send group and private messages and is continually making headlines as it is one of the most dangerous apps for teens. It is important to know that Kik limits how many recent messages are saved, saving only a certain number within 48 hours and older, making it difficult for parents to monitor their child's chats. Kik also makes it very difficult to identify both the sender and receiver of messages as there is no profile verification. Although this app is extremely popular for kids under the age of 18, it is also very popular with sexual predators.

Kik has had a problem with child exploitation on the app since its creation and is still making headlines concerning this in April 2019. Not only have children been exposed to mature content, but there are numerous inappropriate chat rooms, cases of child predators using the app to contact children, and even child pornography.

[Snapchat](#) is popular among teens and adults alike as a fast-paced photo sharing and messaging app. The app allows you to send photos, videos, or messages to other users with a set amount of viewing time. After that time expires or the user navigates away from the message, it self-destructs, and cannot be seen again.

What many teens fail to remember is that even though these are self-destructing, receivers are able to take screenshots of what they are sent. Snapchat will notify you if someone takes a screenshot of a photo or video you've sent them, but there is no way to prevent them from disseminating this to others. These screenshots can act as potentially devastating fuel for cyberbullying, should your teen mistakenly share too much about themselves or someone else.

[Ask.fm](#) is a social networking site that uses a question and answer format, allowing teens to learn more about their friends and peers as well as people from all over the world. Seemingly innocuous, Ask.fm is being used by teens to abuse and bully others, made easier by the fact that there is no filtration or moderation of the content and questions being asked.

Ask.fm created enough problems with cyberbullying and mental health that the U.K's former Prime Minister, David Cameron, urged parents to not let their children use the app. With its lack of adequate privacy settings and content moderation, as well as an anonymity factor, Ask.fm has been linked to teen suicides around the globe and parents should be hesitant to allow their kids to use this app.

Parents and teens should know that the app did create the [Ask.fm Safety Center](#) in 2014 with resources available in order to combat the negative and toxic environment that was growing within the platform.

Whisper Another anonymous messaging app that parents will want to be on the lookout for is [Whisper](#). The Whisper app allows users to connect in groups based upon their interests and location in order to confess secrets. While the app is rated 17+, Whisper still allows users aged 15-17 to use the platform. Posts in this app are called "whispers" and users can sift through topics and then reply publicly or direct message the poster.

What makes Whisper one of the most dangerous apps for kids are the anonymous features as well as the location-based grouping. Pair that with the ability for other local anonymous users to direct message your children and you've got the perfect recipe for your child to be in contact with an online predator.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-advice-to-support-mental-health-> **Where are the children going?**

We have seen a slight reduction in the lockdown measures in the last few weeks. I understand that the children by enlarge, have done a fantastic job of obeying the rules and staying in. As things slowly start to relax,:

- it is important that our children know that they still need to demonstrate good hand washing hygiene, as this is still being widely reported as one of the best ways of reducing the risk of catching the virus.
- They also need to ensure they socially distance from anyone who is not a member of their household. This means staying at least two metres apart as this reduces of catching the virus, especially outside, to less than 2%.
- They need to meet members of a different household outside and in groups no more than 6. Social distancing still needs to be observed at all times.

Pupils should not be gathering in large groups in public places such as parks, sports fields and other open spaces.

As we are experiencing some warmer weather, it is also worth remembering that it is dangerous to swim in large expanses of water such as Pennington Flash or Scottsmans Flash. Open expanses of water can be very cold, even when the weather is warm and when the body enters cold water, it can go into shock which can cause panic and children to drown.

Parents, please ensure you know where your children are at all times and if you are allowing them a little more freedom, please ensure they are behaving responsibly in the community.

Supporting Mental Health

Just a reminder that the school published some excellent resources about managing mental health during this very difficult time. They are still available under the Covid section of our website. The government also keep a detailed list of websites to be accessed if support is required for mental health and well being. The links for both of those are detailed below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-advice-to-support-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>
<http://www.golbornehigh.wigan.sch.uk/Wellbeing>

Domestic Violence

We spoke in the last issue regarding the increase in the domestic violent incidents across the whole of the country. Mental health surrounding this issue can also be a problem. As we discussed previously, the normal channels to report incidents have been removed leaving people in very difficult situations and a feeling that there is no where to turn to. Below are some places that can be accessed to get help and advice during these challenging times.

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

National Domestic Abuse Helpline nationaldahelpline.org.uk