



Safe Environment Tips for Parents, Guardians and Caregivers 2020-2021

Keeping children safe on-line during a pandemic means familiarizing ourselves with websites that offer tips to help prevent our youth from becoming victims of on-line bullying, cyberstalking or sexual predators. Below are websites that offer valuable information on these topics. Some sites offer videos and games to teach your children on-line safety. Please take some time to check out some or all of the sites listed below.

<http://d2l.org/protective-steps/> - Resource site and materials to provide adults with information to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to reduce child sexual abuse through education and public awareness. Resources are available in English and Spanish.

<https://www.fbi.gov/> - Federal Bureau of Investigation site with resources for Internet safety for parents, Kids' Page for K-12 students, and child safety tips. <https://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety/sex-offender-registry> . . sexual offenders registry.

<https://www.missingkids.org/> - The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children web site is a comprehensive resource for educators, parents & guardians, childcare providers, attorneys, and media, providing information about missing children, reporting exploitation, keeping children & teens safe, and child/teen sexual exploitation prevention.

<https://www.missingkids.org/NetSmartz> - NetSmartz is an interactive, educational safety resource from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) and Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) for children aged 5 to 17, parents, guardians, educators, and law enforcement that uses age-appropriate, 3-D activities to teach children and teens how to stay safer on the Internet.

www.Beaubidenfoundation.org/internetsafety/ - offers internet safety resources, bullying resources, free ebooks for parents and educators.

www.Connectsafely.org/parentguides/ - This nonprofit organization is dedicated to educating users of connected technology about safety, privacy and security.

www.Fosi.org/good-digital-parenting/resources - Family Online Safety Institute

<https://pbskids.org/> - PBS kids is filled with videos and games on a wide variety of education topics.

www.nctsn.org - The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) was created to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.

www.nfcym.org - The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry site provides information for youth ministry coordinators to support a pastoral response to young people, to foster awareness of and education on sexual abuse issues, and to promote authentic dialogue.

<https://www.nsopw.gov/> - United States Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Offender Registry.

<http://www.safetocompete.org/> - Safe to Compete is a program of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, that provides access to resources to help youth-sports organizations protect child athletes from sexual abuse.

<http://childprotection.unigre.it/> - The Centre for Child Protection (CCP) of the Pontifical Gregorian University is dedicated to providing educational resources—both basic training and specialized formation—for people working in the field of safeguarding minors.

Teen Dating Apps Parents Should Know

With school buildings closed more teens are meeting people through dating apps. Parents should familiarize themselves with the different dating apps and talk to their teen about safety in online dating. Below are some of the most popular teen dating apps. Many more are available and parents should research any dating app their teen may be using. Dating apps are just one of the methods pedophiles and sex-traffickers use to lure teens. *Information on the following teen dating apps was adapted from Cyberwise.org.*

TAFFY.CHAT

Taffy,Chat is a dating and friending app for 17+ that takes the approach of putting “personality and conversation on an equal footing with physical appearances.” The app does not show clear photos of matches’ faces—only a blurred photo with a catchy headline. It’s not until after the users have become better acquainted through chatting that their “true” connection -and photo— is revealed.

YUBO (Formerly "YELLOW")

Yubo shows users pictures of other users and lets them swipe left if they want to be friends, and right if they want to pass. In other words, it resembles a dating app and some teens use it as such. The app markets itself as a way to chat and livestream with "new" friends. Restricted to teenagers between 13 and 17, it's easy to register with a cellphone.

MYLOL

This app is aimed at teenagers for the purpose of social networking and dating. The user’s profile info can include pictures, sexual orientation, quiz questions, videos and interests. Mylol users must be at least 13 years of age and users over the age of 19 are forbidden from joining. Common Sense Media website gives the app a 1-star rating, saying “Parents need to know ... there are too many adults, too many explicit photos, and too much personal info being exchanged for MyLOL to be a safe social site for teens.”

MEETME

"Meet, chat, and have fun with new people," claims this app's tagline. This app is focused on helping teens create new friendships (read "strangers"). Affiliated with Skout, MeetMe offers a "quick" feature that allows users to meet face-to-face “right now.” Chat, video chat, and email are all offered through the app.

HOT OR NOT

This app lets users rate the attractiveness ("hot or not"?) of others, based upon photos submitted, by tapping on either a heart or an X to rank them. Users can find out what others think of them too. Although the app claims it will not accept the profiles of anyone under 13, like most apps, there is no age verification.

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Gamer Dating Sites (Teens 18-19+)

Gaming is a form of pop culture. There are several sites/apps out there ranging from GamerDating to GirlGamerDating to LFGdating that are worth reviewing before your 18+ teen signs up.