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Dear Parents & Guardians:

It is important for us as parents and educators to stay informed regarding the social media outlets our teenagers utilize. Potential dangers exist when apps are accessed to commit acts of malice, bullying, and/or intimidation towards others. In this spirit, several of the social apps listed below are anonymous, do not require usernames, and are potentially dangerous. It is of the utmost importance that you take an active role in monitoring your child's social media activity to ensure their safety and social responsibility. **Please note, this is not a comprehensive list of all social media apps available.**

***After school:*** An anonymous social network that's high school specific. Users identify their school but not themselves.

***Ask.fm (age 13 +):*** Anonymous posting of answers to questions asked, no control over negative comments, bullying etc.

***Burnbook (age 18+, 17 with parental permission):*** You do not need to sign in, and you do not create a username. As a result, Burnbook gives kids the ability to pick a name and open up anonymous judgment from the community, leading to possible cyber-bullying.

***Cuddlr:*** Intended for adults- lets users connect with others in their vicinity (**including strangers**) who want a hug.

***Facebook (13+):*** Connect with friends, family and other people you know. Share photos and videos, send messages and get updates.

***Finsta (age 13):*** A Finsta is a "fake" account, usually on Instagram, that is set to private, with only a handful of people who are allowed access to those materials.

***Instagram (age 13):*** Photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos and share them on a variety of social networking platforms.

***Kik (age 17+):*** Instant messaging app, free when using Wi-Fi, where anyone can contact a user and there is no approval process.

***Omegle (need parent permission under 18, not intended for users under 13):*** Type a keyword and then you can text or use a webcam to "talk" to other users. Frequently cited for sexual content.

***Pssst! Anonymous:*** You can share freely and openly and privately message or text people without sharing who you are. Anything you post to the community disappears after 48 hours, similar to Snapchat.

***Sarahah:*** You can share thoughts and opinions anonymously.

***Snapchat (recommended for age 12+):*** Allows users to capture videos and pictures that will erase after a few seconds.

***Strangermeetup.com (age not specific):*** Chat with strangers at random in private chat rooms.

***Tinder (age 13 +):*** Is a location-based social search mobile app that facilitates communication between mutually interested users, allowing matched users to chat.

***Tumblr (age 13+):*** Allows users to post text, images, videos, link, quotes and audio to their tumble-log, a short-form blog.

***Twitter (age 13 +):*** Online news and social networking service where users post and interact with messages, “tweets” restricted to 140 characters. Registered users can post tweets, but those who are unregistered can only read them.

***Whisper:*** Lets you choose from one of their many photos and add text overlay of a confession or comment namelessly. You can privately message other users while keeping your identity (and theirs) totally secret.

Our collective mission is to ensure we maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all students. Please do not hesitate to contact an administrator or counselor if your child experiences any form of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

Sincerely,

Christopher Gitz, Ed. D.  
Principal  
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