

## 15 Apps Every Parent Should Know About

It's safe to say that the advent of the digital age—and specifically the Internet, smartphones and social media—have brought unique and daunting challenges to the current generation of parents. As a “bonus” challenge, the technology that both helps us parent and also poses danger to our kids' safety is ever-changing. As soon as you have one dangerous app deleted from a mobile device or have installed safety software on a computer, another scary app or Internet safety issue appears. The best way to face these parenting obstacles is to educate yourself about them, and we're here to help with that.

### Here are 15 dangerous apps or websites that your kids might be using—and why they shouldn't be.

Content Provided by: [ForEveryMom.com](http://ForEveryMom.com)

#### Tinder

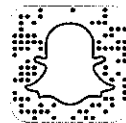
What it is: An app used to find dates and hook-ups using GPS tracking.



Why it's bad: It is easy for adults and minors to find each other, and the “rating” system can be used for bullying.

#### Snapchat

What it is: A photo-sharing app that allows users to send photos to specific people, assigning the photos an allotted time – after which they will “disappear.”



Why it's bad: It's very popular for sexting. Users have figured out how to save or screenshot the images, so they aren't really gone and can be used against the sender later for “revenge porn” or any other nefarious purpose.

#### Blindr

What it is: A “flirting” app allowing users to send photos/videos to anyone on their “friends” list and rate their “hotness.”



Why it's bad: This app uses GPS and is not authenticated, so predators can find minors or anyone they are looking for. It's also popular for sexting, and the “hotness” rating allows for bullying.

#### Kik Messenger

What it is: An instant messaging app that allows sending of videos, pics, and GIFs.



Why it's bad: It's very popular for sexting. There are no parental controls or authenticating, so it's really easy for predators to find your child on Kik.

#### Whisper

What it is: An anonymous confession app.



Why it's bad: Since it's “anonymous,” you can post pics and confessions of someone who isn't you (bullying). It also uses GPS, so people—a.k.a. predators—can find you pretty easily.

#### Ask.fm

What it is: A popular Q&A social networking site used almost exclusively by kids.



Why it's bad: Its anonymous question-asking leads to relentless consequence free cyber bullying. There are nine documented suicide cases linked to Ask.fm in the UK.

#### Yik Yak

What it is: An app that allows users to post 200 character “Yaks” which can be viewed by the 500 people closest to them as determined by GPS.



Why it's bad: Users are putting lots of sexually explicit content on Yik Yak, and although it's anonymous, it can reveal personal details that make users easy to find, especially with GPS.

#### Poof, Hidden Apps, Hide it Pro, App Lock

What they are: These are all apps designed to hide other apps on your phone. Not all are available anymore, but if your child already has them, they can still use them.



Why they're bad: These allow your child to conceal apps from their phone screen, so you will have to be diligent about searching for them.

#### Omgele

What it is: A video chatting app.



Why it's bad: Although you don't identify yourself, it's pretty easy for your child to make friends with a predator. It's known to be a predator favorite.

#### Down

What it is: A dating app connected to Facebook.



Why it's bad: It allows you to classify your friends into people you would be “down” with “hooking up” with, creating normalcy for a sexual hook-up culture for your child.

#### Oovoo

What it is: A video chatting app where users can chat with up to 12 people at a time.



Why it's bad: While not terrible in itself, your kids MUST use the privacy settings and only let people who know them chat with them. Otherwise it's stranger-danger city.

#### Meerkat/Periscope

What they are: Similar live streaming video apps that stream video to Twitter.



Why they're bad: Although it's against the apps' terms of service, since it's live streamed it's difficult to keep users from producing images with nudity or pornographic content, which makes it a favorite for predators to watch.

#### MeetMe

What it is: An app that uses GPS to allow users to meet new people who live nearby.



Why it's bad: There's no age verification, and your account is linked to Facebook so you and your location are easily identifiable to predators. The popularity rating makes seeking approval from strangers seem like a game.

#### Skout

What it is: A flirting app used to meet new people.



Why it's bad: Ages aren't verified, and although there is a teen version with slightly more safety features, all you have to do to bypass it is put in a fake birthday. This leaves children open to the adult sector of Skout, which includes plenty of profanity, suggestive pictures and private messaging with strangers who can see their location.

# Parent monitoring apps

## The best apps you've never heard of

App	Price*	Location	Social Media Posts	Texting Content	Internet	App Control	Driving	Call	Additional Comments
mSpy	\$200.00/ year	•	•	•	•	•		•	SnapChat , WhatsApp, Tinder, Facebook Messenger, geo-fencing, Emails, calendar
FlexiSpy	\$149-\$349/year	•	•	•	•	•		•	Record video, screenshots, record surroundings
Ignore No More	\$5.99							•	Disables phone with ignored call
Mama Bear	Free to \$25/6 months	•	•	•	•		•		Leave notifications, vehicle speed, new photos uploaded, Facebook and Twitter requests
MM Guardian	\$3.99/device to \$99.99 for a one time license family plan	•		•	•	•	•	•	Time limits, call block, lock/unlock phone remotely
Screen Time Parental Control	Free to \$40/year					•			Bedtime restrictions, homework and tasks,daily report.
Mobile Guardian	Free 7 day trial then \$3.95 per month to \$38.95 per year				•	•		•	Geofencing, block camera use, disable texting while driving
TrueMotion Family	FREE	•					•		Driving report cards
React Mobile	Sidekick is \$70. The app is free	•							Buy sidekick and it acts as a panic button, lets you create network of people
SecureTeen	\$40/year	•	•	•	•	•		•	Set schedule of apps, Facebook, Instagram
FamilyTime	\$1.15/month	•		•	•	•	•	•	Limit screen time, activity reports, PickMeUp alerts
TeenSafe	Free for 7 days/ \$14.95	•	•	•	•			•	Kik, WhatsApp, Instagram.
Life360	Free	•					•		Leave notifications, track lost or stolen phones, Family circles
Qustodio	\$138 per year for 15 devices	•	•	•	•	•		•	Multi device time limits
Phone Sheriff	\$89 per year	•		•	•	•		•	WhatsApp, Snapchat, photos, multi-device, time restrictions, panic alert
XNSpy		•	•	•	•	•		•	Screenshot, record surround, lock phone
ESET	\$29.99 per device	•			•	•			Parental message
My Mobile Watchdog	\$14.99 per month up to 5	•		•	•	•		•	Time limits
Mobile Spy	\$138 per year	•	•	•	•	•		•	Media files, iMessages, profanity alert

\*App prices subject to change.

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## How to Get Your Pre teen/Teen to Want to be Good (11 and older)

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The most important thing you can do to increase positive behavior in your preteen/teen is to create closeness and warmth in your relationship. When kids act up or misbehave it is hard to feel close and warm! Here are some tips that have been shown to work:

### Special One on One Time Pre-teens/teens (11 + years old)



**Set aside 15-20 minutes 3 times per week to spend time together:**

1. Identify an activity your pre-teen/teen really enjoys, that you can do together: *making a recipe, going someplace together like the mall, the park or for a walk, doing artwork, playing interactive video games, playing some kind of physical activity together like ball or skating. Avoid TV, video games that don't involve interacting or games that are aggressive or highly competitive.*
2. Encourage more open communication in general during the activity. A really good way to do that is listen attentively and show interest in what they talk about (even if it is not very interesting to you!): *"tell me more about what happened when you and Megan had that argument"; "I can hear that your feelings are hurt"; "Thanks for explaining to me about [Warcraft, Farmville, Wii], I didn't know that".*
3. Ignore minor misbehavior. *Unless the pre-teen/teen is doing something dangerous, just ignore and then return your attention and comment/praise on the NEXT appropriate behavior the child shows.*
4. Never use one on one time as a reward or consequence. *One on time is even MORE important on days when there are problems.*
5. Things to try during one on one time:
  - Use Descriptive statements such as: *"You are so careful when you measure the ingredients".*
  - Use Praise statements such as: *"You're really good at.....". "You have great taste in clothes"*
  - Use Reflective statements such as: *Pre teen/Teen: "I'm good at this game" Parent: "You're really good at this game".*
6. Things to avoid during one on one time:
  - Avoid asking too many questions or giving commands
  - Avoid correcting or making critical statements (even if tempted)

### **REMEMBER:**

Be consistent in routinely spending this special time together, the benefit builds up over time. It is like money in the bank for the hard times, and makes every day life much better.

# 101 Phrases of Praise

I love you.	You're great.	Great job.	Terrific.
Thanks so much.	Super work.	Outstanding.	I'm so proud of you.
Fabulous.	Perfect.	You're getting there.	Wonderful.
You make me happy.	You're special.	Lean on me.	Thanks for helping.
You can do it.	Excellent.	You're super.	Great smile.
That's a great idea.	You're the best.	Way to go.	Good for you.
You're delightful.	You did it.	Right on.	Great.
Thanks for sharing.	Looks good.	Marvelous.	I trust you.
You're getting better.	Fantastic.	You deserve a star.	You've improved.
Very good.	I'm impressed.	Exceptional.	You're an angel.
You're fun.	Thanks for caring.	You're a big help.	You're very responsible.
You're a real pal.	You're a super listener.	You're a joy.	You're tops.
You're considerate.	Nice work.	You're a gem.	Dynamite.
Hurray for you.	I listen to you.	You're on your way.	You've made progress.
You're neat.	You're a champ.	Beautiful.	Great imagination.
You'll get it.	Keep up the good work.	You're very brave.	You're special.
Good sport.	Sounds great.	You've got what it takes.	You're #1.
How clever.	How thoughtful.	How original.	You're on the mark.
You're a real friend.	You're the greatest.	I've got faith in you.	Keep trying.
Much better.	Well done.	I support you.	Thanks for being honest.
Great idea.	How artistic.	What careful work.	Exceptional.
Very nice of you.	I like you.	That's neat.	Great try.
You've got it now.	Wonderful imagination.	You're right.	You're sweet.
Great answer.	You've got heart.	Delightful idea.	You deserve a kiss.
You brighten my day.	Super job.	You're so smart.	What a great kid.
You're such a smart kid.			

Adapted From: *Parent-Child Interaction Therapy* by Hembree-Kigin, T. & Bodiford McNeil, C., 1995.

CBT+



**One on One Time  
Plan for this week**

Activities I will try:
Specific time and place:
Any reminders or support I will use:
Possible challenges or obstacles & how I will overcome:

**Track how it went!**

Date						
Did I do it?						
How did it go?						

# Parenting Styles

## What are Parenting Styles?

Parenting styles, as defined by Dr. John Gottman, describe the way parents react and respond to their child's emotions. Your parenting style is related to how you feel about emotions. ("Feelings about feelings" are often referred to as meta-feelings.) For example, do think emotions are powerful? Messy? Distracting? Important? The way you, as a parent, feel about these questions plays an important role in shaping your parenting style.

## Why Parenting Styles Matter

Parenting styles matter because the way a parent interacts with their child sets the stage for the child's future social and emotional development.

- \* One of the primary ways to help your child is to help him learn to manage his emotions. However, for many parents, this is not an easy task. It requires self-awareness about your own management of emotions, an awareness of emotions in others (specifically your child,) and a method for responding.

## The Four Parenting Styles

There are four parenting styles. Most parents have a dominant style but use a combination of all four. As you read the descriptions below, consider which style best describes you, as well as how you were parented.

**DISMISSING** "I know you miss mommy, but let's do something fun like make cookies."

- \* Dismissing parents can be very loving and compassionate. They just don't believe it is important to spend time dealing with their child's negative emotions, and tend to ignore the feelings or attempt to distract the child from them.



- \* Such parents are not insensitive to their children's emotions. They see them happening and want to be helpful and protective, but they are not sure what to do. Because dismissing parents ignore emotions, they miss the opportunity to connect and to create a closer relationship with their children when their children need them most.

### Children with Dismissing Parents tend to...

- \* Learn that negative emotions (especially sadness and anger) can't be trusted.
- \* Learn that it is only good to feel happy, even though they have other feelings.
- \* Learn that it is better to avoid or "get over" certain emotions rather than to feel them and understand them. They may also learn to hide their emotions.
- \* Struggle learning how to self-soothe from escalated emotions like sadness or anger, which can make school and friendship hard later.
- \* Learn that some feelings won't be noticed until they escalate into stronger feelings.

**DISAPPROVING** "There is nothing to be afraid of in your room...just go to bed and go to sleep."

- \* Disapproving parents typically don't value emotions and often feel that negative emotions should not be allowed to happen. As a result, children learn that some feelings are "good" and others are "bad" because their parents treat the feeling like a behavior by asking or telling the child to feel differently.

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## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS: Parenting Styles

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- ✧ When children of disapproving parents feel the “bad” emotions, like sadness, anger, or fear, they often think something is wrong with them or that they are a “bad” person, even though their feelings are normal.
- ✧ What these parents are missing, in part, is the realization that emotions are a natural part of our daily experiences and are not simply a mode of thinking that can be switched on or off at will.

### Children with Disapproving Parents tend to ...

- ✧ Learn that certain feelings should be switched off like a light.
- ✧ Have difficulty learning to regulate emotions, which typically has negative long-term effects.
- ✧ Learn that some feelings won't be noticed by displaying subtle cues (such as nonverbal displays of frustration) until they escalate into stronger feelings and behaviors (such as hitting).
- ✧ Be less likely to talk to their parents about how they feel because they worry that they might be punished for those feelings.

**LAISSEZ-FAIRE** “I’m sorry your brother took your toy away from you.”

- ✧ Laissez-faire parents are compassionate, and they recognize and respond to their children's emotions. They practice unconditional love, but they also fear that setting limits on a child's behavior might send the wrong message and show that love is only connected to good behavior.

### Children with Laissez-Faire Parents tend to ...

- ✧ Learn that feelings are valued, and they can talk about their feelings with others. This is a very important part of learning what emotions are.
- ✧ Learn that it is ok to act out or misbehave when they have strong feelings, and that almost “anything goes” when it comes to their behavior.
- ✧ Struggle learning skills for how to calm down when they feel excited, angry, or sad.
- ✧ Have difficulty learning ways to act appropriately around others, and can have trouble keeping friends or concentrating in school.

**EMOTION COACHING** “Come sit with me and we’ll talk about how you’re feeling right now.”

- ✧ Emotion Coaching parents value sharing emotional times with their children.
- ✧ To Emotion Coach, parents need to use empathy. Specifically, these parents try to put themselves into their child's shoes. They show an understanding of their children's emotions and guide them in their behavior. Emotion Coaching creates a foundation for strong, healthy, trusting relationships.

- ✧ Emotion Coaching takes practice. Every emotional event is different and Emotion Coaching needs to be flexible. None of us can do it all the time, but the more we can take the time to help children work through their emotions, the better.

### Children with Emotion Coaching Parents tend to ...

- ✧ Learn that feelings are important and can be trusted.
- ✧ Learn how to name certain feelings and begin to understand why they feel the way they do.
- ✧ Learn that they are not alone with their feelings, and that they can bring their wide range of emotions to their parents with confidence they will be loved and comforted.
- ✧ Learn that all feelings they experience are OK, but not all of their behaviors are OK.
- ✧ Learn how to solve the problems life brings.
- ✧ Learn to calm themselves down when they have strong emotions so they can concentrate better at school.
- ✧ Learn about their own feelings and the feelings of others, which helps them form strong friendships.

## What Parents Can Do

### THE BIG PICTURE:

- ✧ Realize that most parents use a combination of all four parenting styles, and that even the “best” Emotion Coaches only use that style about 30% of the time – and that is enough to make a big difference in the parent-child relationship.
- ✧ Remember that feelings are normal and children can't control how they feel.
- ✧ Teach limits on behavior. Children like to know their boundaries and it's important that you teach them what is acceptable and unacceptable.

### IN EVERYDAY MOMENTS:

- ✧ Avoid ignoring or disciplining a child for their emotions. When emotions arise, make an effort to teach your child how to manage them. Doing so will establish a stronger relationship between the two of you.
- ✧ Recognize emotions – this is the first step to helping children learn about them.
- ✧ Remember that every child expresses emotions in her own way.
- ✧ Let your child feel and understand his emotions.
- ✧ Help children figure out what to do when they experience strong emotions.