APPS & SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS CANADIAN PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

In today's digital age, social media and mobile apps are an integral part of a child's daily life.

Platforms like **TikTok**, **Snapchat**, **Instagram** and **Discord** allow young people to connect, share, and explore. However, alongside the benefits of these technologies come serious risks that parents must be aware of.

Many social media platforms and apps provide spaces for creativity, connection and fun, but they can also expose users to dangers. We encourage parents to be proactive in understanding these platforms to help keep their children safe.

TikTok
Why kids use it: Short-form videos, trends, and creative expression.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Predators can contact children via direct messages, and inappropriate content is easily accessible.

Instagram
Why kids use it: Sharing photos, videos, and stories with friends.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Direct messages from strangers, cyberbullying, and exposure to inappropriate content.

WhatsApp
Why kids use it: Private messaging with encryption.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Untraceable messages can make it a tool for grooming and cyberbullying.

X/Twitter
Why kids use it: Sharing thoughts and following trends.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Unfiltered content, hate speech, and interactions with strangers.

Snapchat
Why kids use it: Disappearing messages and fun filters.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** "Snap Map" shares a user's location, and disappearing messages make it difficult for parents to monitor conversations.

Reddit
Why kids use it: Engaging in niche communities and discussions.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Unmoderated forums can expose kids to harmful content.

YouTube
Why kids use it: Watching entertaining and educational videos.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Inappropriate content, live chat features, and targeted ads

Facebook
Why kids use it: Connecting with family and groups.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Privacy concerns, scams, and exposure to misinformation.

Kik
Why kids use it: Anonymous chatting with strangers.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Used by predators due to its anonymity and lack of parental controls.

Discord
Why kids use it: Chatrooms and voice calls, mainly for gaming communities.
⚠️ **Potential risks:** Unmoderated groups can expose kids to inappropriate content and predators posing as friends.

HOW PARENTS CAN PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN

- **Stay informed** Learn how these platforms work and what privacy settings are available.

- **Communicate openly** Encourage your child to share their online experiences without fear of judgment.

- **Monitor usage** Use parental controls and regularly check privacy settings.

- **Teach online safety** Remind children never to share personal information or talk to strangers online.

By staying aware and involved, you can help create a safer online environment for your child.

For more information and resources, visit **joysmithfoundation.com**

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