

# 15 Sites and Apps Kids Are Heading to Beyond Facebook

Next-generation apps that let users text, video-chat, shop, and share their pics and videos are attracting teens like catnip.

Are teens totally over Facebook? Or are they using it even more than ever? Recent reports go back and forth on teens' favorite digital hangout, but the fact is that the days of a one-stop shop for all social-networking needs are over. Instead, teens are dividing their attention between an array of apps and tools that let them write, share, video-chat, and even shop for the latest trends.

You don't need to know the ins and outs of every app and site that's "hot" right now (and frankly, if you did, they wouldn't be trendy anymore). But knowing the basics -- what they are, why they're popular, and what problems can crop up when they're not used responsibly -- can make the difference between a positive and a negative experience for your kid.

• **Twitter** is a microblogging site that allows users to post brief, 140-character messages -- called "tweets" -- and follow other users' activities.

## Why it's popular

Teens like using it to share quick tidbits about their lives with friends. It's also great for keeping up with what's going on in the world -- breaking news, celebrity gossip, etc.

## What parents need to know

- **Public tweets are the norm for teens.** Though you can choose to keep your tweets private, most teens report having public accounts (Pew Internet & American Life Project 2013). Talk to your kids about what they post and how a post can spread far and fast.
- **Updates appear immediately.** Even though you can remove tweets, your followers can still read what you wrote until it's gone. This can get kids in trouble if they say something in the heat of the moment.
- **It's a promotional tool for celebs.** Twitter reels teens in with behind-the-scenes access to celebrities' lives, adding a whole new dimension to celebrity worship. You may want to point out how much marketing strategy goes into the tweets of those they admire.

**Instagram** is a platform that lets users snap, edit, and share photos and 15-second videos -- either publicly or with a network of followers.

## Why it's popular

Instagram unites the most popular features of social media sites: sharing, seeing, and commenting on photos. Instagram also lets you apply fun filters and effects to your photos, making them look high-quality and artistic.