EAGLE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Monitor Apps & Websites Your Child Uses

The online world is an ever changing landscape for children, and parents are responsible for monitoring the ways in which they use apps and websites. Below are a few mobile apps and websites and their common uses to be aware of to support your conversations with your child around safe and responsible online activity. The minimum age for most of these platforms is 13, but it's never too early to start having these important conversations with your child.

Instagram is a photo-sharing site. Users follow others to view their posts and chat. Users can livestream and post short videos called "Reels." Users should keep accounts private and only allow those they know personally to follow them.

Snapchat is a photo/video sharing app that claims to auto-delete pictures after being opened. However, pictures and videos can be saved, screenshot, or screen recorded. It is also a messaging platform.

TikTok is a global community where users create and share short videos. As with most apps, there can be mature and explicit content. Strangers can follow public accounts, and instant messaging and comments allow people to communicate easily. Many users seek as many likes, followers, and fans as possible.

X *(formerly Twitter)* allows users to share short statements, links, and media. Accounts should be private to protect personal information and prevent strangers from sending direct messages.

Facebook (w/ Messenger) is a popular social networking site. Personal information should be limited and care should be taken when posting and sharing. Facebook can also be used to broadcast live.

Messenger is a tool of Facebook. Users can message and call their Facebook connections.

YouTube is a video sharing site that can be accessed online. Many videos are public, and some include mature or explicit content. Users can create profiles that other users subscribe to, as well as livestream.

Reddit is a content sharing site. Users post pictures, videos, links, or personal stories and questions. Content can be mature and graphic in nature.

Roblox is a platform where users create experiences, usually in the form of games. Roblox encourages users to play and chat with "friends," so review what settings are enabled for your children and use parental controls. While Roblox is popular with youth, there are many adults on Roblox as well.

Fortnite is a multi-platform video game. Users can play solo or in squads, and play with strangers they are paired with online. Check parental controls and watch out for V-buck (Fortnite currency) scams.

Gaming consoles such as Xbox, PlayStation, and Nintendo Switch can be used to access the internet. In addition to online gaming and messaging apps, multiple services allow users to talk, message, video call, and live broadcast. Each pose a risk of exposure to mature and explicit content, especially when chatting with users you don't know personally.

Unsettling New Frontier: AI Dating

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is making its way into the dating world, with various platforms letting users talk with a "virtual companion." These platforms serve as partners, romantic or otherwise, for users to practice their conversational skills and receive emotional support. However, even with minimal responses and human input, these platforms will generate mature and explicit content.