



CRANBOURNE

Safeguarding

Newsletter

June 2025

WhatsApp and Snapchat: convenient communication or a serious risk for children?

In today's digital age, staying connected has never been easier. Apps like WhatsApp and Snapchat offer teenagers a fast, free, and convenient way to communicate.

Yet, the Cranbourne Safeguarding team often work with students and families that have had issues with communication over these two particular apps.

In this month's article we decided to focus on some of the main features of each app and things for parents/carers be aware of.

WhatsApp: Good things to know

With over 2 billion users worldwide, WhatsApp is a dominant messaging platform among young people. But while it offers many benefits—like easily staying in touch with friends and family, it also comes with risks it is important to be aware of:

1. End-to-End Encryption

WhatsApp's end-to-end encryption ensures that only the sender and receiver can read the messages. While this protects privacy, it also makes it harder for parents and even the police to monitor harmful content. If your child is being bullied, harassed, or exposed to inappropriate material, you might not even know it's happening.

2. Group Chats and Peer Pressure

Group chats can be breeding grounds for bullying, exclusion, or the sharing of explicit content. It's not uncommon for children to feel pressured to participate in harmful conversations or share personal content to fit in.

3. Stranger Danger and Scams

Even though WhatsApp is tied to phone numbers, it's still possible for strangers or scammers to reach your child—especially if they've shared their number on public social media profiles. Phishing attempts and inappropriate content from unknown contacts are growing concerns.

4. Exposure to Graphic or Inappropriate Content

Teens may receive forwarded images, videos, or messages containing violent, pornographic, or extremist content. These messages can spread quickly in group chats or from contact to contact, often without warning.

5. Digital Addiction and Sleep Disruption

With constant notifications and the pressure to reply instantly, WhatsApp can become addictive. Many teens check messages late into the night, leading to poor sleep, anxiety, and decreased academic performance.



Snapchat: Good things to know

Snapchat is one of the most popular social media apps among teenagers, known for its fun filters and disappearing messages. But while it may seem harmless on the surface, it's important for parents to understand the potential risks.

1. A False Sense of Privacy

One of Snapchat's main features is its disappearing messages, which many users believe makes the platform safer or more private than traditional texting or other apps. However, this illusion of privacy can encourage risky behaviour, such as sexting, cyberbullying, or sharing images and comments they wouldn't otherwise send. What many don't realize is that screenshots, screen recordings, and third-party apps can still capture and save content - even if the sender believes it's gone forever.



2. Location Sharing and Snap Map

Snapchat's Snap Map feature allows users to share their real-time location with friends or even the public, depending on their settings. While it may seem like a fun way to stay connected, this feature can make children vulnerable to location tracking, stalking, or unwanted visits. Many users don't fully understand the implications of sharing their location constantly, and without strict privacy settings, anyone on their friends list can see exactly where they are at any given time.

3. The pressure to engage

Snapchat encourages constant engagement, with features like Snapstreaks that reward users for daily messaging. This could lead to anxiety over losing a streak, or increased pressure to present a filtered, curated self, affecting self-esteem and body image.

What You Can Do:

- Set phone-free hours, especially at night. Restrict wi-fi access at set times.
- Encourage screen breaks and offline activities.
- Use tools like Screen Time (iOS) or Digital Wellbeing (Android) to track app usage.
- Talk to your child about responsible messaging.
- Encourage open communication about what they're seeing or experiencing online.
- Ask about the groups your child is in and who is in them.
- Remind them they can leave any chat that makes them uncomfortable.
- Teach them how to mute or block users who cross boundaries.
- On WhatsApp check privacy settings: ensure your child's "Last Seen," profile photo, and status are only visible to contacts.
- Check your child's privacy settings on Snapchat to ensure they are not sharing their location.
- Talk to your child about not responding to unknown numbers.
- Be alert for signs of distress that may indicate unwanted contact.
- Discuss what kind of content is not okay to view or share.
- Reinforce the importance of reporting inappropriate material to a trusted adult or directly to WhatsApp.

Links to support:



CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>



NSPCC Childline: <https://www.childline.org.uk>

Please reach out to our school safeguarding team if you would like any more information or support: dsl@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk

childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111



Childline is here to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. You can talk about anything. Whether it is something big or small, Childline's trained counsellors are here to help you.



CEOP is a law enforcement agency that helps keep young people safe from sexual abuse & online grooming. You can make a report directly if you are worried about online sexual abuse or something that has happened online which has made you feel unsafe, scared or worried.

YOUNGMINDS



Young Minds is the UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health. They want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health and all young people get the mental health support they need, when they need it, no matter what.
www.youngminds.org.uk



Nude image of you online?
We can help take it down.



Report Remove is here to help young people under 18 in the UK to confidentially report sexual images & videos of themselves online & remove them from the internet. It is against the law for anyone to share a sexual image or video of someone who is under 18; **Report Remove is safe, easy and free.**

THE MIX



The MIX is a UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile. Whatever issue a young person is facing, **The Mix** is always there for them!
www.themix.org.uk

shout 85258



Shout is the UK's first and only free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope. To start a conversation, text the word 'SHOUT' to 85258. Their trained volunteers are there to listen at any time of day or night, & messages won't appear on the phone bill.

WE WILL LISTEN and WE CAN HELP



At Cranbourne every single staff member is responsible for safeguarding. All staff are here to promote the welfare of our students & protect them from harm.

All staff are trained to take the appropriate action and ensure that someone from the safeguarding team follows up to support you with specific assistance and guidance:



Mrs K Reddy
Lead DSL



Mrs K Gare
Deputy DSL



Miss S Conlon
Deputy DSL



Mrs C Ryan
Deputy DSL

We want you to talk to who you feel most comfortable; it could be your form tutor, your Head of House, someone from the DSL team or any other member of staff.



Mrs P Corrigan
Deputy DSL



Mrs C Millett
Deputy DSL



Miss R Alner
Head of House



Mrs T Simpson
Head of House



Mrs J Vaughan
Head of House



Miss S Miller
DDSSL / HOH