

# Snapchat



Snapchat is a photo messaging app with a twist and appeals to people of all ages. You can take photos, record videos, add text and filters, and then share them with friends. These 'snaps' aren't saved by default, and you can control how long viewers can view the 'snap' (ranging from 1-10 seconds). If someone screenshots a 'snap' that has been sent to them, Snapchat will notify the sender of this.

## Age restricted? **YES**

Snapchat is not intended for use by children under the age of 13.



## Who can my child communicate with?

You can add friends from your mobile contacts, their snapchat username, by Snapcode, or with the Add Nearby feature. Ensure that your child's security settings are up to date and that they are only communicating with real friends on the app.



## Can I control location settings?

There are 3 location settings to choose from on Snapchat: Ghost Mode, My Friends, and Select Friends. Ghost mode means that you are the only person who can physically see your location on the Map. You can still see your friends but they cannot see you.

My Friends means that all of your contacts on Snapchat can see your location.

Select Friends means that users can look through their friends list and then decide which of their friends they want to be able to view their location.

**REMEMBER**-Screenshots can be taken of 'snaps' that are sent, however the sender will be notified. Make sure your child is aware of the risks around this, and also with sharing inappropriate content.

## Can you block users?

By blocking someone in Snapchat, this will mean they are prevented from sending 'snaps', chats, or viewing your stories. Deleting someone means they will no longer show up in your friends list, but it doesn't necessarily mean that they will not be able to view your 'snaps'.

Have a conversation with your child about who they have as their friends, and tell them to not communicate with unknown users. Blocking of users may be appropriate if they are contacting you/them inappropriately.



## What Can I do to protect my child?

Have regular conversations around who they are communicating with on Snapchat. If necessary, regularly sit down and get them to show you who is in their contact list. Explain the significance of a 'Digital Footprint', and also around sending appropriate messages. Remind your child that sending sexual messages and images is against the law. Urge them to report any inappropriate behaviour to Snapchat, and also make their parents/guardians aware so that it can be reported to the police if necessary.

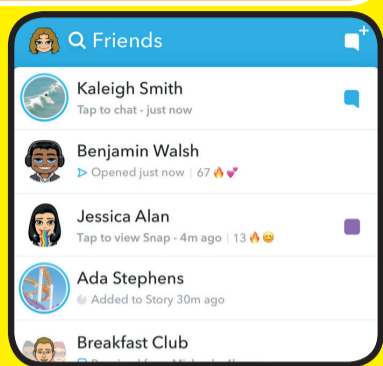
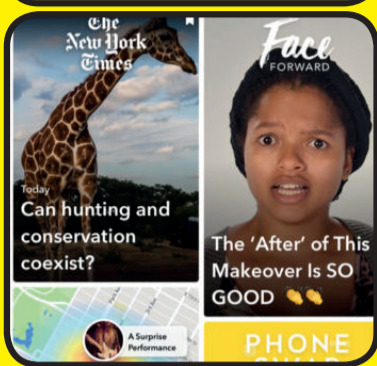


Further Information: [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org),  
[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk), [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk),  
[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)





Snapchat is a photo sharing app for mobile phones and tablets. The app allows users to share images, videos and chat with friends. Users can share images and videos directly to specific friends, or through a 'story' shared with their entire friend list, which documents the last 24 hours. In a study, Snapchat was ranked the 4th most negative app in terms of having an impact on young people's health and wellbeing, with children feeling that they can use the app Snapchat to "make you look pretty".



# What parents need to know about SNAPCHAT

## EXPOSING YOUR CHILD'S EXACT LOCATION

The 'Snap Map' lets you share your EXACT location in real-time through a map on the app. The users location updates when the app has been opened on the device. There is a warning on the Snapchat website about uploading images and videos to 'Our Story', stating that "Snaps you submit to Our Story can still show up on the Map, no matter what location setting you choose!". When uploading to Our Story, your child's image or video could appear in "Search results and Stories on or off Snapchat - today or in the future".

## SCREENSHOTS & SAVED MESSAGES

While Snapchat's gimmick is that all photos, videos and text disappear eventually, users still have the capability to screenshot or record what has been sent to them. Users may sometimes forget that screenshotting is a possibility in the app and send a compromising image or message to somebody that they think they trust. They may also accidentally send an image or message to somebody who they do not trust. Simply by pressing and holding a message, allows the user to save a message they have received, which can be screenshotted or used against them at a later date.

## SEXTING

Due to 'Snaps' disappearing, (users can even send a one second photo or video), Snapchat has become the chosen platform for children and young people to send sexually explicit images or 'selfies'. Once a photo/video has been screenshotted, or recorded using another device or software, this can lead to further dangers, such as blackmail and cyberbullying. It is illegal to make, possess, download, store and share sexual images, photos and videos of a person under the age of 18. This also includes any sexual images, photos and videos that a child may have taken of themselves. However, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed, but taking formal action isn't in the public interest.



## SNAPSTREAKS & ADDICTION

'Snap Streaks' are gained when snaps have been sent back and forth consecutively between friends. The longer that Snaps are sent between users, the longer the streak becomes. Furthermore, Snapchat rewards users who have achieved high Snap Streaks, by gifting emojis, adding incentives for users to keep the streaks. Children invest time into making their streaks as high as possible: this can put an incredible amount of pressure on children and their friendships to make sure their streaks are continued.

## \*\*\*NEW FOR JULY 2018\*\*\*

### LENS EXPLORER

The Lens Studio on Snapchat gives users the freedom to use their imagination to design their own filters for themselves and others to use. Snapchat states that the lenses users create "must comply with our Lens Studio Submission Guidelines and Community Guidelines and must be appropriate for Snaphatters ages 13+." The Lens Explorer in the app now allows users to choose from thousands of these creations to alter their snaps. Anyone can create a Lens for Snapchat, which opens opportunities for age-inappropriate content to be uploaded.



# Top Tips for Parents



## DISCUSS THE RISKS OF SEXTING

It can be slightly awkward talking about this topic with your child, but if it helps them protect themselves, then it is worth it. Talk to them about the consequences of sexting and make sure that they're aware of the risks. Ensure your child knows that 'Snaps' can be screenshotted. Teach them that if they post anything potentially embarrassing or harmful (either of themselves or someone else) it can have severe consequences; the message, image or video can be shared further.

## USE 'GHOST MODE'

We highly recommend enabling Ghost Mode on the app so that your child's location will no longer be visible to anyone on the 'Snap Map'. To enable this, go onto the Snap Map and tap the cog in the top-right corner. Here, change the setting to 'Ghost Mode'.

## RESTRICT STORY VIEWS

Your child can add videos and images to their 'Story' throughout the day which will last for 24 hours. By default, anyone in a users friends list can see their story. We recommend checking the privacy settings to ensure that this has not been edited. This can simply be done in the apps settings under the 'Who Can View My Story' section. The options to choose from are 'My Friends', 'Everyone' or 'Custom' - we suggest that it is set to 'My Friends'.

## REPORTING A STORY, LENS, FILTER, SNAP OR MESSAGE

If your child comes across inappropriate Snapchat content, which may be sent directly to them or in another person's story, advise them to report it immediately. This may include an inappropriate lens, filter, message or Snap. To report an offensive lens, they should open the app and select the lens they want to report. An info button will appear above the lens. Click this, followed by the flag icon. This will send a report to Snapchat for further investigation. Reports can also be made on the Snapchat support website: [support.snapchat.com](https://support.snapchat.com).

## \*\*\*NEW FOR JULY 2018\*\*\*

### HOW TO DELETE A MESSAGE

Advise your child never to send any negative messages (or images through gallery in the chat on the app) as screenshots can still be taken. You should also advise your child to screenshot any negative comments that they receive as the sender can also delete them. To delete a message, simply press and hold the sent message and press delete.



## TURN OFF 'QUICK ADD'

'Quick add' helps friends find each other on the app. This is based on mutual friends or if their number is in their phone book. Explain to your child that this feature can open up their profile to strangers. We highly recommend that your child turns off the 'Quick Add' feature. This can be done in the settings.

SOURCES: Status of Mind: Social media and young people's mental health | Life in Likes - Children's Commissioners Report | Google Play Store | <https://support.snapchat.com/en-US> | <https://nepsanity.net/snapchat-parent-review/> | BT.com | Independent.co.uk