



Online Safety Newsletter (Parents) Autumn 2017



Back to school advice...

Looking for advice now your child has moved up a year group at school or maybe is even attending a new school. The Internet Matters website for parents has launched some advice for Back to school about devices and parental controls, together with conversations and privacy settings.

Further information:
<https://www.internetmatters.org/start-school-safe-online/>

What's all this fuss about SnapMaps?

You may be aware that there was a lot of media interest in July when the new feature of SnapChat was launched in June 2017. SnapMaps is a street map, similar to Google or Apple Maps, which also shows your locations to your friends if they have added each other. Users can disable location sharing on the map, or only open it to certain friends, but if they are showing location then this is down to the level of the building so home addresses are readily identifiable. The main concern here would be users accidentally revealing their location to "online friends" that they don't actually know.



The app doesn't quite track users in real-time, but updates their location every time they open the Snapchat app. If you haven't opened it for a few hours, you will disappear from the map.

We would recommend that users put Snap Chat into Ghost Mode, which means that you are the only person who can see your location on the map. You can still see the locations of your friends but they will be unable to see you. This setting will ensure that you have complete control over who knows your location. However, if you submit a Snap to 'Our Story' this Snap may still be public, and may reveal your location, even if you are using Ghost Mode.

Many other apps such as Instagram, Facebook, Muscial.ly etc also use location services but the popularity of Snapchat makes this a bigger concern.

<https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/article/location-snap-map>

Pornography: Fantasy vs reality

There is concern that children and young people are learning about sex from pornography. Some of these concerns are discussed in this BBC article <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-41499243> Are children turning to pornography to educate themselves about sex? Are boys coercing girls to do things they later regret? A 24-year-old secondary school teacher tells the BBC she's shocked by the stories she hears from her teenage pupils. Her personal account contains some frank language. "The language boys use to discuss sex and sexual acts is degrading and shows a lack of understanding of consent and the actual mutual respect required to have meaningful sex."

"The girls, equally, are taught not to respect their own bodies and don't comprehend the notion that they may be being used.

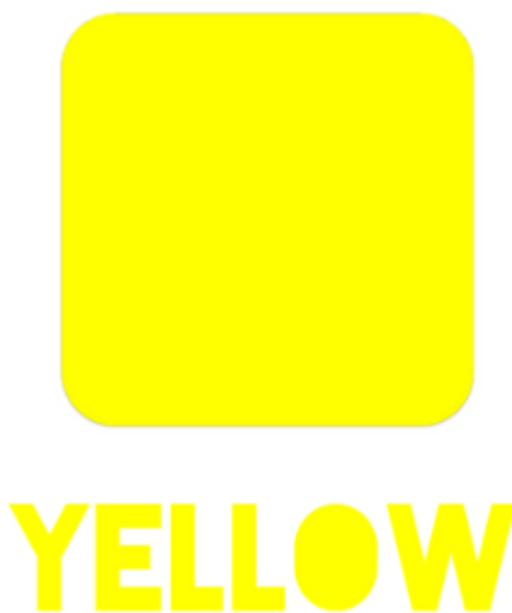
Parents may feel this is very difficult subject area to talk about; they may even feel that it is up to school to educate young people but young people feel that sex education concentrates on the biology of sex, contraception and sexually transmitted infections rather than some of the other aspects around healthy relationships, what is "normal", what is consent? With the lack of information out there for young people, perhaps it is unsurprising that many young people will use pornography to try and answer some of their own curiosities and questions about sex. The NSPCC has useful information for parents about pornography – why children may choose to view it, how to have discussions with their children etc <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-porn/> ; the Childline website has information for young people <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/online-porn/>



A recent Voice Box video for Childline talks about some myths surrounding pornography and what some of the issues might be for young people in a non-threatening or patronising way. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLLj-w85Qb0>

Yellow

We have had a number of parents concerned about their child's use of the app Yellow. Yellow markets itself as a social media app for 13+ age group. To create a profile on Yellow, users have to provide their: real name, mobile number, date of birth, gender, location, a real photo that shows their face. Users are invited to swipe right on profiles they like and swipe left on profiles they don't, and you can endlessly browse the profiles of people in your area and automatically link to follow their profiles on Snapchat and Instagram. If you swipe right on a person who has swiped right on your profile, you can then chat and automatically follow them on Snapchat. The app allows users to share pictures, messages and live stream.



Yellow state that nude images will be removed <https://www.yellw.co/> for a safety guides.

However, it appears that there is a lot of sexual content and we have also dealt with some cases where parents have discovered that their children are using the app when the child tells them about the overly sexualised messages and requests for nude images they have been receiving. Yellow is often referred as the tinder for teens after Tinder removed it's

under 18 section. ITV's Loose Women presenter Nadia Sawalha described the app as "a depressing meat market" after posing on the app as a 15-year old girl <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-4944480/ITV-Loose-Women-shows-dangers-Yellow-app-teens.html> and NSPCC warned last year that the lack of age verification does pose risks for young people.



Let's keep kids safe online

Whether you want to set up parental controls, adjust privacy settings or get advice on social networks, experts from the free O2 & NSPCC helpline are here to help. Parents can ring the NSPCC/O2 helpline on 0808 800 5002 24-hours a day. You can also book a visit to an O2 guru at one of the O2 shops who can help you set up your child's mobile devices.

