

CORNERSTONE
DAY SCHOOL

Parents Matter

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The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Social Media

Part 5 in a series on Social Media and Your Child

How to Best Monitor Your Child's Online Life

It is very important to monitor your child's online activity in order to ensure that they are practicing safe online practices. The challenge for parents is to find the balance between monitoring your child's online life, while simultaneously allowing some level of privacy. As a parent, you have the power to decide the intensity over which you want to monitor your child's online use.

There are many different companies that have developed an array of products to help with monitoring your child's online activity. Below is a list of a few of the more popular ones:

Circle—a hardware device that hooks into the internet and allows you to implement control over access to YouTube, Facebook and Fortnite. It is user-friendly and accurately reports usage. This also offers an opportunity to get more detailed reporting of things like which YouTube videos have been watched.

Monqi Phone—this is a device that already has the controls built into it. As a parent, you can download an app that allows you to set limits, track location, and browse activity of what your child is doing online. The one negative is that it can be expensive.

Boomerang—allows you to have control over access to different apps and websites. Allows logging of text messages and phone calls, including tracking the location of your child.

Qustodio—installs software onto the device and creates dashboards where you can set limits, including blocking specific apps. It also has a location tracker.

Phone Sheriff—this provides an opportunity for parents to set parameters around use: you can block numbers,

set time restrictions, monitor texts and set alerts. It also has a location tracker.

Teen Safe—parents are able to monitor their kid's activities so that you are able to see with whom your children are communicating. This even allows you to access deleted messages and view which sites your child is visiting.

Many of the companies that provide these apps and software offer free trials which provides an opportunity to let you try out several products until you find the one that best meets your individual needs. It may also be beneficial to contact your service provider and inquire about what options may be available for monitoring.

It is important to also implement other measures to monitor your child's use, such as knowing their password and setting parameters around amount of time they can be online. It is also beneficial to enhance your knowledge about social media and to have the awareness of what is out there. Lastly, it is crucial to have candid dialogue with your children about social media, possible dangers and safety precautions. Even though children and adolescents may act as though they don't want to hear what you have to say, it is important to set the foundation of what is acceptable vs. what is not.

Resources:

www.internetmatters.org/resources/monitoring-apps-parents-guide/
www.learningliftoff.com/5-best-monitoring-apps-for-parents/



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Parents Matter is published regularly throughout the school year as a service to the parents of students enrolled at Cornerstone Day School. Each issue highlights an important topic for parents with practical suggestions for helping their child continue to grow and overcome their emotional challenges.