



Welcome to Snapchat, a new way to share moments with friends on iPhone and Android. We're excited that the Snapchat community is growing so quickly and we know that many people are new to the service. Until you try Snapchat for yourself, it may sound confusing or raise some questions. You may ask yourself why anyone would want a photo to disappear if there isn't anything "wrong" with it?

On traditional social networks, users tend to feel pressure to curate the perfect representation of their lives for their friends, coworkers, and relatives. It's normal to worry about what people in your network might think about the things that you post. Sometimes this means that we say things that we think people will like, rather than expressing who we really are.

Snapchat creates a place to be funny, honest or however else you might feel when you take and share a snap with family and friends. It's sharing that lives in the moment, and stays in the moment.

Our goal with this guide is to provide parents with detailed information about our product, as well as suggestions for how to handle issues and concerns that may arise. We encourage you to review these materials and have an open conversation with your family. Talking with your family about what is appropriate to share online is a great way to help make sure that everyone enjoys the Snapchat experience.

# SNAPCHAT GUIDE FOR PARENTS

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## WHAT IS SNAPCHAT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Snapchat is a mobile application that is compatible with Android smartphones and Apple's iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad devices.

Snapchat allows users to capture pictures and videos and send them as messages to other Snapchat users. Every Snapchat message has a viewing time limit ranging from 1 to 10 seconds, as selected by the sender. The timer starts when the recipient opens the message. When the time limit is reached, the message is deleted and can no longer be viewed using Snapchat.

Using Snapchat is similar to making a phone call - a record of the communication persists, but the actual content of the communication does not.



## HOW ARE SNAPCHAT ACCOUNTS CREATED?

After downloading and installing Snapchat from the Google Play (Android) or Apple AppStore marketplaces, users must provide an email address and select a password to create an account. If Snapchat is installed on a device with phone service, the phone number will also be provided.

For more details on what information is collected and how it may be used, please see our Privacy Policy ([www.snapchat.com/privacy](http://www.snapchat.com/privacy)).



## WHO IS SNAPCHAT FOR?

Snapchat is not intended for children under the age of 13. Minors ages 13-17 should have permission from a parent or legal guardian before using Snapchat.

If you are the parent or legal guardian of a minor that is using Snapchat without your permission, please refer to the *'How can I prevent my teen*

from using Snapchat?’ section of this guide.

For more details on eligibility and age, please see our Terms of Use ([www.snapchat.com/terms](http://www.snapchat.com/terms)).



## MY CHILD IS UNDER THE AGE OF 13 AND HAS A SNAPCHAT ACCOUNT, IS THAT OKAY?

No. Children under the age of 13 are **prohibited** from having Snapchat accounts by the Snapchat Terms of Use. If your child is under 13 and has created a Snapchat account, **you must delete** it by going to [www.snapchat.com/a/delete\\_account](http://www.snapchat.com/a/delete_account) and entering their username and password.

If Snapchat obtains knowledge that a user is under the age of 13, it is our policy to terminate their account and delete their personal information.



## WHAT DOES MY TEEN NEED TO KNOW ABOUT USING SNAPCHAT?

We encourage all users to take an active role in protecting their **privacy** and **safety**, and to help others by practicing good **digital citizenship**.

### **PRIVACY**

In order to message someone on Snapchat, you need to know their username and add them to your “*My Friends*” list.

Snapchat’s “*Find My Friends*” feature allows users to look up their friends’ usernames by uploading the phone numbers in their device’s address book and searching for accounts that match those numbers.

By default, anyone who knows your username or phone number can send you a message.

**You can configure Snapchat to only accept messages from users on your “My Friends” list.** To change this setting, tap the camera icon as if you’re going to take a picture, then, tap the square button on the bottom right corner of the screen. Select “Settings” > go to “Who can send me snaps...” > select “My Friends” instead of “Everyone.”

To block a user, tap the Menu icon, select “My Friends,” locate their name in the list and swipe right across their name (or in Android, long-press the name). Press “Edit” and then “Block.” If you would like to delete a friend from your contacts, press “Delete.” Even if you haven’t added the user as a friend, their name will still appear in the “My Friends” list under “Recent” if they have sent you a message recently.

## **SAFETY**

**Under no circumstances is it okay to create, send, receive, or save a sexually explicit image of a minor.** It does not matter what the purpose or motive is, the willingness of the participants or the age of the recipient. Even a self-portrait can be considered a serious crime and may be a felony in the United States. **It is extremely important that Snapchat not be used in this manner and parents are strongly encouraged to educate their minor children on this subject.** If you have knowledge of, or are in possession of, a sexually explicit image of a minor; contact your local law enforcement for assistance and contact Snapchat to let us know (see below for details).

It is illegal in the United States to send a sexually explicit image to a minor or for an adult to sexually solicit a minor; any such incidents should be reported to your local law enforcement and to Snapchat (see below for details).

Advise your teen on the warning signs of someone pressuring them, pushing their boundaries or doing things that make them uncomfortable. Let your teen know who the adults are in their life that they can confide in.

Although Snapchat messages are designed to disappear in 10 seconds or less, there is no guarantee that the recipient won’t take a picture of the message using the “screenshot” feature of their phone or by taking a picture with a camera.

Snapchat attempts to detect when recipients take a screenshot and sends a notification to the sender, but even this is not foolproof.

As with any online service, one should always “Think Before You Send” and consider the trustworthiness of the intended recipient(s) before choosing to share an image or video with them—if it’s too sensitive to risk someone else seeing it, then it shouldn’t be sent!

If you receive a bullying, abusive or otherwise unwanted message, do not respond to it—responding may encourage further messages. Instead, you should block the user and/or change your privacy settings to prevent future contact from the individual (see ‘Privacy’ section above). If you believe the sender’s behavior is unlawful, contact your local law enforcement for assistance.

### ***DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP***

**Help others.** Check in with your friends who use Snapchat and make sure that they know about the privacy settings and safety information.

**Think before you send.** How will your message make the other person feel? Would you be upset, embarrassed or get in trouble if they showed it to someone else? If you feel like you’re taking a risk or doing something that makes you even a little bit uncomfortable—stop what you’re doing and don’t send the message.

### **Have fun.**

Snapchat is supposed to be fun, if you’re not having fun or if you’re ruining someone else’s fun, *you’re doing it wrong* and you should re-think what you’re doing.



## SHOULD I USE SNAPCHAT WITH MY TEEN?

Yes! Snapchat is not just for teens—Snapchat users include parents, grandparents and adults of all ages. Snapchat is an easy and fun way for families to stay in touch.

Snapchat also provides delivery confirmation for every message sent, letting you know if your message has been delivered and when it has been opened.



## WHAT DOES SNAPCHAT COST? DO I NEED A DATA PLAN?

The Snapchat application is free to download and install. If your smartphone, iPod or iPad is using Wi-Fi to connect to the Internet, you may not experience any additional cost for usage. Otherwise Snapchat uses the data plan that you purchase with your smartphone. If your data usage exceeds what is allotted by your data plan, you could be subject to additional fees by your carrier.



## IS IT POSSIBLE TO SAVE SNAPCHAT MESSAGES?

Prior to transmitting a message, the sender is able to save a copy of the image they have composed. After sending a message, the sender can no longer view it through the Snapchat application.

Although the ability to save received messages is not part of the Snapchat application, it may be possible for recipients to use built-in features of the Android and Apple iOS operating systems to take a picture of the message and save it, in what is known as a “screenshot” or “screen-capture.” It is also possible to use a second device to take a picture of the message as it displays on the screen.

Snapchat attempts to detect if a recipient takes a screenshot and sends a notification to the sender when possible.



## **CAN I RETRIEVE, COPY OR INTERCEPT MESSAGES MY TEEN HAS SENT OR RECEIVED?**

In most cases once the recipient has viewed a message, it is automatically deleted from Snapchat's servers and cannot be retrieved by anyone, for any reason.

Snapchat is unable to provide parents with access to their children's messages.

Parents wishing to monitor the messages their teen receives through Snapchat should instruct their teen not to open Snapchat messages until they are able to view them together.

For more details please see the Snapchat Privacy Policy ([www.snapchat.com/privacy](http://www.snapchat.com/privacy)).



## **HOW CAN I DELETE MY TEEN'S ACCOUNT OR PREVENT THEM FROM USING SNAPCHAT?**

To delete an account, go to [www.snapchat.com/a/delete\\_account](http://www.snapchat.com/a/delete_account) and enter the account's username and password. Deleting an account is permanent and cannot be reversed, however it will still be possible to create a new account from the same device.

If you wish to delete your teen's Snapchat account and are unable to compel them to divulge or enter their password, you may submit a deletion request to Snapchat by completing the form located at [www.snapchat.com/static\\_files/deletion\\_request.pdf](http://www.snapchat.com/static_files/deletion_request.pdf).

On the Apple iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad devices, one can delete the Snapchat application and then use built-in parental control settings to restrict the ability to install new applications. One can also access the device's AppStore account to monitor which applications are installed.

For more information, see: <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4213>

On Android devices one can monitor and control which applications are installed by accessing the device's Google Play account at <http://play.google.com>. There are also a variety of third-party parental control applications available through the Google Play marketplace. Some of these applications may be useful for restricting or preventing access to Snapchat, however every application is different and Snapchat makes no claims as to their quality or effectiveness.



## **WHAT CAN I DO IF MY TEEN HAS RECEIVED AN INAPPROPRIATE OR UNWANTED MESSAGE?**

If your teen has received an unwanted message, instruct them not to respond to it—responding may encourage further messages. Instead, they should block the user and/or change their privacy settings to prevent future contact from the individual (see '*Privacy*' under the '*What does my teen need to know about using Snapchat?*' section of this guide).

If your minor child has received a sexual solicitation by an adult or a sexually explicit message and you believe a crime has been committed, please contact your local law enforcement. Also, please inform us of the incident by sending an email to [safety@snapchat.com](mailto:safety@snapchat.com) and be sure to include:

The nature of the message

Time and date the message was sent

Sender's username

Sender's approximate age (if known)

Username of your child's account that received the message

Age of the child that received the message



## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I BELIEVE MY MINOR CHILD HAS BEEN SENDING SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MESSAGES?**

In addition to whatever reprimand you feel is appropriate for the situation, we recommend informing your child of the criminal nature (under U.S. law) of recording, sending or receiving sexually explicit images of a minor (even self-portraits and even to/from other minors).

Ask them to delete any copies they may have saved and inform the recipients of the serious criminal consequences of possessing or distributing sexually explicit images of a minor. Contact your local law enforcement if you feel it is appropriate or necessary.

If necessary, refer to the *'How can I delete my teen's account or prevent them from using Snapchat?'* section of this guide as well.



## **CONTACTING LAW ENFORCEMENT AND ASSISTING IN INVESTIGATIONS**

If you believe that you or your child have been the victim of a crime that involved the use of Snapchat, please contact your local law enforcement for assistance.

With the right legal process from law enforcement, Snapchat is often able to preserve evidence, provide identifying information and cooperate with investigations.

It is important to note that once a message has been viewed, it is usually impossible for Snapchat to retrieve a copy of its contents, even for law enforcement. If you wish to preserve evidence of the on-going receipt of illicit messages, leave the messages unopened and contact law enforcement. Unopened messages will expire after 30 days, but prior to that, they can typically be retrieved by law enforcement.

Please let the investigating officer know that they can contact Snapchat via email at [lawenforcement@snapchat.com](mailto:lawenforcement@snapchat.com). We also offer a Law Enforcement Guide with further information, including a sample preservation letter and a release form for users wishing to authorize the release of their data to law enforcement without the need for a subpoena or search warrant.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Snapchat Support Team are fans of these resources, but Snapchat is not affiliated with them and is not responsible for their content.

### ***NETSMARTZ WORKSHOP***

Resources provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

<http://www.netsmartz.org>

### ***NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN'S CYBERTIPLINE***

Report child exploitation crimes to NCMEC for referral to law enforcement

<http://www.cybertipline.org>

### ***A PLATFORM FOR GOOD***

A project to help parents, teachers and teens to connect, share and do good online.

<http://www.aplatformforgood.org/>

### ***CONNECT SAFELY***

An Online Safety Resource for Parents, Teens and Educators

<http://www.ConnectSafely.org>