



**CRIME STOPPERS
CYBER SAFETY
RESOURCE GUIDES:**

Social Media

*We remain committed to our mission
to **solve and prevent serious crime**
in the Greater Houston Area.*



TERMS TO KNOW

Algorithm: A set of rules used to solve a problem. In social media terminology, however, people often use ‘algorithm’ as a shorthand for ‘feed algorithm’, which is the set of rules a social network uses to automatically decide which posts come first in your feed.

Avatar/Profile Picture: A small image that represents you on a social network. It can be a real photo of you, a corporate logo, or anything you want your followers to identify as ‘you’ on social.

Bio: the section of any digital profile that tells new or prospective followers who you are and it is the first thing users see when they discover your profile.

Clickbait: Web content with a misleading or sensationalist headline designed to get readers to click through to the full story, which is generally a disappointment. Clickbait’s goal is usually to generate pageviews and advertising revenue. All social networks have taken a stance against clickbait, and algorithms are designed not to surface clickbait posts.

Direct Message (DM): A private message sent directly to a user’s inbox. DMs exist in contrast to public forms of interaction on social media like commenting on an image or posting on a user’s timeline.

Disappearing Content/Ephemeral Content: Posts on social media that delete themselves automatically after a set amount of time has passed. Instagram and Snapchat Stories are notable examples, as these sets of photos and videos disappear after 24 hours.

Feed: A generic term for the stream of content you see from other users.

Filter: A photo effect that can be applied to images before publishing them. Filters are available on Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, and many other apps with camera integrations.

Friend: A person that you connect with on Facebook. A friend is a two-way connection—both you and your friend must endorse the relationship.

Geotag: A specific location added to a photo, video, or other social media post. Geotags can expose your posts to more people, since content is often searchable by location.

GIF: An acronym for Graphics Interchange Format, a file format that supports both static and animated images. GIFs rose to popularity to react on social media without words.

Group: An online community within a social network. Groups can be public or private. Within a group, community members with a common interest can share information and discuss relevant topics.

Handle: This is your username on social media. It is usually noted as @username.

Hashtag: A word or phrase preceded by the “#” sign. Hashtags are used on social media to tag posts as part of a larger conversation or topic. Clicking a hashtag reveals the latest posts that include the tag. Hashtags are searchable and serve a similar role to keywords.

Influencer: A social media user with a significant audience who can drive awareness about a trend, topic, company, or product.

Like: A quick way of showing that you—literally—like the content posted by simply clicking a button. On Facebook, the Like button is a thumbs-up, while on Instagram and Twitter, a Like is indicated by a heart. Liking content also works like bookmarking, since you can go back later to view the content you have Liked.

Live stream: A real-time video shared over the Internet. Most social networks now offer live streaming options that include the possibility to interact with viewers, who can submit written comments and questions throughout the broadcast.

Lurker: This is someone who watches a social media feed or belongs to a social media group but does not engage with the content with a like or reply.

Meme: A joke or comment made for sharing on social networks. It usually appears in the form of a graphic or GIF with text above the image or superimposed.

Selfie: a self-portrait photograph, usually taken with the front camera on a smartphone and shared on social media sites.

Snap: Each post on Snapchat is also called a Snap. Users can add filters, text, drawings, or emoji to their content before sending it.

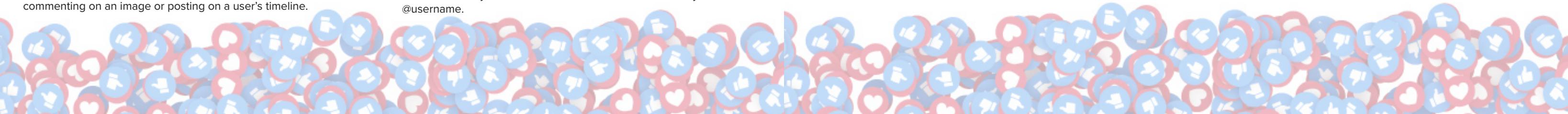
Stories: A form of disappearing content on Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat that disappears after 24 hours.

Tag: A keyword added to a social media post to categorize content. You can also tag someone in a post or photo, which creates a link to their social media profile and associates them with the content.

Troll: A social media user who makes deliberately offensive or annoying postings with the sole aim of provoking other users.

Verified: Users who have proven your identity to the social media platform provider and gained a verified label in return, usually in the form of a checkmark. This is usually reserved for brands, journalists, and other public figures as a way of preventing fraud and protecting the integrity of the person or organization behind the account.

Viral: When a particular post brings in an unusually large number of engagement. An exceptional number of shares is the clearest sign of going viral, as your post spreads across the internet like a virus.



TOP SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Social media platforms are everchanging. While Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are the top apps of concern at this time, that could change at any moment. Make sure to pay attention to platforms that:

- track location
- allow direct messages
- allow disappearing content
- have a significant amount of inappropriate content
- provide ample opportunities for cyberbullying or victimization.

TikTok

It is important to note that TikTok is not owned by an American company and therefore it is unclear what exactly is being done with data collected from users.

Features & Concerns:

- Location Services
- Direct Messaging
- Inappropriate Content
- Cyberbullying
- Live Streaming
(for users with 1,000+ followers)
- Group Chats
- Video Chats



Snapchat

Snapchat is best known for its disappearing content, and this is the top feature of concern. Snapchat also has a super accurate location service called SnapMaps that should be turned off for all users.



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- Cyberbullying

Instagram

Instagram is a top platform for human trafficking grooming via direct messages. 79% of minor sex trafficking interactions begin online via platforms like Instagram.

Features & Concerns:

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- Group Chats
- Direct Messaging
- Disappearing Content
- Inappropriate Content
- Cyberbullying



YouTube

YouTube is the second most used search engine in the world and there is over 500hrs of content uploaded to the platform every minute. Because of this, there is a lot of inappropriate information that appears on this platform and even the kid's version of this platform, YouTube Kids.



Safety Tips:

- Utilize safety settings and parental controls
- Avoid allowing students to use YouTube alone or behind closed doors
- Actively monitor videos on YouTube. Even videos targeted to kids can have inappropriate or pornographic content within the video.

Social Media Monitoring Tools:

Bark (best for social media monitoring: Analyzes text, emails, social media and then sends you concerning content along with suggestions on how to address the situation and talking points. You must have device to install OR the user must accept all push notifications to connect with all social media, text, and email platforms. Stays up to date on language and signs of bullying, suicide, violence, adult content, depression etc so more passive content of concern can be monitored. Options for \$5/month (\$49 annually) or \$14/month (\$99 annually).

Qustodio (best for teens): See what websites are visited, block dangerous content, see communications, protect privacy, manage how and when to be online. Automatically reports activity back to you and has a dashboard where you can view and manager online activity. Free option.

Net Nanny (best for young kids): Limits the type of content and websites your kid can access and allows you to schedule when your child can access the internet and social media. You must have the physical device to install software. Various plans, but the most common option is for a 5-device plan for \$79.99.

Did you know?
62%
of teens
spend more than
4 hours a day on
social media

Contact Us

We hope that this resource guide is beneficial to you, your family and your community. Please reach out if you have any questions, would like more information or would like to request a presentation.

For a student related presentation requests and questions, contact: ssi@crime-stoppers.org

For parent & community requests and questions, contact: scp@crime-stoppers.org

How to Report



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