

ATTENTION PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Important information on popular smartphone apps

Dryden Middle School would like to take a moment to share some helpful information about a few smartphone apps that we believe all parents and guardians should know about. Many of you already know about Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and Vine. However, there is a new wave of social media and smartphone apps that students are using. We strongly encourage you to have a meaningful conversation with your child about these apps, as well as the safety concerns and consequences associated with them.

Social Media Apps



AFTER SCHOOL

This popular app allows users to join their school/user group based on GPS location and social media (Facebook, etc.) verification, which then allows them to make anonymous posts about activities, events, and people at their school. While the app was designed as a “safe space” for students to express their feelings, it has become a venue through which users make targeted comments that are derogatory, hurtful, humiliating, and otherwise inappropriate in nature.

Other popular social media apps that are similar to After School include:



Ask.fm



Kik Messenger



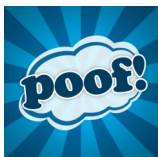
Yik Yak



Whisper

Data & Information Hiding Apps

These apps are designed to hide information such as texts, photos, emails, videos, other apps, and many other forms of information and media. What makes these apps so popular, especially with students, is that these apps hide various forms of information and media from plain sight, and often disguise themselves as something innocent and/or useful. Some of these “hiding apps” even have the ability to hide apps and other forms of information and media from parental monitoring features such as iCloud. A few popular “hiding apps” include;



Poof!



Smart Hide
Calculator



Hide It Pro



Vault

While there are many other apps that fall into these categories, our goal was to offer a quick snapshot of what many students are using in their everyday lives. We encourage you to investigate the many other apps that are out there by exploring what they do, how they function, and the many ways in which they can impact not only the social and emotional well-being of our students and children, but also their safety.