**Whisper**- This app allows you to post secrets anonymously and also allows you to chat with other users in your geographic area.

***Why It’s Dangerous:*** Many children are drawn to communicating with strangers, feeling that their secrets are safer with them than with their friends. This app is a perfect tool for ill-intentioned strangers looking to connect with young people because it allows you to exchange messages with people nearest to you (so anonymity can be easily lost).

**YikYak**  - All Yik Yak users are anonymous. They don’t create a profile or account, but they can post comments that are accessible to the nearest 500 people (within a 1-5 mile radius). [**A psychiatrist called this**](http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2014/05/09/psychiatrist-view-yik-yak-is-most-dangerous-app-ive-ever-seen/) the most dangerous app he’d ever seen because it “can turn a school into a virtual chat room where everyone can post his or her comments, anonymously. Untruthful, mean, character-assassinating short messages are immediately seen by all users in a specific geographic area.”

**Why It’s Dangerous:**This app is causing problems in schools across the United States, with students maliciously slandering teacher, staff, and other students. In fact, several schools have now banned smart phones from campus because of this particular app.

**Kik**- A free app-based alternative texting service that allows texts/pictures to be sent without being logged in the phone history. (Similar apps: Viber, WhatsApp, TextNow)

***Why It’s Dangerous***– Makes it easier for your child to talk to strangers without your knowledge since it bypasses the wireless providers’ short message services (SMS). Children also think they can “sext” without parents finding out. In addition, strangers can send your child a “friend request.”

**Snapchat**– Allows you to capture an image or video and make it available to a recipient for a specific time. After that time limit is up, the picture/video automatically disappears forever…or so Snapchat claims. (Similar apps: Poke, Wire, and Wickr) **(Snapchat Charges 99 Cents to Replay Disappearing Messages, *Wall Street Journal,* Sept. 15, 2015)**

***Why It’s Dangerous*** – Kids can receive (or send ) sexually inappropriate photos. This app also makes kids feel like they can “sext” or send inappropriate pictures without consequences because the image will self-destruct automatically. The truth is that nothing sent over the internet disappears. There are always ways to retrieve and capture those images.

**Vine**– Allows users to watch and post six second videos.

***Why It’s Dangerous*** –While many of the videos are harmless, porn videos do pop up into the feed, exposing your children to sexually explicit material. You can also easily search for/access porn videos on this app. Predators utilize this app to search for teens and find their location. Then they try to connect with them via other messaging apps.

**ChatRoulette**and **Omegle**– These apps allow you to video chat with strangers.

***Why It’s Dangerous*** – Not only are users chatting with strangers, they could be chatting with a [**fake stranger.**](http://www.businessinsider.com/child-molesters-technology-2014-3) “Chat sites like Chatroulette and Omegle have done their best to produce systems that warns users when the people they are chatting to are potentially using fake webcam software, however developers still manage to slip under their radars with frequent updates.” So a fifty-year-old man could set up a fake webcam and use images from a 15-year-old boy that looks like a teen celebrity to convince your child to send inappropriate pictures or get information about your child’s location.

**Tinder**– Users post pictures and scroll through the images of other users. When they think someone is attractive they can “flag” the image. If that person has also “flagged” them in return, the app allows you to contact them.

***Why It’s Dangerous***– This app, and similar apps such as Down, Skout, Pure, and Blendr, are primarily used for hooking up.

**Poof**– Hides other apps on your phone. You select which apps you would like to hide and their icons will no longer show up on your smartphone screen.

***Why It’s Dangerous*** – If children have apps that they want to keep hidden from their parents, all they have to do is download this app and “poof,” their screen is clear of any questionable apps. So, if you see the poof app on their phone, you may want to ask them what they are hiding.

Source: <http://www.crosswalk.com/family/parenting/kids/9-most-dangerous-apps-for-kids.html>

# Instagram and Your Kids: 5 Hidden Dangers

by [Chris McKenna](http://protectyoungminds.org/author/chris-mckenna/) | May 12, 2016 | [Digital Citizenship](http://protectyoungminds.org/category/digital-citizenship/), [Proactive Parenting Tips](http://protectyoungminds.org/category/proactive-parenting-tips/), [Tech Solutions](http://protectyoungminds.org/category/internet-safety-2/)

In less than five years, Instagram has gone from “that picture app” to become **the most popular social media platform with tweens (ages 8-12) and teens (ages 13-18),** with no signs of a slow-down.

In September 2015, Instagram[reached 400 million users](http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/important-instagram-stats/), with over 75% of its user base living outside of the U.S. It is the doorway social media experience for most young people, making it critical that parents have a keen understanding of its uses and risks.

## ****I can bully kids and not get caught**** Using a fake account is a common tool utilized by cyberbullies in the social media world. On Instagram, fake accounts are called “Finstas,” and they are used as a second account that is shared with only very close friends, or in a sinister fashion as an anonymous way to comment horrible things on certain pictures. (Freedom13 comment: Also used by predators and traffickers.)

## ****I can easily find porn. Yes, straight up video sex**** With over 400 million users, and an endless stream of pictures categorized with hashtags, Instagram could easily be classified as an unfiltered internet search engine. Do you want to see cute kittens? Just search for #cutekittens. Do you want to see spring break pictures? Type in #springbreak. Do you want to see naked photos? Type in #topless. Yes, Instagram contains a massive, unfiltered amount of pornography.

## ****I can access Tumblr, Google, Bing, Yahoo and Twitter without ever leaving Instagram**** Through the Instagram blog users can access a Twitter search, and by using the Google, Bing or Yahoo accounts on Twitter, perform unfiltered searches for anything. All without ever leaving Instagram! ****The solution for parents?**** On iOS devices, add Twitter to the “never allow” list under “restrictions” to prevent access to this Twitter search.

## ****There are no parental controls in Instagram**** This is one of Instagram’s greatest weaknesses. (no filtering. And) With a simple click on “clear search history” in the settings, all user and hashtag searches are instantly cleared. (So kids can hide what they have been viewing)

## BONUS: Safety Precaution

It’s easy for people and predators to figure out where you live by searching the locations of your photos. Find out how to disable that function in Instagram and why you should.