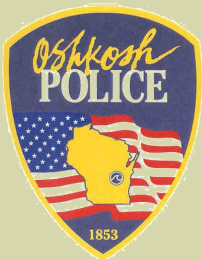




Cyber Bulletin

Keeping parents informed!



Snapchat

WHAT IS IT

Snapchat is a messaging application in which users can take photos, record videos, add text or drawings, and send them to a controlled list of recipients. These sent messages are known as 'snaps'. The user can set a time limit for how long the recipient can view the image, from 1 to 10 seconds, after which they disappear and are no longer accessible. However viewers can take a screenshot of the images and save it on their own device.

Snapchat has also created a feature called 'stories', which are groups of pictures and/or videos set in a montage that can be accessible for 24 hours. Snapchat also allows for users to video and text message one another.

In 2014, Snapchat users were sending an average of 700 million photos and videos per day while the Snapchat Stories content was being viewed 500 million times per day.

WHAT IS THE CONCERN

Snapchat provides users with the temptation to send inappropriate content. There have been countless reports of "sexting" occurring through the use of Snapchat because users mistakenly believe that the risk is low for the content to be viewed by others due to the short lived image life for the recipient. Not only are law enforcement and school officials addressing instances of 'sexting' but Snapchat provides a conduit for bullying for the same reasons of the perceived short lived image life.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO

Snapchat can be a fun app when used appropriately. But they can also have a dark side. These apps though present a great reminder for parents to be vigilant about smartphone and computer use. Parents should talk with their children regarding the appropriate use of these apps and what type of content is permissible. Be very specific with what your ground rules are for social media!

An informed community is a safer community!

Winnebago County Social Media Coalition

