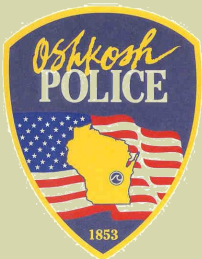




Cyber Bulletin

Keeping parents informed!



Whisper

WHAT IS IT

Whisper is a free social networking app available for iPhone and Android and website that encourages users to share secrets. The app was originally intended and first became popular on college campuses, but like many trends, it has trickled down to a younger crowd. It is becoming popular with tweens, and it is something parents absolutely need to know about because it can be unsafe.

The app and website encourages users to post pictures and share secrets anonymously as well as chat with other "whisperers." The "whispers" are text expression of secrets placed over stylized images. Whisper's tag line is "Express Yourself - Share Secrets - Meet New People."

WHAT IS THE CONCERN

Whisper is rated "17 +" due in large part to the potential of frequent and intense mature/suggestive themes. Whisper also can reveal a user's location which can be dangerous. If you have not disabled the app's location services, your whispers can show up in lists of "nearby whispers" which decreases the user's anonymity!

Whisper has been used to bully not only other students but also school faculty.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO

Whisper requires a PIN to look through it's history. Parents should have access to their child's user name and password in order to monitor their use.

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. Ask your kids one simple question—"Do you know this person in real life?" Be very specific with what your ground rules are for social media!



An informed community is a safer community!

Winnebago County Social Media Coalition