

## MICRO-BLOGGING AND PERFORMANCE APPS AND SITES

**Instagram** lets users snap, edit, and share photos and 15-second videos, either publicly or with a private network of followers. It unites the most popular features of social media sites: sharing, seeing, and commenting on photos. It also lets you apply fun filters and effects to your photos, making them look high-quality and artistic.

### What parents need to know

- **Teens are on the lookout for "likes."** Similar to the way they use Facebook, teens may measure the "success" of their photos -- even their self-worth -- by the number of likes or comments they receive. **Posting a photo or video can be problematic if teens are posting to validate their popularity.**
- **Public photos are the default.** Photos and videos shared on *Instagram* are public unless privacy settings are adjusted. Hashtags and location information can make photos even more visible to communities beyond a teen's followers if his or her account is public.
- **Private messaging is now an option.** Instagram Direct allows users to send "private messages" to up to 15 mutual friends. These pictures don't show up on their public feeds. Although there's nothing wrong with group chats, kids may be more likely to share inappropriate stuff with their inner circles.

**Tumblr** is like a cross between a blog and Twitter: It's a streaming scrapbook of text, photos, and/or videos and audio clips. Users create and follow short blogs, or "tumblogs," that can be seen by anyone online (if made public). Many teens have tumblogs for personal use: sharing photos, videos, musings, and things they find funny with their friends.

### What parents need to know

- **Porn is easy to find.** This online hangout is hip and creative but sometimes raunchy. Pornographic images and videos and depictions of violence, self-harm, drug use, and offensive language are easily searchable.
- **Privacy can be guarded but only through an awkward workaround.** The first profile a member creates is public and viewable by anyone on the Internet. Members who desire full privacy have to create a *second* profile, which they're able to password-protect.
- **Posts are often copied and shared.** Reblogging on Tumblr is similar to re-tweeting: A post is reblogged from one tumblog to another. Many teens like -- and, in fact, want -- their posts reblogged. But do you really want your kids' words and photos on someone else's page?

**Twitter** is a microblogging tool that allows users to post brief, 140-character messages -- called "tweets" -- and follow other users' activities. It's not only for adults; teens like using it to share tidbits and keep up with news and celebrities.

### What parents need to know

- **Public tweets are the norm for teens.** Though you can choose to keep your tweets private, **most teens report having public accounts.** Talk to your kids about **what they post and how a post can spread far and fast.**
- **Updates appear immediately.** Even though you can remove tweets, your followers can still read what you wrote until it's gone. This can get kids in trouble if they say something in the heat of the moment.

**Musical.ly – Your Music Video Community** is a performance and video sharing social network that mostly features teens lip syncing and to famous songs but also includes some original songwriting and singing. Musers, as **devoted users are called, can build up a following among friends or share posts publicly.**

### What parents need to know

- **Songs and videos contain lots of iffy content.** Because it features popular music and a mix of teens and adult users, swearing and sexual content are commonplace.
- **Gaining followers and fans feels important.** Teens want a public profile to get exposure and approval, and many are highly motivated by getting more followers and likes for their videos.

