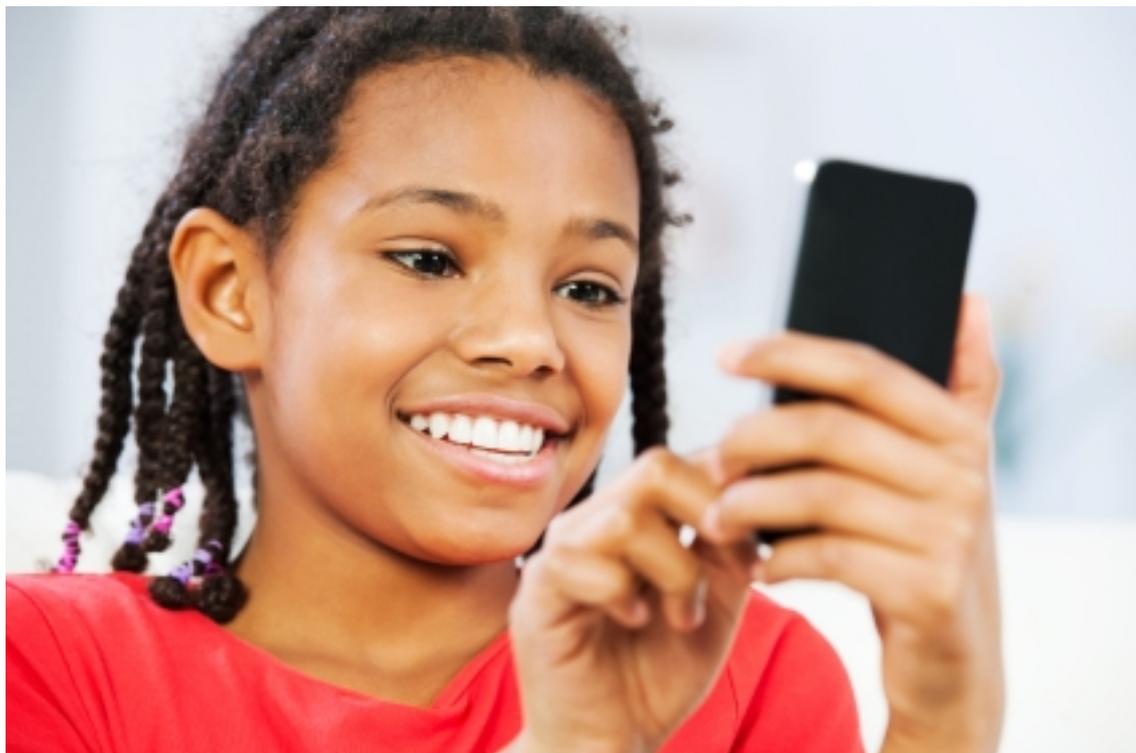


Is Your Child Sharing Too Much Information?



mobilesecurity.com [Mountain View, CA] As [Mark Kanok](#) explains in this short video on mobilesecurity.com, sharing your location through an app has many benefits. This might include helping you get to your destination, finding a nearby restaurant, or staying connected with friends and family. With their game-like design and “constantly connected” appeal, location-sharing apps are growing more popular with people of all ages.

Kids who regularly “check-in” using apps are broadcasting various locations - possibly including their homes and their friends’ homes, but also popular hang-out sites, and with a little investigation it might be possible to create a timeline of an individual’s whereabouts or travel patterns. While there’s little risk sharing this information with close and trusted friends, what happens if your child begins sharing too much with these location-based apps?

Many of these apps are built with social sharing in mind – once a relationship is established between two people using the app on their mobile phones, any connected person can continue to see future check-ins permanently. These apps may also automatically download all the contacts from your kids’ other social media accounts, making your child’s location information available to acquaintances and strangers and encouraging them to expand the circle of connections on that specific social network.

Instead of becoming alarmist and highlighting the dangers, let’s look at how parents can take a pragmatic approach to protecting their child’s privacy:

- Know what apps are installed on the phone and what information is being shared
- Have a conversation with your child about these apps and whether or not it makes sense to have the app installed
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Have a round table discussion concerning the ways in which a location-sharing app could be violated by strangers, or used carelessly by your child

- Remind your child to think twice before checking in or posting tagged photos of themselves or friends to photo sharing or social media sites
- Explain the reasons why your child should never reveal their or any friends'/relative's home addresses
- Be aware that geotags are automatically attached to photos taken by smartphones. Familiarize yourself with how to disable this function, so you'll at least have the option.

Young people are early adopters of new technology; children regularly teach their parents how to use smartphones, tablets and computers. It's not practical to enforce a ban on their use of mobile apps. By maintaining an open dialogue with your child around the pros and cons of using location-sharing apps and websites, you may just find that treating them like grown-ups teaches them to share some of the responsibility for staying safe online.

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