

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara

Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBTQ People

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**Our Next Sharing Meeting will be held on March 17th
2:30 - 4:30
Kenilworth United Church of Christ**



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www.facebook.com/pflag.niagara

Generally, monthly sharing meetings are held at **Kenilworth United Church of Christ, 45 Dalton Drive, Tonawanda 14223**, from 2:30 - 4.30. Newcomers and anyone interested will be offered the option of meeting privately with a PFLAG parent. Our monthly meetings are in the library, which is near the parking lot entrance. The facility is handicapped accessible. **New Parents Meetings** are scheduled as needed at a location convenient to those involved. These self-help one on one sessions are available to those who request a meeting outside of the monthly sharing meeting.

We meet because we have learned that someone very close to us is Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender. We try to help one another deal with this information in a positive manner. Although we do not agree at all times, we try to be understanding. We offer help to those who seek it, but do not force ourselves on others. We strive to maintain anonymity while sharing on a level that is comfortable for all of us.

PFLAG News and Updates

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara will be attending the Gay and Lesbian Youth Services (GLYS) Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) Conference on March 27 at West Seneca East High School.

It is an annual event for LGBTQ youth and allies who are members of their high schools' GSAs. It is a very fun and important day for our teenagers. We have been a part of this event in various ways over the years. This year, we will have copies of our scholarship applications, *The Marvin J. Henchbarger Scholarship* and the *Mary L. Hewitt Scholarship*, to give to attending seniors.



Each scholarship is worth \$500.00. The application is attached at the end of this newsletter and will also be on our website and Facebook page. Please pass the word and the application!

We share this article to help parents in this cyber age where bullying and other harmful behaviors occur regularly online and on phone apps. We hope you find it helpful.



17 APPS THAT COULD PUT YOUR CHILD IN DANGER

Escambia (Alabama) County Sheriff's Office

February 14

As children get older and become more independent, there are a variety of apps that parents should be aware of when deciding what to allow a child to install on their devices. We need to pay attention to who our children are chatting with. There are people out there trying to destroy those that we are trying to raise.

There are apps that CAN be dangerous and CAN expose your children to a range of things from bullying and unwanted sexual messages, some apps CAN even give strangers your child's location.

Here are a few things you can do to help protect your children:

- *Approve every app on your kid's phone*
- *Check privacy settings*
- *Talk with your kids about phone use, apps, and social media*
- *Find out what apps are popular in your area, different apps catch on in different areas.*

- *For parents who have very young kids with cell phones, there are accountability software and apps that can be used and set up on their phones to help protect them.*
- *Talk with your kids and tell them the importance of not giving someone else such as a stranger or someone they THINK they may know, their own address and personal information. (Do your children really know that person they are befriending on social media? Is your child showing signs of being bullied or bullying others after using their cell phones or at any time.)*
- *Parents should be aware that kids may be able to get around parental settings by accessing Public WIFI*
- *These are only a few, there are many others and we will try to add some helpful links below to help you learn more*



Here are some of the apps:

BUMBLE is similar to “Tinder” (which is a popular dating app. But this app requires women to make the first contact. Kids use Bumble by creating a fake account by using a fake age.

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LIVE.ME is a live-streaming video app that uses geolocation to share videos so users can find out a broadcaster's exact location. Users can earn "coins" as a way to "pay" minors for photos.

ASK.FM is known for cyber bullying. The app encourages users to allow anonymous people to ask them questions. ask an anonymous question and get an answer. This app has been linked to the most severe forms of Cyber bullying.

SNAPCHAT is one of the most popular apps of 2018. While this app promises users can take a photo/video and it will disappear, recent features including "stories" allows users to view content for up to 24 hours. Snapchat also allows users to see your location.

HOLLA is a self-proclaimed "addicting" video chat app that allows users to meet people all over the world in just seconds. This app is similar to the Random Video Chat apps. Reviewers say they have been confronted with racial slurs, explicit content and more. To learn more, you can check out this link here: <https://braveparenting.net/random-video-chatting/>

CALCULATOR% is only one of SEVERAL secret apps used to hide photos, videos, files and browser history. This app looks like a calculator but functions like a secret photo vault. Here is how it works, it is actually a functioning calculator.

You will be able to type in numbers and do normal calculations on it, however once you type in a passcode and then press another key such as the percent button, the app will then unlock and reveals a vault of secret photos or video files. There are other apps just like this that have an icon that looks normal, but it is a Hidden Icon or some other app or etc.

KIK allows anyone to contact and direct message to your child. Kids can bypass traditional text messaging features. KIK gives users unlimited access to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Keep in mind that this app has built-in apps and web content that would be filtered on a home computer. The reason why this app is so popular with teens is because users are allowed to create anonymous accounts and it does not require the users to verify their age. You can read more on KIK on McAfee's website at this link: <https://securingtomorrow.mcafee.com/.../kik-messenger-danger.../>

WHISPER is an anonymous social network that promotes sharing secrets with strangers. It also reveals a user's location so people can meet up. An anonymous app where the creators promote sharing secrets and meeting new people.



HOT OR NOT Encourages users to rate your profile, check out people in their area and chat with strangers. The goal of this app is to hook up.

OMEGLE A free online chat website that promotes chatting anonymously to strangers

YELLOW This app is designed to allow teens to flirt with each other in a Tinder-like atmosphere

BURN BOOK The description of the app says, " Together We Can Keep a Secret." This app post Anonymous rumors about people through audio messages, text, and photos

WISHBONE an app that allows users to compare kids against each other and rate them on a scale

INSTAGRAM Photo sharing app where many teens and kids are creating fake account profiles to hide content from parents. Kids also like to text using Instagram because messages are deleted once a user leaves the conversation

LINE is another all in one mobile hub for chatting, sharing photos and videos, and free texting and videos calls. Users decide how long their messages will be visible (TWO SECONDS OR A WEEK) They also can be charged for in-app activities, but that would only be an issue if your child has access to a credit card.

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VORA is a dieting app that allows a user to track their fasting activity. The app has a social media feature that connects users with other fasters or dieters. WHILE THE INTENT OF THE APP MAY HAVE ORIGINALLY BEEN FOR HEALTH BENEFITS, IT COULD BE DANGEROUS FOR KIDS PRONE TO EATING ISSUES. (Keep in mind again, there are apps that were created for a great cause or offers a good service, but can end up being unhealthy or dangerous if used the wrong way.)

HIDE IT PRO (HIP) app disguised as a music manager, but really it's meant for hiding anything from photos and videos to TEXT MESSAGES and other apps. The name is pretty straightforward in the app store, but on your screen it simplifies to HIP to add to the clever mask.

The user sets a pin code and can then move files to the app and remove them from the phone (i.e., photos, messages, etc.). This, and similar hidden "vault" apps, helps kids hide inappropriate material from their parents.

Please know our heart and purpose in this post is to help protect and help YOU protect your kids from danger.

Not everything online is evil or dangerous, nor does danger lurk behind every new application that comes out on the market or app store.

KEEP IN MIND THAT NO APP POSES A DANGER IN AND OF ITSELF, BUT MANY DO PROVIDE KIDS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE BAD CHOICES AND MANY CAN BE DANGEROUS AND CAN EXPOSE YOUR CHILDREN TO A RANGE OF THINGS FROM BULLYING AND UNWANTED SEXUAL MESSAGES, AND CAN GIVE STRANGERS ACCESS TO YOUR CHILDREN

Remember, as parents, we need to watch our children's internet activity and usage of social media. Pay attention to who our children are chatting with. There are people out there trying to destroy those that we are trying to raise.

Parents, you need to be aware that truly dangerous apps exist and are readily available to your children.

And, if you are reading this as a young person or young adult who thinks this post is condescending,

Not only can adults fall prey to scams, and other dangers online or through social networking and other type apps, but if we as adults can fall prey to them, how much more could our kids.

In order to write an article such as this that is intended to reach the parents of potential victims, This post has to be general in assumptions.

This post is and was not created to offend you. This post was put together to get the message out to someone that could prevent a devastating, life altering event for a child.

Here are some other helpful links for parents

There are many options out there for parents to protect their kids, not all of them are perfect however there are companies such as Covenant Eyes that provide apps and downloadable software for computers that help monitor websites and activity on cell phones.

<https://protectyoungeyes.com>

<https://www.tigermobiles.com/.../how-to-protect-your-childre.../>

<http://www.chicagonow.com/between-us-parents/.../burnbook-app/>

<http://www.chicagonow.com/.../teach-kids-to-think-online-in-.../>

Additional Note: You can turn location services, or GPS, off on cell phones by going in to the device settings. This will keep the Apps and photos from posting the exact location or whereabouts of the phone user.

These are only a few examples of apps that you should be aware about. keep in mind when looking at apps: look to consider whether they have messaging features in them or not.

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www.facebook.com/pflag.niagara



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