

A Parent's Guide to The Discord App

As technology advances and young people have become more reliant on “Apps” to stay connected with one another, we felt it was time to expand your understanding of an application your gamer might be using, Discord. The application can be downloaded onto any smartphone or personal computer, making its influence on your student that much more impactful. The following is a brief explanation of Discord and resources as to where you might find additional resources to better your understanding of this extremely useful program.

What is Discord?

In short, the Discord App is an invite only social network of servers where people can post thoughts and discuss everything from gaming tactics to last night's math homework. Additionally, documents and images can be shared between members or pinned to the top of the chat log. Currently, Discord has over 100 million users worldwide.

What happens on Discord?

If you remember AOL instant Messenger, this will be easier to process. Your student will be invited to join a Server (think chat room) and depending on which server your student joins will determine the RULES they must abide by. Some servers are setup to prevent swearing and ill-mannered posts, while other servers are uncensored. Now, while the vast majority of Discord use is/has been positive, there are always examples of negative behaviors which need to be addressed with your student.

How is Discord used in Gaming Clubs?

Discord has two real methods for use in a gaming club. First, the app is frequently used by students while playing games together for its Voice Channel services. This will allow your student to play a game while talking with only members of their group (think team versus team). Second, gaming clubs can use Discord to post information about what is happening and hold discussions in a servers Text Channel (think message board). Third, gaming clubs can hold meetings in Discord, where your student can participate in an active group meeting (think Zoom/Google Meet).

What do I need to do?

Like all new technologies it is best to know how the system operates in order to prevent your student from having negative experiences. While we do not want to tell you how to parent, we most certainly want you to know what your student is involved with. We are hopeful that you and your student have an open conversation about internet safety and what is and isn't acceptable on social media platforms.

Additional Resources

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews/discord-chat-for-gamers?gate=1>

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-discord>

<https://discord.com/>

<https://discord.com/safety/360044149591-Answering-parents'-and-educators'-top-questions>