

A Googly problem

At Safe on Social we know that your average child can, will, and has run rings around the majority of parents and educators when it comes to social media, and circumventing restrictions. They just do.

If your school uses Google Docs (or GSuite), you may be missing a loophole that many of your students are using as a digital way to pass notes.

A timely article in the Atlantic, has pointed the finger at how students are talking to each other while you are teaching, or for parents – when they are theoretically studying.

www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2019/03/hottest-chat-app-teens-google-docs/584857/?fbclid=IwAR3JZg9ILh_tjXIBqOzqjiiMzjF2r4MHyVXWPneWz8MmNjGrmbBXDbu6a28

The collaborative benefits of Google Docs are extolled online as a teaching tool to engage and improve student learning. Google apps for education allows for projects to be worked on within a student group that can occur both in school and at home. Multiple users can interact and edit together, documents can be downloaded and worked on and uploaded again – it's a great thing. It's a real time exercise, and many teachers love it.

But there are some problems with the way that it's being used by some students. Safe on Social has confirmed that this isn't an isolated incident, discussing the topic further with high school students during our presentations.

How are they using Google to chat in class-time?

1. With live- chat. Teachers take note; this doesn't pop up by default. You may not be aware of it. This information is NOT saved and will disappear when the document is closed.

How?

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- Look for the names of collaborators in the upper right corner of the screen.
- Click on the names to activate instant message box.
- Type in notes on the text field to chat live.

2. And notes sections that are shared between students on the collaborative documents.

3. The ability to use Googles own features that highlight certain words and phrases and then comment in the pop-up box that results.

How?



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