# Call grows for non-profit social media platforms designed for children



### A Call for Child-Centric Social Media: The Need for Safe Online Spaces

In an era where social media has become deeply integrated into everyday life, the debate surrounding its impact on children and teenagers continues to capture public attention. While some critiques are exaggerated—such as claims linking social media directly to rising mental health issues among youths—many genuine concerns remain valid. Michael Marshall's recent assertions call for the development of a dedicated social media platform tailored specifically for younger users, asserting that existing corporate giants will not provide the necessary protections and features.

Marshall argues for a non-profit model for such a platform, highlighting the unique vulnerabilities and developmental needs of children and teenagers. As it stands, many current social media sites lack the safeguards that would allow safe interactions for younger users. The inherent design flaws of commercial platforms often lead to exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, and insufficient privacy.

Responses to the escalating concern have seen an emergence of alternative platforms aimed at providing safer online environments for children. Applications like Zigazoo and Grom Social feature age-appropriate interactions and safety measures that allow kids to engage positively online. Zigazoo, for instance, encourages creativity through education-focused content, allowing children to share experiences while fostering a sense of community. Such platforms serve not only to entertain but also to equip children with the skills needed for responsible online engagement.

Beyond creating specialised apps, experts stress the importance of parental involvement in navigating their children’s digital lives. Developing a family social media plan is crucial; strategies may include establishing screen-free zones, setting device curfews, and encouraging open conversations about online experiences. This approach fosters a balanced relationship with technology. Research underscores that parents must guide their children through the complexities of digital interaction, akin to physical health check-ups. Establishing limits, discussing online boundaries, and regularly checking in about experiences can lead to healthier digital habits.

Moreover, a comprehensive understanding of existing child-friendly platforms might also greatly assist in this journey. Resources that curate lists of social media applications like TingMe Social and PopJam highlight their safety features and age limitations, serving as valuable tools for parents seeking appropriate platforms for their children's socialisation. These curated experiences not only prepare children for more extensive social media use but do so in a safer, controlled environment.

As awareness grows regarding the intricacies of online safety, the call for tailored, youth-focused social media is more pertinent than ever. While big tech companies may hesitate to enact substantial change, a grassroots approach could pave the way for platforms prioritising children's well-being above commercial gain. The community-driven creation of such spaces could reshape how younger generations experience digital interaction, fostering resilience and responsible behaviour in the digital landscape.

In this unfolding dialogue about social media's role in youth development, innovative solutions and parental guidance will be key to ensuring that children can navigate this terrain successfully and safely. The pursuit of a non-profit, child-centric social media platform is not merely a recommendation; it is rapidly becoming an essential necessity for the future of digital communication among our youngest users.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiugFBVV95cUxOZjlvWHFfMHBvcTFiVVdJYnZtSU9DRU9aTjlSZVJVcTEzVDJIYmEzczFxYUd1WjRpYXE2WEZLRUhEU1IwYnE2WUVlamkxaWJWOEpZVDBmWGNiT3V6QTliWTl0Y096dE9ZeXVhaDZvRTJYZUhMRVJiZFFoS0d6MGprSmp3U0dOa2JfTWlkR2xaZzJJaUttOHRKeUtNZHlPZ0xxRm95R2xMVzVqb0R0aGJldkIyY2kyVVd3aFE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/social-media-networks-made-for-kids/), [[3]](https://www.educationalappstore.com/best-apps/best-social-media-apps-for-kids-2018)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.lifespan.org/lifespan-living/safe-and-healthy-social-media-use-kids), [[5]](https://www.childrensmercy.org/parent-ish/2022/03/social-media)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://vpnoverview.com/internet-safety/kids-online/social-media-safety-for-kids/), [[7]](https://healthcare.utah.edu/healthfeed/2023/01/tips-healthy-social-media-use-parents-and-teens)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiugFBVV95cUxOZjlvWHFfMHBvcTFiVVdJYnZtSU9DRU9aTjlSZVJVcTEzVDJIYmEzczFxYUd1WjRpYXE2WEZLRUhEU1IwYnE2WUVlamkxaWJWOEpZVDBmWGNiT3V6QTliWTl0Y096dE9ZeXVhaDZvRTJYZUhMRVJiZFFoS0d6MGprSmp3U0dOa2JfTWlkR2xaZzJJaUttOHRKeUtNZHlPZ0xxRm95R2xMVzVqb0R0aGJldkIyY2kyVVd3aFE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiugFBVV95cUxOZjlvWHFfMHBvcTFiVVdJYnZtSU9DRU9aTjlSZVJVcTEzVDJIYmEzczFxYUd1WjRpYXE2WEZLRUhEU1IwYnE2WUVlamkxaWJWOEpZVDBmWGNiT3V6QTliWTl0Y096dE9ZeXVhaDZvRTJYZUhMRVJiZFFoS0d6MGprSmp3U0dOa2JfTWlkR2xaZzJJaUttOHRKeUtNZHlPZ0xxRm95R2xMVzVqb0R0aGJldkIyY2kyVVd3aFE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/social-media-networks-made-for-kids/> - This article provides a list of child-friendly social media and messaging apps designed to help children learn how to interact with each other and share safely online. It emphasizes the importance of using these platforms to develop positive habits before transitioning to regular social media when they are of age. The article highlights apps like Zigazoo, Grom Social, and Kinzoo Messenger, detailing their safety features and age recommendations.
3. <https://www.educationalappstore.com/best-apps/best-social-media-apps-for-kids-2018> - This resource offers a curated list of the best social media apps for kids, focusing on safe online spaces for learning and sharing. It includes apps such as Zigazoo Kids, TingMe Social, and PopJam, providing detailed descriptions of each app's features, safety measures, and age suitability. The article aims to guide parents in selecting appropriate platforms for their children's social media engagement.
4. <https://www.lifespan.org/lifespan-living/safe-and-healthy-social-media-use-kids> - This article discusses the importance of developing a family social media plan to ensure safe and healthy social media use for children. It outlines steps such as creating screen-free zones, setting device curfews, and having open conversations about online safety. The piece emphasizes the role of parents in guiding their children's digital habits and fostering a balanced approach to social media.
5. <https://www.childrensmercy.org/parent-ish/2022/03/social-media> - This guide provides steps for establishing good digital health for children, likening it to physical health with check-ups and protective measures. It includes making a plan before setting up social media accounts, setting limits on usage, implementing parental controls, and regularly checking in with the child about their online experiences. The article aims to support parents in navigating their children's social media use responsibly.
6. <https://vpnoverview.com/internet-safety/kids-online/social-media-safety-for-kids/> - This article offers tips for keeping social media use safe and fun for kids, including setting boundaries through family media plans, installing parental control apps, and watching for signs that something is wrong. It emphasizes the importance of open communication and monitoring to ensure children's online safety and well-being.
7. <https://healthcare.utah.edu/healthfeed/2023/01/tips-healthy-social-media-use-parents-and-teens> - This resource provides tips for healthy social media use for parents and teens, including creating a media plan, having honest conversations about online safety, and modeling positive social media behavior. It emphasizes the importance of open communication and setting non-negotiable limits to ensure safe and responsible social media engagement for teens.