

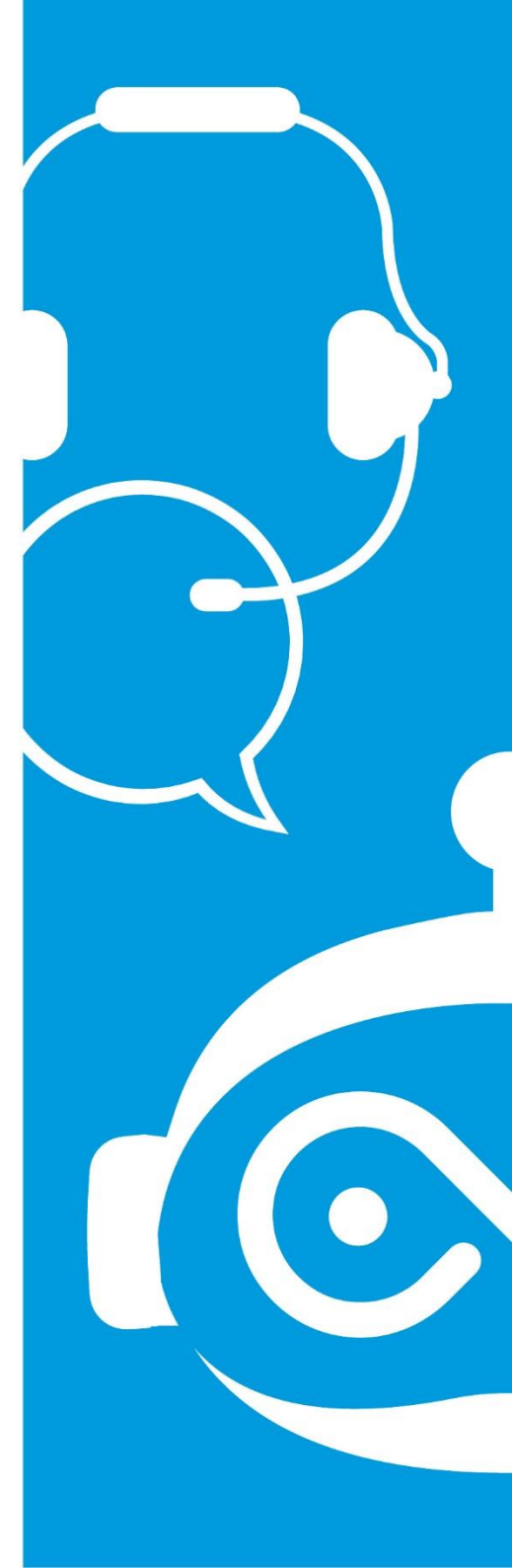


## SOCIAL MEDIA: SNAPCHAT

### What is it?

Snapchat is a **digital tool** designed for multimedia messaging. Users share photos, videos, and messages that disappear after a short time, making it ideal for casual and spontaneous communication. Since its launch in 2011, Snapchat has evolved to offer various features, including stories and private messaging.

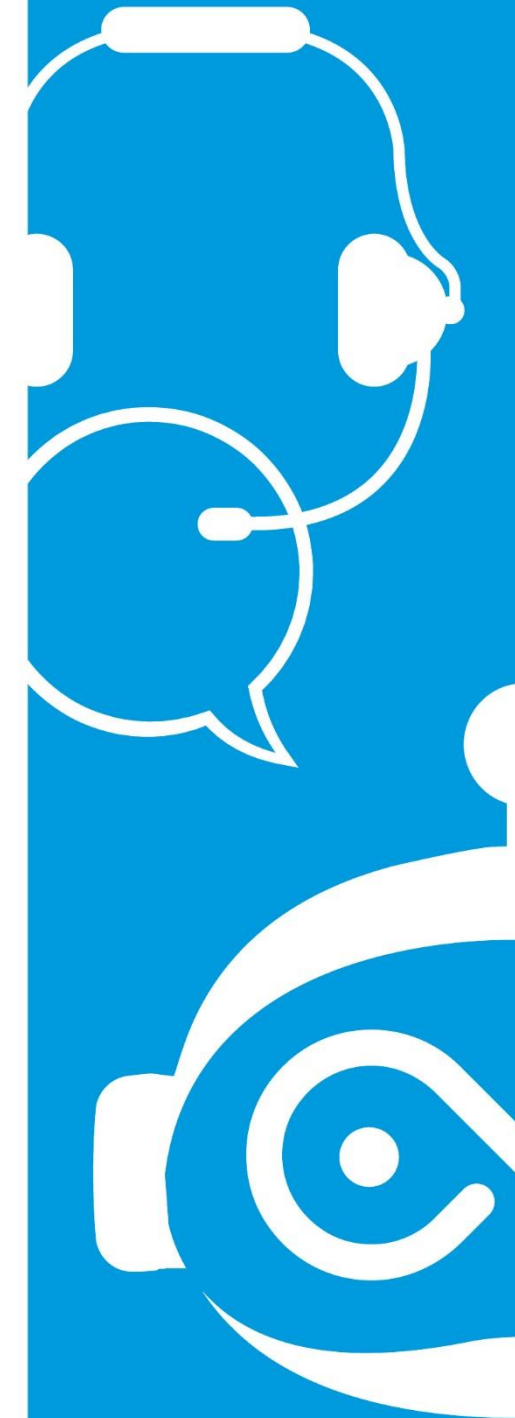
Snapchat has gained immense popularity among youth, becoming a staple of their digital lives. Its user-friendly interface, playful filters, and the ephemeral nature of messages have made it a preferred platform for young individuals, with a significant portion of its user base aged between 13 and 24.



### How can it impact the sexual and reproductive health of youth?

In youth's SRH, Snapchat fosters dialogue but poses risks. Users must stay vigilant, ensuring well-being and privacy. Snapchat offers a private space for intimate communication among close friends, potentially facilitating healthy conversations about SRH. Youth can discuss questions, concerns, and experiences in a less intimidating environment compared to face-to-face interactions. This can encourage open dialogue and information sharing.

However, the ephemeral nature of Snapchat's content can also lead to challenges. Youth might engage in sexting or share explicit content, assuming that it will disappear. This behaviour can have legal and emotional consequences. Furthermore, Snapchat's emphasis on visuals can contribute to body image issues and unrealistic beauty standards, affecting youth's self-esteem and SRH.



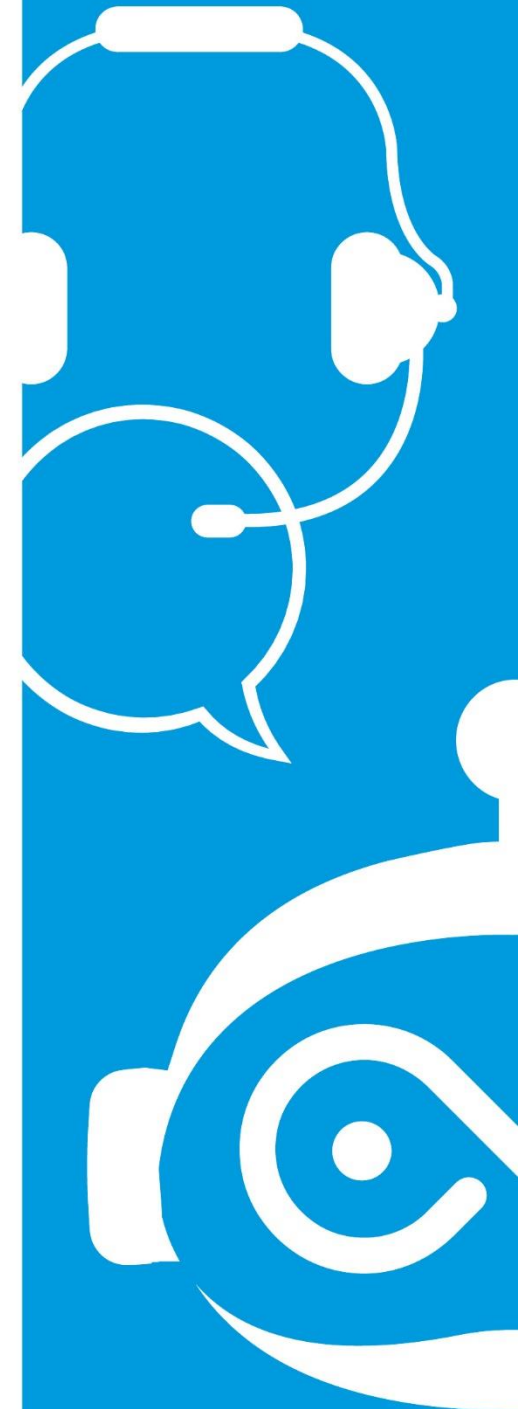
### What are some ways in which youth can be supported?

- Highlight the ephemeral nature of the application. Emphasise that content shared on Snapchat is not truly private, as recipients can take screenshots. Discuss the potential risks associated with sharing explicit material, given the impermanence of messages.
- Teach the importance of obtaining and giving consent specifically within the context of Snapchat, especially when it comes to exchanging explicit messages or images. Ensure users understand the implications.
- Promote positive body image in the context of Snapchat by providing resources on self-acceptance and countering unrealistic beauty ideals often perpetuated through visual media.
- Encourage the configuration of Snapchat's privacy settings to control who can view and interact with their content. Explain how to use these settings effectively for safer interactions.
- Create Snapchat-specific safe spaces where youth can openly discuss their online experiences, challenges, and concerns related to SRH while using the platform.

### Related digital phenomena/tools:

See sheets:

- Socialising/dating apps (like Yubo, Wizz, Hoop, Wink)
- Social media: Instagram
- Social media: TikTok



### Further reading:

- Shah, J., Das, P., Muthiah, N., & Milanaik, R. (2019). "New Age Technology and Social Media: Adolescent Psychosocial Implications and the Need for Protective Measures."
- LeBeau, K., Carr, C., & Hart, M. (2020). "Examination of Gender Stereotypes and Norms in Health-Related Content Posted to Snapchat Discover Channels: Qualitative Content Analysis."

