Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Institute
Social Media Basics

The most dangerous qualities of social media are found in those that create anonymous content that bullies, threatens and escalates others to violent action with no ability to hold the writer accountable. While most companies work hard to cut out racist and extremist content, this often occurs after a matter of days and weeks, often leaving that content available and unchecked.

APPLICATION	DESCRIPTION	WHAT TO KNOW
Facebook	A social networking site that allows users to create posts, share pictures, videos and live streams. Can be public or limited in terms of privacy.	Losing popularity with younger groups and not as common in primary education settings.
Twitter	A social messaging site where users share brief messages called "tweets" for those who follow them on Twitter. Optimizes scan-friendly approach, allowing users quick looks at topics.	Designed in more of a one-way communicating, used in many threat cases at the moment of attack.
YouTube	The most popular site to share videos. May be used commercially, as a video podcast or channel, or clips from movies and television. Clips can allow for user comments or have this feature turned off to limit comments.	Several recent attacks have involved manifestos uploaded to Youtube as well as live-streaming attacks. There is also the question of exposure to extremist content.
Instagram	One of the largest social networks that allows users to share photos and videos. It allows direct messaging with friends. Allows users to like posts.	Similar to Facebook, more picture and video oriented in terms of posting. Numerous cases of threat.
Snapchat	Both a messenger platform and social network, snapchat messages disappear after a few seconds. More common with younger users.	Used to communicate more securely between groups, known for its disappearing content. It can't be used on the regular web, only as a mobile app.
Yolo	This is an anonymous question and answer app that is used within the Snapchat platform. It allows users to make anonymous comments on user's content.	Concerns around bullying and threats have increased with the roll out of this addition to Snapchat in 2019.
TikTok	Allows users to post 15 seconds of content or string stories together. Built around music clips, trending video challenges, and pranks, creativity is pushed to the limits. There is often sexualized and vulgar content that has caused the app to concern parents.	A growing trend that often has numerous trolling, transient posts. The app is popular with the under 24 crowd.
Whatsapp	Whatsapp is a messaging app that allows users to share text, pictures and video over WiFi. It is popular internationally.	Used frequently outside of the United States to communicate free of charges.

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Discord	Discord is an app for teens and adults primarily interested in gaming. They allow users to create groups and text, chat or share videos and pictures with each other.	A common app for gamers in high school and college. Allows users to build private, invite-only groups.
Whisper	A social networking app that assigns users random names. Users post confessions and, according to the app, have a chance to express their pent-up frustrations.	Anonymous apps lack accountability and become a challenge for law enforcement when identifying and mitigating threats.
iFunny	A collection of GIFs (short clips without sound), pictures, memes and videos. Allows users to collect content.	Concerns around bullying, racist and misogynistic content.
Reddit	A specialized discussion board site and app that allows users talk about various topics and share content with each other.	Some boards have questionable content related to threat, violence, bullying and racists themes. Starting place for the Incel discussion boards.
Vent	An app designed to allow users to anonymously 'vent' their frustrations anonymously. The company describes it as a social diary to express how you really feel. The app closely follows the YikYak and Whisper designs.	If there were an app designed to frustrate school officials and threat assessment professionals, one centered on the anonymous posting of intense feelings would be it.
Myspace	A social networking site that predates Facebook and allows users to create a webpage to interact with others.	An older site that still remains in somewhat limited use.
4chan/ 8chan/ 8kun/ 8kun.top	4chan is an information-based discussion board that allows for anonymous sharing of videos, memes, text and pictures. 8chan is a more notorious version which recently changed its name to 8Kun and 8kun.top. Anonymous, the hacker group, started out on 4chan.	Similar concerns as other sites that allow anonymous posting. Multiple campus shooters have posted threats and extremist/racist content. The El Paso attacker posted his manifesto on 8chan.
gab Gab	A more unrestricted social network similar to Twitter which has few restrictions on what users are able to post. There is no overall moderation, but rather upvoting and downvoting by users. It is not supported directly for iphone users, but there is a work-around through other apps.	Common with users who are concerned their right-wing, anti-Semitic content would be censored. This was used by the attacker to the Pittsburg Synagogue shooting.