

Cotham School

Online Safety Newsletter

Academic Year:
2024/2025

Term: 6
Date: 30/06/2025



Newsletter Topic:

1. What is: Emoji Meanings (Part 2 of 2)
2. Social Media Focus: Snapchat Streaks?

The Dark World of Emojis...

Emojis, often seen as simple additions to online chats, can take on a more sinister role within the digital landscape. Their presence in online misogyny has grown more pervasive and troubling. These seemingly innocent symbols can be strategically employed to amplify harmful stereotypes and degrade women in digital spaces. Rather than mere decoration, emojis can function as subtle linguistic tools, reinforcing derogatory statements or operating as coded signals within specific online communities that harbor misogynistic views. For example, even seemingly innocent emojis—like a cat (🐱), can be used to imply a woman is lonely or undesirable, or a wilted flower (🌹), suggesting a woman is 'past her prime' in dating contexts—can be subtly used to demean or criticise women. This concerning application of visual communication contributes to the normalisation of harmful attitudes, particularly among younger users who may not immediately recognise the malicious intent behind these images.

Advice for Parents and Educators

- **Learn the Language:** Stay current with evolving emoji meanings and online slang (e.g. using [Emojipedia](#) or [Urban Dictionary](#)). This helps you understand conversations and identify potential issues.
- **Create safe spaces for discussion:** Foster open, non-judgmental conversations about emojis, online trends, and social media. This encourages young people to share their digital experiences freely.
- **Ask, don't assume:** If you see an unfamiliar emoji, ask about its meaning with curiosity rather than suspicion. This demonstrates respect and invites honest dialogue.
- **Prioritise trust over surveillance:** While monitoring tools can be useful, building a trusting relationship where children feel comfortable coming to you with concerns is paramount for their emotional safety.

Examples of Emojis with Hidden Meanings

- 🦴👁️👁️👁️👁️👁️ Skull, Alien, Devil: May represent the drug ecstasy. The skull can also represent figurative "death" of someone's reputation or a brutal joke. Devil can also mean feeling frisky or naughty.
- 📷📷 Camera: Can represent a request for nude/explicit images or videos.
- 🍝 Spaghetti: Playful slang for nudes ("noods") due to the tangled visual.
- 😋 Drooling Face: Expresses strong sexual desire, often when viewing nudes.
- 👁️👁️ Eyes: Indicates the act of sending or receiving nude images online.
- 🔨 Hammer: Crude metaphor for sexual intercourse.
- 🌶️ Hot Pepper: Signifies "spicy" or risqué content that is sexually suggestive.
- 🌽 Corn: TikTok slang for "porn", based on visual similarity.
- 🌪️ Tongue: Directly implies sexual activity, particularly oral sex.
- 🧠 Brain: Coded slang for oral sex.
- 🤔 Woozy Face: Can mean drunk, sexually aroused, or expressing strong discomfort (grimace). Context is key.
- 😏 Hot Face: Straightforwardly indicates someone is found sexually attractive or feeling aroused.
- 🚚 Articulated Lorry: Humorous slang ("dump truck") for a large and shapely buttocks.
- 🐸 Frog: "You're ugly" bullying/harassment.
- ❤️ Red Heart: Love.
- 💜 Purple Heart: Attraction or sexual desire.
- 🟡 Yellow Heart: "I'm interested, are you interested?"
- 💕 Pink Heart: "I'm interested but not in sex".
- 🟠 Orange Heart: Platonic, "You're going to be fine."
- ⌚ Hourglass: "Hourglass" body shape.
- 😬 Freezing Face: Snarky or "savage" comment "That was cold".
- 👁️👄👁️ Eyes, Mouth, Eyes: "It is what it is".
- 🙄 Upside-Down Face: Annoyance.
- 👻 Ghost: Being "ghosted" dumped without explanation.
- 🗨️ Cap: Lie.
- 👉👉 Index Pointing at Each Other: Shy, nervous flirting.
- 🙄 Nazar Amulet: Warding off the "evil eye".

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Social Media: Snapchat

Snapchat is a multimedia messaging app developed by Snap Inc. It allows users to send photos, videos, and messages (called “Snaps”) that disappear after being viewed. The app is known for its focus on ephemeral content, creative filters, and augmented reality (AR) features.



Age Requirements: 13+.

Key Features:

- Snaps
- Stories
- Chats
- Filters
- Discover Page
- Snap Maps
- Memories
- Streaks

Safety and Privacy Features:

- View and location sharing control
- Report and block
- Ghost mode - hide location
- Parental control tools
- 24h data deletion
- 2FA security
- AI Moderation
- Safety center resources.

What are: Snapchat Streaks?

A Snapchat Streak (or Snapstreak) starts when two users send each other a photo or video Snap (not a chat message) every day for three consecutive days. Once a streak begins, a 🔥 emoji appears next to the friend’s name, along with a number showing how many days the streak has lasted.

How Do Streaks Work?

- To maintain a streak, both users must send at least one Snap per day to each other.
- Only photo or video Snaps count—text messages, group chats, or stories do not contribute to streaks.
- The streak number increases by one each day both users exchange Snaps.
- If either person misses a day, the streak resets to zero.

When Do Streaks Expire?

Streaks expire if 24 hours pass without both users sending a Snap. Snapchat shows an ⌚ hourglass emoji next to a friend’s name when a streak is about to expire—this is a warning to send a Snap quickly to keep it alive.

Snapstreak Symbols to Know

- 🔥 Fire emoji: Indicates an active streak.
- ⌚ Hourglass emoji: Streak is about to expire.
- 100 100 emoji: You’ve maintained a streak for 100 days.
- Number next to the emoji: Shows how many days the streak has lasted



Why It Matters

Snapstreaks can be fun and social, but they also encourage daily app use and can become a source of stress or anxiety—especially if a long streak is lost. Some teens even share their login info with friends to maintain streaks while on holiday or without phone access.

What Else Should Parents Know?

- Streaks become stressful: What starts as fun can turn into anxiety over breaking them, especially with friends.
- Social pressure kicks in: Teens may feel pushed to keep streaks going—even giving out passwords to do so.
- Sleep and focus suffer: Staying up late or waking early to Snap can disrupt sleep and take a toll on your energy and mood during the day.
- No real reward: Streaks offer no real value, but many teens treat them like social status markers.

