



**Common Sense says: Social network with training wheels is safe, but limited.**

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On this site kids can: connect with friends, create a social network, learn responsible online behavior

**Why We Rated This  for Ages 7 and Up**

#### **The good stuff**

##### **Educational value:**

Users learn the basics of social networking and can play with pre-approved words to create interesting sentences. There's potential for discovering new words and building language skills as users interact with the list of words to form sentences.

##### **Messages:**

With such a simple platform, the site clearly sends a message of the importance of safe social networking.

##### **User-created content:**

Status updates and messages are created only through pre-approved word lists, so they are typically simple and straightforward -- but can be made quite silly. All photos that are uploaded are manually reviewed before they become live.

##### **What to watch out for**

**Violence:** Not an issue.

**Sex:** Not an issue.

**Language:** Not an issue.

**Consumerism:** Presently, there is no outside advertising visible anywhere on the site, but there are ad spaces alongside each page that contain a logo for IAB (The Interactive Advertising Bureau) and are presumably acting as holding space for future advertising content.

**Drinking, drugs, & smoking:** Not an issue.

## How safe is it?

### Personal privacy:

ScuttlePad was designed to keep information as private as possible and exceed the safety guidelines. Accounts are created only with a child's first name, state, country, age, and year of birth (and adults users who enter their real birth year will be booted from the site). All uploaded photos (which can include kids' real photos) are manually approved.

### Online interaction:

Content and interaction is so closely monitored and controlled, there's little opportunity for negative online interactions.

### Parental controls:

Kids are asked to submit a parent's email address to be approved for membership, though kids can enter any address.

### What Parents Need to Know

Parents need to know that this simple social networking website was designed with the young user in mind and is intended to create a safe online space for kids aged 6-11. The site is a pared-down place for kids to learn the basics of social networking and, unlike other social networks geared to kids, doesn't have any of the extraneous games, puzzles, activities, or ads (at least yet) to occupy them. All content is closely monitored and controlled: Uploaded photos are manually reviewed and status updates and comments are created only through a pre-approved list of words.

### Families Can Talk About

Talk to your kids about the media in their life. We have more [tools and tips that can help](#)

- Families can talk about the importance of [staying safe on social networking sites](#). Websites aren't required to keep kids safe, but there are many things that parents and kids can do to [stay safe while online](#), especially when you're on a social network.
- Talk about how social networking shouldn't replace face-to-face interaction with friends. Ask your child if it's more fun to be alone on a computer or playing with friends. How do you play differently online than you do in person?
- Why the computer shouldn't become the sole source of communication and play. Why is it important to have a healthy balance between seeing friends in person and connecting with them online? How can you work together to determine [what is an appropriate amount of time](#) to spend on the computer?

### Is It Any Good?

Introducing kids of any age to the world of social networking can feel like sending them into open water teeming with sharks. SCUTTLEPAD was created to help kids get their feet wet first. Designed to be a child's first social networking experience, it's a place where 6-11 year olds can collect "friends," post comments, and begin to learn to share information responsibly. For parents who want their elementary-aged kids to experience a safe, limited social network, this site provides that opportunity. Kids who expect (or are used to) an energetic, content-rich online experience may find the site somewhat simple - and possibly boring. Interactions are basic -- just status updates and comments -- and use only pre-approved words. There are no other activities, but the principles of social networking are present and well-executed for this age group. Unfortunately, what parents deem suitable and safe may be too staid for the kids who visit. And they may not want to dive in.

