bark

Digital Danger Zones:

Critical Insights from Bark's 2024 Annual Report on the Safety and Well-Being of Teens and Tweens

Executive Summary

[Bark's 2024 Annual Report](#) on Children and Technology analyzed a staggering 7.9 billion digital activities from teens and tweens, spanning texts, emails, and over 30 of the most popular apps and social media platforms among young people.

Bark's advanced AI generates alerts whenever a child engages with or encounters a potentially harmful subject matter, and the 2024 Annual Report consists of data surrounding the percentages of children who experienced dangers in 9 different categories, along with the top 5 rankings of apps for various dangers.
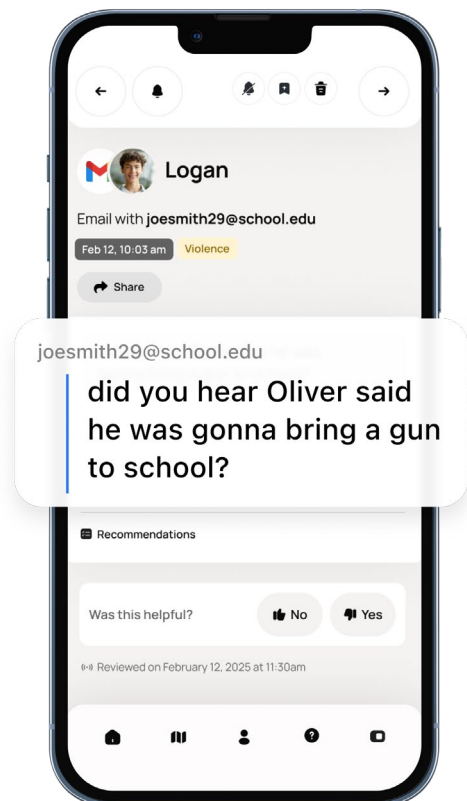
The following key takeaways highlight the critical areas of concern for schools:

→ The data is consistently analyzed year over year, and in 2024, there was a **concerning increase across nearly every category for the first time.**

  · This upward trend underscores the growing digital risks children face, with **significant spikes in areas such as suicidal ideation, online predators, and exposure to violent content.**

→ For school administrators and staff, this highlights the urgent need to **implement stronger protections** and proactive measures to **safeguard students both online and in real life.** In the **Dangerous Apps** section of the 2024 Annual Report, Bark identifies several platforms that pose significant risks to children and teens due to their potential for harmful content and interactions.

  · Apps such as **Discord, Instagram, and Snapchat continue to be flagged for facilitating risky behavior**, from cyberbullying to encountering content with disordered eating. The report stresses the **importance of educating both parents and school administrators about the dangers** these platforms present.

→ Cyberbullying continues to be an issue that not only negatively impacts mental health and feelings of online safety, but also real-life well-being. According to a recent study from the Cyberbullying Research Center, the percentage of students who reported staying home from school because of cyberbullying went from 10.3% in 2016 to 19.2% in 2023. Absenteeism further impacts academic performance.

→ While not broken out in this report, students with disabilities are almost 2x as likely to be victims of social-media related cyberbullying. Despite the data, studies show that parents of adolescents with intellectual disabilities perceive fewer online dangers for their children compared to parents of non-disabled adolescents.

The findings from Bark's 2024 Annual Report demonstrate the importance of proactive measures in educational settings, including:

  · Implementing comprehensive monitoring systems
  · Fostering open communication channels
  · Offering mental health resources
  · Providing education and training for online safety for both students and staff
  · Equipping vulnerable student populations with resources to be safer online, including devices with safety precautions.

As online interactions continue to evolve, **staying ahead of emerging threats is more critical than ever.**

Bark's 2024 Annual Report on Children and Technology*

Self-harm/suicide

37% of tweens and **60%** of teens were involved in a self–harm/suicidal situation.

Sexual content

63% of tweens and **77%** of teens encountered nudity or content of a sexual nature.

Anxiety

22% of tweens and **40%** of teens used language or were exposed to language about anxiety.

Drugs/alcohol

63% of tweens and **78%** of teens engaged in conversations surrounding drugs/alcohol.

Bullying

71% of tweens and **77%** of teens experienced bullying as a bully, victim, or witness.

Depression

35% of tweens and **43%** of teeens engaged in conversations about depression.

Disordered eating

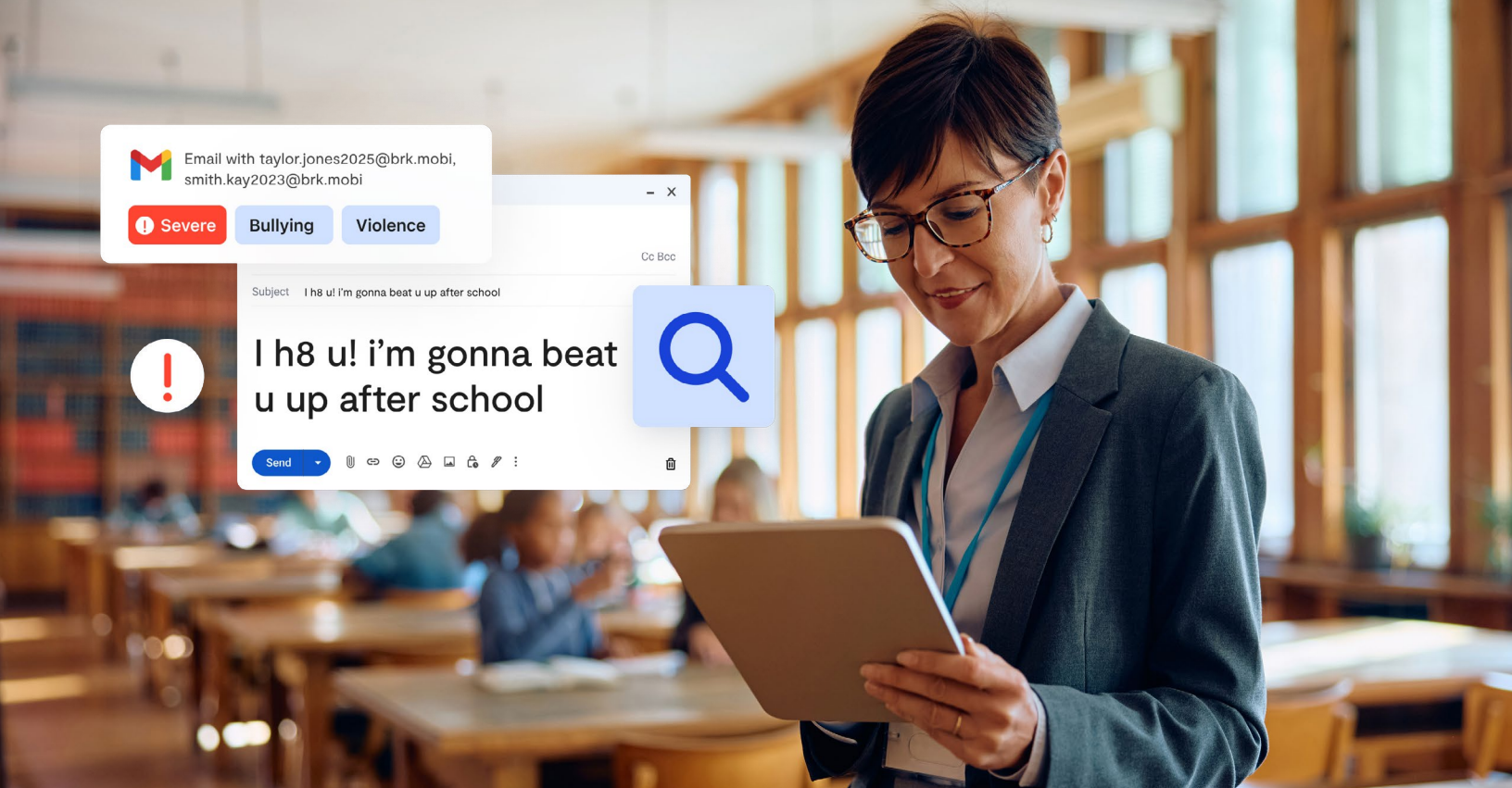**11%** of tweens and **25%** of teens engaged with or encountered content about disordered eating.

Predators

4% of tweens and **7%** of teens encountered predatory behaviors from someone online.

Violence

72% of tweens and **82%** of teens expressed or experienced violent subject matter/thoughts.

About Bark

Bark is an online safety company that helps protect over 7 million kids at home and in more than 3,600 schools and districts across the U.S. Offering content monitoring, screen time management, location tracking, and more, Bark is the leading digital safety solution for parents, families, and schools. Products include the Bark app, the Bark Phone, the in-home web filter Bark Home, and the community give-back program Bark for Schools.

Using highly sophisticated artificial intelligence, Bark's award-winning monitoring technology alerts an identified trusted individual to concerning behaviors in a variety of categories, including bullying, suicidal ideation, threats of violence, sexual content, and online predation. Bark monitors many popular social media platforms and apps, as well as text messages, images, videos, chats, emails, and files.

Recognized as one of TIME's Best Inventions of 2023, Editor's Choice for Best Kids' Phone by PCMag, and the Best Overall Kid's Phone by the Kid Safety Awards, Bark is a trusted partner for parents and schools in the effort to help keep kids safe online today, while equipping all parties with the tools to be prepared as new threats arise.

Learn more by connecting with a Bark team member today.