

Transcript Details

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The Surge of Social Media & Quarantine Shaming

Dr. Turck:

Coming to you from the ReachMD Studios, this is *COVID-19: On the Frontlines*. I'm Dr. Charles Turck.

The following is a news brief on the benefits and drawbacks associated with the embrace of social media and apps like Nextdoor, as reported by the Washington Post.

With social distancing and self-isolation strategies in place to minimize the spread of COVID-19, people nationwide have turned to social media to pass the time and feel less alone—and the numbers prove it.

Take Nextdoor, for instance. Nextdoor is an app used to “connect and share with the neighborhood” everything from warnings about doorstep package robberies to babysitter recommendations and local events. In fact, in March—which is when widespread social distancing began—there was an 80 percent increase in the use of the app compared to the month before.

Users seized on the opportunity to embrace the app as a tool for good, helping others in their own communities. Neighbors crowdsourced grocery runs for seniors and the immunocompromised, bartered in-demand goods for those in need, coordinated support for struggling local businesses, and shared do-it-yourself surgical mask designs and patterns.

Other popular apps, like Instagram and Facebook, also jumped on the bandwagon. Instagram added a “Stay Home” shared story and sticker so that users could show others how they're spending their time while social distancing. And Facebook not only provided increased visibility for nonprofit fundraising, but it also launched the COVID-19 Community Help center for users to request or offer help to those impacted by the outbreak.

However, while the pandemic did bring out the positive side of online community groups, it's unfortunately also given rise to a new type of behavior on which the social media platforms are beginning to crack down. Behaviors like, quarantine shaming, which is the practice of calling out those not abiding by social distancing rules and has begun appearing in many forms—from sharing photos of strangers jogging to targeting open businesses.

Other dangers like inaccurate medical advice and conspiracy theories have also been spreading as lockdowns continue. The apps are working diligently to remove harmful content from their platforms and are reminding users to only seek pandemic updates from reliable sources.

Visit [WashingtonPost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com) for the full story.

For ReachMD, this is *COVID-19: On the Frontlines*. And as always, to add *your* perspectives toward the fight against the pandemic, visit us at [ReachMD.com](https://reachmd.com) and become Part of the Knowledge. Thank you for listening.