



## TECH TALK

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# Apps for Humanity

Are we losing our humanity in this new age of technology? Is it taking over our lives? Changing our behaviour? Affecting our health? Creating social isolation?

Some might argue that technology has taken away the essence of humanity, however I believe it can do the very opposite. Technology can bring us together, connect us to people, and help us with daily tasks and problems. Technology can also be used for health and social issues.

One of the more approachable and affordable ways to use technology is through apps.

We all have apps on our phones and tablets. These are programs, designed to fulfill a particular purpose, when downloaded by a user.

Here are six of my top app picks that can benefit students and educators.



1. **Sit With Us** is an app that helps kids find friends to sit with at lunch. It promotes kindness and inclusion in schools. Kids can use the app to coordinate with friends. They can also volunteer to be ambassadors for their schools and post open lunch events where everyone will be included. [facebook.com/sitwithus.io](https://facebook.com/sitwithus.io)
2. **Scholarly** is a tutoring service that connects students with nearby tutors, anytime and anyplace. The service is simple: tutors create profiles and students can view them by looking for help in a particular subject. Scholarly is a brand new app and the creators are planning to grow their tutor network and expand the service to K-12 students and their parents in the coming months, so keep an eye on it! [apple.co/2fOIEqw](https://apple.co/2fOIEqw)
3. **Optimism** is a mood-tracking app that helps to monitor and develop strategies for managing depression, anxiety, bipolar or other mental health conditions. What most users like about this app is that they can email the charts to their doctor. [apple.co/2fnMWmX](https://apple.co/2fnMWmX)
4. **ReThink** is an app that helps stop cyberbullying before the damage is done. When a young adolescent tries to post an offensive message on social media, through text or any app that uses a keyboard, ReThink uses its context-sensitive filtering technology to determine whether or not it's offensive. It gives the poster a second chance to reconsider their decision. ReThink Keyboard works with all apps. Thousands of schools around the world are already using the "WeThinkReThink" program and empowering students to ReThink before the damage is done. [rethinkwords.com](https://rethinkwords.com)
5. **YWCA Safety Siren** is an app available in both English and French that activates a siren by either pressing the safety button or by shaking the device when an unsafe situation arises. The app also sends an emergency email to a pre-set SOS contact with the approximate coordinates and makes an emergency call to a pre-programmed number. The app also offers Canadian health and safety information geared toward young women. [ywcacanada.ca/en/pages/mall/apps](https://ywcacanada.ca/en/pages/mall/apps)
6. **Strava** is one of many fitness apps. The Strava app (means "to strive") is switched on when exercise begins. It measures distance and time. The workout route is mapped via GPS so the user can see precisely where they've been and what they've done. The user can also create "segments" and track or share their improvements with other users and receive thumbs-up for achieved goals. This app promotes well-being and creates a positive social network. [strava.com](https://strava.com)