Helping Apps for Practitioners and Educators - HAPPE

App Review Handbook

685 Baldy Hall
Buffalo, NY 14260-1050
swtech@buffalo.edu

https://ubwp.buffalo.edu/happe/

University at Buffalo
School of Social Work

General Review Information

Thank you for your interest in being a guest reviewer for Helping Apps for Practitioners and Educators. Our objective is to help educators and practitioners in the helping professions discover useful apps with the potential to improve their classes or practice. We do so by providing brief but substantive reviews of apps.

This handbook is meant to give you, a guest reviewer, guidelines on how to submit a review and some helpful information in drafting a review.

Finished reviews should be emailed to swtech@buffalo.edu.

Permissions and Attribution

As a guest reviewer you will receive recognition for the materials that you submit to the blog. We use a standard attribution which will include your name, title, and organization. We will also link to one outside website that you are affiliated with. Below is what our standard attribution looks like:

> *This blog is used under license and was submitted by guest contributor [Name, title and organization]. Learn more about [person or organization] at their website, www…. The opinions represented here are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University at Buffalo, School of Social Work.*

By submitting a review, you attest that the material is original to you and that no one else has contributed to the posting.

By submitting a guest review, you hereby grant to the University at Buffalo, School of Social Work, an exclusive, perpetual, worldwide, assignable, royalty free license to use the guest review, and to create derivative works of same, in any manner in any medium now known or hereinafter to be developed.

The University at Buffalo reserves the right to edit or modify the review to ensure it meets our editorial guidelines.

Selecting an app for a review

There are a wide variety of apps which can be submitted for review. They can have a direct connection to the helping professions or an indirect connection. Apps with a direct connection might include but are not limited to assessment, therapeutic, mindfulness, or child development apps. Apps with an indirect connection could include but are not limited to organizational, managerial, or financial apps.

Whether the app you are reviewing has a clear connection to the helping professions, like PTSD Coach, or a less clear connection, like Trello (an organizational platform), these are some questions you can keep in mind while testing the app.

Can this application be useful for a practitioner?
- Is this application better fit for a practitioners use than it is for a client's use?
- Is it best fit for one type of practitioner (caseworker, advocate, etc.)
- Is it helpful for organization?
- Is it helpful for office management?
- Is it helpful for practitioners opening their own practice?
- Is it helpful for professional networking?

Is this application better fit for a client's use than a practitioners use?
- Could it be referred to a client?
- Could a practitioner use it with their client (for example to track the client's depression symptoms)

Can this application be useful to an educator?
- Does it meet some educational objective?
- Does it bring real world experience into the classroom?
- Does it prepare students for work in the field?
- Does it educate users about a subject in the field (human rights, substance abuse, bullying, etc.)?
- Could it be assigned to promote a clinical skill set (advocacy, trauma-informed care, etc.)?
- Could it be used to organize or manage group work?

Tips for Writing

Brevity is important.
- Assume your reader wants to skim through what you've written, so try to provide substance while saying less.
- Avoid long paragraphs

Avoid ambiguity.
- While we want to be brief, we don't want to sacrifice clarity.　　　Example: Instead of saying "the app is very useful," say "the app is very useful for management, organization, etc."

Assume the reader has never seen the app.
- Be careful not to use terms the app uses that are foreign to the reader. Try to define app terms early in your review.

Blank Template

Application Name:

Summary

Version:

Compatibility:

Price:

Target Audience:

Bottom Line:

Likes	Dislikes
•	•

Features and Options:

Practice Implications:

Privacy Policy Disclaimer:

Device used for this review:

Specific Guidelines for Writing Review

Additional information about the application name, version, compatibility, price, and privacy policy can be found in the Android and Apple store,

Application Name
  What is the app name?
 *Note sometimes android and apple devices use different names for the same name. If this the case for the app your reviewing, point out both names but with an "(IOS)" or "(Android)" after each respective name.
Example: Know Bullying (IOS) Understand Bullying (Android).

Summary
It may be helpful to write your full review below, and then come back to this section. While the summary can be worded differently than some of your full review, you want this to be a very brief review of the main ideas you used in the full review. Don't add any new facts about the app here. Assume that someone may just read this section. Keep this section between 250-500 words.

Version
What is the most reason version? Are there versions for IOS and Android devices?

Example: 4.1.4 (IOS) 4.6.0 (Android)

Compatibility
What devices can this app be used on? Again, the apple store and android store can help you with this.

Examples: Only available for iPad and android tablets, available on all iOS and Android devices, or only available for IOS devices.

Price
How much is it? Is it differently priced on the apple store than it is on the Android store?

Example: Free, $1.99, or $1.99 (IOS) 2.99 (Android).

Target Audience
To define a target audience try to answer two questions at one time: who was the application created for and who is the target audience we are focusing on in our review (practitioners, social work students, clients, etc.)? Sometimes these answers won't be the same. The application may have been created for small businesses, but we are using it for a social work classroom. In this case, focus on who we are prescribing the app to.

Bottom Line
Here, your task is to capture the main function(s) of the app. This is our broadest, most sweeping comment about the app. What does it do?

Likes and Dislikes

Likes and Dislikes are brief characterizations or phrases about pros and cons of the app. Was the app user friendly? Did it close out on you/malfunction ever? Were the app's purposes clear? Were the functions useful? Does the app look good? Was there anything offensive in the app? Does the app offer the user certain security and privacy? Does the app fulfill the purposes it was created to fulfill?

Like Examples: Wide variety of functions and tools, evidence based, additional resources linked within application, significant number of features, easy to use features, tracks depression, educates and informs children, teens, and parents dealing with bullying.

Dislike Examples: No option to share data from one device to another, some features do not have a clear purpose, unclear what ages the application is appropriate for, no iOS iPad version.

Features and Options

In this section of the review you want to describe the main components of the app and what each of them does. Explain why each component is there and what it does for the user. Try to refrain from giving users instructions on how to use the app. At the very end of this section you can mention your overall reflection and opinions about the app. In the last paragraph of this section, or the "overall" paragraph (see example above), you can mention your general take on the app, commenting also on if a function was slow, unclear in its purpose, hard to use, or even if it could be construed to be offensive by others.

*Note organizing your thoughts about the different functions of an app can be overwhelming. We've taken to organizing our thoughts by the using an app's tabs or pages. In the example above you see subheadings like "Track Symptoms," or ""Manage Symptoms." These are phrase PTSD Coach used to differentiate the different pages of their app. By using these tabs, we found we were able to organize our thoughts about the different functions of the app.

Practice Implications

How does this app apply to the field? Can you give an example of how an instructor could use it in class, a student in their work, a practitioner with a client, etc.?

Privacy Policy Disclaimer

Indicate whether the App has a privacy policy and what that policy covers. Are there concerns that the data or information shared with the App will be used by the app creator or available to others? This can be found in the IOS or Android store. Sometimes, this information is not posted publically in which case you can just note that there is no publically available privacy policy.

Device used for this review

What device have you been using to do this review?

If you have any questions about this process, or would like to discuss your app before creating a submission, please feel free to contact us at swtech@buffalo.edu we would be very happy to talk to you about sharing your experiences with the app you are reviewing.