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# Teenagers use emoji codes to deal drugs

**Richard Ford**

Teenagers are using secret codes made up of emojis to earn up to £300 a day dealing class A drugs on social media, an investigation has found.

One gang says that 75 per cent of its takings come through social media deals, using “digital savvy” pupils, the

BBC documentary by the film-maker Stacey Dooley reports. “Tai”, a 16-year-old dealer, is contacted via Snapchat and agrees to do a deal for six ecstasy pills in Croydon, south London. He tells the programme: “I’m a kid so kids know me ... kids come to me to get their thing.” The use of emojis speeds up the deals. An image of an autumnal maple

leaf is often deployed as a symbol for drugs and other drug-related symbols include a needle, pill and diamond.

Snapchat, which has 250 million global users and is used by more than 75 per cent of British teenagers, said: “We encourage all Snapchatters to report anything to us that doesn’t belong on Snapchat.”