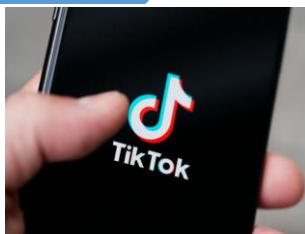




TikTok

What is TikTok?

TikTok is a video-sharing social media App which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-syncing to popular songs enhanced with filters, effects and text. You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok.



Why should I be concerned?

You need to be aware that some of the songs used in this app may contain explicit language and sexual imagery, which may not be suitable for your child to view. Some clips have also been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, themes of suicide and self-harm or young teens acting in a sexually suggestive way. Because of the sheer volume of video uploads, it is impossible to moderate entirely.

Privacy settings

If your child is using TikTok then we recommend setting the account as private. Even with a private account, your child's profile information such as their photo and bio is still visible so ensure your child understands the importance of not adding personal information to this area.

Family safety mode

TikTok have created Family Pairing to help you keep your child safe whilst using TikTok. Family Pairing allows parents to link their own TikTok account to their child's account. This will allow you to control:

- Screen Time Management: Control how long they can spend on TikTok each day.
- Restricted Mode: Limit the appearance of inappropriate content.
- Direct Messages: Restrict who can send messages to them (e.g. only approved followers) or turn off direct messaging completely. TikTok now automatically disables Direct Messages for registered accounts under the age of 16.

Challenges and Trends

You can find challenges which trend on TikTok, lots of them are fun and not harmful but sometimes they can be risky. Talk to your child about challenges as a whole that may appear on the internet and making sure they know that they can talk to you about what they see online. Talk to them about the potential risks that may arise from participating in certain challenges.

Further information

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/tiktok-everything-you-need-know-about-video-production-app>
<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/tiktok/>
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/social-mediaguides/tiktok>

Helping My Autistic Child Stay Safe Online

The Ann Craft Trust and The Marie Collins Foundation have joined forces to create a resource to help parents and children understand various online risks. The booklet includes information about what online harm is and ways you can effectively help and support your children. Download a copy here:

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/helping-my-autistic-child-stay-safe-online/>

What is screen time?

It is the amount of time that we spend on a phone, computer, watching television or on a games console.



Often, we worry about how much screen time our children are having and unfortunately, there is a lack of research to determine how much screen time our children should have. Following guidance released in 2019 by the Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), Professor Russell Viner, President of RCPCH suggests:

“that parents make decisions about screen time based on their child's development and health, and whether they are getting enough exercise and sleep. It remains a question of balance, as it is when screen use gets in the way or restricts other activities that a child's well-being can be negatively impacted.”

[<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/news-events/news/rcpch-responds-social-media-screentime-guidance-chief-medical-officers> Accessed 20.5.21]

Further information:

<https://parentinfo.org/article/screen-time-should-i-be-worried>

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/young-people-and-screentime-agood-start/>

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/digital/5-a-day/>

Omele

You must be 18+ to use or 13+ with parental permission. Omele is a social networking/chat website that connects two strangers together for either a text or a video chat. Chats are anonymous unless a user provides this information within their text or video chat. Omele states that "Omele video chat is moderated. However, moderation is not perfect. You may still encounter people who misbehave."

What should I be aware of?

- No registration is required to access Omele (therefore no age verification) and there are no reporting facilities.
- Users are given an option to save the chat's log and share the link. It is always possible for other users to take screenshots of text and video chats.

We recommend that Omele is not used by children due to the potential imagery shared and language used which can be particularly explicit.

Net Aware rate the safety features of this app as very poor.

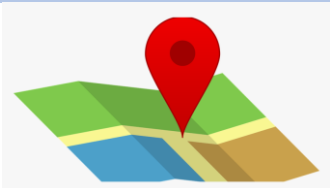
<https://www.netaware.org.uk/networks/omele/>

This blog from UK Safer Internet Centre features further information including how to talk to your child about Omele: [What is Omele? Key things parents and carers need to know - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

A guide to location settings

Many apps and games now ask users to share their location. It's important that your child understands the risk of location sharing and that you can discuss when it is appropriate to share. You can read more here:

<https://www.netaware.org.uk/news/a-parents-guideto-location-settings/>



YouTube

YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13, however the App store rates YouTube as 17+ due to the content that can be found on there.

How can I make YouTube safer?

- Turn on Restricted mode as this restricts the availability of mature content. You will need to set up a Google account to do this.
- Explore YouTube together and see what they like to watch. Make sure your child understands that they can talk to you if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable online.
- Ensure your child knows how to report inappropriate content.



YouTube Kids

YouTube recommends that YouTube Kids is used for children under the age of 13 as it provides a safer environment and offers greater controls (you can select the shows that you would prefer them to watch). Find out how to set up the parental controls here:

<https://support.google.com/youtubekids/answer/6172308?hl=en-GB>



Supervised experience (Beta version)

Managed by you by creating a supervised Google Account. It allows you to choose from three content settings:

- Explore: generally suitable for ages 9+.
- Explore More: generally suitable for viewers ages 13+.
- Most of YouTube: contains almost all YouTube content (except age restricted content) so it will include sensitive topics that may only be appropriate for older teens.

<https://www.youtube.com/myfamily/>

Posting videos

You should be over 13 years of age to post videos. Talk to your child about posting videos, do they understand what information they should keep private and what to do if they receive negative comments? YouTube have produced these tips:

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802244?hl=en-GB>

Should I let my child set up a YouTube account?

This article features the benefits and risks of using YouTube and their top tips:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/should-ilet-my-child-set-up-a-youtube-account/>



Whilst safety measures can be put in place, there are no guarantees that unsuitable material won't get through. A parent reported recently of an 'Evil Santa' video a child viewed through YouTube Kids. Make sure you report any harmful content and speak to your children about what to do in these situations.

Useful sites

- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support.
- [Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world.