



Online Safety Newsletter

July 2022

TikTok

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok. Some of the videos on TikTok may contain explicit language and sexual imagery, which may not be suitable for your child to view and there is also the risk of strangers contacting your child. If your child is using TikTok then make sure the appropriate security/privacy settings are on.

We recommend setting the account as private (this is the default setting for users under 16 since Jan 2021). Even with a private account, your child's profile information such as their photo are still visible so ensure your child understands the importance of not adding personal information (e.g. location, age and phone numbers) to this area. This article explains how you can strengthen your privacy settings and what features are turned off by default for accounts for children aged 13 – 15: <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/strengthening-privacy-and-safety-for-youth>

Family Pairing

This allows you to link your own account to your child's account. You can then set controls such as restricted mode (limit the appearance of inappropriate content) and screen time management. You can find out more here:

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide/>

Blocking and Reporting

Ensure your child knows how to use these features.

Bullying on TikTok

Make sure your child knows that help is always available. This article makes suggestions on appropriate settings as well as how to deal with bullying:

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-gb/bullying-prevention/>

WhatsApp

You must be at least 16 years old to register for and use WhatsApp. WhatsApp is a free messaging app that allows you to send messages and videos.



Group chats: One of the key features is that WhatsApp has a group chat function that are set up by one person (the admin). Everybody in the group, even if they are not one of your child's phone contacts, will be able to see all messages within that group. *If your child is added to a group with someone that they have previously blocked, that person can still see their messages and send them messages within the group.*

In settings, you can change who can add your child to groups, for example, you can change it to 'my contacts', which means that only those in your child's contacts can add them to a group. You can leave a group chat at any point so talk to your child and encourage them to leave any chat that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Location sharing: If switched on, then when you share images/videos, it will show the location of where they were taken. This can be switched off in your phone settings. There is also a Live Location feature which allows you to share your location. Talk to your child about when this would be appropriate to use but also the potential danger of sharing their location, for example with strangers.

Blocking/Reporting: Show your child how to block and report.

Online Bullying: WhatsApp has been used in instances of online bullying, e.g. to send nasty messages or share images of other children without their permission. It is important to have regular chats with your child about their online life and that they understand that they must talk to you or another trusted adult if they are being bullied. This is a helpful article from BullyingUK, which talks about what to do if you are being bullied: <https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/what-to-do-if-you-re-being-bullied-on-a-social-network/>

Be Kind: How we behave online should be the same as how we behave face to face. This YouTube video from Dr Linda Papadopoulos tells us how we can encourage our children to be kind online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BqKi3J7g6Q>

Further information

<https://www.whatsapp.com/safety/>

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into.
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