

Online Safety Newsletter

March 2020

Snapchat

Snapchat is a messaging app used to send photos, videos, text and drawings (called snaps) which disappear after they've been viewed. You should be 13+ to sign up. If you choose to allow your child to have an account then you should be aware of the following:

Snap Map (sharing their location)

The Map lets users see where their friends are if a friend has chosen to share their location at any given time. Location sharing with friends via the map is optional and is off by default (we recommend that this remains the default setting).

Snapchat streaks

Streaks count how many consecutive days two people have been sending Snaps to each other. A streak is shown by a little picture of a flame and a number (the number of days the streaks has gone on for) next to a contact's name. There can be pressure to respond on a daily basis to maintain their streaks and it can cause issues with people logging into other's account to carry on streaks for friends.

Reporting

Ensure your child knows how to report any issues when using Snapchat.

Safety tips and resources

It's really important to talk to your child regularly and make sure that they know that you're always there to talk to if they have any concerns.

TikTok update

What is TikTok?

Users can watch musical clips, record (up to) 60 second clips, edit them and add special effects.

Is your child old enough?

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok.

Why should I be concerned?

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.

If your child is using TikTok then we recommend setting the account as private. Internet matters explains how to here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/tiktok-privacy-and-safety-settings/>

Did you know?

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 (e.g. address, age and phone numbers).

Talk to your child

Why does your child use it? What do they like about it? Do they know their followers? What do they like watching on it? Have they ever seen anything that has worried them?

Family safety mode

This new tool has just been launched by TikTok which when enabled gives you control over your child's safety settings. More information available here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-51561050>

Further information

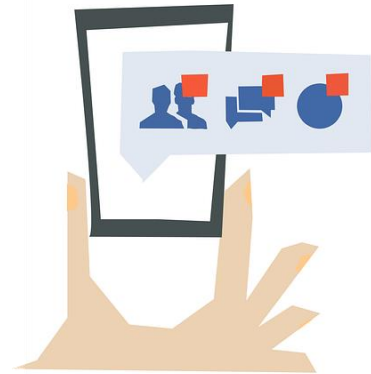
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/tiktok-everything-you-need-know-about-video-production-app>
- http://support.tiktok.com/?ht_kb=for-parents

1. Set account to private

2. Show them how to report

3. Show them how to block

4. Learn about the app yourself



What should I do if my child wants to upload videos on YouTube?

The decision obviously lies with you as the parent and regardless of your decision, it is really important that you maintain an open conversation. If you choose not to let your child post videos on YouTube then explain why, if you agree, then set some ground rules such as comments must be switched off, the channel must be kept private and of course monitor what they are uploading.



This article by Common Sense Media looking at YouTube channels has some great tips (particularly around labelling the content 'for kids' which is a new feature on YouTube) and also explains the legalities if your child is under aged 13: [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/learning-with-](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/learning-with-technology/is-it-ok-for-my-kid-to-start-her-own-youtube-channel)

[technology/is-it-ok-for-my-kid-to-start-her-own-youtube-channel](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/learning-with-technology/is-it-ok-for-my-kid-to-start-her-own-youtube-channel)

This article is also really useful as it includes top tips for staying safe: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/youtube/>

New Apps

This article lists the latest 5 apps you should know about and includes a top tip if your child is using them:

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting/five-apps>

Fortnite

Fortnite is rated PEGI 12 for frequent mild violence which means it is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age to play. PEGI do not take into consideration the chat features when rating games. Fortnite contains voice and text chat, which can contain inappropriate and explicit language. You can turn the voice chat off but not the text chat. As always, show your child how to report players for any inappropriate behaviour (more information can be found here: <https://epicgames.helpshift.com/a/fortnite/>) and ensure that they know that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.

In app purchases:

All users can purchase V-Bucks directly through the game so make sure you don't store your credit card details and your child understands that they must check with you before making any purchases.

We always recommend playing the game with your child so you can see what they are playing and monitor the sort of chat that they are listening/contributing to.

This report examines children's media literacy providing evidence on current media use, attitudes and understanding among children. The report highlights that half of ten-year-olds now own their own smartphone – the importance of understanding what your child is doing online, going online with them and talking to them about what they do online continues to be of upmost importance.

Access the full report here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2019>

