

Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms

(Ages specified in terms as of 2014)

Twitter
Facebook
Instagram
Pinterest
Google+
Tumblr
Reddit
Snapchat
Secret



LinkedIn



WhatsApp



Vine
Tinder



Path



YouTube
Kick
Foursquare
WeChat
Kik
Flickr



Communicating the issues

Childnet SMART rules have been written especially for young people to remind them how to be careful online.

- S** **SAFE:** Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your name, email, phone number, home address, or school name – to people who you don't trust online.
- M** **MEETING:** Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parent's or carer's permission and even then only when they can be present.
- A** **ACCEPTING:** Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!
- R** **RELIABLE:** Someone online may be lying about who they are, and information you find on the internet may not be reliable.
- T** **TELLS:** Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried.

What you can do right now

- Get involved in your children's internet use. Discussing the opportunities and risks with children involves helping them to see for themselves how they might get into and out of difficulty. Make sure your children know the SMART rules.
- Agree rules as a family about personal information, time spent online, and contacting people via the internet.
- Create a family email address for registering online.
- Bookmark your family's favourite websites. Add www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com to your favourites if you ever need to report online abuse to the police.
- Encourage children to talk to someone they trust if they feel worried or upset by something that happens online.

Further advice & resources



The Childnet International website gives internet safety advice and links for young people, parents, teachers, and other organisations.
www.childnet-int.org



Childnet's Chatdancer website gives details about the potential dangers on interactive services like chat, IM, online games, email, and mobiles. Read true stories and find out how to keep safe while chatting online.
www.chatdancer.com



Childnet's Sorted website is a resource produced entirely by young people for young people and adults on the issues of internet security. It gives important information and advice on how to protect computers from the dangers of viruses, phishing scams, spyware and Trojans.
www.childnet-int.org/sorted



The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre's website houses a range of information on how to stay safe online. It includes a unique link to the Virtual Global Taskforce that enables parents and young people to make reports of actual or attempted abuse online which the police will investigate.
www.ceop.gov.uk



The Internet Watch Foundation website is the UK's hotline for reporting illegal online content. It deals specifically with child abuse images hosted worldwide and criminally obscene and incitement to racial hatred content hosted in the UK.
www.iwf.org.uk

www.childnet-int.org

keeping up with children on the internet...



...an internet safety guide for parents, carers and teachers

98%
of child sex abuse live streaming victims are 13 or under



Live streaming is the term used to describe the broadcast of a real-time video from a mobile device, tablet or games console. Many live streaming apps have the functionality for interactions from viewers, such as commenting, live-chats and sending reactions during the broadcast. Live streaming opens up a world of excitement for children, where they can watch live concerts, their favourite celebrities and bloggers/vloggers, connect with their friends, watch live-gaming and much, much more. Whilst there are many positives with live streaming, it creates a worldwide platform for unsuitable content to be streamed and creates a host of dangers for children.



What parents need to know about LIVE STREAMING

SIGN UP PROCESS & AGE RESTRICTIONS

Most live streaming apps have the age restriction of 13 and above. It is important to note that some platforms do not require proof of age when signing up to the app, meaning that anyone can register an account. This also opens up the opportunity for people to be about their age to seem older or younger.

RECORDINGS OF YOUR CHILD

Each streaming app and website that allows live streaming has different rules about how they store their live videos once completed. For example, a live stream on Periscope will be automatically deleted after 24 hours but apps such as Facebook and YouTube allow the video to be posted on the app afterwards and will only be deleted once the creator decides. It is important to know that deleting a video will not stop it from being shared. A live stream can be recorded (or screenshots can be taken) by other viewers using certain software and then shared on other platforms. According to research conducted by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), they found that the apparently recorded illegal videos of live streams were redistributed on other sites.

WHO IS WATCHING YOUR CHILD?

If your child's privacy settings are not set up effectively, anybody can be watching their live streams. One of the main characteristics of live streaming is its ability for videos to be instantly shared all over the world, but this creates the opportunity for more people to watch anybody.

WHAT IS YOUR CHILD WATCHING?

Live streaming apps don't just allow children to stream their own videos, they can also watch other people's streams. Anything can be streamed, at any time and any place, including violence, graphic imagery, nudity, illegal behavior, drug use, profanity etc. Most live streaming apps claim to monitor live streams and will take action to stop any that do not adhere to their guidelines. But, with millions of live streamers each day, it makes it extremely difficult to monitor every one.

LIVE CONTENT

As the streams are live, children can be exposed to something inappropriate instantly. Most live streaming apps will have filters, rules and guidelines in place to ensure that their services are monitored. They will also have report buttons where inappropriate content will be sent for review. Keep in mind that a report may not be dealt with instantly which means your child will be further exposed to inappropriate content during a live stream.

GROOMING

There have been recent reports of paedophiles grooming children as young as 2 on live streaming apps. Due to the anonymous nature and lack of identification needed to sign up to some apps, almost anyone has the opportunity to sign up and use the service. Users can use fake identities to sign up to the apps and watch/stream videos. Recent research by the IWF revealed that children may be asked to do things and perform 'suggestive acts' during their live streams by strangers.



National Online Safety

Top Tips for Parents



PROTECTING THEIR 'REP'

What your child does now may affect their future opportunities, and it is important that they have a good understanding of this. As the videos are live, it may lead to the misconception that whatever happens in the video will disappear once the live stream ends. This is incorrect. Talk to your child about how what they stream cannot be undone and has the potential to affect their online reputation.

REMOVE LINKS TO OTHER APPS

Some live streaming apps/websites give users the ability to link and share the content through other social media platforms to share their video further. For example, a live stream on Periscope, can be shared on Twitter and Facebook during the stream, if the accounts are connected. While this may seem like a good idea to share the video to more people, the privacy settings may differ on each app, opening up the opportunity for unwanted viewers to join the stream. We suggest checking the privacy settings on each app and where possible, only streaming on one app at a time to have more control over who sees the live stream.

TALK REGULARLY WITH YOUR CHILD

Ask your child what live streaming apps they are using and how they are using them. Are they watching live streams or making their own? What types of live streams do they like watching? If they are under 13, it is strongly advised that they are not using any live streaming apps due to the dangers involved, but you may feel that your child should not be using the apps even if they are over the age limit. With live streaming such a popular feature on apps, it is important that you are aware of the dangers associated with live streaming to effectively protect your child.

BE PRESENT

In a recent study by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) over a 3 month period, 90% of streams showed a child on their own, often in their bedrooms or bathrooms. If your child is going to conduct a live stream, ask them if you could be present for it. This will give you an opportunity and a better understanding of what your child is doing during their live streams and who they are streaming to.

PRIVACY SETTINGS

Each live streaming app will have its own privacy settings with options varying from platform to platform. Generally, we advise that your child's account is set to private. This will ensure that only their friends/followers will see their live streams. It is important to check each app to ensure that the privacy settings are in place to protect your child from strangers viewing their streams and engaging in conversation with them. Most apps settings will allow you to turn off the chat feature during a live stream, restricting conversations, but live chat is part of the 'fun' when it comes to live streaming.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFO

Your child may unknowingly give away personal information during a live stream, including their location. Talk to them about what constitutes as 'personal information' and make sure they do not disclose anything to anyone during a live stream, even to their friends. Advise them to remove any items in their live stream (school uniform, street name, posters etc.) that could potentially expose their location or information about them.

FIFTEEN APPS

PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

MEETME



MEETME IS A DATING SOCIAL MEDIA APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY. AS THE APP'S NAME SUGGESTS, USERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO MEET EACH OTHER IN PERSON.

GRINDR



GRINDR IS A DATING APP GEARED TOWARDS GAY, BI AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE. THE APP GIVES USERS OPTIONS TO CHAT, SHARE PHOTOS AND MEET UP BASED ON A SMART PHONE'S GPS LOCATION.

SKOUT



SKOUT IS A LOCATION-BASED DATING APP AND WEBSITE. WHILE USERS UNDER 17-YEARS-OLD ARE UNABLE TO SHARE PRIVATE PHOTOS, KIDS CAN EASILY CREATE AN ACCOUNT USING A DIFFERENT AGE.

WHATSAPP



WHATSAPP IS A POPULAR MESSAGING APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO SEND TEXTS, PHOTOS, MAKE CALLS AND VIDEO CHATS WORLDWIDE. WHATSAPP USES AN INTERNET CONNECTION ON SMART PHONES AND COMPUTERS.

TIKTOK



TIKTOK IS A NEW MOBILE DEVICE APP POPULAR WITH KIDS USED FOR CREATING AND SHARING SHORT VIDEOS. WITH VERY LIMITED PRIVACY CONTROLS, USERS ARE VULNERABLE TO BULLYING AND EXPLICIT CONTENT.

BADOO



BADOO IS A DATING AND SOCIAL NETWORKING APP WHERE USERS CAN CHAT, SHARE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS AND CONNECT BASED ON LOCATION. WHILE THE APP IS INTENDED FOR ADULTS ONLY, TEENS ARE KNOWN TO CREATE PROFILES.

BUMBLE



BUMBLE IS SIMILAR TO THE POPULAR DATING APP 'TINDER' HOWEVER, IT REQUIRES WOMEN TO MAKE THE FIRST CONTACT. KIDS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO USE BUMBLE TO CREATE FAKE ACCOUNTS AND FALSIFY THEIR AGE.

SNAPCHAT



SNAPCHAT IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR APPS IN RECENT YEARS. WHILE THE APP PROMISES USERS CAN TAKE A PHOTO/VIDEO AND IT WILL DISAPPEAR, NEW FEATURES INCLUDING 'STORIES' ALLOW USERS TO VIEW CONTENT FOR UP TO 24

KIK



KIK ALLOWS ANYONE TO CONTACT AND DIRECT MESSAGE YOUR CHILD. KIDS CAN BYPASS TRADITIONAL TEXT MESSAGING FEATURES. KIK GIVES USERS UNLIMITED ACCESS TO ANYONE, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME.

LIVE.ME



LIVE.ME IS A LIVE-STREAMING VIDEO APP THAT USES GEOLOCATION TO SHARE VIDEOS SO USERS CAN FIND OUT A BROADCASTER'S EXACT LOCATION. USERS CAN EARN 'COINS' AS A WAY TO 'BUY' MINORS FOR PHOTOS.

HOLLA



HOLLA IS A SELF-PROCLAIMED 'ADDICTING' VIDEO CHAT APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO MEET PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD IN JUST SECONDS. REVIEWERS SAY THEY HAVE BEEN CONFRONTED WITH RACIAL SLURS, EXPLICIT CONTENT AND MORE.

WHISPER



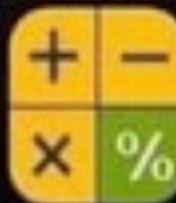
WHISPER IS AN ANONYMOUS SOCIAL NETWORK THAT PROMOTES SHARING SECRETS WITH STRANGERS. IT ALSO REVEALS A USER'S LOCATION SO PEOPLE CAN MEET UP.

ASK.FM



ASK.FM IS KNOWN FOR CYBER BULLYING. THE APP ENCOURAGES USERS TO ALLOW ANONYMOUS PEOPLE TO ASK THEM QUESTIONS.

CALCULATOR%



CALCULATOR% IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL SECRET APPS USED TO HIDE PHOTOS, VIDEOS, FILES AND BROWSER HISTORY.

HOT OR NOT



HOT OR NOT ENCOURAGES USERS TO RATE YOUR PROFILE, CHECK OUT PEOPLE IN THEIR AREA, AND CHAT WITH STRANGERS. THE GOAL OF THIS APP IS TO HOOK UP.



It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech-related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?



47%
of parents
said they thought their
children spent too much
time in front of screens

What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION

SMARTPHONE ADDICTION IS A RECOGNISED HEALTH CONDITION

Children as young as 12 are attending 'smartphone rehab' following growing concerns over screen time. There are now help centers in the UK which deal with screen addiction for children and adults showing the seriousness of device addiction.

IT CAN CAUSE SLEEP DEPRIVATION

7 out of 10 children said they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need in order to focus the next day.

CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT & ACCEPTANCE

The Children's Commissioner report 'Life in Likes' explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about their problems and seek acceptance and support, removing face-to-face interactions.

LOSS OF INTEREST IN OTHER THINGS

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is missing school time and generally being less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behaviour change.

APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Apps have been designed with 'psychological tricks' to constantly keep grabbing your attention. One example of this is on the app Snapchat, where you can gain 'streaks' when interacting with your friends. If you don't respond, you lose the streak. This addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



Top Tips for Parents

LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning them from using their devices, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is a suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device, they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them. If you have asked your child to not use their device at the table, make sure you don't. Try setting house rules that the whole family abide by.

REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from bedrooms will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focused the next day at school. 20% of teenagers said that they wake up to check their social network accounts on their devices. Even by having a device switched off in their bedroom, they may be tempted to check for notifications.

LESS TIME MEANS LESS EXPOSURE

There are many risks associated with devices, such as cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, viewing inappropriate content etc. Less time spent on a screen means that a child will be less exposed to these risks.

ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or playing outdoors will help them realize they can have fun without their device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their outdoor activities to show your support.

MOBILE-FREE MEAL TIMES

Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a tablet at the dinner table or restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but in reality, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

STATISTICS

53% of children aged 3-4
go online for nearly 8hrs a week

79% of children aged 5-7
go online for nearly 9hrs a week

94% of children aged 8-11
go online for nearly 13.5hrs a week

99% of children aged 12-15
go online for nearly 21hrs a week



<https://www.independent.co.uk>
Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2017. <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk>
<https://uk.businessinsider.com/how-app-developers-keep-us-addicted-to-our-smartphones>
Journal of Youth Studies. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10634269.2016.1192288>
University of Leeds. <https://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/newsarticle/1296/lock-up-sleep-damaging-for-children>



National Online Safety

A whole school community approach to online safety
www.nationalonlinesafety.com

Email us at hello@nationalonlinesafety.com or call us on 0800 368 8061

