

Online Safety Newsletter

December 2020

Twitch

Twitch is a live video game website. Users can search for a game and then watch the game being played live (or via playback) by another user. You should be 13+ to access Twitch, although according to their Terms of Service, users between the ages of 13 and 18 may use Twitch **under the supervision of a parent or guardian**.

As you can search for any game, your child might end up watching games that are not age appropriate for example, Call of Duty (18+). Twitch also streams live which means it is difficult to censor the chat so they may also hear unsuitable language.

Privacy Settings

Set up appropriate privacy settings for your child, including switching off messages from users your child does not follow. You can learn more here: <https://help.twitch.tv/s/article/twitch-account-settings#securityandprivacy>

Chat

Twitch gives users the opportunity to interact with others through the chat facilities. Whilst Twitch set out what their standards are, language can be mature plus they could potentially be chatting with people they don't know.

Block users

Ensure your child knows how to block or report users and content when using this service. More information can be found here:

<https://help.twitch.tv/s/article/how-to-file-a-user-report>

More support/information

- <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/twitch/>

What is your child seeing online?

The internet is a wonderful place but it does have its risks and particularly for younger people who are navigating the online world, they may not know what to do when they come across content that is inappropriate, explicit and/or illegal.

How can I limit what they may see?

- **Parental Controls:** set up age appropriate parental controls on your broadband, on any devices your child uses as well as any games/apps that they play and use.
- **Age limits:** talk to your child about the reason apps/games are rated by age and set rules to not use or access anything that is not age appropriate.

What can I do if my child sees something online?

- Have **regular and open conversations** with your child about what they may see online and that they should always talk to you (or another trusted adult) if they have any concerns. Teach them how to search safely, not to click on pop ups and to navigate away from anything that is upsetting.
- Show your child how to use the **reporting tools** on any apps/games that they use so if something does upset them then they are able to report the content and block other users if necessary.
- If you need advice as you are worried about what your child has seen online then you can **contact the NSPCC** free on 0808 800 5000.
- If you need to make a report about **sexual abuse or grooming** online then you can contact CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Further information

Follow the links below for further information:

- <https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/online-pornography/protect-your-child/>
- <https://parentinfo.org/article/digital-resilience-a-parents-guide>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/inappropriate-explicit-content/>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Im-worried-my-primary-aged-child-might-see-something-inappropriate-online/>

What is TikTok?

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

Users can watch musical clips, record 60 second clips (it includes lots of lip synching and dancing), edit them and add special effects.



Is your child using TikTok?

TikTok have created their top 10 Tips for you, which provides a really useful overview of settings to make TikTok a safer environment:

<https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/tiktoks-top-10-tips-for-parents>

Privacy settings

Find out about TikTok's privacy settings and choose the most appropriate for your child. It is safer for an account to be set to private (therefore only people your child chooses to accept can follow them) although you would still need to talk to your child about only accepting requests from people they know in real life. You can also set whether people can comment on their content.

Reporting

As with any app/website your child is using to interact with others, ensure that they know how to delete, report or block another user as well as know how to report any inappropriate content that they come across:

- <https://support.tiktok.com/sv/privacy-safety/block-accounts-sv>
- <https://support.tiktok.com/en/privacy-safety/report-inappropriate-content-default>

Direct messaging/commenting

TikTok has a direct messaging element so users can chat to each other (**TikTok now automatically disables Direct Messages for registered accounts under the age of 16**) as well as the ability to comment on each other's content.

There is a risk on TikTok that cyberbullying can occur or a user can receive unwanted attention from a stranger. TikTok have produced this list of available settings to reduce the risk of this happening

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/anti-bully?lang=en>. It is important that your child understands that if they come across anything that they don't like or makes them feel uncomfortable then they should speak to you or another trusted adult.

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.

Further information

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/anti-bully>

Sharing videos and images

Net Aware have produced the following article to help those who may be worried about their child sharing videos and images online through apps like TikTok and Snapchat.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/should-i-be-worried-about-my-child-sharing-videos-and-images-online2/>

WhatsApp: disappearing messages

WhatsApp have introduced disappearing messages. If enabled, a user can send a message that will disappear after seven days. WhatsApp advise users to only use disappearing messages with trusted individuals because for example users are still able to take a screenshot of a disappearing message before it disappears and then share with others.

You can find out more information here:

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/general/chat/s/about-disappearing-messages>

Monitoring Apps

Would you like to monitor what your child is doing online? The best app to use will be dependent on what devices your child is using but this helpful article from Internet Matters reviews the top monitoring apps for you:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/monitoring-apps-parents-guide/>