



Safeguarding Team



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Safeguarding Newsletter

Welcome to our Safeguarding Newsletter

Dear Families,

This half termly newsletter is designed to support families in deepening their understanding of safeguarding issues that may affect their child, themselves or members of their local community.

Heading into Christmas we would like to wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and New year .



HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Do you need help from the foodbank?

To provide the most appropriate help for your circumstances, Dunstable foodbank works with local agencies. If they feel you are struggling to put food on the table, they will issue you with a foodbank voucher.

The local agency can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis. Click on the link to find out more about Dunstable Foodbank <https://dunstable.foodbank.org.uk/>

Tithe Farm Primary is an E-Referral Partner with Dunstable Foodbank.

Please contact Jackie Molloy if you are in need of a voucher for a food parcel.

Inside this issue:

Safeguarding team

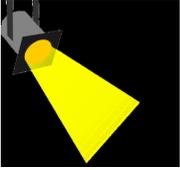
Foodbank

Domestic Abuse

Reporting Concerns

Mental health Support

Online Safety



Everyone has the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.

Spotlight on.....Domestic Abuse

No one should behave in a way that makes you feel unsafe or afraid, including anyone in your family. Domestic abuse involves any single incident or pattern of conduct where someone's behavior towards another is abusive, and where the people involved are aged 16 or over and are, or have been, personally connected to each other (regardless of gender or sexuality).

The abuse can involve, but is not limited to:

Psychological, Physical, Sexual, Financial, Emotional, Violent, Threatening and Controlling coercive behavior.

Abuse can begin at any time in a relationship, after a relationship has ended or within a family, and it takes place at all levels of society, regardless of social class, race, age, religion, sexual orientation or disa-

Effects on children exposed to domestic abuse

Exposure to violence can harm a child's emotional, psychological and even physical development. Children exposed to violence are more likely to have difficulty in school, abuse drugs or alcohol, act aggressively, suffer from depression or other mental health problems and engage in criminal behavior as adults.

CPVA: Child to parent Violence and Abuse

Child to Parent Abuse is where a child (of any age) displays repeated abusive behaviours towards a parental figure. This abuse may be physical, verbal, economic, digital, coercive or even sexual - and it's thought to occur in at least 3% of UK homes, although the real figure could be much higher and is escalating.

CPA is not 'normal' challenging behaviour experienced by most parents. It causes parents to feel fearful, isolated and like they're treading on eggshells, forces them to leave their careers and change their routines and lifestyles, and has a profound impact on families.

To find out more <https://www.pegssupport.co.uk/> or contact Jackie Molloy

Our school is a registered Safe Space that enables someone experiencing domestic abuse to be able to make a confidential call, use the internet safely to get help, pick up a leaflet or to just be somewhere safe. Our safe space in our school ensures support is offered by a member of our Safeguarding team, access to a telephone and use of the internet.

To access a safe space at our school you can either telephone and request use of a safe space or come to the school office and request to see Mrs Molloy.



Safe Space

What is a Safe Space?

- a place for you to go if you need to access support
- a place where you can contact a domestic abuse support service who will be able to help you safely

For more information, speak to a member of staff or contact BDAP@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



bedsdv.org.uk

Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year, but is that the case for all!

We know for those who are experiencing domestic abuse this can be a very frightening and isolating time. It is not Christmas that cause the domestic abuse however it does provide an excuse for perpetrators to exert more power and control. Factors such as high expectations, alcohol. Mental ill health and spending more time at home can all imp-act on the rise numbers at Christmas time.

For those families who are living with domestic abuse it is important to have a safety plan in place to ensure children are safe and protected.

For more information on safety planning : www.dvact.org

Are you in an unhealthy relationship?

Central Bedfordshire



When I am physically hurt, they say it's my fault

I feel scared when I am at home

Intimate contact is never my choice

I'm isolated

They tell me what to wear



I don't have control of my own money

I'm being stalked on social media

They threatened to
out me to my family

I'm not allowed to see my friends

Find out about local support services at www.bedsdv.org.uk



BEDFORDSHIRE
DOMESTIC
ABUSE
PARTNERSHIP



IT DOESN'T HURT
TO ASK FOR HELP!

This is a Safe Space



Central
Bedfordshire

Do you need to talk to someone about your relationship? Are you afraid of someone you live with, an ex-partner or family member? You are not alone. You can ask for support from any of these organisations:

Local support services

- Bedfordshire Signpost Hub: 0800 028 2887
- Bedford Women's Centre: 01234 316801
- Luton All Women's Centre: 01582 416783
- Stepping Stones: 01582 457114
- Women's Aid in Luton: 01582 391856
- www.change-ur-life.org

National support services

Available 24 hours a day

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247
- Child line: 0800 1111
- Victim Support helpline: 0808 168 9111

Other support

- Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327
- National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0300 999 5428
- Karma Nirvana 'Honour'-Based Abuse Helpline: 0800 5999 247
- National Stalking Helpline: 0808 802 0300
- Revenge Porn Helpline: 0345 6000 459
- Respect Phone line: 0808 802 4040 (for those who are worried about or want to change their behaviour)



**You can find out more at www.bedsdv.org.uk
If you are in immediate danger, call 999.**

If you are concerned for the safety of a child:

- If you believe the child to be in danger call the police on 999
- Contact a member of our Safeguarding Team
- Call Children Services on 0300 300 8585
- Call NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 [Email: help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) Or complete our [online form to report](#)

Mental Health support over the Christmas Period

Wellbeing Advent Calendar 2024

360 SCHOOLS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
25. JINGLE & JIVE DANCING Dance to fun, festive songs to lift everyone's mood. 	26. POSITIVE WINTER CARD Make a card with a positive message, uplifting drawings - or doodles for someone special!	27. BREATHING STAR Teach students a simple breathing exercise in the shape of a star - inhale on one side, exhale down the next. 	28. FESTIVE SENSORY PLAY Set up a sensory station with themed items - e.g pine cones, cinnamon sticks, jingle bells to stimulate senses and encourage creativity.	29. JOLLY STORY TIME Come together and have a story time with festive books and poems that sum up the season. 
2. COSY ZONE Create a calm zone using cushions, fairy lights, blankets, soft lighting and calming activities such as puzzles and colouring sheets.	3. END OF YEAR GLOBAL WISH LIST Ask students to write down wishes for others - e.g the environment or world peace. 	4. COMPLIMENT CHALLENGE Challenge students to give three compliments to classmates or family to spread positivity.	5. HOLIDAY JUMPER DAY Have a festive jumper day where everyone can wear a fun or favourite item of clothing. 	6. MINDFUL WALK Take a mindful walk around the school or local area - paying attention to the sights, decorations and smells of winter.
9. CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST Encourage students to create a holiday playlist that makes them feel happy and energised! Encourage them to take it home and share with family. 	10. FESTIVE YOGA Have a short yoga session using holiday things like a 'Christmas tree pose' and 'Snow Angel'.	11. GRATITUDE PAPER CHAIN Create a paper chain where each student writes one thing they are grateful for on a link - the chain reflects the class's collective gratitude.	12. PRACTICE GRATITUDE Take 10 minutes to think about all the amazing things you've done this year. What made you feel proud?	13. CHRISTMAS SENSORY BOTTLES Make festive sensory bottles filled with glitter, water and small decorations. Watch the glitter swirl for a soothing experience. 

PRIMARY SCHOOL

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YOUNGMINDS

Where to find support over the festive period

We know a lot of services tend to wind down over the festive period, ours included, and this reduced amount of support can feel scary. So, we've put together a **list of everywhere you can find support over the holidays** if you need it. We hope it helps and reassures you that you're not alone.

Childline

Open 24/7 for under-19s, call 0800 1111 or chat online.

Mind

Their four helplines are open during the daytime Mon-Fri (except 25-26 Dec and 1 Jan).

Samaritans

Open 24/7 for all ages, call 116 123

Shout

Text SHOUT to 85258 for support over text message, open 24/7 for all ages.



Central Bedfordshire Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub

The hub offers people access to a choice of services to support their mental health and wellbeing.

The hub operates out of 4 locations:

Amphill, Biggleswade, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard. A variety of services are available in each location over 2 days, all fully funded and free to access. Each location offers access to:

- Topic based group sessions
- Activity based drop-in groups
- Community Navigator Service
- (1-2-1 support)
- Peer support groups
- Tea and chat
- Online group (once per week, mixed localities)

Eligibility

Adults aged 18+ who live in Central Bedfordshire and young people aged 17 who are preparing for transition to adulthood.

How to access support

Referrals can be made by completing the referral form on our website.

For more information, please contact:

e: hq@mind-blmk.org.uk
t: 0300 330 0648



Central
Bedfordshire
Council
Working in partnership



www.mind-blmk.org.uk

Charity No. 1068724

FIFTEEN APPS PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT



ASK.FM is known for cyber bullying. The app encourages users to allow anonymous people to ask them questions.



CALCULATOR% is only one of secret apps used to hide photos, videos, files and browser history.



HOT OR NOT encourages people to rate your profile, check out people in their area, and chat with strangers. The goal of this app is to hook up.



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.



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.



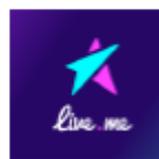
KIK allows anyone to contact and direct message your child. Kids can bypass traditional text messaging features. Kik gives users unlimited access to anyone, anywhere, anytime.



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.



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 hours.



LIVE.ME is a live video streaming 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 'pay' minors for photos.



MEET.ME 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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



WHISPER is an anonymous social network that promotes sharing secrets with strangers. It also reveals a user's location so people can meet up.

Children are using smart devices from a much younger age than ever before. It's why it's essential we talk to our children about how to use them safely. There are so many positive benefits to the new technology at our disposal these days - however there are plenty of downsides too. As a parent, it's important you understand these risks and how you can take steps to protect your family against them.

1 PUT YOURSELF IN CONTROL

Make use of the parental control settings available to you. With most devices, you're able to change the settings to control the content your child has access to. This isn't difficult to do, as you'll often find guidance in the instructions that come with the device. By setting a private pin code on certain devices, you can make sure your child can only access it when you allow it.



2

PROTECTING ANDROID DEVICES



You can set up restricted users on Android tablets through a Google account. Open the settings menu (look for a cog icon) and select the 'Users' option. Here you can add a new restricted user. After setting up a password and username, select which applications you want to restrict access to. On an Android smartphone it's similar, but first select 'Parental Controls' in the play store.

3 PROTECTING APPLE DEVICES



For Apple devices, you can simply visit the preferences/settings menu and within 'General' there is an option for 'Restrictions'. Here you can turn off any applications or features on your child's device that you do not want them to have access to.



4

THINK ABOUT ALL YOUR SMART DEVICES

As well as tablets and smartphones, you should think about any device in your home connected to the Internet: a games console, a media hub, or a personal computer. In each case you can usually find parental controls in the settings. Think carefully about how much access you want to allow your child, especially when it comes to accessing the Internet.

5

MAKE SEARCHING MUCH SAFER



Most search engines, such as Google, Bing or Yahoo, have a 'safe search' setting. You should activate this. Otherwise, it's extremely easy for a seemingly harmless search on the Internet to return unexpected and inappropriate results. Depending on the browser you're using, go to the settings and search for 'safe search'. Make sure you save the change so it defaults each time you open the browser. This will seriously reduce the chances of your child being exposed to something they shouldn't be.



National
Online
Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

9 Top Tips To Get Smart About children's devices

6

REGULARLY CHECK SOCIAL MEDIA SETTINGS



Before you allow your child to use social media, you should discuss the dangers with them. You should also make sure you're able to access their profile and privacy settings and check them regularly. The companies behind social media platforms often make privacy changes without making it very obvious to the user, such as Facebook's introduction of facial recognition software.

7

DON'T LET PEOPLE SEE WHERE YOU ARE



Location software sounds useful for seeing where your child is, but it also provides the opportunity for others to locate your child too. For safety, it's a good idea to disable location software on all devices or at least turn it off when it's not required. Also, be mindful of specific apps that record running routes or locations where your child might be playing a game. Talk to your child about why these can be dangerous and how to turn the setting on and off as required.

8 WATCH OUT FOR FAKE PROFILES

Sadly, social media presents an enormous opportunity for the likes of paedophiles to set up fake profiles and interact with children. Keep a track of the people your child interacts with on social media and if you do not recognise a user as a friend, consider blocking them.



9 KEEP A CHECK ON SCREEN TIME

Managing how much time we spend on screens is a new challenge for us all. It's critically important when it comes to children, especially younger children who are still developing. It's not just a case of setting arbitrary time limits. Guidelines published by The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health suggests it's more important to consider the 'context and content' of what the screen is being used for. Still, it is helpful to put limits on devices using 'Golden Access' functions, which you can find in the settings of certain devices.



Meet our expert

Emma Davis was a secondary school Computer Science teacher for more than a decade. Since leaving education, she has been working in a cyber security firm delivering cyber awareness training to businesses and carrying out network testing. She is a mother of a five-year-old, she's had vast experience of controlling and managing how children access online services and use apps.



www.nationalonlinesafety.com

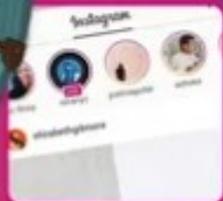
Twitter - @natonlinesafety

Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 10.04.2019



Instagram is an image and video sharing app that allows users to share moments with the world. The app has a live streaming feature and additional add-ons, such as 'Boomerang', 'Hyperlapse' and 'Layout', which can be used to enhance their feed. Users can choose to add filters and make adjustments to their photos, such as brightness/contrast. To make their content more 'searchable', users can include hashtags in their uploads to make them easier to find.



What parents need to know about INSTAGRAM

LIVE STREAMING TO STRANGERS

The live stream feature on Instagram allows users to connect with their friends and followers in real-time. Followers can comment on the video during the broadcast (which can be turned off in the settings). If your child has a private account, only their approved followers can see their story. It is important to note that they still may have followers that they do not know, which means they could be live streaming to strangers. A public account allows anybody to view their story. We suggest that your child goes through their followers list and blocks people they do not know. An additional risk with live streams is that your child may do something that they regret. This could be captured by a viewer taking a screenshot and further shared around the internet.



DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE, BODY IMAGE & MENTAL HEALTH

When influencers, celebrities or peers use filters on their photos or videos on Instagram, it can set unrealistic expectations of their own appearance and create feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. Children may try to strive for a comparable number of likes on their own photos to an image or video that has been edited heavily.

NEW FOR MAY 2018

IN-APP PAYMENTS

Instagram is rolling out in-app payments for products and services directly through the app. It will operate under the same rules as Facebook Payments, which state if you are under the age of 18, you can only use Facebook Payments with the involvement of a parent or guardian.



PHOTO / VIDEO SHARING

Posting photos and videos is Instagram's biggest selling point, so with sharing images comes risks. A photo which includes landmarks in the area, their school uniforms, street name, house and even tagging in the location of the photo uploaded to Instagram can expose the child's location making it easy to locate them. If their account is not set to private, anyone can access their account and see their images.

HIJACKED HASHTAGS

Like Twitter, hashtags are also an extremely prominent tool in Instagram and with that, comes potential risks for your child. One person may use a seemingly innocent hashtag with one thing in mind and before you know it, hundreds of people could be using the same hashtag for something inappropriate or dangerous that your child certainly shouldn't be exposed to.



LOCATION TAGGING

Public locations can be added to a user's photos/videos and also to their stories. While this may seem like a good idea at the time, it can expose your child's location; this is particularly more of a risk if it is on their story, as it is in real-time.



National Online Safety

Top Tips for Parents



REMOVE PAYMENT METHODS

If you are happy for your child to have a card associated with their Instagram account, we suggest adding a PIN which needs to be entered before making a payment; this will also help prevent unauthorized purchases. This can be added in the payment settings tab.



NEW FOR MAY 2018

FILTER INAPPROPRIATE COMMENTS

Instagram announced on 1st May that they now have an 'anti-bullying' filter on the app. The new filter hides comments containing attacks on a person's appearance or character, as well as threats to a person's well-being or health. The filter will also alert Instagram to repeated problems so they can take action on the user if necessary. This is an automatic filter, but it can be turned off. Make sure this is turned on in the apps settings.



TURN OFF SHARING

Even though this feature will not stop people from taking screenshots, it will stop others being able to directly share photos and videos from a story as a message to another user. This feature can be turned off in the settings. We also recommend turning off the feature which automatically shares photos and videos from a story to a Facebook account.

USE A PRIVATE ACCOUNT

By default, any image or video your child uploads to Instagram is visible to anyone. A private account means that you have to approve a request if somebody wants to follow you and only people you approve will see your posts and videos.





kik

Kik (or Kik Messenger) is a free messaging app used by 300 million people worldwide that lets users exchange messages, photos, videos, GIFs and webpages via a Wi-Fi connection or data plan. Kik is unusual in that your child can sign up without a phone number and then find and message other people via just their username. Kik is aimed at anyone aged 13 years and older – the app says teens between 13 and 18 years old will need parental permission but it does not verify ages.

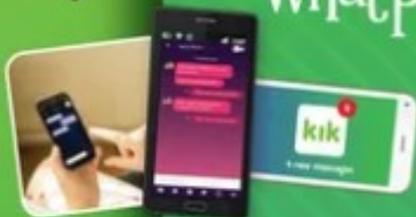


AGE RESTRICTION
13+

I new message

What parents need to know about

Kik



CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION & GROOMING

Police in the UK have warned that Kik has featured in 'more than 1,500 child sexual abuse cases in the last five years' and that 'children are at risk' on the app. Offences involving the app include child sexual exploitation, grooming, and image violations. Kik has also been identified by US police as being used by sex predators, and they say it is responsible for several recent incidents involving children, including the murder of a 13-year-old girl by a man she met via Kik.

FAKE OR ANONYMOUS PROFILES

What makes Kik unique to most other private messaging apps is the fact that it doesn't require a phone number at all to use through Wi-Fi instead. By using a username, your child can avoid sharing personal information with others on Kik, but on the flipside, this makes it far easier for people to remain anonymous or to create a fake persona.

SEXUAL PREDATORS

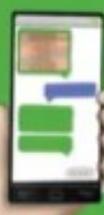
Some people may use Kik with the intention of targeting children. Typically, this is a subtle and a potentially dangerous individual who will initially portray themselves as a friend who 'understands' a child. They may also be about their age and it's possible that your child could be manipulated by a stranger into doing regrettable or illegal activities, and maybe even meeting them in real life.

JOINING PUBLIC GROUPS

As soon as Kik is downloaded, your child can join public groups to chat with up to 49 others about anything from music, to sports, to travel by searching for topics they are interested in. However, groups can include inappropriate names and content. There are also private groups on Kik that can be joined by scanning a group QR code or if they're added by someone on your contact list.

SEXTING

Due to the general ease of sharing photos and videos, sexting has been reported on the app. These messages can be screen-captured or copied at the press of a button, which could lead to further dangers, such as blackmail and cyberbullying. It is illegal to make, possess, download, store and share sexual images, photos and videos of a person under the age of 18. This also includes any sexual images, photos and videos that a child may have taken of themselves.



KIK 'BOTS'

Users can add 'bots' to their friends list and comments are built into the app that mimic conversation - developers, brands and Kik can create 'bots' to communicate with any Kik user who has opted to start a conversation with them. Kik has been associated with 'pombots' and 'pambots', which try to lure users into clicking on links or porn websites by using suggestive and often personalised messages.

VIDEO CHAT

Your child can take part in a live video chat with their friends in a one-to-one chat, or with up to ten friends at a time in a private group chat. There is the danger that conversations can be recorded and shared without their knowledge, and with live video conversations, your child is at risk of seeing or hearing content that is inappropriate, sexual or violent.

PERSONAL OR COMPROMISING USERNAMES

As Kik works with usernames and not phone numbers, some people may search for clues as to who someone is in real life, based on their name. For example, if your child uses their real name or something similar, strangers could potentially find out their identity and even start looking for them on other social media platforms.



Top Tips for Parents

I new message

CHOOSING A USERNAME

When setting up a Kik account, ensure that your child knows the importance of a unique username and why it shouldn't contain anything that is vulgar, obscene or real-life - especially their first or last name. Get them to choose a username that is hard to guess, using a combination of letters and numbers.

SHARING USERNAMES

Explain to your child that sharing usernames on social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram or Facebook, will make it visible to people they might not know - and they'll be able to message your child. If your child joins a group, explain again that groups will be able to see their username. Your teen will have a Kik Code that's unique to them and lets your child connect with anyone that wants the proper code; encourage your child not to share their Kik Code with anyone they don't trust.

DEACTIVATING ACCOUNTS

If your child is under 13, you can submit a deactivation request to kik@nationalonlinesafety.com, use the subject line 'Parent Inquiry' and include your child's Kik username and age in your message. If your child is over 13 and you need to close their account, you'll need access to the email address registered to their account before you visit <https://www.kik.com/deactivate>.

FIND GENUINE FRIENDS

The Kik app includes an optional feature that your child can turn on to help find real friends on Kik. The feature works by choosing for accounts to Kik that match an email address or phone number stored in contact to join a smartphone. If the app finds a match, it will notify both your child and their friend with a Kik message.

SHOW HOW TO BLOCK & REPORT

Teach your child how to block and report users on the app. Kik's 'Block' feature lets users block all contact with another user, without revealing to the other user that they've been blocked. The blocked user's name will no longer be visible to Kik. Your child can also report a group if they think it's offensive or being used for abuse. Some users of Kik have reported that they receive intrusive explicit, automated messages over the app - this is when automated spam bots have been created to distribute explicit images and texts using the service. Your child can use the 'Report' feature to report spam. Once reported, there is the option to keep or remove the chat from the conversation list. If conversations are saved, Kik will automatically block the spam account but leave the chat history.

DON'T TALK TO STRANGERS

If your child knows not to talk to anyone they don't know in real life, the risk of using Kik are drastically lowered. Alternatively, if any strange happens to send your child a message, teach them to ignore it.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

If your child sees something disturbing, pornographic, violent or otherwise troubling, they may be left confused and in need of somebody to explain it to them. As such, tell your child that you are always there to help them if they need it, and if they start acting differently to normal, calmly ask them why.

AVOIDING UNEXPECTED IMAGES

Kik censors images from strangers to limit lewd content being shared by surprise. The app will use all photos in messages when users have never interacted before contact each other for the first time. Users can only share unblurred images after they have both approved each other.

USING A VALID EMAIL

According to Kik, it is really important for users to provide a valid and accessible email address when registering their account. This will help to make sure your child is able to receive important emails from the service, such as a link to reset their password, when they need them.

MUTING OR LEAVING A CHAT

If someone has said something inappropriate to your child through Video Chat, they can mute the user or leave the Video Chat. Tap on the person's Video Chat bubble and a menu will appear. When a chat mutates themselves, their notifications will be disabled and nobody else in the chat will be able to hear them.

I new message



SOURCES:

<https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/blog/everything-a-parent-needs-to-know-about-kik>
<https://www.kik.com/faq/what-is-kik>
<https://www.kik.com/faq/what-is-kik>



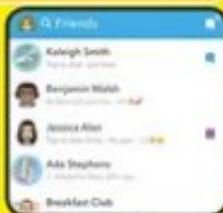
National Online Safety

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

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



Snapchat is a photo sharing app for mobile phones and tablets. The app allows users to share images, videos and chat with friends. Users can share images and videos directly to specific friends, or through a 'story' shared with their entire friend list, which documents the last 24 hours. In a study, Snapchat was ranked the 4th most negative app in terms of having an impact on young people's health and wellbeing, with children feeling that they can use the app Snapchat to "make you look pretty".



What parents need to know about SNAPCHAT

EXPOSING YOUR CHILD'S EXACT LOCATION

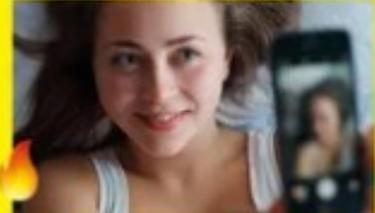
The 'Snap Map' lets you share your EXACT location in real-time through a map on the app. The users location updates when the app has been opened on the device. There is a warning on the Snapchat website about uploading images and videos to 'Our Story', stating that "Snaps you submit to Our Story can still show up on the Map, no matter what location setting you choose". When uploading to Our Story, your child's image or video could appear in "Search results and Stories on or off Snapchat - today or in the future".

SCREENSHOTS & SAVED MESSAGES

While Snapchat's gimmick is that all photos, videos and text disappear eventually, users still have the capability to screenshot or record what has been sent to them. Users may sometimes forget that screenshotting is a possibility in the app and send a compromising image or message to somebody that they think they trust. They may also accidentally send an image or message to somebody who they do not trust. Simply by pressing and holding a message, allows the user to save a message they have received, which can be screenshot or used against them at a later date.

SEXTING

Due to 'Snaps' disappearing, users can even send a one second photo or video. Snapchat has become the chosen platform for children and young people to send sexually explicit images or 'sexts'. Once a photo/video has been screenshotted, or recorded using another device or software, this can lead to further dangers, such as blackmail and cyberbullying. It is illegal to make, possess, download, store and share sexual images, photos and videos of a person under the age of 18. This also includes any sexual images, photos and videos that a child may have taken of themselves. However, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, photos and videos that a crime has been committed, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed, but taking formal action isn't in the public interest.



SNAPSTREAKS & ADDICTION

'Snap Streaks' are gained when snaps have been sent back and forth consecutively between friends. The longer that Snaps are sent between users, the longer the streak becomes. Furthermore, Snapchat rewards users who have achieved high Snap Streaks, by giving emojis, adding incentives for users to keep the streaks. Children invest time into making their streaks as high as possible, this can put an incredible amount of pressure on children and their friendships to make sure their streaks are continued.

NEW FOR JULY 2018

LENS EXPLORER

The Lens Explorer on Snapchat gives users the freedom to use their imaginations to design their own filters for themselves and others to use. Snapchat states that the lenses users create "most comply with our Lens Studio Submission Guidelines and Community Guidelines and must be appropriate for Snapchatters ages 13+". The Lens Explorer in the app now allows users to choose from thousands of these creations to alter their snaps. Anyone can create a Lens for Snapchat, which opens opportunities for age-inappropriate content to be uploaded.



Top Tips for Parents



DISCUSS THE RISKS OF SEXTING

It can be slightly awkward talking about this topic with your child, but if it helps them protect themselves, then it is worth it. Talk to them about the consequences of sexting and make sure that they're aware of the risks. Ensure your child knows that "Snaps" can be screenshotted. Teach them that if they post anything potentially embarrassing or harmful (either of themselves or someone else) it can have severe consequences: the message, image or video can be shared further.

USE 'GHOST MODE'

We highly recommend enabling Ghost Mode on the app so that your child's location will no longer be visible to anyone on the 'Snap Map'. To enable this, go onto the Snap Map and tap the cog in the top-right corner. Here, change the setting to 'Ghost Mode'.

RESTRICT STORY VIEWS

Your child can add videos and images to their 'Story' throughout the day which will last for 24 hours. By default, anyone in a user's friends list can see their story. We recommend checking the privacy settings to ensure that this has not been edited. This can simply be done in the app's settings under the 'Who Can View My Story' section. The options to choose from are 'My Friends', 'Everyone' or 'Custom' - we suggest that it is set to 'My Friends'.

REPORTING A STORY, LENS, FILTER, SNAP OR MESSAGE

If your child comes across inappropriate Snapchat content, which may be sent directly to them or in another person's story, advise them to report it immediately. This may include an inappropriate lens, filter, message or Snap. To report an offensive lens, they should open the app and select the lens they want to report. An info button will appear above the lens. Click this, followed by the flag icon. This will send a report to Snapchat for further investigation. Reports can also be made on the Snapchat support website: support.snapchat.com.

NEW FOR JULY 2018

HOW TO DELETE A MESSAGE

Advise your child never to send any negative messages (or images through gallery in the chat on the app) as screenshots can still be taken. You should also advise your child to screenshot any negative comments that they receive as the sender can also delete them. To delete a message, simply press and hold the sent message and press delete.



TURN OFF 'QUICK ADD'

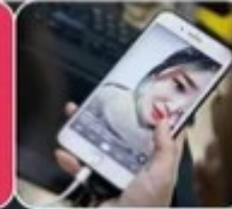
'Quick add' helps friends find each other on the app. This is based on mutual friends or if their number is in their phone book. Explain to your child that this feature can open up their profile to strangers. We highly recommend that your child turns off the 'Quick Add' feature. This can be done in the settings.



© National Online Safety Ltd. This is not a definitive guide. Please always check with the app's support information to see if our security and privacy concerns are addressed. www.nationalonlinesafety.com



TikTok is a global video community where users create, share and discover 'funny and memorable moments' via short video clips - typically about 15 seconds long. Videos can be 'spiced up' with special effect filters, stickers, music and sound clips. Currently one of the world's most popular apps, TikTok was formerly known as Musical.ly, before it was rebranded by the Chinese company that acquired it in November 2017. If your child had previously had a Musical.ly account, all of their videos and personal settings will have automatically been moved to TikTok.



What parents need to know about

TikTok

BEING INFLUENCED

More than one third of children aged 8-17 consider 'social media stars' to be among their top role models. There are millions of creators on TikTok, showcasing their talents, moments and knowledge, from singing to dancing to stunts and comedy (bits), which receive thousands of likes and comments from around the world, quickly turning people into 'stars'. There is the danger that children may develop unrealistic expectations of how they should look and behave on the app in order to become the next 'star'. They may have feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem or become swayed by certain opinions.

INAPPROPRIATE SONG LYRICS

TikTok lets users lip-synch to their favourite songs and produce their own music videos. Some of the music choices contain swear words or sexual themes. So not only can children be exposed to potentially inappropriate content but they can broadcast themselves rapping or singing these lyrics.

CONCERNING CONTENT

Some of the outfits and dance moves in videos can be overly sexual and provocative. There have also been reports of some users sharing concerning content, such as videos that promote anorexia, porn, self-harm and violence.

DANGEROUS TRENDS & CHALLENGES

On TikTok, there are always 'trending challenges' and hashtags that users can copy or build upon, and sometimes, these challenges can pose risks to young people.

STRANGERS CAN FOLLOW YOUR CHILDREN

If your child's profile is open, strangers can use the app to comment on your child's videos. While this isn't always sinister, it gives potential predators the ability to contact your child through the platform.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Of course, as with many apps, there's a paid element to TikTok. Users can buy virtual coins to be exchanged for virtual gifts - for example, if they like a specific video, your child can use coins to purchase emojis to show approval. These can be expensive and easily purchased - there is the option to buy 10,000 coins for £97.99 with a one-click buy button.

ANYONE CAN SEE YOUR CHILD'S CREATIONS

TikTok encourages users to 'share their passion and creative expression through their videos' and while something may seem fun at the time, videos can get in the wrong hands and cause embarrassment in the future. If posted publicly, anyone in the world can see your child's homemade music video and potentially cause bullying within personal friendship groups or even online.



Top Tips for Parents



TALK ABOUT THE PITFALLS OF OVERSHARING

Encourage your kids to always think before they do, say, like or post anything online, explaining that their 'digital footprint' can shape their online reputation and the way that other people see them. Something they may find funny and entertaining now may impact them in the future. Talk about how to deal with peer pressure and how doing something they think will impress others could affect them.

HANDLING CRITICISM

While it's fantastic to see your child being creative and expressive and bonding with people with similar interests, they need to be aware that not everyone will be supportive online. Comments can be negative or even cruel. Make sure they know how to comment respectfully and handle negative feedback. In the app's Privacy and Safety settings, your child can decide who can react to their videos, who can comment, and who can send them private chat messages. We suggest using these settings so only their friends can interact with their posts.

SIGNING UP WITH THE CORRECT AGE

When signing up to TikTok, you are prompted to input your birth date. If your child inputs their age as 'under 13', the app will not allow them to sign up and will be locked for 24 hours. The app is intended for users aged 13+, so explain that the rating is there for a reason: to keep them protected from online dangers. It is actually possible to watch TikTok videos without even creating an account, so it's important to check if your underage child has downloaded the app to their devices.

USE THE 'DIGITAL WELLBEING' SETTING

If you're concerned about the amount of time your child is spending on TikTok, in the app's settings, you can switch on a feature called Digital Wellbeing. This includes 'Screen Management' to limit the amount of time your child spends on the app.

SET THE ACCOUNT TO PRIVATE

This means that only people who you and your child approve of can see their creations. To make an account private, tap the three dots at the top right of the screen to access settings. Click 'Privacy and Safety'. Scroll down until you find 'Private Account' and turn this setting on.

REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

If you or your child see something on TikTok that appears to be inappropriate, they can report content in different ways within the app. They can report an account, video, comment or chat conversation by simply tapping 'Report'. In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' feature, there is also an 'Enhanced Restricted Mode', which limits the appearance of videos that may not be appropriate for all audiences.

AVOID IDENTIFIABLE OBJECTS

To ensure that there's no way of anyone tracking your child's location or identity, make it clear to them that they should never film a video in their school uniform or near a landmark that gives away where they live.

DISCUSS IN-APP PURCHASES

To lower the risk of your child making accidental in-app purchases, teach them exactly what in-app purchases are and the risks of making them without permission. Tell them that they are not essential to enjoy the app and that if they want to make a purchase, they should always ask you beforehand. In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' feature, there is the option to disable the function of purchasing coins and sending gifts.

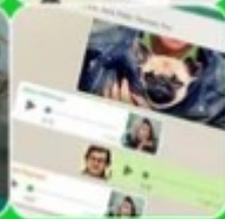
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WhatsApp is one of the most popular messaging apps in the world, with more than 1.5 billion people in more than 180 countries using it to send and receive text, photos, videos and documents, as well as make voice and video calls through an internet or Wi-Fi connection. The free app offers end-to-end encryption, which means that messages can only be read by the sender and the recipient in one-to-one chats, or all members if it is a group chat. Not even WhatsApp can read them.



AGE RESTRICTION
16+



What parents need to know about WhatsApp



AGE LIMIT CHANGE

Since May 2018, the minimum age for using WhatsApp is 16 years old if you live in the European Union, including the UK. Prior to this, the minimum age was 13, which still applies for the rest of the world. WhatsApp has not yet stated whether it will take action against anyone aged between 13 and 16 who already hold accounts under the old terms and conditions, such as closing their account or seeking parental permission.

SCAM MESSAGES

Occasionally on WhatsApp, people receive spam messages from unauthorised third parties or from fraudsters pretending to offer prizes to 'lucky people', encouraging recipients to click on a link to win a prize. A common scam involves messages warning recipients that their WhatsApp subscription has run out with the hope that people are duped into providing their payment details. Other scam messages include instructions to forward the message in return for a reward or gift from WhatsApp or another person.

FAKE NEWS AND HOAXES

WhatsApp has been linked to enabling the spread of dangerous viral rumours. In India, for example, a number of attacks appear to have been sparked by false rumours shared on WhatsApp.

THE 'ONLY ADMIN' FEATURE AND CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is the act of sending threatening or taunting text messages, voice messages, pictures and videos, with the aim to hurt and humiliate the receiver. The group chat and group video call features are great for multiple people to chat simultaneously, but there is the potential for people to hurt others with their comments or jokes. The 'only admin' feature gives the admin of a group chat greater control over who can send messages. Whilst this can be good for one-way announcements, the group admin has the power to block somebody from responding to an offensive message in a chat, which could result in a child being upset and unable to reply.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

To start a chat in WhatsApp, you need to know the mobile number of the contact you want to speak to and they also need to have the app downloaded. WhatsApp can find contacts by accessing the address book of a device and recognising which of those contacts are using WhatsApp. If your child has shared their mobile number with someone they don't know, they can use it to get in touch via WhatsApp.

LIVE LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp's 'Live Location' feature enables users to share their current location in real time to their contacts in a chat, allowing friends to show their movements. The feature, which can be found by pressing the 'attach' button, is described by WhatsApp as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." Location-sharing is already a common feature on other social apps, including Snapchat's Snap Map and Facebook Messenger and can be a useful way for a child to let loved ones know they are safe. However, if your child is in a group chat with people they do not know, they will be exposing their location.



National Online Safety

Top Tips for Parents



CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though somebody would need your child's phone number to add them as a contact, as an extra security measure we suggest altering their profile settings to control who can see their profile photo and status. The options to choose from are 'Everyone', 'My Contacts' and 'Nobody'. We suggest selecting 'My Contacts' or 'Nobody' to ensure their profile is protected.

EXPLAIN HOW TO BLOCK PEOPLE

If your child has received spam or offensive messages, calls or attachments from a contact, they should block them. Messages and status updates sent by a blocked contact will not show up on the phone and will stay undelivered. Blocking someone will not remove this contact from the contact list - they will need to be removed from the phone's address book. To block a contact, your child needs to open the person's chat stream and tap on the settings.



REPORT SCAM MESSAGES

Advise your child not to tap, share or forward any message that looks suspicious or sounds too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they will be given the option to report the number as spam directly inside the chat. They can also report a contact or a group as spam using the following steps: 1) Open the chat. 2) Tap on the contact or group name to open their profile information. 3) Scroll to the bottom and tap 'Report Spam'.

LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is part of a group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable or has been added to a group they don't want to be part of, use the group's settings to show them how to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once, if they leave again, they cannot be added again.

USING LIVE LOCATION SAFELY

If your child needs to use the 'Live Location' feature to share with you or a friend, advise them to only share it for the amount of time they need to. WhatsApp gives the options of either 15 minutes, one hour or eight hours. However, your child can choose to stop sharing at any time.

DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child has sent a message to the wrong chat or if a message they sent has contained a mistake, they can delete it. To do this, simply tap and hold on the message, choose 'Delete' and then 'Delete for everyone'. The app allows seven minutes to delete the message after it has been sent, but it is important to remember that recipients may have seen and screenshot a message before it was deleted.

SET TIME LIMITS

A 2017 study found that by the age of 14 the average child will have sent more than 35,000 texts, 30,000 WhatsApp messages and racked up more than three solid weeks of video chat. Although it is inevitable that your child will use technology, you can still set boundaries. This is not easy, especially since teens use their devices for both schoolwork and free time, often simultaneously.



