

Dear Parents, Carers and Families

## E Safety Guidance for Parents of 7-11 year olds (Online Gaming and Apps)

Online gaming is often a popular activity with children aged 7-11, many of whom have become increasingly independent users of technology and the internet, and own their own devices. Their online gaming habits most likely consist of games which offer more features than those for a younger audience, such as in-game chat, and even games which are intended for an older audience and may contain scenes of violence or frightening content. This access to online games which are intended for older users and desire for independence when going online could mean they are at an increased risk of seeing inappropriate or upsetting content or even witnessing or experiencing things which leave them feeling worried, upset or confused. It's important to ensure that children have a bank of strategies to use if something does go wrong online especially as they become more independent users of technology and the internet.

Below you can find details on how to set up parental controls for a number of the current devices and consoles children are using.

[Use parental controls on your child's iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch](#)

[Set up parental controls on Google Play - Google Play Help](#)

[Nintendo Switch Parental Controls | Nintendo Switch Family](#)

[Xbox Family Settings: Responsible Gaming for All](#)

[How to set parental controls and spending limits on PS4](#)

[How to setup up parental controls on different Social Media Apps](#)

### 6 top tips for supporting children aged 7-11 online - follow the links below for more advice

1. One of the easiest things you can do is check for age ratings - Most games have an age rating from PEGI which are displayed on the packaging of the game or within some app stores along with content descriptors which show what will be seen within a game, e.g. violence, drugs or scenes of a sexual nature. These are there to help you and your child to choose age appropriate games. If your child is not 12+ they shouldn't be playing games with a PEGI rating of 12+.

For more information please visit [PEGI Ratings](#) e.g **Fortnite** has a PEGI rating of 12, PEGI have said this is due to the: 'frequent scenes of mild violence. It is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age'. **TikTok** is intended for users age 13 and over. The following is taken from TikTok own webpage "Please do not allow a child under the age of 13 to use the app. It therefore has a strict 12+ app store rating." The following website [Common Sense Media](#) has lots of guidance that may help you.

2. Explore the safety features - Online games and apps (like Fornite and Tiktok) offer different safety features including parental controls. You can find out more about how to set these up by using the gaming guides on the main [hot topic page](#) or by visiting the [UK Safer Internet Centre guides](#). You can also find out how to set up parental controls on a gaming device by visiting the [Internet Matters parental controls guides](#).
3. Set up and play together - It's a good idea to help your child set up any new gaming accounts so you can make sure the correct safety features are in place. You could also spend some time playing the games together initially so you can see what happens within the game, support them with any worries and establish boundaries for playing the game.
4. Establish boundaries - Why not try using our [family agreement](#) to create a set of rules or boundaries to help keep your child safe when playing games online. At this age children can contribute their own ideas for safe online gaming and may respond more positively to rules which have been created in partnership with them. For more information on how to put the family agreement into practice with children of different ages please visit [family agreement blog](#).
5. Keep an open dialogue - As a family discuss how playing games online can make you feel. Discuss how you know you have been online for too long, considering physical, emotional and device-level factors, e.g. headaches, feeling grumpy, noticing the device battery is now low. Make sure your child knows what to do if something is worrying or upsetting them online, such as pressing the report or block buttons and telling a trusted adult.
6. Encourage your child to make safe choices - Make sure your child knows not to share their personal information or anyone else's when playing online games. This could be whilst chatting within a game, creating profiles or sharing pictures. Encourage your child to always come and talk to you if someone has asked them for personal information within a game or if they ask them to meet up in real life. You can report any concerns you have that someone is behaving inappropriately towards a child online to [CEOP](#).

## Conversation starter ideas

A simple and effective way to support your child with online gaming is through discussion. An open dialogue is the best way to help your child access the amazing games the internet has to offer, whilst keeping them safe at the same time.

1. What is your favourite game to play online?
2. What things make you happy when playing online games?
3. What things make you unhappy/angry/sad when playing online games?
4. How long do you think you spend playing online games each day/ week?
5. What happens when you've been playing online games for too long? What happens to your body, to your mood, and to your device?

If you have any further concerns please visit the school website <http://www.sspeterpaul.co.uk/> and look for E-SAFETY@HOME in the menu bar, this has a number of useful pages and guides including videos to e-safety.

We hope this information has been helpful.

Mrs Butt  
Mrs Wetherelt  
Mr Gregg



Publish date: 06/02/19

# What parents need to know about AGE RATINGS



If you have children, it is understandable to have concerns about the films and TV shows they watch, as well as the games they play. In this guide, we take a look at the two official ways you can assess if a particular title is suitable for your child. Both the BBFC and PEGI have search facilities on their websites that can be used to look up individual titles so you can check their ratings.



## RATINGS FOR FILMS, TV & MUSIC VIDEOS

Since 1912, the BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) has informed UK residents of the age suitability of films, TV and music videos - providing parents with the information needed to assess whether or not it is appropriate for their child's age. This applies to cinema releases, DVDs and streaming video services such as Netflix.

### WHAT ARE THE BBFC RATINGS?

BBFC ratings are broken down into seven age categories:

Universal, suitable for all ages	Parental Guidance required	Suitable for people aged 12 and over	Suitable for people aged 12 and over; anyone younger must be accompanied by an adult
Suitable for people aged 15 and over	Suitable for people aged 18 and over	Adult content only available in specially licenced cinemas and specialist retailers	

### WHAT ELSE CAN BBFC REVEAL?

Accompanied with the age suitability rating, BBFC also provide an additional warning regarding the content and what to expect, such as swearing, sexual content, violence and anything you may consider to be inappropriate for your child. In addition to this, the content is also rated in three levels: frequent, mild or strong.

### LIMITATIONS OF BBFC RATINGS

It's important to note that there is no obligation on streaming video services to use or display BBFC ratings. Due to this, we advise that you check the rating online before your child streams the content. It may also be a good idea to watch the content first yourself or discuss it with other parents to help you decide whether or not it is suitable for your child.

Source: [www.bbfc.co.uk](http://www.bbfc.co.uk)

## RATINGS FOR GAMES

PEGI (Pan European Game Information) is a content rating system that ensures all video games are labelled with a minimum age recommendation. These age recommendations are based on the types of content featured within a game. With each game, PEGI also provide a content descriptor that indicates the potential issues and concerns, including sex, violence, bad language and drugs.

### WHAT ARE THE PEGI RATINGS?

PEGI ratings are split into age restriction and content descriptors. Additional 'content descriptors' help parents and children to understand the type of content featured within a particular game, including sex, fear, bad language, discrimination, gambling, drugs, violence, and in-game purchases. In combination, the two different ratings can provide a good level of information to help make informed decisions regarding the suitability for your child.

PEGI age ratings are broken down into five categories:

<a href="http://www.pegi.info">www.pegi.info</a>	<a href="http://www.pegi.info">www.pegi.info</a>	<a href="http://www.pegi.info">www.pegi.info</a>	<a href="http://www.pegi.info">www.pegi.info</a>	<a href="http://www.pegi.info">www.pegi.info</a>
--------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------

PEGI content descriptors are broken down into eight categories:



### LIMITATIONS OF PEGI RATINGS

It's possible for young people to buy games online without a required proof of age, opening them up to age-inappropriate content without you knowing. We advise that you regularly monitor your child's gaming activities and maintain a honest and healthy dialogue with them about the online world.

### PARENTAL CONTROLS

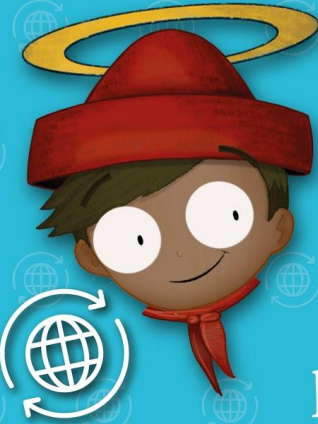
It is a good idea to put in place parental controls for all online accounts which your child may use to purchase or download online games e.g. The App Store, Google Play Store, PlayStation Store and Microsoft Xbox Store etc.

Source: [www.pegi.info](http://www.pegi.info)





#WakeUpWednesday



# Online Safety Tips For Children

Do's



Don'ts

## 1 KEEP YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION PRIVATE ONLINE

Only share it with people you know like friends and family. Ask a trusted adult, like your teacher or a family member, to help you change your privacy settings so that strangers can't see it.

## 2 SPEAK POLITELY AND BE KIND TO OTHERS WHEN YOU SPEAK TO THEM ONLINE

Treat them like you would treat them in real life and always remember your manners.

## 3 TELL A TRUSTED ADULT IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED ONLINE

If other another person is sending you nasty messages, a trusted adult will be able to help you collect evidence and report the person to the relevant authorities.

## 4 USE PASSWORDS TO PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Ask a trusted adult to help you create a password that you can easily remember but which is hard for other people to guess.

## 5 ALWAYS CHECK WITH A TRUSTED ADULT FIRST BEFORE USING A DEVICE OR DOWNLOADING A NEW APP

This is so that they can check it is safe for you to use and make sure the privacy settings are right.

## 6 TELL A TRUSTED ADULT IF YOU SEE SOMETHING ONLINE WHICH YOU DON'T LIKE

This can include anything that upsets you, makes you feel sad or which you're unsure about.

## 7 USE THE INTERNET TO HAVE FUN AND TO HELP YOU FIND OUT INFORMATION ABOUT THINGS

Remember to ask your trusted adult for help and always use child friendly search engines so that the information you get back is safe.

## 1 ACCEPT FRIEND REQUESTS FROM STRANGERS OR PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW

Always tell a trusted adult if somebody you don't know tries to contact you online.

## 2 SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON YOUR DEVICE

Instead, go out and play with your friends, get some fresh air and try to exercise more. This will help you stay fit and healthy.

## 3 REPLY TO MESSAGES FROM ONLINE BULLIES OR PEOPLE WHO SEND YOU NASTY MESSAGES

The most important thing to do is to tell a trusted adult and then block the person from contacting you.

## 4 COPY PEOPLE'S WORK ONLINE OR PRETEND IT IS YOURS

This is called plagiarism and can get you into a lot of trouble.

## 5 BE MEAN OR NASTY ONLINE

Behave online like you would in real life and don't post anything that can make you look like a bad person. Things that you post online can stay there for a very long time.

## 6 USE YOUR DEVICES CLOSE TO BEDTIME

This will allow your brain to rest so that you can get a good night's sleep, stay focused at school and perform better in class.

## 7 SHARE PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET WITH STRANGERS

Always tell a trusted adult if somebody you don't know asks you for your personal information.





Fortnite: Chapter 2 has finally landed! With a whole host of new in-game features including a brand-new map, more water-based activities, upgraded character skins and a more streamlined arsenal of weapons, this Fortnite is promising to be the best yet. Almost all of the changes are cosmetic which means the concept of the game remains the same, with players still aiming to be the last man standing. Players will no doubt find the game much more enjoyable with so much more to explore. For parents and carers however, it pays to remain vigilant.



# What parents need to know about FORTNITE CHAPTER 2

## BATTLE ROYALE

Battle Royale games have become very popular over the last couple of years, and most tend to follow a very similar setup. Taking Fortnite as an example, 100 players drop into a map, loot buildings for weapons and armour and attempt to beat all the other players to be crowned victor at the end. If you've ever seen the Hunger Games movies, you'll have an idea of what this entails. Each game can take up to 20 minutes (assuming you last to the end) and can be restarted relatively quickly once 100 new players have been found.

## IS FORTNITE ADDICTIVE?

Fortnite is at the forefront of gaming addiction discussions because it is so popular with young people. But whether it actually contributes to gaming addiction is up for debate. WHO (World Health Organisation) have classified gaming as a legitimate addiction, but this is not solely a concern with Fortnite. Signs of addiction can include irritability when not playing, lying about the amount of time played and a preoccupation with thoughts of the next gaming session. Ideally, it must be down to parents and carers to recognise these symptoms and act accordingly if they think they are developing.

## FREE TO PLAY... OR IS IT?

While Fortnite is technically free to play (in that you can download and play it without paying) it does come with the caveat that spending money on things like skins and emotes in-game is heavily pushed to players. The currency used in-game is called 'V-Bucks' and can be bought with real money through the game's online store. It's worth remembering that these purchases are absolutely not necessary, are cosmetic only and that V-Bucks can be earned in-game with enough play time.

## SEASONAL UPDATES

Every 10 weeks or so Fortnite is updated with a new season. This essentially adds new things (like skins and emotes) to the game, while also sometimes changing up the game map in interesting ways. These seasons are free to everybody and don't require additional money to play, though battle passes for each season can be bought with V-Bucks. A battle pass will typically allow a player to earn experience faster and gain fun in-game items by completing a host of daily challenges.

## CROSSPLAY IS AVAILABLE

One of the wonderful things about Fortnite is that it can be played cross platform. This means that no matter what platform a person plays on (PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One etc) they can play with friends who own the game on a different platform. To do this, an Epic Games account must first be created online (which is free) and then linked with your platform account. Doing this removes the age-old boundary of not being able to play together because you don't have the same console and opens up a whole new world of playing online with friends.

## IS FORTNITE VIOLENT?

Fortnite has been rated by the ESRB (Entertainment Software Ratings Board) as teen, as it contains cartoon violence and the weapons and acts depicted in the game are some way removed from their real life inspirations. Characters don't draw blood when shot and instead of dying, they are simply 'knocked up off the map. Naturally, players younger than the recommended age limit will want to play the game and that should be at the discretion of parents and carers.



## Top Tips for Parents

### BUYING V-BUCKS

As mentioned, Fortnite does contain in-game purchases and transactions in the form of V-Bucks which can be bought with real money. If you do decide to let your young one spend money in the game, be sure to delete your card information afterwards as it can be very easy to purchase more items at the press of a few buttons. It's important to set a limit on any purchases as mentioned they are absolutely not necessary to play the game! And a suggestion would be capping the spending at around £20 - this is the normal retail price of a game.

### GAMING WITH STRANGERS

Fortnite Battle Royale is an online game, and as such, there is a chance that young children could come into contact with strangers who are randomly placed into their group in a game. It's difficult to predict what another person might say or do in a game, so it's a good idea for friends playing together, to be grouped together. The only real countermeasure to interacting with strangers offered by Fortnite is to turn off all in-game communications, which can be done in the game's settings. Using outside chat apps, like Skype or Discord while playing, is a great way to make sure you know who you're talking to and that nobody else is listening in.

### LIMIT TIME, BUT BE FLEXIBLE

A game of Fortnite can last up to 20 minutes, so be flexible when it's time to quit it away. The amount of 'live time' game' as opposed to '10 more minutes' will stop any complaints that a match is still ongoing. Better still, play with your child and take it in turns that way you're helping control the time played and can keep an eye on what they're experiencing.

### TALK TO OTHER PARENTS / CARERS

If you're concerned about play time or spending money in the game, talk to other parents and carers of your child's friends. If you approach as a collective, it will be easier to know when these friends go online and you don't have to worry about who they're playing with. It can also help curb expectations on spending money on battle passes and skins if you stick together.

### CAN DEVELOP SOME IMPORTANT SKILLS

It's often overlooked just how good gaming can be for young people. Fortnite encourages team play, quick and complex problem solving and communication; that's not to mention the lightning fast reflexes gamers can develop. While talking breaks to do other activities is of course important, there are benefits to screen time which might not be immediately obvious.

### PLAY THE GAME YOURSELF

There's no substitute for sitting down and playing the game yourself to learn all about it. Fortnite is available for free on almost anything you can imagine, even your smart phone, so that's never been a better time to get involved and see what all the fuss is about. You may even know, you might even be able to impress your child on when you share their own impressive Victory Royale tally!

## Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMING Bible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



[http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/2018/02/07/gaming-tips-for-parents-quick-video-game-play-pod-drops-on-its-catchy-4944/](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/2018/02/07/gaming-16-18-19-22/gaming-tips-for-parents-quick-video-game-play-pod-drops-on-its-catchy-4944/)  
<http://www.pdgg.com/25181/2517196635863-pdggm-drops-play-pod-drops-on-its-catchy-4944/>



There's a very good chance you've heard of Fortnite, but what exactly is it? And why is it so popular amongst young people? Fortnite is an online multiplayer "battle royale" game developed by Epic Games, and is playable on Playstation 4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PC and mobiles. It gained popularity in late 2017 and has since become the biggest game in the world, thanks to its rapid and engaging gameplay. As with most games, Fortnite itself is a highly enjoyable and safe experience, but it pays to be vigilant, as the safety is not water tight.



# What parents need to know about FORTNITE BATTLE ROYALE



## BATTLE ROYALE

Battle Royale games have become very popular over the last couple of years, and most tend to follow a very similar setup. Taking Fortnite as an example, 100 players drop into a map, loot buildings for weapons and armour and attempt to beat all the other players to be crowned victor at the end. If you've ever seen the Hunger Games movies, you'll have an idea of what this entails. Each game can take up to 20 minutes (assuming you last to the end) and can be restarted relatively quickly once 100 free players have been found.



## IS FORTNITE ADDICTIVE?

Fortnite is at the forefront of gaming addiction discussions because it is so popular with young people. But whether it actually contributes to gaming addiction is up for debate. WHO (World Health Organisation) have classified gaming as a legitimate addiction, but this is not solely a concern with Fortnite. Signs of addiction can include irritability when not playing, lying about the amount of time played and a preoccupation with thoughts of the next gaming session. Realistically, it must be down to parents and carers to recognise these symptoms and act accordingly if they think they are developing.



## FREE TO PLAY... OR IS IT?

While Fortnite is technically free to play (in that you can download and play it without paying) it does come with the caveat that spending money on things like skins and emotes in-game is heavily pushed to players. The currency used in-game is called 'V-Bucks' and can be bought with real money through the game's online store. It's worth remembering that these purchases are absolutely not necessary, are cosmetic only and that V-Bucks can be earned in-game with enough play time.



## SEASONAL UPDATES

Every 10 weeks or so Fortnite is updated with a new season. This essentially adds new things like skins and emotes to the game, while also sometimes changing up the game map in interesting ways. These seasons are free to everybody and don't require additional money to play, though battle passes for each season can be bought with V-Bucks. A battle pass will typically allow a player to earn experience faster and gain fun in-game items by completing a host of daily challenges.



## CROSSPLAY IS AVAILABLE

One of the wonderful things about Fortnite is that it can be played cross-platform. This means that no matter what platform a person plays on (PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One etc) they can play with friends who own the game on a different platform. To do this, an Epic Games account must first be created online (which is free) and then linked with your platform account. Doing this removes the age-old boundary of not being able to play together because you don't have the same console and opens up a whole new world of playing online with friends.



## IS FORTNITE VIOLENT?

Fortnite has been rated by the ESRB (Entertainment Software Ratings Board) as teen, as it contains cartoony violence and the weapons and acts depicted in the game are some way removed from their real life inspirations. Characters don't draw blood when shot and instead of dying, they are simply boomed up off the map. Naturally, players younger than the recommended age limit will want to play the game and that should be at the discretion of parents and carers.



# Top Tips For Parents



## BUYING V-BUCKS

As mentioned, Fortnite does contain in-game purchases and microtransactions in the form of V-Bucks which can be bought with real money. If you do decide to let your young one spend money in the game, be sure to delete your card information afterwards as it can be very easy to purchase more items at the press of a few buttons. It's important to set a limit on any purchases (as mentioned they are absolutely not necessary to play the game) and a suggestion would be capping the spending at around £50 - this is the normal retail price of a game.



## GAMING WITH STRANGERS

Fortnite Battle Royale is an online game, and as such, there is a chance that young children could come into contact with strangers who are randomly placed into their groups in a game. It's difficult to predict what another person might say or do in a game, so it's a good idea for friends playing together, to be grouped together. The only real countermeasure to interacting with strangers offered by Fortnite is to turn off all mic communications, which can be done in the game's settings. Using outside chat apps, like Skype or Discord while playing, is a great way to make sure you know who you're talking to and that nobody else is listening in.



## LIMIT TIME, BUT BE FLEXIBLE

A game of Fortnite can last up to 20 minutes, so be flexible when it's time to put it away. The approach of 'one more game' as opposed to '10 more minutes' will stop any complaints that a match is still ongoing. Better still, play with your child and take it in turns; that way you're helping control the time played and can keep an eye on what they're experiencing.



## TALK TO OTHER PARENTS / CARERS

If you're concerned about play time or spending money in the game, talk to other parents and carers of your child's friends. If you approach as a collective, it will be easier to know when their friends are online and you don't have to worry about who they're playing with. It can also help curb expectations on spending money on battle passes and skins if you stick together.



## CAN DEVELOP SOME IMPORTANT SKILLS

It's often overlooked just how good gaming can be for young people. Fortnite encourages team play, quick and complex problem solving and communication; that's not to mention the lightning fast reflexes gamers can develop. While taking breaks to do other activities is of course important, there are benefits to screen time which might not be immediately obvious.



## PLAY THE GAME YOURSELF

There's no substitute for sitting down and playing the game yourself to learn all about it. Fortnite is available for free on almost anything you can imagine, even your smartphone, so there's never been a better time to get involved and see what all the fuss is about. You never know, you might even be able to impress your children when you show them your impressive Victory Royale tally!

## Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



<https://www.theguardian.com/games/2018/mar/07/fortnite-battle-royale-parents-guide-video-game-multiplayer-shooter>, <https://www.psychguides.com/behavioral-disorders/video-game-addiction/>, <https://www.polygon.com/2018/3/23/17146848/cross-platform-crossplay-ps4-xbox-pc-switch-ios-mobile-enable-friends-compatible-matchmaking?hpid=hp>, <https://www.esrb.org/ratings/34948/Fortnite/>



TikTok is a video-sharing social media app available on iOS and Android which lets users create, share, and view user created videos much in a similar manner to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. It's main draw, however, is that users can record and upload bite-sized looping videos of themselves lip-syncing and dancing to popular music or soundbites, often for comedic effect, which can then be further enhanced with filters, emojis and stickers. TikTok has been designed with the young user in mind and has a very addictive appeal. At the beginning of 2019 it skyrocketed in popularity to become the iOS store's most downloaded app with over 33 million downloads. Estimates suggest that it now has anything between 500 million and over 1 billion monthly active users worldwide.



# What parents need to know about TIKTOK



## MATURE CONTENT

On the iOS store, TikTok is listed as 12+. On the Google Play Store it is rated as 'Parental guidance recommended'. When signing up for the app, it's possible to lie about your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they're likely to come across are lighthearted or funny takes on dance routines which are designed to make people laugh. However there has been a slew of videos which have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and sexual content, including young teens dressing overtly sexually and behaving suggestively. Given the deluge of material uploaded to TikTok every day, it's impossible to moderate everything and it can be quite common to come across explicit content on the 'for you' feed when logging into the platform.

## INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC

TikTok revolves around creating new videos through lip-syncing and dancing. Inevitably, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the undeniably young user base, there is a risk that children may look to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing others user's videos on the app.

## TIKTOK FAME

TikTok is very image focused and there is a notable preoccupation with appearing cool and attractive. Many teenagers now attempt to go viral and become what's known in-app as 'TIKTOK famous'. TikTok (and its predecessor musical.ly) has spawned its own celebrities - social media stars Loren Gray and Jacob Sartorius have been catapulted to fame through their initial exposure on the app. Obviously, most budding influencers looking to become the next big thing will be disappointed, but this may have the knock-on effect of making them go to more and more drastic lengths to get noticed.

## ONLINE PREDATORS

As a social network, TikTok makes it easy to connect with other users. This includes the ability to comment on and react to other user's videos, follow their profile and download their content. Be aware that by default, any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public. Most interactions are harmless enough but as an app, TikTok is prone to predators because of the abundance of younger users.



## ADDICTIVE NATURE

Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it is also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping video format, the app's ability to keep you guessing what will come on screen next makes it easy to turn a five-minute visit into 45-minute visit.

## IN-APP PURCHASES

Aside from the content, there's also the option to purchase in-app extras called 'TikTok coins'. Prices range from £0.99 for 100 coins to an eye-watering £93.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different emojis to reward content creators that a user finds funny or entertaining. In the iOS version of the app you can disable the option to buy TikTok coins but this sadly doesn't seem to be a feature in the Android version.



# Safety Tips For Parents

## TALK ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Assuming your child is above the age limit to use the app, make sure you also take the time to talk to them about what they are seeing on the app. Have a dialogue, get them to give you their opinion on what is appropriate and model the correct behaviour for them. Go over why they shouldn't give out private information or identifiable photos and be positive and understanding of them. In the long run, getting them to think critically about what they're seeing goes a long way to keeping them social media savvy.



## USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Undoubtedly, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means only those users your child approves can view, like, and follow their content. Setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media superstardom, but it will keep their account secure from strangers. This setting can be enabled under the privacy and safety menu by pressing the ellipsis in the 'me' tab of the app. To be extra safe, there are additional controls available to toggle such as who can send comments and messages, among other options.



## ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE

In the digital wellbeing section there's the ability to turn on restricted mode using a PIN. Restricted mode filters out content that is not age appropriate although it should be noted that this isn't always 100% fool proof. When enabling restricted mode, parents should still be vigilant to what their child is watching and take note that the algorithm moderating content is not infallible.



## EXPLORE AND LEARN YOURSELF

Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to get to grips with TikTok. You could then even use the app with your child and watch some videos with them. If you are the parent of a teen, even if it does not make you popular, keep a close eye on what they're viewing and sharing. That said, it's a brilliant chance to turn it into a bonding opportunity with your child also. You could even unleash your inner performer and make videos with them while (more importantly) keeping them safe online.



## LEARN HOW TO REPORT AND BLOCK INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With the proper privacy settings in place, TikTok can be a safe space for your child to express themselves. However, just in case something does manage to slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report content that isn't appropriate and get them to come to you about what they have seen. TikTok allows users to report offenders and comments within the app. You can also block individual users by going on their profile.



## MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child moderate their time on the app by making use of the digital wellbeing section. Under the screen time management option, you can limit the daily allotted time allowed on the app in increments ranging from 40 to 120 minutes. You can also lock this preference behind a PIN number which has to be inputted in order to then exceed the daily time limit. This way your child can get their daily dose of memes without wasting away the day.



## Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.



## \*NEW FOR 2020\* FAMILY SAFETY MODE

TikTok Family Safety Mode allows parents to link their own TikTok account to their child's. It's a great way to oversee your child's digital wellbeing by giving you direct control over their safety settings and being able to remotely turn features on and off. This includes managing screen time, the ability to send and receive direct messages (and with whom) and the ability to restrict the appearance of content that might not be age appropriate.



SOURCES: [www.tiktok.com](http://www.tiktok.com)

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety Instagram - @NationalOnlineSafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 20.02.2020