



This week we have noticed that some of our students have not always been using their phones and social media to behave kindly to one another. TikTok in particular has impacted a number of our students. We have therefore created this factsheet to support parents help the children in their care manage their devices appropriately.



### What should I look out for?

- User profiles which talk about 'trading' or swapping pictures/videos
- Use of emojis that are commonly considered to be sexually suggestive (such as the aubergine)
- Hashtags, such as #trade4trade, which clearly suggest the user is looking to trade illicit content.
- The lyrical content of some songs – parents have raised concerns that it's not always age-appropriate

Users cannot exchange images and videos via in-app messaging, but once they've made contact they move on to another platform to trade, such as Snapchat. TikTok has taken steps to remove users who it suspects are soliciting underage users. However, there are still many suggestive profiles and TikTok has committed to almost doubling the number of content moderators it employs to 10,000 to address this.

### What is TikTok?

TikTok is a video-sharing app. Users can upload and share short videos of themselves lip-syncing to songs or acting out comedy sketches, and add special effects. They can gain followers ('fans') and browse other people's videos.

The age recommendation is 13 and above. This is for some students in year 8 and above. However, you don't have to prove your age when creating an account, so younger children can still use it easily. It's most popular with under-16s.

### What are the concerns?

On the surface, nothing. But you may have seen news reports or heard concerns about some users harassing children for nude images and videos.

## What safety options are available to parents?

### Control who can view your child's videos

Set your child's account to 'private' so that your child can control who sees their videos or keep them completely private. Your child will be able to approve or deny people as 'fans', and will only be able to accept messages from followers.

### Instructions for this are here:

#### [Setting up a private account, TikTok](#)

<http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/setting-up-a-private-account>

### Remember:

Accounts are set to 'public' by default. Public profiles can be viewed by anyone

Even with a private account, your child's profile information can be seen by all users. Make sure your child doesn't reveal personal information on their public profile.

## Restrict how your child uses the app

Use TikTok's digital wellbeing feature to control the time your child spends on the app and limit the appearance of content that may not be appropriate:

### [Digital wellbeing, TikTok](#)

<http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/digital-wellbeing>

Most devices also allow you to set time limits on game play, set age limits for content, and restrict in-app purchases. Check the user instructions for your child's device.

### Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate behaviour

Your child can use the app to report content that makes them feel uncomfortable, including accounts, videos, comments and chats. You can too. Instructions for this are here:

#### [Report inappropriate content, TikTok](#)

<http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/report-inappropriate-content>

You or your child can also block 'fans' at any time:

#### [Delete fans, TikTok](#)

<http://support.tiktok.com/knowledge-base/delete-fans>

## CEOP: Updated 11-18 website

CEOP Education have updated and created one area for all 11 – 18 year olds to access. This website replaces the previously separated areas for 11-13s and 14+. You can find out more here:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/our-views/2022/our-new-website-for-young-people-aged-11-18/>

## Screentime advice

We're asked how long children should spend on their devices each day. Childnet has created a blog discussing why it is difficult to specify a limit and what you should consider. You can read it here:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/screen-time-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>

## Your mental health on social media

Social media can sometimes make us feel anxious, sad or upset and affect our mental health. If you or your child need further advice or support, then one place to start could be Childline. Childline have an area on their website with advice including ways to feel good on social media, coping mechanisms, how to get support when you are being bullied online and how to access further help. <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/feeling-good-on-social-media/>