



### Virtual Reality (VR)

VR is a 3D computer generated environment that users can explore wearing a VR Headset.

#### Meta Quest Parental Controls

Meta Quest are one of the more popular VR Headsets. Users aged 13+ can use Meta Quest (children between 10 and 12 years old can use it through a parent managed account). *Meta Quest state that VR Headsets are not recommended for use by younger or smaller-sized children for a variety of reasons including eye strain.* Optional supervision tools are available for those aged 13–17. Find out more here: <https://familycenter.meta.com/uk/our-products/horizon-and-quest/>

Meta Quest has a Safety Centre; it includes health and safety warnings and how to set privacy settings. <https://www.meta.com/gb/quest/safety-center/>

#### Gorilla Tag

This is a popular game and whilst rated as PEGI 3 (even though young children should not be using VR), it is important to note that it does include in app purchases and players can interact so there is a risk of offensive/inappropriate language. <https://www.esrb.org/blog/a-parents-guide-to-gorilla-tag/>

#### What can I do?

- Check what games your child is accessing and make sure they are appropriate.
- Play together.
- Set time limits and ensure plenty of breaks.

#### Further information:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/virtual-reality-headsets/>

### Online Privacy

It is important to develop an understanding of how you can protect your child's privacy online. Any personal information shared online creates a digital footprint and it is vital that we control who sees what.

#### What are Privacy settings?

Privacy settings are tools available on most social media apps, websites, and games. They allow users to control who can view what they share online.

#### What can we do to support our children with their online privacy?

**Talk to your child regularly:** Talk to your child about what is personal information and to think about what they share online. Personal information includes their name, address, current location and the school they attend. This also includes information within photos or videos that they may share, for example does it show their current location?

**Apply appropriate privacy settings:** For any app, game or device that your child uses, check the privacy settings and apply them as appropriate. For example:

- Check if their location is being shared.
- Check who can tag them in posts (as what others tag them in can also affect their digital footprint).
- Check who can share their content.

Check these settings regularly as new options may become available or sometimes updates can change previous settings.

**Children learn from us:** Think about what you are sharing online – do you share photos of your child in their school uniform or their current location?

**Set strong/complex passwords:** Teach your child to create strong/complex passwords and to never share them with others.

**Search their name** – search their name in a search engine to see what information can be seen about your child. Remind your child that they can delete any information that they no longer want others to see.

#### Further Information

- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/taking-care-your-digital-footprint/>
- <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/child-care/online-privacy>
- [https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/11\\_18/lets-talk-about/online-safety/privacy-settings/](https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/11_18/lets-talk-about/online-safety/privacy-settings/)



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTUBE KIDS



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

As its name suggests, YouTube Kids is a child-friendly version of Google's online video-sharing platform. Its colourful user interface is designed with young people in mind, and it offers a curated, family-friendly experience with features like age-based content settings and parental controls.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT BYPASSING FILTERS



YouTube Kids is less likely to show inappropriate material than YouTube, but there have been reports of the app showing age-inappropriate content to young viewers. One investigation found that YouTube Kids had shown videos that promote skin bleaching, weight loss, drug culture and firearms to children as young as two, as inappropriate content had bypassed the platform's algorithms and human moderators.

### BE WARY OF ADVERTISING



Like Google's regular YouTube app, YouTube Kids features pervasive advertising before a video plays. While these adverts are designed to be family friendly and are subject to a strict review process, it's worth noting that YouTube Kids collects information around children's viewing to inform targeted content and advertisements.

### DESIGNED TO BE ADDICTIVE



YouTube Kids is designed to be addictive. The platform's design features, such as the constant stream of new videos and the reward system of points or virtual stickers, can be very engaging and make it difficult for children to switch off. Research has shown that spending too much time using digital services such as YouTube can lead to screen addiction, affecting children's daily routines, studies, and even their social lives.

### SETTINGS CAN BE CIRCUMVENTED



YouTube Kids offers built-in parental controls, enabling you to set screen time limits and curate the content children are able to view; however, children are often more tech-savvy than we think. They can easily bypass or tweak these settings if they have access to the associated Google account password, thereby exposing themselves to age-inappropriate and potentially dangerous content.

### AI-GENERATED MISINFORMATION



There is also a risk of children accessing videos that contain disinformation and misinformation. A BBC investigation found that some YouTube channels are using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to create misleading 'scientific' videos that are recommended to children as educational content. These videos included conspiracy theories and ideas that lack scientific backing.

### DATA COLLECTION RISK



While there are limits on the data that YouTube can collect on children under 13, children can still inadvertently give away sensitive information when using YouTube Kids. The platform collects data on children's viewing habits, content searches and location, which YouTube and third-party advertisers can use.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### PARENTAL CONTROLS



YouTube Kids offers several settings that allow you to manage what content children can view. For example, you can choose what level of content you want them to access, such as 'Preschool' or 'Younger'. You can also turn off the search function, so that only those videos approved by the YouTube Kids team themselves will appear on a child's recommendations list.

### SET TIME LIMITS



The built-in parental controls let you keep a tab on how long children spend watching videos. You can set a timer that limits screen time and disables the YouTube Kids app once a specified length of time has been reached. It's also worth speaking to children about the dangers of spending too much time on YouTube, to ensure they remain focused on other, more important activities.

### CHECK WATCH HISTORY



YouTube Kids has made it easy for you to keep an eye on what the children in your care have been watching on the app. By clicking on the 'Recommended' icon at the top right of the home screen, you can see which videos they've been viewing, and how much of each. If a child watches YouTube Kids while signed into a Google account, you can check their history through Google's 'My Activity' page.

### WATCH TOGETHER

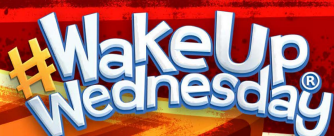


It's important that you try to make YouTube Kids a fun and positive experience for children. One way to do this is by introducing watching sessions, where you all gather around and share the most enjoyable videos that you have recently watched. This can be a great way of giving you both new things to talk about and of keeping an eye on what they're watching.

### Meet Our Expert



Carly Page is an experienced journalist with more than 10 years of experience covering the technology industry. Previously a senior cybersecurity reporter at TechCrunch, Carly is now a freelance journalist, editor, and copywriter. Her bylines include Forbes, TechRadar, Tes, The INQUIRER, The Metro, Uswitch, and WIRED.



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