



## Online Safety Newsletter

Nov 2025

### CapCut

CapCut is a video editing app. Their services are intended for those over the age of 13 (those under the age of 18 must have consent from their parent/legal guardian). It is rated as 13+ on the App store.

#### What can I do on CapCut?

CapCut is used as a video and image editing tool allowing users to edit their videos/ images as well as add music, sound effects, text and stickers.

#### What should I be aware of?

- The templates are user generated, therefore they may not always be appropriate for your child to view, for example may contain adult themes.
- CapCut includes access to a library of music that can be used within videos that may include explicit lyrics.
- Premium content – CapCut does include in-app purchases/monthly subscriptions to allow users access to premium content.

#### Further information

Internet Matters have created this useful guide:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/apps-and-platforms/skills-building/capcut/>

### Help to keep children safe online with

**Techosaurus** The NSPCC have created Techosaurus, a friendly dinosaur to assist you in having chats with your child about online safety. It is aimed at younger children and includes a book and activity pack (both chargeable). You can find out more here:

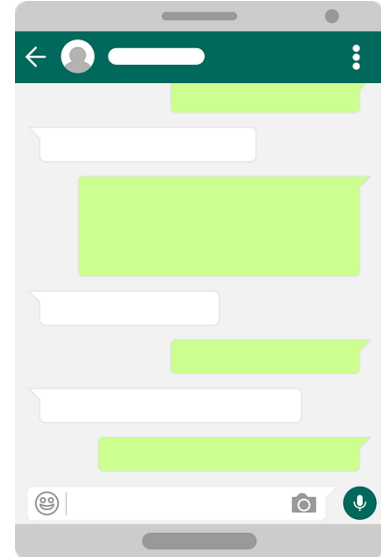
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/techosaurus/>

### WhatsApp Update

#### Parent-led School WhatsApp groups

Are you part of a parent-led WhatsApp group at your school? These groups can be useful for sharing information and reminders, but it is important to use them thoughtfully. Here are some tips on how we can ensure they remain positive and respectful:

1. Be considerate –we know messages can sometimes be misinterpreted so carefully think about what you share. These groups should not be used to share criticisms of the school, staff or other parents and children. Any concerns should always be discussed with the school directly.
2. Don't spread rumours – avoid sharing any gossip within the group.
3. Protect privacy - do not share photos or videos of other children.
4. Think before you send – be mindful of the time and if the message is necessary for everyone.



Our children watch how we communicate, so let's model healthy, online communication to them.

#### WhatsApp Channels

**Users should be at least 13+ years old to use WhatsApp.** If your child is using WhatsApp, then you should be aware of WhatsApp Channels. Channels are a one-way broadcast tool used by companies and individuals to send updates to followers. WhatsApp Channels can be found on the Updates tab. From here you can view a whole host of channels, including channels that will not be age appropriate and may include adult content.



You cannot switch off access to channels and there is no age rating associated with the channels so you would have to access them to know what the content truly is. Klicksafe highlight what you should be aware of: <https://www.klicksafe.eu/en/news/was-sind-whatsapp-kanale-und-was-muessen-eltern-beachten>

Find out more about WhatsApp channels in general here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/549900560675125>

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

(Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Online videos are often associated with apps such as YouTube, but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a potentially addictive, never-ending stream of short clips tailored to users' interests based on their viewing habits. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while most content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where young people are "most likely to encounter a potential harm".

## AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

TikTok's Following Feed shows videos from known creators, while the default For You Feed serves endless clips based on viewing history. Most are harmless, but unsuitable content can still appear, and watching for long enough signals interest to the algorithm. Although TikTok bans illegal or inappropriate uploads, the volume of posts means some slip through, increasing the chance that children encounter age-inappropriate material before it is detected or removed.

## BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Ofcom reports that most online harms for girls involve body image, while boys more often see dangerous stunts. Both types appear frequently on TikTok and spread quickly through its engagement-driven algorithm. Harmful challenges have included the "blackout" trend, where users held their breath until passing out. Families filed lawsuits after children died linked to the trend, showing how extreme or risky content can rapidly reach young people and negatively influence them.

## IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but children can still spend money. TikTok coins, costing £9.99 to £224.99, let users buy gifts for creators. TikTok Shop adds risk by allowing purchases from influencers or companies, sometimes leading to poor-quality items driven by persuasive marketing. A Canadian investigation found TikTok collected personal data from many children for targeting and advertising despite age limits, meaning young users may lose control over their personal information.

## CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Between 1.6 and 1.9 billion people use TikTok, meaning there's a high risk of unwanted attention from strangers. Accounts created by over-18s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public view by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and allows anyone to download or comment on them.

## MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

TikTok's short videos may appear lighthearted, but they can expose young people to harmful ideas. Misinformation is common, and Ofcom reports that nearly one third of 12-15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source, increasing the chance of seeing racist, misogynistic, extremist or conspiracy material. Even brief clips can influence impressionable users and shape their worldview, making discussions about critical thinking, propaganda and online influence especially important for parents and educators.

## ADDICTIVE DESIGN

TikTok's fast-paced stream of eye-catching videos can be potentially addictive for young users. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the platform, double the time recorded in 2020. Excessive use can disrupt sleep, increase irritability, and distract from healthier activities. Constantly skipping between short clips may also affect attention span, making it harder to focus on longer tasks such as homework or reading.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's in order to manage settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children cannot alter these settings without parental approval.

### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure they don't share any identifying personal information or respond to dangerous trends, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's important to talk about misinformation and propaganda.

### BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

Parents can restrict in-app purchases on iPhone and Android devices to prevent accidental or impulsive TikTok spending. Young people can easily spend large amounts on TikTok coins or low-quality products promoted through TikTok Shop. If a disappointing purchase occurs, turn it into a discussion about influencer marketing and how online promotions can be misleading.

### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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