



Kik

Kik state you must be 16 years of age to use the app.

What is Kik?

Kik is classed as a social network where users can message each other, share photos/videos as well as video chat.

What do I need to be aware of?

- Groups – once a user joins a group then your child can receive messages from other members of that group. Some of the groups are centered around topics that are inappropriate for under 18s.
- Adverts
- Location sharing
- Explicit content – including images, videos and messages.
- Live streaming/videos - risk of seeing/hearing inappropriate content.
- Talking to strangers

What parental controls does Kik offer?

Kik does have reporting and blocking tools as outlined here:

<https://kikhelpcenter.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/4402400774043-What-can-I-do-if-my-teen-has-received-an-unwanted-or-inappropriate-message>

Further information

- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/kik>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

Check age ratings!

There is so much that we can do online nowadays including playing games, chatting with others, watching TV or sharing our videos/photographs. Being online can be great but it is important that we set boundaries for our children to keep them safe whilst they explore being online, develop their digital resilience and understanding of what to do if anything negative happens when online.



So how can we help keep our children safe? We can start by checking age restrictions/ratings. **It is important that we follow these to ensure that what our children are doing or seeing online is appropriate for their age.**

Where can I find age ratings?

Films: The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rate films. This page includes a link to a 'Parents' Guide to Age Ratings':

<https://www.cbbfc.co.uk/resources/viewing-films-safely-online>.

Video games: PEGI provides age classifications for video games. PEGI considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty. It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration user generated content within games (such as on Roblox) and chat facilities within games.

Apps: Check the individual age ratings within the relevant app store. We also recommend that you download any apps and play them yourself to check their suitability.

Social Media: All social media networks have a minimum age rating; they are all at least 13+.

What else can I do?

- Explain the importance of age ratings to your child.
- Go online together to see what your child is accessing.
- Set up parental controls on your broadband, devices and on any individual apps that your child is using. This will reduce the chances of them accessing or viewing anything unsuitable.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and as always, remind your child that if anything is worrying them then they should talk to you or another trusted adult.

Further information

You can find out more here:

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit/take-control/understanding-age-ratings>

Have a wonderful Summer break but please keep your Children Safe OnLine

10 Top Tips for Helping Children

STAY SAFE ONLINE THIS SUMMER

Over the summer our children will, of course, have significantly more spare time now they are out of school. For many youngsters, it may be that a considerable amount of this extra freedom is spent online, using social media apps, video games, streaming services and other digital tech to have fun. For that reason, it's even more important for trusted adults to focus on online safety during the summer break – ensuring that our children are not only aware of the most common threats but also know what to do if they encounter something in the digital world that upsets or disturbs them.

1 ENGAGE WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES

It might not always be convenient, but try to make time to show interest in what your child's doing online. Ideally, get involved – by joining in with video gaming and discussing the apps they're using. It will make your child more likely to come to you with any future online worries or concerns.

2 FOSTER CRITICAL THINKING

Teach your child to question what they see in the digital world. As fake news increasingly uses AI to create believable audio, video and images, it will become even more important in future years to question the content that we see – and to know how to confirm it as true.

3 BE A DIGITAL ROLE MODEL

Take opportunities to demonstrate your empathy and understanding of others online, giving your child a positive template to follow. Watching you being a good digital citizen will help your child to learn an appropriate level of respect for the feelings, thoughts and privacy of other internet users.

4 EMPHASISE THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Among the internet's oceans of content, of course, are things which can be upsetting and concerning for young ones. There's always a chance that your child could stumble across inappropriate material, so it's wise to discuss in advance what they should do if this happens. Underline that they can always come to you if something online has worried them.

5 FIND A BALANCE

Communicating and competing online is fun, but shouldn't replace in-person socialising, exercise or being outdoors. Work with your child to find a healthy balance between their online and offline activities. Take into account what they're actually *doing* online: researching something or cooperating in a game, for example, is more valuable than simply browsing TikTok.

6 STAY AWARE

Keep an eye on your child's online activity and regularly check in with what they're doing. If you have serious concerns, you could discreetly view their browser history. The extent of monitoring should correspond to your child's age and maturity: younger children are likely to need closer observation.

10 REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN

Obviously, the digital world isn't without its dangers – but, when navigated safely, it remains an exciting, engaging and educational place. Be mindful of the many risks, of course, but don't let them discourage you from supporting your child to explore and enjoy themselves in the online space.

9 KEEP DEVICES UPDATED

Ensuring any devices that your child uses to go online have the most up-to-date firmware and software installed is hugely beneficial. Many people put off downloading these regular updates, but very often they contain vital software patches which help to keep your devices and data secure.

8 TEACH BASIC SECURITY

It's important that children learn to keep their personal data safe, and understand how strong passwords can help with that. Explain the basics of digital security (showing them examples, if possible) and when they're a little older you could move on to more advanced methods like multi-factor authentication.

7 TAKE (PARENTAL) CONTROL

It's wise to capitalise on the parental controls offered by most internet service providers and the devices and software that children use. These controls allow you to manage the kind of content your child is able to access, and they can usually be adjusted to reflect your child's specific age.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



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