

E-Safety Newsletter

Parental Controls and Social Networks

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This newsletter aims to provide parents and carers with information about setting parental controls on phones and tablets and age restrictions on popular social networking services.

Setting Parental Controls

iOS (iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch)

1. Open the Settings app
2. Go to General > Restrictions
3. Tap 'Enable Restrictions'
4. Set a passcode
5. Select which features and content you want to allow

You can disable installing and deleting apps, disable in-app purchases, set age limits for apps that can be installed, disable multiplayer games and disable adding friends in games which support Apple's Game Center. With Parental Controls turned on all apps are still visible in the App Store but apps over the age limit you set cannot be downloaded.

To browse age-appropriate apps, in the Apple App Store go to Categories>Kids then select the age range of the apps you want to view.

More information is available at <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

Android

Individual manufacturers adapt the Android operating system to their own devices so the options on your device might be different from the description below. Note that parental controls only apply to whichever Google account you were logged into when you set them up rather than to the device and any games downloaded before the restrictions were set will still be seen.

1. Open the Play Store app
2. Tap the 'hamburger' icon in the search bar or swipe from the left of the screen to open the menu
3. Go to Settings>Parental Controls

4. Enter a PIN to access parental controls settings
5. Set content restrictions for apps & games, films, music etc.

You can select which PEGI ratings you want to allow. The Play Store features a 'Family' category. In the Google Play Store tap the 'Family' category at the top of the screen to see apps and game suitable for children.

Age Restrictions on Social Networks

The following is a list of the minimum age a person has to be to have an account on some common social networking services. More information is available at <http://parentinfo.org/article/under-13s-and-social-media>

All of the social networks and messaging services listed below were reported to be used by Bowmandale children in our latest E-safety survey.

Facebook / Messenger

Minimum Age: 13

Facebook requires users to be 13 years or older. Their policy is to delete accounts if there is proof that the account holder is under 13.

Instagram

Minimum Age: 13

You don't have to be over a certain age to look at photos posted publicly on Instagram, but if you want to post photos on your own account the age limit is 13.

Twitter

Minimum Age: 13

Twitter is a messaging service that lets you post public messages, pictures and videos and send private messages. Anyone can follow any other user's public tweets. Twitter do not ask a user's age on sign-up but the minimum age for an account is 13.

YouTube

Minimum Age with parental permission: 13

Minimum Age for independent sign-up: 18

You don't need to be over a certain age to watch videos on YouTube (younger children might be better off using YouTube Kids, which only features child-friendly videos). To comment or share your own videos you need an account. YouTube says that if a video is flagged (marked for review by another user) and they find out that the person who posted it registered with a fake age, they'll remove the account.

Snapchat

Minimum Age: 13

Snapchat is an app that lets you send a photo, short video or message to your contacts. The 'snap' appears on screen for up to 10 seconds before disappearing, although it can be screenshotted. When Parentinfo asked children about Snapchat about a third thought it was risky because of strangers adding them, having no control over what they see when they open a Snapchat and people taking screenshots of their Snapchats and then sharing them.

WhatsApp

Minimum Age: 16

WhatsApp is another messaging service. As part of its Terms of Service, WhatsApp states its minimum age of use is 16 years. By using WhatsApp, a user agrees to provide certain personal information such as their mobile phone number, billing and mobile device information. If WhatsApp learns that identifiable information of a child under 16 has been collected on the WhatsApp Site or WhatsApp Service, then they may deactivate the account.

Musical.ly

Minimum Age: 13 / 18

Musical.ly is a social network for sharing user-generated music clips. Their terms of use state, a little confusingly, that: 'The service is not for persons under the age of 13... If you are under 13 years of age, you must not use or access the service in any manner. Furthermore, by using the Service, you affirm that you are at least 18 years of age.'

Skype

Minimum Age: 13

Skype say their websites and software are not intended for or designed to attract users under the age of 13.

FaceTime

Minimum Age for independent sign-up: 13

FaceTime is a video and audio messaging app built into Apple devices. An Apple ID is required for all of Apple's services including Facetime, Mail and iMessages. Children under 13 can't create an Apple ID on their own. However, a parent or legal guardian can provide verified parental consent for a child to have their own Apple ID, then create it on the child's behalf.

Google+

Minimum Age: 13

Google+ is Google's social networking offering. Google Accounts can only be created by users over the age of 13 and are required for products such as Google+, Gmail and YouTube.

ROBLOX

Minimum Age: 8

ROBLOX is a user-generated gaming platform where you can create your own games or play games that other users have made. There is also the option to chat to other players. In a Net Aware survey, 16% of the children and young people who reviewed ROBLOX thought that it can be risky. The main reasons were in-app purchases, being able to talk to strangers, people you don't know adding you.

ooVoo

Minimum Age: 13

ooVoo is a service for making video and voice calls and sending texts. It allows conversations with up to 12 people. The default setting is 'public' meaning users speak to people they don't know.

Kik

Minimum Age: 13

Kik is an instant messaging app. It lets you create your own username and message others without using your mobile number. You can share photos, organise events, share games, news and anything of interest to you from the internet. 20% of children surveyed by Net Aware reported dangers such as strangers adding them and messaging them, hacking and being sent inappropriate messages and pictures.

Steam

Minimum Age: 13

Steam is a gaming and platform and store which lets you play games and create your own in-game content. You can also chat to other members of the community through groups, clans, or in-game chat features. The minimum age for an account, including accounts managed by parents, is 13.

References

The information in this newsletter has been compiled mainly from the websites listed below. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, although we do not have first-hand experience of every one of these social networks.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

<http://parentinfo.org/article/under-13s-and-social-media>