Online Safety Newsletter

April 2023

Sendit

Sendit is an add on app to Snapchat and it allows users to play games together. **Sendit state on their website that the app is not intended for children under the age of 13**.

The games include Q&A games including ask me anything. A user asks a question and players can respond **anonymously**. As with any anonymous element, there is an increased risk of cyberbullying.

The app does contain in-app purchases ranging from £0.99 to £29.99. There is also a weekly subscription service available, which provides users with enhanced features. It costs £8.49 per week. Ensure payment details are not stored/accessible on your child's device to avoid unexpected bills.

If you know that your child is using this app then you can contact Sendit to ask them to disable their account.

Further information
https://www.getsendit.com/parents

Anime TV

Anime refers to animations originating from Japan. Due to its cartoon style, your child might inadvertently watch it when it isn't appropriate for their age. Some Anime contains adult themes. It is important to check age ratings so a starting point could be Common Sense Media. They have created a list of some Anime TV with reviews/age ratings:
https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/anime-tv-for-teens-and-tweens

Being unkind online

It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face to face with each other.

Talk to your child about how they speak to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect and kindness, like they would if they were face-to-face. How they act online should be how they behave on the school playground when they are following school rules. Here are some examples of what being unkind looks like online:

- Sending nasty or hurtful messages
- Leaving unkind comments
- Sharing photographs of somebody else without their permission
- Excluding somebody on purpose
- Impersonating somebody with a fake account
- Telling/sharing lies

The above might happen whilst your child is gaming online or whilst using social media or messaging apps e.g. WhatsApp.

Top Internet Manners

Internet Matters have produced a list of 'manners' that we all should follow to create a safer and kinder online world: https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/top-internet-manners/

What should I do if my child is being bullied online?

Ensure that your child understands that if they receive unkind messages or see something that worries them, they should not reply or engage in conversation with the perpetrator. Instead, they should tell a trusted adult. You can use the tools within an app to report any offensive or hurtful content as well as block people so they cannot contact you again in the future.

Further information

https://www.esafety.gov.au/kids/I-want-help-with/how-do-i-know-if-im-being-mean-online

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into.
Current as of the date released 1.4.23.

BeReal

You must be 13+ to use BeReal. BeReal is a social media app. It notifies you once a day to upload an image of what you are doing. Once you receive the notification, you have two minutes to capture and share what you are doing at that moment. All your friends post at the exact same time and once you have posted, you can then see what your friends have posted. If you do not post, then you cannot see your friend's BeReals from that day or access the discovery tab.

What do I need to be aware of?

BeReal is private by default and only visible to your friends. However, it is possible to share with all users by selecting the public option. If selected, your BeReal will appear in the Discovery tab so all users can see and interact with it, therefore there is the possibility of strangers contacting your child via this app.

There is also an option to share your location. Chat to your child about location sharing as it is important that your child understands the risk of location sharing and when it is and is not appropriate to share.

Discovery tab – this is the area where you can view all other BeReals that have been made public. There is an element of risk that your child may see an inappropriate image depending on what others have uploaded.

If your child is using BeReal then talk to them about what they share, what they should do if they see something inappropriate or that they find upsetting and that they know how to use the reporting tools.

Further information:

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/is-bereal-safe-for-my-child

Snapchat Update

Family Centre: New Feature

Snapchat launched Family Centre last year, which includes features such as allowing you to see who your child is friends with on Snapchat and who they have been communicating with (you will not be able to see the contents of conversations).

Snapchat have now announced their latest feature for Family Centre - Content Controls. Content controls will allow you to limit the type of content your child can watch on Snapchat by filtering out stories.

You can find out how to set this new feature up here:
https://values.snap.com/en-GB/news/introducing-content-controls-on-family-center

TikTok update

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok.

60-minute screentime notification
TikTok are introducing a 60-minute screentime notification for teen accounts (accounts with users under 18 years of age). When the time limit is reached, the user will be asked to enter their passcode to continue watching.

Family Pairing: new features
This allows you to link your own account to your child's account. TikTok have now added three new features:

- **Custom daily screen time limits:** this option includes choosing different time limits depending on the day of the week as well.
- **Screen time dashboard:** this provides a summary of time spent on the app, the number of times TikTok was opened and a breakdown of total time spent during the day and night.
- **Mute notifications:** this setting will enable you to mute notifications at set times. Accounts aged 13-15 already do not receive push notifications from 9pm and for accounts aged 16-17, notifications are disabled from 10pm.

You can find out more here:
https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/new-features-for-teens-and-families-on-tiktok-us

When should a child get their own phone?

If you are thinking about giving your child their own phone, then you might find the latest article from the Education Team at Childnet useful:

https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/experts-answer-when-should-my-child-get-their-first-phone