

Information and Cybersecurity Awareness

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How safe is your kid online?

'Make your home a haven for online safety'

Do you know the rules for children's use of social media? Do you realise that your child can come into contact with strangers by playing a game?

Introduction

Many parents are concerned about their children's safety during online activity. However, they sometimes inadvertently bypass restrictions that have been designed to promote safety for minors.

How to protect your child

Facebook, Google, TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and most other social media platforms have a minimum age restriction, which is usually 13 years. Some of these companies provide services to enable parents to introduce their children below the required age for a particular platform by allowing them to access the service via a limited 'kids-friendly' platform. They also

provide resources for parents to teach children to safely use the service.

Parents who monitor their children's internet usage, screen time and activities have the opportunity to guide them regarding their use of the internet. Several apps are available for a variety of devices. You will find a list of parental control software at: <https://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-parental-control-apps.review-2258.html>.

Some ways in which parents can allow the use of social media platforms for their children are:

On Google:

- Use Google's Family Link app to create and manage the Google account of a child under the minimum age: <https://support.google.com/families/answer/7103338?hl=en>.

On Facebook:

- Under-age children are not allowed to create personal Facebook accounts and Facebook requires its users to inform them should they find such accounts.
- A parent may create a Facebook Messenger account for a child, which is linked to the parent's Facebook account: <https://www.facebook.com/help/messenger-app/1649611538457424>.

Other platforms:

- Many resources are available to guide parents when introducing their children to WhatsApp once they have reached the minimum age for using the service. One such resource is: <https://useboomerang.com/2018/04/25/monitor-childs-whatsapp-account-free/>.
- Most games offer in-game chat functions, social-media-like services and paid components. Parents should have sufficient knowledge of the games their children play, ensure adherence to age restrictions and monitor their children's activities. See: <https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/gaming/>.

SEE MORE

 [WATCH: Impact of social media on youth](#)

READ MORE

 [At what age should children have social media accounts?](#)

[Facebook: Safety resources for parents](#)

[Google: Safety resources for families](#)

[WhatsApp safety: What parents need to know](#)

[Online gaming: The risks](#)

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 Be informed – know the limits and the risks