

Keep your child safe on TikTok

What is it?

A video-sharing app that's very popular with children and teenagers. Anyone can make and upload their own videos, which often include:

- Dance routines
- Lip-syncing to music
- Comedy sketches

You can also gain followers ('fans') and watch other people's videos.

The age recommendation is **13 and above**, but it's easy for younger children to sign up too.

What are main things to watch out for?

A lot of TikTok's popularity comes from videos of 'viral' challenges (i.e. when 1 person attempts a particular skill and then others make their own videos copying it).

Most of these challenges are harmless (for example, copying particular dance moves) but some can be dangerous. For example:

- Eating or drinking inedible substances, or eating and drinking a far greater quantity of something than is recommended
- Holding your breath or being choked until you pass out (the 'blackout' challenge)

A recent viral trend on TikTok has seen school pupils staging protests in their school due to issues such as access to toilets, and uniform policies. These protests can, and have, become dangerous.

If you're aware that your child is considering a school protest, please encourage them to talk to their teacher or another member of staff about their concerns instead. This is a much safer way to share concerns with the school.

Other things to watch out for on TikTok include:

- Content about eating disorders (known as 'pro-ana') and bullying
- Challenges with highly sexualised content (e.g. the 'silhouette challenge')
- Sexual, violent, racist and/or homophobic content and other forms of hate speech appearing on your child's 'For You' page

Under-16s can't send or receive private messages. But once users have made contact, for example through comments on videos, they could still switch to another app like Snapchat to chat privately and swap images and videos.