What Parents & Carers Need to Know about
YOUTUBE KIDS

YouTube Kids is a child-friendly version of YouTube which offers a colourful and easy-to-navigate environment that's suitable for young children. This app is easily accessible and available for mobile devices, which can be downloaded without needing the YouTube app on the device. Despite YouTube Kids seeming like a very child-friendly platform, it has raised concerns over its advertising and inappropriate content seeping through the curation process.

SETTING UP

1. Download the YouTube Kids app and connect your own YouTube channel.

2. Input your child's name, age and birth month.

3. Select the types of videos you want to include for your child based on their age and your own personal choice.

4. If you decide to approve the content yourself, the app will present you with sample videos for you to accept and reject.

5. Once you've made your choice, you're ready to use the app!

Advice for Parents & Carers

REMOVE ADVERTISEMENTS

Like YouTube, adverts on YouTube Kids are also quite pervasive. If you decide you don't want your child being exposed to adverts, you can subscribe to YouTube Premium which will remove adverts on YouTube Kids. However, it's worth remembering that this doesn't block adverts that content creators decide to make as part of their content, and children are still able to access channels from branded fast food or toy companies.

BE WARY OF UNSUITABLE CONTENT

YouTube Kids has a far lower chance of showing unsuitable material than YouTube, but there are still reports of malicious users deliberately uploading inappropriate content. It's important that your child feels able to talk to you if they were ever exposed to upsetting content in the future. It's also safest to report inappropriate videos: tap the three dots in the corner of the video and select 'Report'.

DISABLE SEARCH OPTION

YouTube Kids allows you to disable the search feature, which you may find useful in preventing your child from unintentionally finding age-inappropriate content. Doing this will also give you more control over what your child is watching. It's also worth noting that setting an age limit will ensure that your child is only exposed to recommended videos that are deemed suitable for their age group.

RESTRICT VIEWING TIME

The YouTube Kids app provides you with the option of setting up a timer to monitor and limit your child's daily usage, which automatically stops the video when it reaches the set time. It may be best to make use of this feature to prevent screen addiction - which can potentially lead to children staying up too late, affecting their mood and concentration the following day.

MONITOR WATCH HISTORY

YouTube Kids has also made it possible for parents and carers to see what their children are watching on the app by clicking on the 'Recommended' icon on the top right of the home screen. It may also be worth having a look at what your child has recently watched by clicking on their history tab. The red bar on the video shows how much of the video has been watched.

WATCH TOGETHER

It's important to make YouTube Kids a fun and positive experience for your child. This may require spending time finding channels and content that you and your child will enjoy and benefit from. Try introducing family sessions where you can share the most enjoyable videos that you and your child have recently watched. This can be a great way of giving you and your child many new things to talk about with each other.

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.

National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com   @natonlinesafety   /NationalOnlineSafety   @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 20.04.2022

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about
TODDLERS & SCREEN TIME

The toddler years are full of excitement, exploration and energy. It's a critical time in children's development, when brain connections are rapidly forming. Youngsters often begin to discover devices around this age, as they learn to communicate with friends, play games and watch videos (Ofcom recently found, for example, that one in five 3–4-year-olds in the UK uses social media). These activities can make a child happy and relaxed but have a damaging impact if overused. Setting screen time limits for toddlers can be a challenge, so we've pulled together some suggestions for making sure your little one is interacting with the online world in a safe, healthy way.

ONLINE SAFETY CHECKLIST

✅ PARENTAL CONTROLS
Children need to be shielded from content that's not age appropriate. You can do this by adjusting parental controls and safe search settings on the devices, apps and games they use.

✅ ONGOING SUPERVISION
Try to stay engaged and present in what your child is doing digitally. Make time to talk about what they enjoy and how they can stay safe online.

✅ OFFERING HELP
Teach your toddler to ask for help – and that they should always tell a trusted adult if they're unsure about anything to do with a device, or they see or hear something that makes them scared or upset.

✅ COMMUNICATION IS KEY
Emphasise that your child should check with you before they do anything online for the first time – such as watching a new show, playing a new game or exploring a new app.

✅ FACE TO FACE IS ACE
Support toddlers' development of language and other skills by prioritising games or apps that encourage face-to-face interaction – like learning to read or count with an adult.

Advice for Parents & Carers

MODEL IT
Your toddler is watching and learning from you whenever you pick up your phone. Even babies are aware of screens and the attention their parents give to them. By showing you know when to put your phone down and focus on something else, you're modelling an important behaviour for them.

CONTROL IT
Use tech to control tech. Most devices and individual apps have settings that allow you to restrict screen time. Decide on the right length of time and use the settings or a timer to block access. This is especially useful for very young children, who simply see it as the device 'turning off'.

ANNOUNCE IT
When a toddler's screen shuts off suddenly, it can lead to frustration and tears. Let your little one mentally prepare for the end of screen time by announcing they have five minutes left, two minutes left and so on. You could also set an egg-timer, alarm or buzzer to go off just before time's up.

DELAY IT
Try to avoid letting children start their day with screen time. Once they're online, it can be hard to get them back offline – and can set a negative tone for the rest of the day. Routine and structure are important for toddlers, so encourage them to enjoy some other activities before the screens go on.

TRADE IT
You could try offering rewards and alternatives in exchange for screen time – for example, having a device-free day to get a playdate with a friend at the weekend, or skipping screen time one evening in return for a trip to the ice cream parlour tomorrow.

EARN IT
Screen time can definitely be used as a reward. You could opt for the classic "no screen time until you've tidied up your toys" or you could get creative and award screen time in relation to successful tasks: eating all of their vegetables earns 10 minutes on their device, for example.

REMOVE IT
Keep family mealtimes, social gatherings, children's bedrooms and other important occasions and places screen free. Remember to turn off TVs that you aren't watching, because even background noise can distract from you spending quality face-to-face time with your young ones.

SWAP IT
Put together a bag of things that your children love playing with – and get them to help choose what goes in there (items like stickers, pens, small toys, Lego or teddy bears are ideal). Then encourage them to pick something to play with from "the special bag of fun" instead of staring at a screen.

Meet Our Expert
Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa: a reporting system currently being used to combat bullying in schools and businesses around the world. FaceUp helps to give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up against unacceptable behaviour.

National Online Safety
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday

ONLINE SAFETY FOR UNDER 5s
10 Top Tips for Parents and Carers

According to Ofcom's most recent research, a significant proportion of children are already online by the time they start school, with 17% of 5-year-olds owning their own mobile phone and 50% using messaging platforms. As becoming familiar with technology is generally encouraged in younger children – and has been essential for education during the pandemic – it is crucial that trusted adults recognise both the benefits and the risks of infants and toddlers using digital devices. We've compiled our top tips to help the under-5s start their online safety journey.

PARENT CODE: ******

1 USE DEVICES TOGETHER
This lets you monitor and control what your child is using the device for. It also provides the interaction that supports children's understanding of what they're seeing – allowing them to ask you questions, and so on.

2 ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS
Most digital devices have built-in parental controls that can limit the type of content children have access to. If your little one uses any device (even borrowing yours), it's a good idea to explore what controls the device has and enable them whenever they have access to it.

3 MANAGE SCREEN TIME
This can be tricky, especially if your child is interested in a certain video, app or game. Try to agree on some ground rules and get your child into a routine which includes certain times of the day when they go without devices.

4 TALK ABOUT BEING SAFE ONLINE
Just like we teach children about being safe in the real world, we need to educate them about how to stay safe online. Use age-appropriate language to help them understand, and plenty of hand gestures can reinforce what you're telling them.

5 SET A GOOD EXAMPLE
Children often learn by watching and copying those around them, and using digital devices is no exception. When you're around your child, try to follow the same rules that you've set for *them*. Let them see you balancing your time online with interacting with people in real life, too.

6 BLOCK IN-APP PURCHASES
If your child uses a device that's linked to a payment method (such as a bank card), use the parental controls to block buys from app stores, as well as in-app purchases. That will prevent your child from accidentally spending money while on your device.

7 CHOOSE SAFE APPS AND SITES
There are some fantastic apps and platforms that are specifically designed to be safer for children. Always check the PEGI age rating before downloading an app, and test it yourself before allowing your child to use it.

8 INVOLVE THE FAMILY
If your toddler has older siblings, it's likely that *their* rules for device use will be different – and that they'll access content that isn't appropriate for younger ones (a particular worry if they share devices). Encourage the whole family to be good role models and help little ones stay safe online.

9 IF IN DOUBT, ASK
The easiest way to find out what your child is doing online is usually just to talk about it with them. Developing an open dialogue at an early age helps them grow up feeling able to talk to you about their digital life – providing opportunities to intervene if you're concerned.

10 SUPPORT CREATIVE & ACTIVE PLAY
Physical and creative activities are important for a child's wellbeing, and there are plenty of ways to incorporate technology into that. For example, you could encourage games that require physical movement; dance and sing along to songs your child loves; and follow step-by-step crafting videos.

Meet Our Expert
Konstantina Moustaka is a professional development and EYFS coordinator at an 'outstanding' nursery school in London. She has been working as a nursery and early years practitioner, both in the UK and internationally, for the past 16 years.

National Online Safety®
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday