

# Online Advice for Parents

## What's App



### Minimum Age 16

**WhatsApp is an instant messaging app which lets you send messages, images and videos in one to one and group chats with your contacts. You can choose to share your live location for up to eight hours with one contact or a group.**

- Children can only talk to existing contacts on their phone, although this may feel safer, it's still important to remember that some content shared may not be appropriate for children, or they have contacts (strangers) in their phone who they have never met face to face.
- Once photos videos or messages are shared, it can be copied, re shared and posted anywhere online.
- WhatsApp also contains a group chat function. Group conversations usually take place between friends. But sometimes, users can be added to a group where they don't know everyone else. Therefore, it's possible they could see or be contacted by someone they don't know and could be vulnerable to content posted by this person.
- WhatsApp shows other users your location.
- Bullying can take many forms as it is a messaging service and we often hear of abusive group chats.

## Roblox



### Minimum Age 8

**Roblox is a gaming platform where multiple players interact and play together online. The site has a collection of games aimed at 8-18 year olds, however players of all ages can use the site. Roblox is currently available on PC, phone, tablet and Xbox One.**

Every game on Roblox is created by users, and there are a wide variety to choose from. These can vary from delivering pizzas, to roaming a kingdom as a medieval knight, to even starring in a fashion show. This variety is one of the reasons that Roblox is so popular with young people.

Key things for parents to be aware of

#### 1. Communication: how users can communicate with others

Whilst the games are aimed at 8-18 year olds, there are no age restrictions. This means both adults and young people can play and communicate with each other on the platform.

All games are multiplayer and include a written chat feature, which is visible to players within each individual game. Users can also make and receive friend requests during gameplay and this means that they can chat to each other outside of the game.

#### 2. Content: what content is available that might not be suitable for children

The Roblox Studio is a section where players use their imagination and skills to create their own games and share these with others. The ability to create and play games can be very appealing to young people who like to create the content they see online.

However, because content is user-generated it can mean that some games might not be appropriate for young children. For example, whilst the graphics are not very life like, some of the games feature weapons and blood.

#### 3. Costs: How children might accidentally run up costs

By creating games, users can earn Robux, the in-game currency. You can also buy Robux in the game. Players can spend money on items, such as membership to the Builders Club. .

If game creators attract players and in-game adverts, they can earn a lot of Robux, which they can convert into real money. To do this, players must be over the age of 13, have paid for Roblox's premium subscription, and have access to a Paypal account. This means that younger players would need to talk to an adult to be able to exchange their Robux for real money.



#### **Minimum age 13**

**Musical.ly is a social network for sharing user-generated music videos. Users can upload their own own lip-syncing videos, remix others' work, or browse content created by other users.**

- As it involves popular music, there can be swearing and sexual content in the songs.

- The site states 'if you are under 13 years of age, you must not access the service at any time or in any manner'.
- Users can select privacy settings which means they only share the videos with their friends however if these settings have not been adjusted they will be shared with the general public.

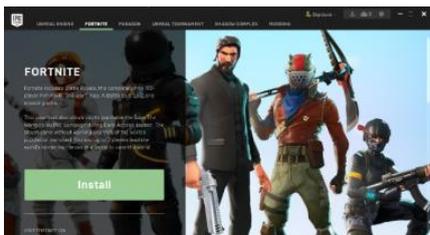


### Minimum age 13

**YouTube is a video sharing website and app that allows users to share, view and upload videos.**

- A user needs to have a 'YouTube channel' in order to upload videos.
- The user's profile will display their username and any other user information entered their videos, activity streams, comments and subscribers.
- If your child is using a YouTube channel, it is important to be aware of what they post and who can view it. However, we strongly recommend they delete it.
- It can be difficult to keep ownership or control of a video once it has been posted on the internet.
- Similarly to other social media platforms, YouTube has a private messaging function where users can send each other messages and videos.

### Fortnite

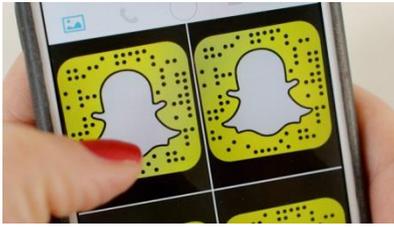


**Fortnite has a PEGI rating of 12, [PEGI](#) have said this is due to the following: 'frequent scenes of mild violence. It is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age'.**

Fortnite is an online game, where players Vs players (PVP) in combat. This is a free game. Users play against people of different ages from across the world, and can talk and interact with each other as they play through the in-game chat feature..

- You have to create an account using a password and verified email address.
- You are not asked your age in order to create an account.
- You play against players of different ages from across the world.

- You cannot turn the in game chats off or choose who you play against.
- Fortnite does feature violence when players are in combat with each other.



## **Snapchat**

### **Minimum age 13\_**

Snapchat is a social network where users send 'Snaps' - short videos or photos to Snapchat friends. Users can also send 'Chats', these are text messages. What makes Snapchat different to Facebook or Twitter is that Snaps and Chat have a lifespan of between 1 and 10 seconds, after which they'll disappear.

Snapchat only launched in 2011, so it's a relatively new phenomenon. Ten billion videos are viewed every day and it's very popular with young people, with 41 percent of users between 18-34.

Who can get a Snapchat account?

Snapchat works using an app, with iOS (iPhone) and Android versions available as free downloads.

Enter an email, password and select a user name to get started. The account will need to be verified (to check you aren't a bot) using a phone number or by selecting pictures.

Snapchat has a minimum age requirement of 13 years old, and users who enter a date of birth under 13 can't set up an account.

# 10 APPS TEENS ARE USING THAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW



**Calculator%**  
This app looks like a calculator but functions like a secret photo vault.



**Omegle**  
A free online chat website that promotes chatting anonymously to strangers.



**Snapchat**  
This is the way most teens communicate with each other. Sending messages and snaps that disappear within seconds and stories go away after 24 hours. Teens live for a "streak" of communication.



**Whisper**  
An anonymous app where the creators promote sharing secrets and meeting new people.



**Ask.fm**  
Ask an anonymous question and get an answer. This app has been linked to the most severe forms of cyberbullying.



**Hot or Not**  
Strangers rate your profile. Goal is to lead to a hook up.



**Burn Book**  
Post anonymous rumors about people through audio messages, texts, and photos.



**Wishbone**  
An app that allows users to compare kids against each other and rate them on a scale.



**Kik**  
Messaging app. Kik has built in apps and web content that would be filtered on home computer.



**Instagram**  
Many kids are now creating fake accounts "finsta" to hide content from parents. Kids also like to text using Instagram because most kids know parents won't check messages.

FOR MORE INFO: APPSOLUTELYAPRIL.COM

Please note: Due to the nature of the Internet and App Store, web and app resources change often. Any outdated material will be corrected and updated.  
This graphic was created by April Requard.

Image source: APPSOLUTELYAPRIL.COM

## Top tips for parents

Whatever gaming sites your children use, our advice remains the same. It is important to have a conversation with your child about the sites they use and carry on having open discussions. This will encourage them to come to you with any concerns they may have.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/whatsapp-safety-a-how-to-guide-for-parents/>