

# Online Safety Newsletter- May 2022

## Lobby

You must be over 13 years of age to use Lobby. Lobby also states when signing up to use the app that you must be over 18 years of age to agree the terms and conditions.

Lobby is a social networking app that is designed to help users connect with their friends or families to play third-party games, to watch YouTube videos, or hang out via real-time voice chats. Lobby connects people with real-time voice chats and it can be used to virtually meet and hang out with your friends or any other person. Real-time videos make it easy to watch with others even though you or they are far from each other. Similarly, you can also listen to music with them at the same time. All these features, like synchronized videos and songs, are used along with voice chats so that you can directly comment, explain or talk to them. Not only does it have the feature to watch videos and listen to songs, but you can also share your screen with other people so they can see your phone in real-time with voice chat connected.

Parents/carers should use caution when enabling children to use the app because the real-time voice chats are unmoderated and children may come across mature and highly inappropriate content.

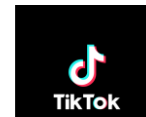


## Help your child to limit social media use!

Remember, moderation is key! Chocolate lovers are always told to eat chocolate in moderation as too much can be bad for us; well, that can also be the case for social media! Some types of content online may not be harmful to a young viewer but if they're consuming it quickly and in large amounts, then that is most likely to contribute to negative feelings. Talk to young people about cutting down social media time, so they don't become too overwhelmed by what they see.

## Tik Tok

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



### How does it work?

Like most other apps and social networks, users can follow other users, like and comment on other's videos. Users can select the song they wish to use in their video first, then record themselves miming along to the music. Alternatively, users can record their video first and then select a song, and/or add a voiceover. The app has lots of ways to add more fun to user's videos, for example, there are options to shoot in slow-mo, time lapse, fast forward, filters, effects or even play the song backward etc. Once users are happy with their video, they can post it to their followers and share it on other social networks for example; Messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram etc. There is also a duet feature which allows you to connect with another user.

The search tool allows users to view other videos. You can also view content under the trending hashtags on the 'For You' page. Trending hashtags allow you to view content that is currently popular, and contribute your own video to that trend using the same hashtag. TikTok sometimes promotes themed challenges, encouraging users to create videos that are related to that particular theme for example; #Lipsncychallenge, #Comedychallenge, etc

### What are the risks?

- **Contact with strangers:** Although connecting with new people on social media is not harmful in and of itself, TikTok has previously been in the news for failing to remove sexual messages sent to teenagers. The platform's guidelines include a section devoted to 'Minor safety', which states "We are deeply committed to child safety and have zero tolerance for predatory or grooming behaviour toward minors." To further address concerns, TikTok introduced a feature that prevents under-16s from both sending and receiving private messages – but nothing stops young users from faking their age. Be sure to adjust the app's settings and let your child know that they can come to you if they've had a bad experience which has involved being contacted by a stranger.
- **TikTok live:** There is a live-streaming feature of TikTok that is only available for users aged 16+. Users can start a live-stream or respond to another user with their own live-stream. While live-streaming can be a fun and immediate way to engage with others, there is a risk that younger users could be live-streaming with adults in an unsupervised environment.
- **Risky challenges:** The social media platform is famous for spawning viral challenges which are a big draw for many users. But TikTok has received a lot of negativity for allowing potentially dangerous challenges – such as the Skullbreaker Challenge and the Outlet Challenge – to reach popularity on its platform. Make sure that your child knows not to try risky activities they see on TikTok.

To find out how to set up parental controls and keep your child safer on Tik Tok visit: <https://parentzone.org.uk/>