

TikTok Safety Guide For Guardians: Online Challenges



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As guardians, we know you want to help your teens understand digital safety so they can manage their online presence, both now and in the future.

That is why at TikTok, we are committed to working in partnership with guardians (including parents, teachers and caregivers) to support your teen's digital journey.

This Safety Guide for Guardians is designed to provide general information on online safety concerns. Reviewing this guide with your teen can help bolster their sense of digital citizenship and empower them to be mindful of their own internet safety.



What Teens Really Need From Their Guardians

We understand that keeping up with evolving social trends and platforms can be overwhelming. That is why we have asked teens what support they need and value. Here is what they said:

“Help me understand the rules”

Teens value support in account set-up, understanding privacy and safety settings, and even welcome boundaries! Safety tools like TikTok’s Family Pairing features allow you to set parameters, especially when teens start out online.

“Be available to chat”

Teens feel supported when they have an ally who is available to talk and help them when things go wrong online—no matter how big or small the problem is.

“Don’t panic when things go wrong”

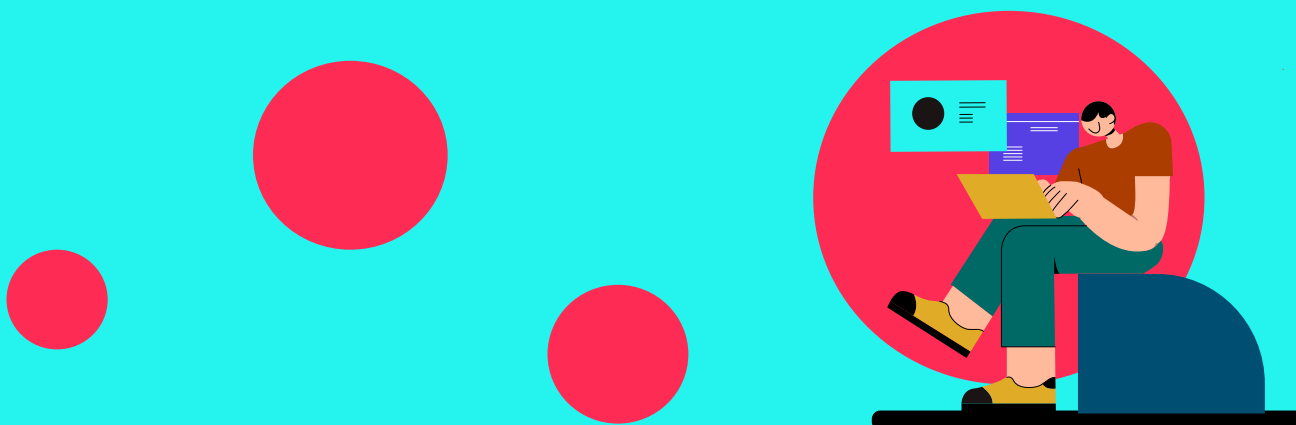
Your teen has come to you for help—fantastic! Teens said that being met with anger or having an adult minimise their worries kept them from asking for help again. Listen without recriminations, ask questions, and focus on solutions.

“Trust me”

Teens get that trust has to be earned and they expect adult oversight, but as they get older they feel greater autonomy is appropriate. As they learn how to navigate the platform safely, you may choose to allow them to move towards more independent use of technology.

“Respect my privacy”

It is natural to worry if your teen is up to mischief, and striking a balance between their expectation of privacy and ensuring they are safe can be tricky. Teens said they want to understand your reasons and explore ways to build trust.



Top 10 Tips To Digital Literacy For Teens

□ Tip 1: Check Your Child's Tech Readiness

Establish a clear policy on when your teen can engage in the digital world, including ensuring your teen uses only apps within the intended age limit.

□ Tip 2: Agree On Family Tech Boundaries

Set a clear, age-appropriate and mutual tech agreement to cover what content (e.g. apps, websites, games) your teen can watch, use, and play.

□ Tip 3: Set Smart Limit On Screen Time

Healthy digital habits are just as important as healthy eating habits. Help your teen develop self-control and time management skills when using social media.

□ Tip 4: Talk About Cyber-Bullying

Keep lines of communication open by checking on your teen's online experiences, the things they talk about with friends, or if they have any issues with cyber-bullying.

□ Tip 5: Talk About Privacy

Help your teen understand the value of their personal information and why it is important to read the privacy policy carefully before signing in to any apps or websites.

□ Tip 6: Talk About Risky Contacts and Content

Remind your teen that people are not always who they claim to be online. Guide them on how they can limit unwanted contact and risky content in the app settings.

□ Tip 7: Talk About Sexting

Proactively check if your teen has shared or has been requested to share intimate or sexually explicit content of themselves. Explain that once content is shared online, it is almost impossible to control how it is shared, and the consequences can be serious and long-lasting.

□ **Tip 8: Talk About Dis-/ Mis-Information**

Talk to your teen about ‘fake news’ and encourage them to think critically about what they see online, including influencers and product placements (e.g. what the purpose or hidden agenda of that information might be) and remind them to fact-check the source.

□ **Tip 9: Connect with Support Networks**

Develop consistent digital parenting policies and get everyone in your household on board to create a solid support and protection network.

□ **Tip 10: Make Videos Together**

Create fun content with your teen to get involved, learn about their interests, and discuss what types of content are appropriate or inappropriate.



Online Challenges And Hoaxes And How To Discuss Them With Teens

Teens have a strong desire to fit in and be a part of something larger with little regard for the potential risks or consequences. Here is what you need to know about online challenges and hoaxes and how to address them with your teen:

- Challenges typically involve people recording themselves doing something difficult, which they share to egg others on.
- They are popular because they offer some positive opportunities, such as doing activities with friends, testing one's physical limits or simply being creative.
- However, some can lead to the risk of serious injury.
- Some challenges trick people into believing something that is not true - which can cause fear and panic.
- Teens can divert their attention away from online challenges and hoaxes by exploring other ways to meet their interest(s) or needs.



4 Tips On How To Talk About Online Challenges And Hoaxes With Teens

Tip 1: Help your teen make safe choices by spotting potential risks and considering the consequences (including the possibility that they, or others, could get hurt).

Tip 2: TikTok's four-step process of "Stop, Think, Decide, Act" is a simple way to get teens to think about risk(s).

STOP:



Pause for a moment.

THINK:



Is it safe? Is it harmful? Is it real? If you're unsure, check with an adult or friends, or look for more information from authoritative sources online.

DECIDE:



If it's risky or harmful, or you're not sure if it is, don't do it. It's not worth putting yourself or others at risk.

ACT:



Report harmful challenges or hoaxes in-app. Don't share them.

Tip 3: When you have concerns that a challenge is unsafe, be upfront with your teen and offer clear reasons why.

Tip 4: Some risks are obvious, but others are more complicated and less easy to spot. If you are not sure, search online for information from trusted sources and sit with your teen to talk about it.

Other Useful Resources:

TikTok Safety Centre Guardian's Guide:

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-nz/guardians-guide/>

Netsafe Online Parent Toolkit:

<https://www.netsafe.org.nz/parenttoolkit/>

