

Parent's Guide to TikTok



The age requirement for TikTok is **13+**. Time spent per month by Canadians is 37 hours 43 minutes, with users viewing over 313 videos per month. In 2024, TikTok revenue was \$23 billion. Users have increased over 300% in the last 5 years (465.7m in 2020 to 1.6billion in 2025).

What Is TikTok?

TikTok is a short-form video platform where users create and share videos, typically 15-60 seconds long. The personalized content in one's feed is driven by algorithms that capture user behaviour to suggest what is viewed. Users must be 13+ to use the app, and users between 13-18 years will have inappropriate content filtered out of their feed. The platform is renowned for promoting viral trends and challenges, especially in the 13-18 year old demographic.



Why Kids Love TikTok



Instant Entertainment

Teens love the short-form video format of TikTok. The quick, endlessly scrollable videos allows them to consume a lot of content in a short time.



Personalized Content

The "For You Page" uses a powerful algorithm to show videos tailored to their interests, making the experience feel highly relevant and addictive.



Social Connection

TikTok is where many teens' friends and peers hang out online. They use it to share trends, jokes, and challenges, creating a sense of belonging.

Potential Risks

Addictive Nature

Many teens spend hours daily on TikTok due to its addictive nature. 21% of teens are on TikTok almost constantly.



Mature Content

Some videos have mature content like vulgar language, violence, and sexual references.



Influencer Culture

Teens aspire to be like influencers and create viral content or perform unsafe viral challenges.



Stranger Interaction

Its easy for others to comment on and react to videos, follow profiles and download content. Profiles are public by default.



Safety Tips for Parents

1. The Basics

- Familiarize yourself with TikTok's features and settings.
- Check Age Compliance: Ensure your child meets the minimum age requirement of 13 and has entered the proper age if 13-16.
- By default, location settings and on, profile settings are public. Change these to more restrictive settings.



2. Encourage Screen Time Limits

- TikTok's algorithm will push content the users find very appealing to watch, as their goal is to maximize user's time on the app and therefore their revenue. Teach teens that they are the product in this situation.
- Set limits on the device or enable 'Family Pairing' to help students manage their time on TikTok.

3. Talk To Teens About Mental Health

- Mental health experts have many concerns about how social media negatively impacts teens' mental health.
- They also cite worries around depression, body image, self-esteem, anxiety and sexualization.
- Increasing your child's awareness about this will help their resilience around their own mental well-being



4. Safety

- Never, never share personal info, passwords, or click unknown links.
- Talk to kids about what is considered inappropriate content and the potential impacts of viewing this.
- Remind students that viral challenges, while popular, can be very dangerous and result in serious injuries.

More Information

1. **TikTok Safety Center Page**: This is the main page on the TikTok's site with info for users on how to stay safe and manage one's experience. The **Guardians Page** also has info for parents / guardians.
2. **Talking TikTok: A Family Guide** is MediaSmarts guide to TikTok for families. MediaSmarts is a Canada's Centre for Digital Media Literacy that will have other resources for parents.
3. **Internet Matters**: This organization provides many resources for parents / users around digital safety.