

This guide will be formatted differently to the normal Safe on Social app guides – because for the first time this is not an app we feel we can support the use of in any way.

We'd like to tell you our reasons – and then show you how to delete it.

There will be no how to use information. We will include individual

Musical.ly had a broad reach with over a 100 million active users per month – with fans calling themselves musers. Use of TikTok records figures of 500- 800 million monthly users now if not more. It is massive, and growing in popularity.

Musical.ly had a number of problems for an app that had been marketed to pre-teens/children – despite making vague noises about a 13+ age gate.

Some examples of these including children behaving pornographically in pursuit of likes, random strangers being able to contact young users, flagrant disregard of the age ratings (13+) , inappropriate language and dancing content from the videos provided to “lip sync “ to.

The list was becoming longer as the app grew in popularity and with the sale – the perfect excuse for a rebrand arose.

And – one would have thought – a opportunity to fix some of the issues that had plagued TikTok's predecessor.

Well. NO. That didn't happen.

And so begins the lists of reasons why Safe on Social, really is not a fan.

TO START

Privacy of children

TikTok or Bytedance is currently the proud recipient of the largest EVER civil penalty in the USA for violating the online privacy of children.

Those words should be enough. India banned it (and now has a special set of guidelines for users). Indonesia banned it, and now the USA has given it a kick in the proverbial.

But what did the app do, particularly in America to earn this reward?

In the USA, there is a piece of legislation called COPPA or the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act 1998. Part of this legislation is the requirement that companies that intend to collect personal information MUST obtain parental consent for individuals under 13.

Prior to rebranding Musical.ly had been aware that a large proportion of its users were under 13 as they had received thousands of complaints from parents.

The company had done nothing to address this issue either as Musical.ly or TikTok.

What was found during the Federal investigation? Let us see what the findings were.

These same users took to Twitter to complain. And this showed very, very clearly that many of the suspended under 13 years accounts belonged to ACTUAL ADULTS. (or at the least older teens).

Um..what?

More Problems Part two.

Branching out

Where Musical.ly was largely focused on lip syncing videos – TikTok has splintered into numerous directions from its karaoke roots.

The app is full of 15 second clips covering – well a wide variety of genres – physical comedy, dancing, gymnastics, monologues, lip-syncs - with the common theme being some kind of audio track laid down over the clip. This can be a song or a voiceover. There are popular songs, voice overs, filters, emoji's and comments, hashtags and likes and dislikes – similar to many social media applications.

But.

The content has gone a little wild west lately. The broadening from simple karaoke is leaving some toxic (and frankly astonishingly horrible) video up on the app.

Watch without an account

You do not need a personal TikTok account to view the content of the app. You can download the app without becoming part of the community. Watch anything that rolls up on the app.

This means a child may view the public accounts of strangers doing absolutely anything on TikTok , without a parent having imposed any filters or restrictions on the app. You can't censor the content your child may be exposed to.

You can't set anything. Your child can watch anything they want, without having an account.

NOTE – this is an option a number of children are taking, to avoid being restricted by parents.

Inaccurate ages used both by older and younger users

The age restrictions according a number of sources varies from 12+ to over 16+ -depending on which internet parenting forums you may seek advice from, but TikTok itself insists on A A A

Default Public setting for all accounts

An account, when established is automatically a public one. A child may not realise this when setting up their profile, or deliberately choose not to install the privacy options.

Anyone at all may view the content of a public account, and until the privacy function is switched on they continue to be able to do this.

While there is a feature that can limit followers to only approved ones – when the essential point of an app is to collect likes and gain popularity – what child will really stick to this?

Private accounts on a sharing app

These are difficult to insist on and it is really impossible to expect a child to use this app in a privacy bubble.

You are absolutely kidding yourself if you think your child's private account will remain that way, unless they only use it when you are around, and you are the only person who has ever used this app.



Here's how to turn on the privacy settings, and the wellness function.

Privacy Settings

Within the app itself. This is the screen you need to navigate.



From the website



Wellness

One reputable aspect of the Tik Tok app is the "Digital Wellbeing" setting.

This means a child cannot turn the app on by themselves without receiving a 4 digit passcode, sent to a previously nominated mobile phone number – usually a parents (again, more data is being provided here from another individual). Further on this choice is the Screen time management mode, which will limit a user to two hours per day. A passcode is again required to extend the time a person may use the app. This is, admittedly a good way for a parent to control the screen time of their child.

The Restricted modality is also available in this section – though the enormous volume of content uploaded to this app is proving troublesome for moderators and this selection is by no means fool-proof.

How to locate -

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