

# netangel

prevention education protection



Issue - 7

## Out of sight

## Out of mind



# 8 Top Tips to Reduce YouTube's Influence on Your Children

YouTube is the most used site or app among children. This is hardly surprising given that 96% of 3-17-year-olds watch videos online. Of the children from this age group who access the internet, a staggering 88% visit YouTube.

The number of apps that children use increases as children get older. What makes YouTube and YouTube Kids stand out from the other apps is that its usage remains consistently high irrespective of the age of the child; when considering WhatsApp, 25% of 3-4s use it, compared to 54% off 8-11s and 80% of 12-17s (as reported by parents)

Encouraging children to think critically while they watch YouTube is important for their digital literacy and their digital resilience. This will help them to decipher what is authentic and help them to decide if they really want to buy the product or service. Influencers are very popular on YouTube. They are individuals who are paid by brands to promote products and services to their fanbases in their videos. However, it is not always easy to identify genuine recommendations.

Almost a third (32%) of children aged 8-17 said that they believed all or most of what they saw on social media to be accurate and true. The News Consumption Survey also found that almost three in ten (28%) children aged 12-15 used TikTok as a news source in 2022, up from 22% in 2021.

Here are some tips to develop critical thinking skills:

- Create safe spaces to have open conversations.
- Ask thought provoking questions.
- Teach them to question the influencer's motives.
- Help your child to look for credibility indicators.
- Encourage your child to look for different points of view on a topic.
- Teach your child to recognise emotional manipulation, misleading information and clickbait tactics.
- Help them to understand that they have the power to choose which content aligns with their interests and beliefs.
- Adjusting security settings can restrict certain content.

Google owns both YouTube and YouTube Kids. Google Family Link is a parental control feature that allows parents to create and manage Google Accounts for their children. If the age of the child being added to Google Family Link is under 13, they will only be able to access YouTube Kids. If the age of the child is 13 or over, they will have access to both YouTube and YouTube Kids.

When a child's Google Account is linked to a parent's account through Family Link, the parent can set restrictions on the child's YouTube access. Parents can customise content filters, restrict specific videos or channels, and set time limits for YouTube usage. These settings help ensure that children are accessing age-appropriate content and are protected from potentially harmful or inappropriate material.

It is important to remember that relying exclusively on parental controls is not a fool proof approach to online safety; firstly, children may find ways to access content that is not age appropriate and secondly, content creators may upload inappropriate videos that fly under the radar of the content filters.

It's always advisable for parents to have open communication about staying safe online and regularly monitor their child's online activities especially when they are younger or are not able to do so cognitively themselves.

Remember, developing critical, thinking skills is an ongoing process. Actively engaging with your child, discussing their YouTube experiences, and guiding them to think critically, you can equip them with the skills, they need to navigate the online world with confidence and discernment.

(The statistics quoted are sourced from the Children and Parents: media use and attitudes report, 2023)



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