



Fact sheet

# KIK MESSENGER (For parents)



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## What is Kik Messenger?

Kik Messenger (Kik) is a free smartphone messenger application that allows users to send texts, pictures, videos and sketches. Kik uses a wireless connection or mobile data to send and receive messages.

## What is the age restriction for Kik?

The age classification for Kik is 13-years-old, however young people between 13-17 years need to obtain parental permission before using Kik. If your child is using Kik and they are under 13, you can submit a deactivation request to have the account closed through the Kik website. This should occur in conjunction with an open discussion with your child about why this action is being taken. It is important to know that these age classifications are set by the apps creator and are not overseen by an independent body.

## What are the potential problems with Kik?

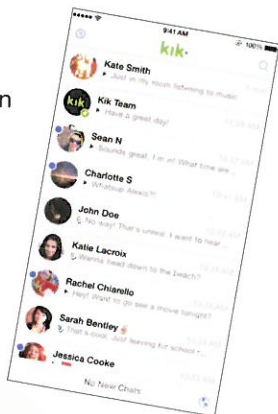
Kik is a popular application amongst young people of all ages. Issues arise when this app is used to transmit messages that are menacing, harassing or offensive. In some cases this can see young people in breach of State and Commonwealth legislation. Ethically, young people need to be aware that the messages they send can have a significant impact on other people.

As Kik also has the capability for users to share images, it is important that your child is aware of the legal and ethical ramifications of sharing sexualised, provocative and nude images.

It is extremely important that parents and carers are aware of the issues associated with various apps and websites so they can openly communicate with their child about their safe and responsible usage of Kik.

## How can I limit who can contact my child on Kik?

There is a feature on Kik called 'New Chats' which separates messages sent to your child by random users, from people in their contacts list.



It's a good idea for your child to disable notifications from this feature before they start using Kik to prevent them from communicating with people they don't know. To do so, select **Settings > Notifications** and turn off **Notify for New People**. This will hide any messages sent to your child from people who aren't on their contact list.

## How can I block someone on my child's Kik account?

It is really important that children know how to block and report on every social networking site or app that they might use. To block a user in Kik select **Settings > Privacy > Block List**, click the + to select the username of the person you want to block and select **Yes** or **Block** to confirm. This will make sure that all messages from this user will be hidden.

**Note:** A user will not be notified when they have been blocked.

## How can my child delete a user on Kik?

We recommend that you monitor your child's use of Kik and be aware of who they are communicating with. This might mean going through your child's contact list together to identify who they are talking to. It is important to ensure that their contacts are people whom your child has met in real life, trust and are safe to communicate with on a regular basis.

To delete a contact on Kik, select the **Talk** icon to see their contacts. Select the person you wish to delete, swipe or press and hold and select **Delete** or **Remove From List**.

## How do I delete my child's Kik account?

After talking with your child about the ethical use of Kik and your family's rules around technology, you may think it's appropriate to delete the Kik account.

To delete a Kik account you require your child's username and password. To delete the account select **Settings > Your Account > Reset Kik Messenger**. You then need to delete the Kik application from your child's device. Ask a friend with Kik to send a message to your child's old account and within a few days your child will receive an email (sent to the email address used to sign up for the account) from Kik saying you have



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unread messages. At the bottom of this email will be a deactivation link – click on this and shortly after your account will be deleted.

**Note:** If your child logs into their Kik account before you have clicked on the deactivation link the request will be cancelled and the account will remain active.

Open and supportive discussions around technology usage are vital in ensuring your child understands their responsibilities when using technology. Simply removing the technology is not the best response as your child may then hide their use, making it more difficult for you to support them.



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