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ALL ABOUT TWITCH

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Twitch is one of the most popular livestreaming platforms which offers users a fun and social way to livestream themselves or watch others doing a range of activities in real time. Although Twitch mainly focuses on videogame streaming, it has expanded outside of this with creators focusing on topics such as politics, travel and even cooking.

Twitch is designed for users aged 13 and older, with those aged under 18 requiring "parental supervision". Currently, there are no age verification measures for the platform, so age restrictions can be easily bypassed by underage users.

RISKS



Exposure to Inappropriate Content

Even with filters and content labels, there may be mature content within streams that could be harmful to children and young people. This can include content that is sexual, discriminatory or displays substance use.

Additionally, many streamers will film themselves attempting to complete viral challenges, which can drive children and young people to attempt them also and put themselves in danger.



Stranger Interaction

The platform encourages user interaction, leaving young users open to communication with strangers which can make them vulnerable to exploitation.



Gifting and Spending

Young people might feel pressured or encouraged to spend money to get noticed by their favourite streamers.

TWITCH TERMS



Categories - Streams are grouped into 'categories', with some examples including 'Just Chatting', 'Music' and 'IRL'.



Bits - Twitch's in-platform currency that users can buy to access add-ons like message effects and in-stream 'cheers'. Twitch rewards streamers with real money when they receive 'cheers' on their stream.



Gifting - A user purchasing a subscription to a channel to another user. They can purchase gifts anonymously, to one viewer, or a group of viewers. The channel creator will be notified of this, and will often thank the user who 'gifted' the subscription during their livestream. Some children and young people may 'gift' just to get noticed by their favourite streamer.



Whispers - Twitch's private messaging system which allows you to have one-on-one conversations with other users.



Turbo - Twitch's premium monthly subscription that offers benefits such as ad-free viewing, custom chat options and extended storage.

TWITCH SAFETY

SETTINGS



Content Classification Labels

Classification Labels must be applied to indicate to viewers if the content they're about to watch contains themes related to:

- * Mature-Rated Games
- * Sexual Themes
- * Drugs, Intoxication, or Excessive Tobacco Use
- * Violent and Graphic Depictions
- * Significant Profanity or Vulgarity
- * Gambling
- * Politics and Sensitive Social Issues



Content Display Preferences

Users can choose to hide content that is labelled with a Content Classification Label. This is done by label category, and an example of this would be that users can choose to hide sexual content but still have access to content with mature-rated games.



Block Direct Messages from Strangers

The 'Block Whispers from Strangers' feature means users can stop strangers messaging them unless they've messaged them first.



Chat Filters

The 'enable filtering in chat' option allows filters to be applied across all chat channels on Twitch to filter out specific language or topics. Individual filters can be chosen within this for specific topics, including discrimination, sexually explicit language, hostility and profanity.

TWITCH TIPS



Have open conversations with the child in your care about their online habits. Ask them questions like, "Who do you like to watch on Twitch?" and "Why do you like to watch them?". This will encourage them to be more honest about their habits and come to you if they have questions.



Utilise safety settings effectively and discuss with the child or young person why you have chosen the selected restrictions and come to an agreement as this will help them feel involved and in control. As the child or young person gets older, you may wish to alter the restrictions, so review them frequently.



Check stream content as children and young people process themes differently, depending on their abilities. Take time to look at the streams they're watching and assess if they are appropriate for the child in your care.



Explain that personal information should stay private. Children and young people should always consider why a person or platform needs their details if they are asked to share them. If they are unsure of the answer, they should ask a trusted adult for advice. This includes their full name, age, school, address, birthday and phone number.