



Leppington, Birch Hill, Bracknell, RG12 7WW
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Dear Parent,

Safeguarding Update – Tik Tok

We are aware of extremely distressful content currently being circulated on the social media platform Tik Tok. This is in relation to a video that was circulated over the weekend involving a streaming of an adult male taking his own life. There now appears to be various clips showing content of self-harm, fake suicide, users' suicidal thoughts and users' upsetting reactions having seen the initial video.

Following reports raised to the platform, Tik Tok has been attempting to take down the video but is struggling due to the numerous reposts. Tik Tok spokesperson Hilary McQuaide reported to the media:

"Our systems have been automatically detecting and flagging these clips for violating our policies against content that displays, praises, glorifies, or promotes suicide. We are banning accounts that repeatedly try to upload clips and we appreciate our community members who've reported content and warned others against watching, engaging or sharing such videos on any platform out of respect for the person and their family."

However, despite their automatic detecting systems, Tik Tok appears to now be flooded with similar content despite stating such content has been banned. Please be aware that even with the 'wellbeing' parental control, these videos can still be viewed.

Why should we be concerned?

- Children are being exposed to violent and graphic images currently while using Tik Tok
- Children who view this content may be significantly psychologically harmed
- These clips can feel real for children and those already struggling with their mental health may harm themselves.
- This content does not even require a search. It appears on their feed with no option but to view while using Tik Tok. There is no protection against it
- This is not specific to one country, it is global.

What can parents do?

1) Ensure you know what your child/children can access online and review this regularly. Despite the comments made by Tik Tok, there currently appears to be limited to no safeguarding in place around this

content. Therefore the risk of your child being exposed to this is extremely high while using Tik Tok at the moment.

2) Speak to your child/children and establish if they have viewed anything upsetting or disturbing on Tik Tok or other platforms and offer support. For additional support around children and young people's mental health, please visit: www.kooth.com, also found on Facebook. There is also a number of suitable mental health apps available.

3) The NSPCC publishes advice and guidance for parents on discussing online safety with their children, as well as Net Aware - the UK's only parental guide to social media and gaming apps: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>.

The constantly evolving digital world means there is a steady influx of new apps and games and it can be hard for parents to keep track. That's why it's important for parents to talk regularly with children about these apps and games and the potential risks they can be exposed to.

Yours sincerely,

Bracknell Forest Council