



## Messenger for Kids

Facebook Messenger for Kids is a messaging app designed specifically for children aged between 6-12 years.

One of the most notable features of Messenger Kids is that it must be set up and run in coordination with a parent's Facebook account. Parents have complete control over their child's registration information through a parent dashboard. The app stores all communications, including messages, photos, and videos that are exchanged, and parents are able to remove any content they feel is inappropriate.

To open discussions about online safety and behaviour, Facebook provides a pledge for children to read and agree to. Each child is asked to make a pledge to be kind, respectful, safe, and kind to others. The app encourages children to be patient with their friends, as not everyone may be online all the time.

To use Messenger Kids, a parent must establish an account for their child, and then the child will be added to the parent's existing Messenger contacts. When the child wants to add a friend to their Messenger account, there are two ways to do so. Firstly, the child can enter their friend's name into the app, and a message will be sent to the parent to approve the friend request. The app will ask if the person being requested is a child or an adult. If the individual is an adult, the app will search the parent's contact list. If the name does not appear, access to Messenger Kids will not be granted.

Alternatively, a four-digit code can be installed that the child can share with their friends. If this code is shared, contacts approved by the parent can add the child to their contacts. This is a real-time veto of whom the child may communicate with. While the former method may be a bit fiddly and may expand the parent's contact list more widely than they would prefer, the latter method is simpler and more secure.

Messenger Kids has features that include games, chat, and video chat. The app offers several games that can be played using the forward-facing camera, such as Healthy Habits, where children can play a game to keep a cartoon character clean and germ-free or draw a picture and send it to a friend. Chatting on Messenger Kids is similar to Messenger, where children can use emojis, stickers, and GIFs, and photos can be shared. A child's message will appear in a chat bubble.

The video chat feature is also available, and there is a wide selection of filters that children can use to enliven their video calls. Children can block and report friends themselves, and even this action will be communicated to the parent.

Messenger Kids offers additional positives such as children cannot share links to websites, and there are no advertisements or in-app purchases available. The filters and stickers that may be used are free, and all activity undertaken by a child on this app is communicated to the parent. Parents are able to set the times that their child may access this application. If it is set to sleep, the child will not be able to use this service.

While Facebook Messenger for Kids is designed to be safe and fun for children to use, it requires regular parental involvement to make sure bullying is not happening.

To set up Facebook Messenger for Kids, you need to follow these steps:

1. Download the app - The Messenger Kids app is available for free on the App Store, Google Play Store, and Amazon Appstore. Download and install the app on your child's device.
2. Create an account - To create an account for your child, log in with your own Facebook account credentials. You'll be asked to provide your child's name and then create an account for them. You can only create one Messenger Kids account per child.
3. Verify your account - After creating your child's account, you'll be asked to verify your account with a valid form of identification, such as a driver's license or passport.
4. Add contacts - Once you've created an account, you can add contacts for your child. You can add friends and family members who also have Messenger Kids accounts. You'll be notified when someone requests to connect with your child, and you can approve or deny the request.
5. Set parental controls - As a parent, you have full control over your child's Messenger Kids account. You can set up parental controls to restrict your child's access to certain features, set time limits for app usage, and monitor their activity on the app.
6. Monitor activity - Messenger Kids is designed to be a safe and controlled environment for kids to chat and play. But as a parent, you should still monitor your child's activity on the app to ensure their safety and well-being.

Overall, setting up Facebook Messenger for Kids is a straightforward process that requires some initial effort on the part of the parent to ensure their child's safety and privacy.

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