

Online Safety News

July 2025



Is Your Child on Discord? Here's What You Need to Know in 2025

Discord isn't just for gamers anymore. It's become a go-to platform for children and teens to chat, stream, and join interest-based communities – but with that comes a new set of safety concerns for parents.

👁️ What is Discord?

Discord is a messaging and voice chat app where users can join public or private “servers” – like group chats – around topics like gaming, music, sports, or just hanging out with friends. It's available on phones, tablets, and desktops, and many children use it daily.

🛡️ New Safety Feature: Teen Safety Assist

In 2025, Discord rolled out a feature called Teen Safety Assist, designed to:

- Scan direct messages from people not on your child's friends list
- Warn teens about potentially inappropriate or risky content
- Encourage them not to reply or share personal information

But it's important to know that this tool isn't foolproof – and it only works if your child is signed up as a teen (under 18) and hasn't bypassed the age settings.

🚩 What Are the Risks?

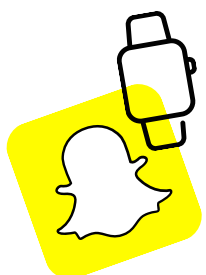
- Unfiltered content in public servers
- Direct messages from strangers
- Voice chats that are often unmoderated
- Pressure to join private chats or share personal info

🔧 What You Can Do:

- Review your child's privacy settings in Discord
- Turn off “Allow direct messages from server members”
- Encourage your child to only join servers with real-life friends or trusted communities
- Talk regularly about what they're seeing and who they're speaking to

📄 Want to learn more? Check out [Discord's official Parent's Guide](#).

📱 Snapchat is now available on Apple Watch



Snapchat recently launched a version of its app for Apple Watch, allowing users to send snaps, view stories, and reply to messages right from their wrist.

This means children can now access Snapchat more discreetly – even during school or without using their phone. Notifications, private messages, and even images can appear on the small screen.

This limits your ability to monitor usage and can increase screen dependency. If your child has an Apple Watch, check the paired apps and privacy settings, and have a conversation about responsible use and boundaries.

Snapchat has an age requirement of 13+



🎮 What is Berry Avenue? (Roblox)



- Role-play city experience: Berry Avenue is a popular Roblox game where players role-play everyday life—buying houses, driving cars, going to school, socialising, etc
- Developed for social interaction: It's designed like a virtual town to hang out with friends, customize avatars, and simulate daily routines.

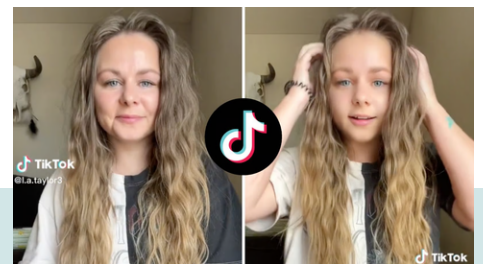
What are the risks?

Berry Avenue servers are global by default, meaning players from anywhere in the world end up in the same public world. That includes players of different ages, cultures, and languages. There's no region lock, and no filter on who can join—so it's like a busy public park with strangers from everywhere.

- In a global server, adult or teen players—and their language, jokes, and behaviours—are mixed with children. Even with chat filters, there's a risk of encountering inappropriate language, themes, or grooming attempts.
- Private servers are safer: choose who joins, keep the environment smaller, encourage only trusted players, like classmates or siblings. Keep account settings in 'under 13 years old'.



Dangerous Filters



Filters on apps like Snapchat and TikTok might seem like harmless fun, but some are deeply troubling. The "teen filter" can make a grown adult look like young teen in seconds—making it dangerously easy for predators to connect with children.

The "bruise filter" mimics injuries, raising serious concerns about glorifying violence, triggering trauma, or being misused for false accusations. These aren't silly trends—they're tools that can distort reality and expose children to real harm.

🔍 Show, then talk – Use the teen filter on yourself and show your child how realistic it looks. It's a great way to start a conversation about how appearances online can be deceiving and why we must only ever connect with people online we have met and know in real life.