حكومـــة دبـــي
GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI

دبـــي الرقمية
DIGITAL DUBAI

PARENTAL CONTROL
GUIDEBOOK

BE WITH THEM IN THE DIGITAL SPACE ..
SO THEY STAY SAFE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, keeping kids safe online is a constant concern. This parental control guidebook is here to help equip parents with the knowledge and tools to set healthy boundaries for screen time, discuss online safety with their children, identify and address potential issues like cyberbullying, and provide detailed steps on how to activate parental controls on several social media platforms. In addition to that, having open communication and clear expectations with your child are key to fostering a positive and responsible digital experience for your child.

SECTION 1:
UNDERSTANDING PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental controls are features offered by various devices, software, and platforms to help parents manage their childrens online activities and protect them from potential risks.

The internet offers plenty of information and resources, but it also exposes children to potential risks. Parental controls are important for protecting children from inappropriate content, limiting screen time, promoting healthy habits, promoting responsible online behavior, enhancing communication and trust, and preventing misinformation and online scams.

Parental controls offer various tools and functionalities including content filtering, screen time limitations, app management and permissions, monitoring activity and communication, location tracking, and social media management.

SECTION 2:
GENERAL GUIDELINE FOR PARENTS

Building open communication and collaborating with your child is essential for promoting their online safety. In this way, you can create a safe and supportive environment that empowers them to navigate the digital world responsibly and confidently.

SETTING DIGITAL BOUNDARIES:

FAMILY DISCUSSION
Have a family meeting to discuss online safety and expectations

AGE APPROPRIATE RULES
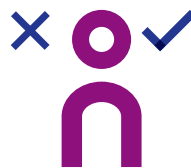Rules for a younger child will differ from those for a teenager

SCREEN FREE ZONES
Designate areas like bedrooms or mealtimes where devices are off-limits

DEVICE BEDTIME
Set a specific time when devices are powered down and stored for the night

OPEN COMMUNICATION
Encourage children to talk about their online experiences, good or bad

LEAD BY EXAMPLE
Model healthy tech habits like taking breaks and prioritizing face-to-face interaction

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT ONLINE SAFTEY:

CURIOSITY, NOT JUDGMENT
Approach online safety with open-ended questions

WHAT IF? GAME
Have conversations about potential online dangers and brainstorm solutions

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT
Discuss the consequences of what's posted online and the importance of privacy

PASSWORD PROTECTION
Teach children the importance of strong passwords and not sharing them

REPORT BUTTON
Explain how to report inappropriate content or cyberbullying

RECOGNIZING & ADDRESSING CYBERBULLYING:

SIGNS OF UPSET
Watch for changes in mood, withdrawal, or secrecy about online activity

EVIDENCE COLLECTION
Save screenshots or messages as proof of cyberbullying

OPEN COMMUNICATION
Talk to your child and let them know you're there to help

REPORT AND BLOCK
Report the cyberbullying to the platform and block the bully

SEEK SUPPORT
If the situation is serious, seek help from the school or a professional

SECTION 3:
SOCIAL MEDIA APPS OVERVIEW

Building open communication and collaborating with your child is essential for promoting their online safety. By fostering open communication and collaborating with your child, you can create a safe and supportive environment that empowers them to navigate the digital world responsibly and confidently.

FACEBOOK:
Is a social networking platform that makes it easy for you to connect and share with family and friends online.

BENEFITS:
- Staying connected with friends and family.
- Document life events and share interests with others.
- Follow news sources and stay informed.
- Find a group or community based on shared interests.

POSSIBLE RISK:
- Exposure to cyberbullying.
- Oversharing personal information online.
- Difficulty distinguishing reliable information.
- Excessive scrolling which can increase screen time.

Facebook requires users to be 13 years old to sign up. However, age verification is self-reported, so younger children may misrepresent their age.

INSTAGRAM:
Is a photo and video sharing app.

BENEFITS:
- Share your life and hobbies.
- Stay connected with friends and family.
- Discover new ideas and trends.
- Find and connect with people who share your interests.

POSSIBLE RISK:
- Exposure to mean comments or pressure to portray a perfect life.
- Exposure to violent or sexual content.
- Focus on idealized appearances can lead to self-esteem issues.
- Endless scrolling and constant updates can increase screen time.

Instagram requires users to be 13 years old to sign up. However, age verification is self-reported, so younger children may misrepresent their age.

TIK TOK:
Is a social media platform that allows users to create, edit, discover, and share videos.

BENEFITS:
- Staying connected with friends and family.
- Document life events and share interests with others.
- Follow news sources and stay informed.
- Find a group or community based on shared interests.

POSSIBLE RISK:
- Exposure to inappropriate content (bullying, violence, mature themes) despite moderation efforts.
- The potential of addiction due to the short, fast-paced video format that can lead to excessive screen time.
- Cyberbullying comments and challenges can create pressure or negativity.
- Body image issues or unrealistic beauty standards. Privacy concerns and potential for online predators.

TikTok requires users to be 13 years old to sign up. However, age verification is self-reported, so younger children may misrepresent their age.

SNAPCHAT:

is a messaging app that lets users exchange pictures and videos (called snaps) that are meant to disappear after they're viewed. It also has a feature called Snap Map that displays your location on a map inreal-time. Only your Snapchat friends can see where you are. The Snapstreak feature on Snapchat is a counter that tracks how many consecutive days you and a friend have sent Snaps (photos or videos) back and forth to each other.

BENEFITS:

- Fun and creative way to share moments with friends, promotes less pressure on posting compared to permanent content platforms, fosters a sense of connection and lighthearted communication.

POSSIBLE RISK:

- Disappearing messages can make it harder to gather evidence of cyberbullying.
- Pressure to create a certain image or keep up with streaks (consecutive days of sending Snaps).
- Potential exposure to inappropriate content or contact with strangers.
- Snap Map lets friends see each other's location on a map, which isn't always safe.

Snapchat requires users to be 13 years old to sign up. However, age verification is self-reported, so younger children may misrepresent their age.

YOUTUBE:

is a massive online video platform where users can watch, upload, and share videos on almost any topic.

BENEFITS:

- Free access to a vast amount of educational and entertaining content. Fosters creativity through video creation.
- Allows for exploring interests and connecting with communities and offers a platform for learning new skills or hobbies.

POSSIBLE RISK:

- Inappropriate content (violence, profanity, etc.) can slip through filtering systems. Addictive algorithms can lead to excessive screen time.
- Exposure to cyberbullying comments.
- Potential for online predators in comment sections.
- Unrealistic portrayals, and social pressure (beauty standards, materialism).

YouTube requires users to be 13 years old to sign up. However, age verification is self-reported, so younger children may misrepresent their age. YouTube also offers a limited version called "YouTube Kids" with stricter content moderation.

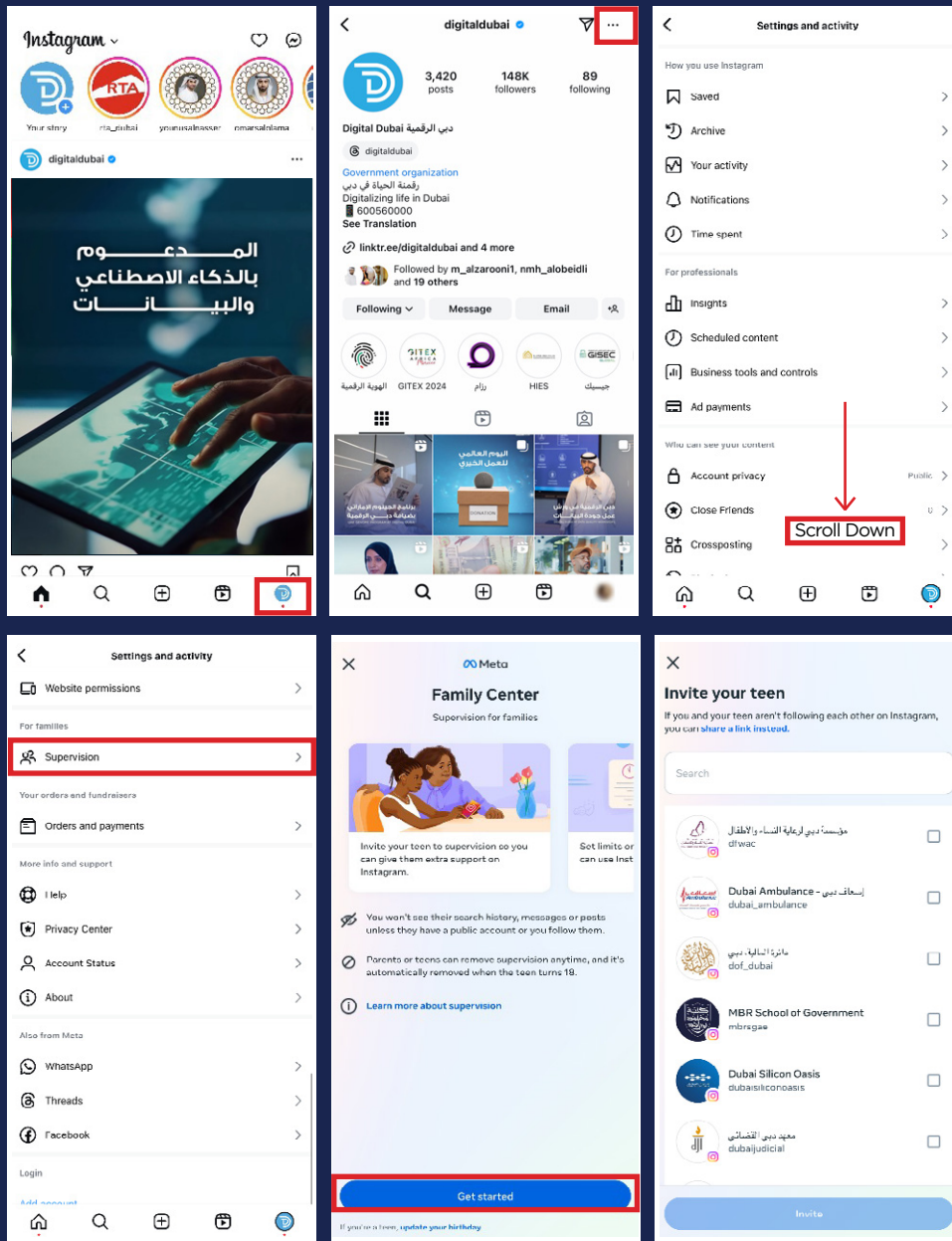# SECTION 4:
STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR SPECIFIC APPS

 FACEBOOK:
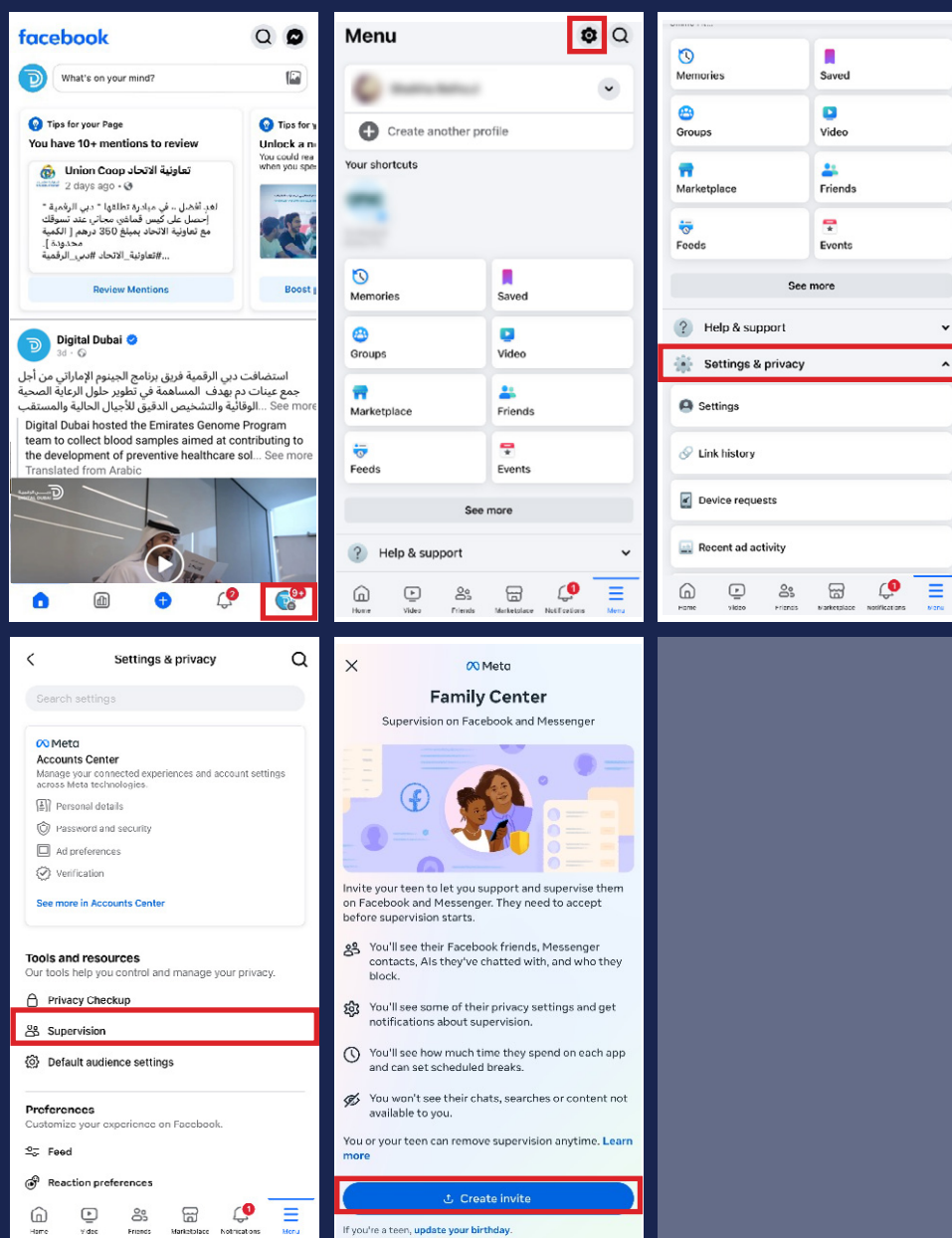
1. Go to your profile on the bottom right of the page.

2. Click on the setting option on the top right of the page, or scroll down and click on settings under Settings & privacy.

3. Click on supervision

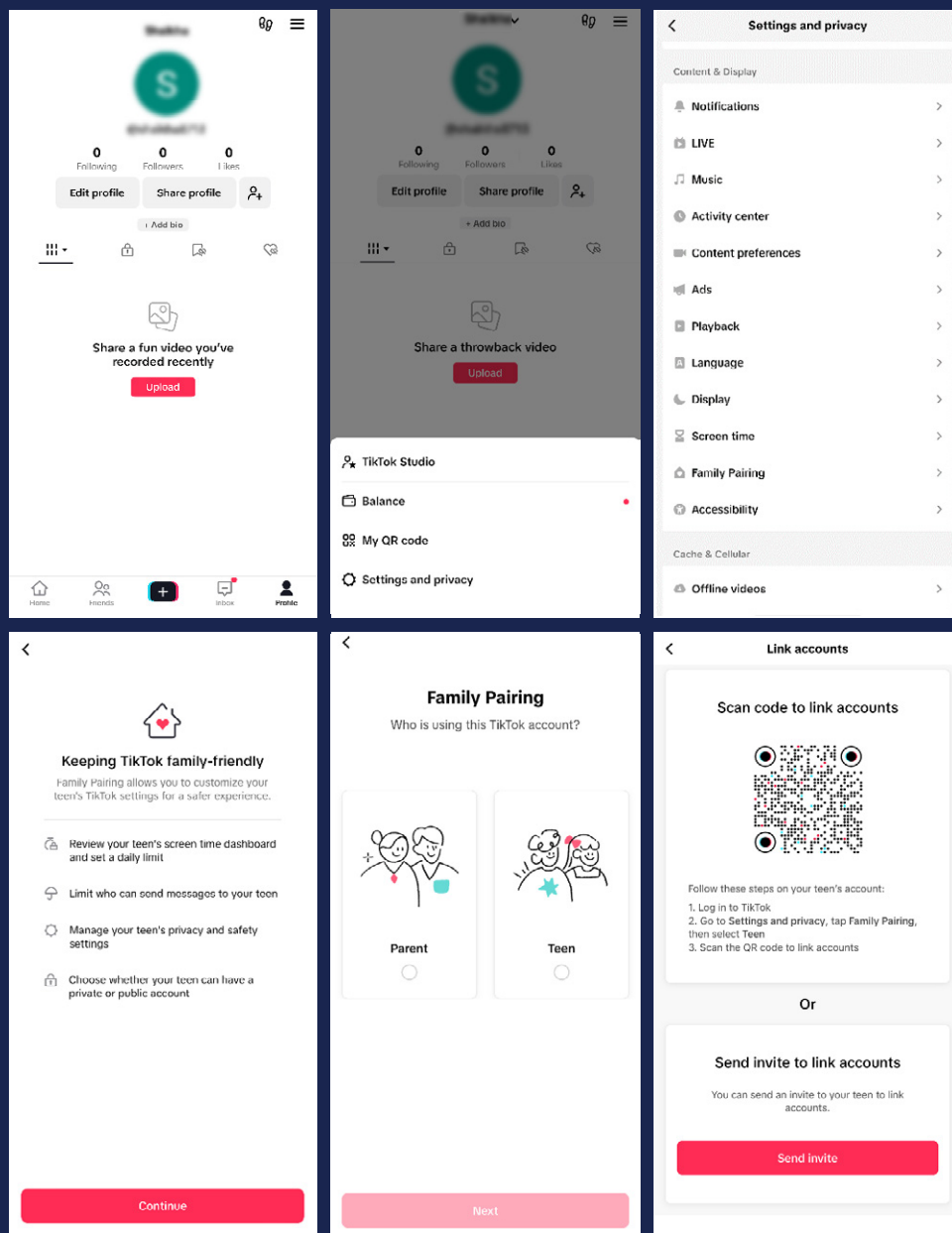**4. Activate Family centre** by creating an invite with your teen.

INSTAGRAM:

1. **Click on your profile** on the bottom right of the page.
2. **Click on settings** on the top right of the page.
3. **Scroll down** and click on supervision.
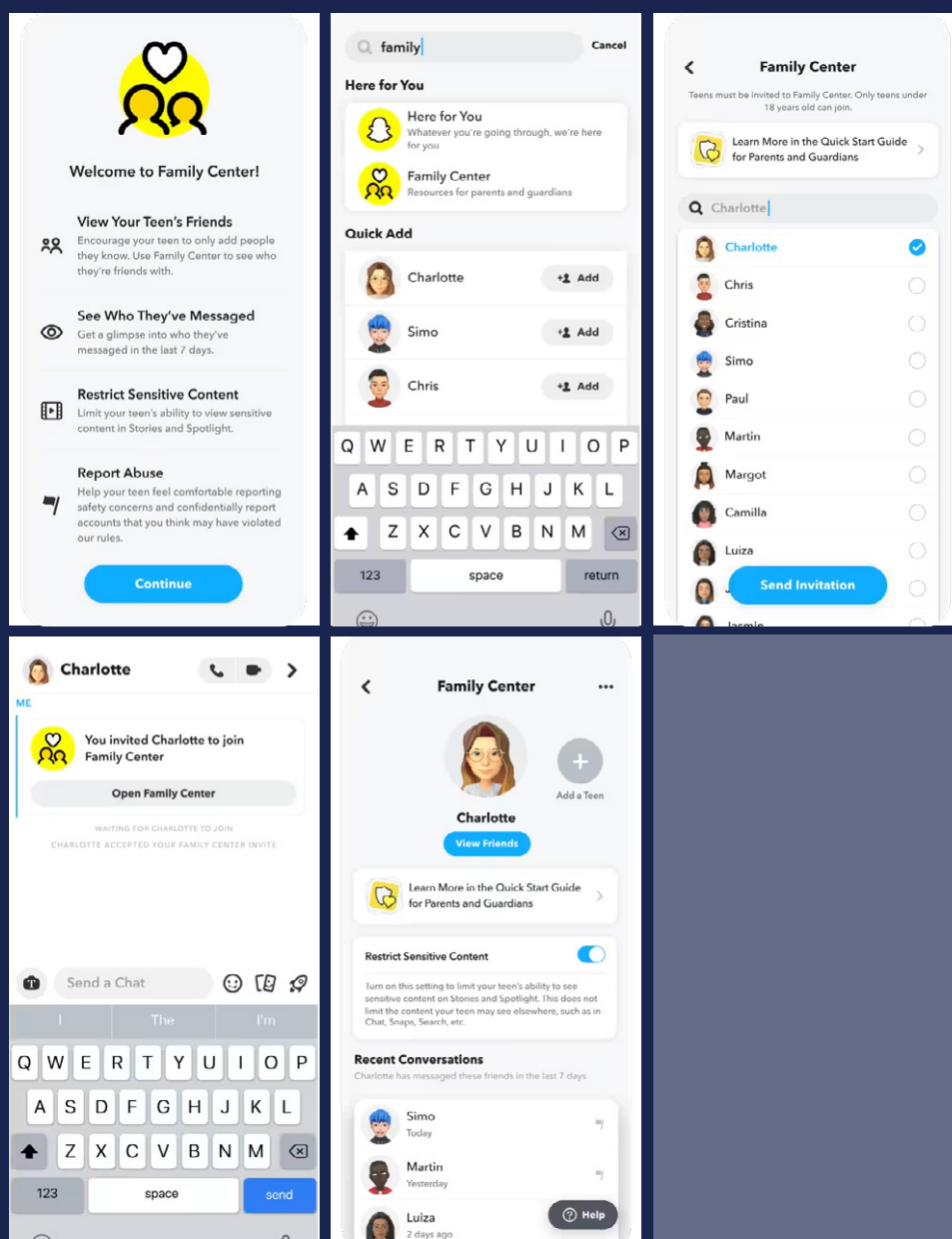4. **Activate Family Centre** by inviting your teen to join.

TIKTOK:

1. **Click on profile** on the bottom right of the page.

2. **Click on setting** on the top right of the page. then click on settings and privecy.

3. **Scroll down and click** on family pairing under content and display.

4. **Click** on the parent option.

5. **Activate family pairing** by sending an invite your teen's account.

SNAPCHAT:

1.**Search relevant terms** such as "safety", "family" or "parent" and Family Centre will appear.

2. **Once you open Family Centre**, you'll need to invite your teen to join.

3. **Your teen will receive an invitation** card, and they must accept to participate.

4. **Once the teen has accepted,** you can use Family Centre to view your teen's friends, see who they are talking to, and report abuse.

YOUTUBE:

YouTube Kids which is a dedicated kids experience and makes it safer and easier for children to find videos on topics they want to explore
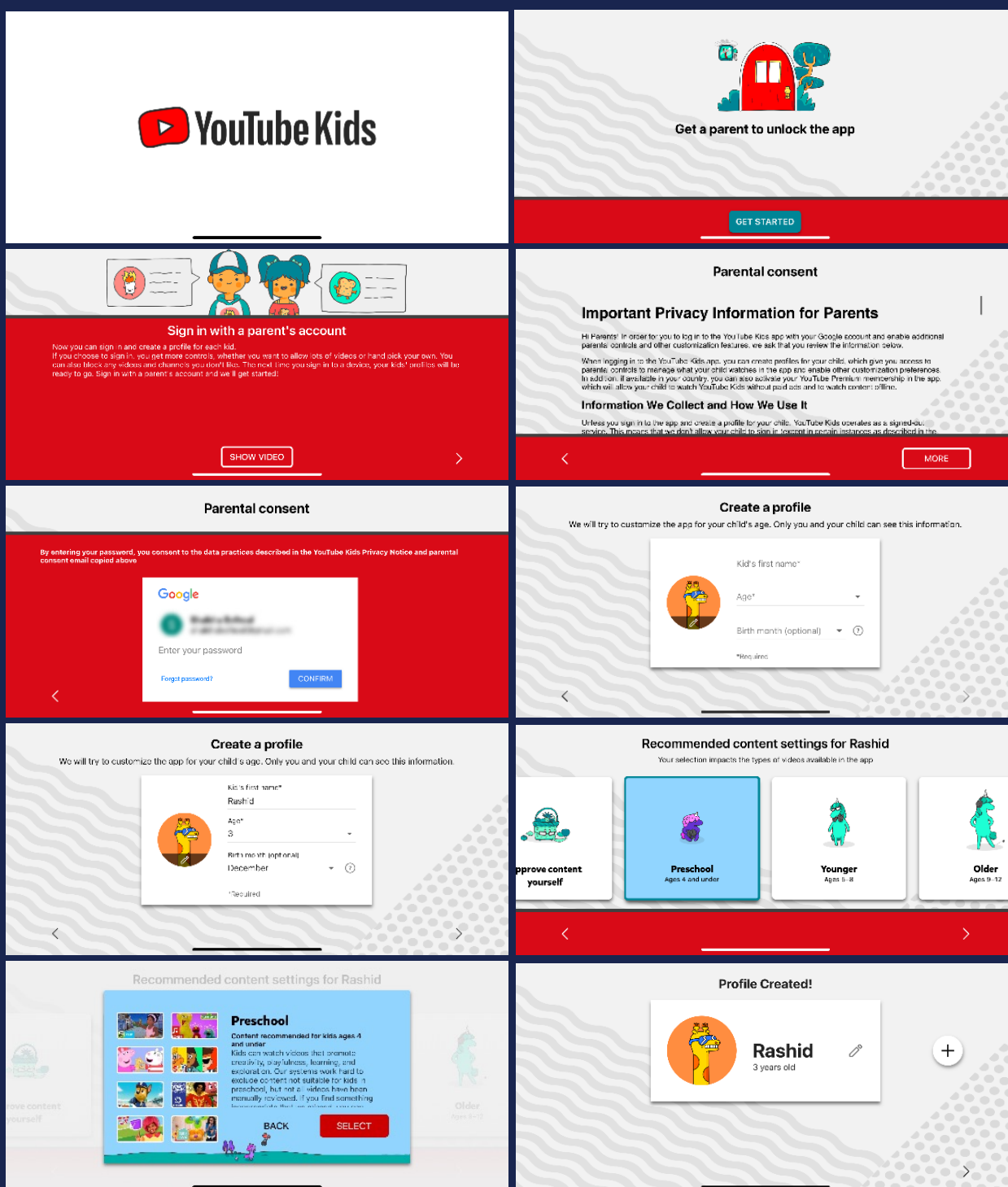
GAMING CONSOLES:

Parents can access the following links to learn more about how to activate parental controls on gaming consoles.

PLAYSTATION:
https://www.playstation.com/en-ae/support/account/**ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/**

XBOX:
https://support.xbox.com/en-US/help/xbox-360/security/xbox-live-parental-control

NINTENDO:
https://www.nintendo.com/us/switch/parental-controls/

SECTION 5:
GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

REPORTING E-CRIME:
https://www.dubaipolice.gov.ae/wps/portal/home/services/individualservices/cybercrimeService?firstView=true

SANNIF:
https://sannif.ae

Sannif is an initiative that aims to classify and display the risks of video games available on various gaming platforms. Sannif allows searching for any video game and display its details, risks, and appropriate age, in addition to the platforms it supports. The platform also provides a list of family games as well as explanation of the potential risks in games.

OVERVIEW UAE LAWS REGARDING INTERNET SAFETY FOR CHILDREN:

- Ministry of Interior and the National Program for Happiness and Wellbeing launched the 'Child Digital Safety' initiative in March 2018, in a joint effort to raise awareness among children and school students about online threats and challenges and promote a safe and constructive use of the internet.

  The initiative familiarizes parents and educators with solutions they can use to address these challenges and ensure the safety of their children and students.

- Article 29 of Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights, also known as Wadeema's Law states: The telecommunications companies and internet service providers shall notify the relevant authorities or the concerned entities of any child pornography materials being circulated through the social media sites and on the Internet and shall provide necessary information and data on the persons, entities or sites that circulate such material or intend to mislead the children.

- The Dubai Data Law (Law No. 26 of 2015 on the Organization of Dubai Data Publication and Sharing, PDF 250 KB) aims for data protection and privacy of all individuals including that of children.

APPENDIX

INFORMATION ON BLOCKING AND REPORTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/help/1380418588640631
Instagram: https://help.instagram.com/192435014247952
TikTok: https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc
Snapchat: https://values.snap.com/en-GB/safety/safety-center
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/howyoutubeworks/policies/ community-guidelines/#detecting-violations

Another way Instagram Users can manage their privacy is ensuring they have a private account, posting on close friends only, and controlling their messages
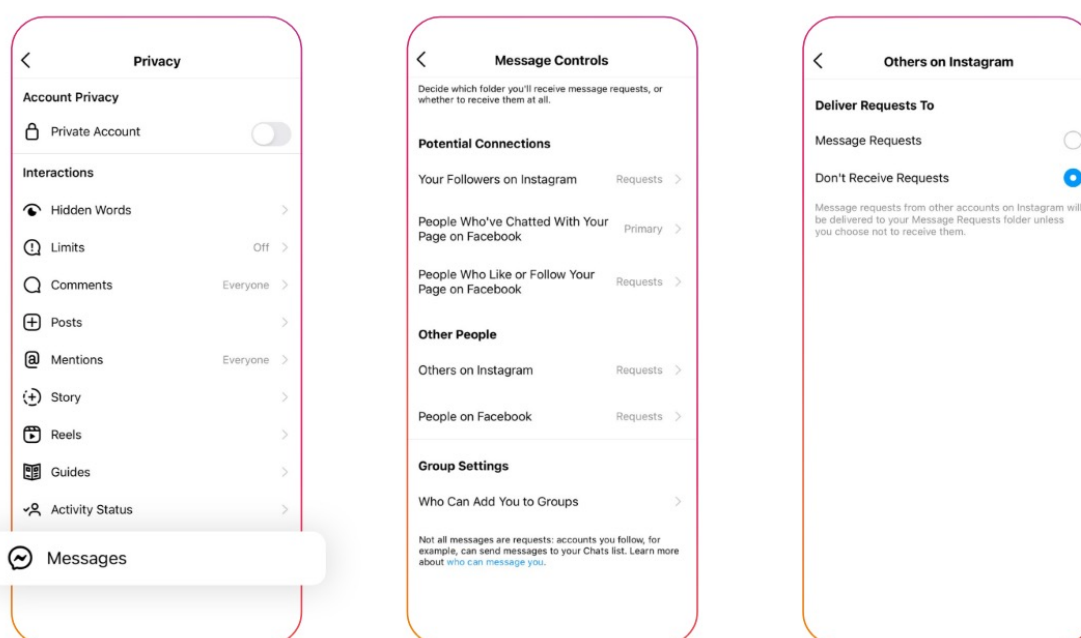
TIK TOK PRIVACY:

Under setting and privacy, turn on the private account feature

Accounts 13-15 aren't able to send or receive direct messages.

Video downloads, Duet, and Stitch are only available on content created by people 16 and over.

Live stream is only available for people 18 and over.

Accounts 13-15 are set to private by default, which means only someone who is approved as a follower can view their videos.

When publishing their first video, we ask 13-15 year olds to consider who can watch their content.

When someone aged 16-17 joins, their Direct Messaging setting deciding who can message them is set to 'No One' by default.

TIK TOK DIGITAL WELLBEING:

1. Under Settings and Privacy, tap Screen time and then Daily screen time.

2. Set a time limit between 40 to 120 minutes. Create a passcode to lock in these settings.

Daily screen time: set limits on how much time you can spend on the app each day

Screen time updates: receive weekly info about your screen time usage

Screen time breaks: get nudged to take a break from the app after a period of uninterrupted screen time

Screen time dashboard: get insight into how and when you're using TikTok