



Congratulations!
you received 5 Stars!



App Name: TingMe Social - social media For Kids

Developer's name: TingMe

App Link: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/tingme-world/id1590185042>

Available on other platforms (Play Store, Amazon):

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.companyname.vivasmartdigitalmkpb>

App Language: British English

In App Purchases? No

In App Ads? If yes, are they 1st party or 3rd party ads?

No

Subject: Lifestyle, Photo & Video, Tools

Learning Outcomes: Communication Skills, Creative Development, Responsibility and Ethics

Ages: Primary School Apps (7-11 Years), Secondary School Apps (11-14 Years)

EAS Star Rating: 5



Summary:

TingMe has been built from the ground up to provide kids with a much safer social media experience than mainstream platforms like FaceBook and TikTok while replicating the key functionality. The app uses parent verification and biometric locks to ensure users are who they say they are. Only those under 14 can use the app.

TingMe's apps are free to download on iOS and Android. After a free trial, a low-price subscription covers up to three kids. There are no advertisements, in-app purchases, or selling of your kids' data.

EAS Review:

What is TingMe Social app?

TingMe is safer social media for kids. The app provides many core features kids want from social media, such as the ability to post videos and photos and chat with others.

- TingMe is for kids only — in fact, even their parents can't use it to communicate, although they can monitor their kids' posts.
- TingMe has safety controls that ensure parents must be verified and approve their kids' use of the app.
- TingMe follows best practices in what data it collects and how it uses it

The app has powerful protection features to prevent content and posts parents wouldn't want to be featured in a kids' app.

The app has automatic blocks for swearing. It will also block images featuring nudity, weapons and other inappropriate images. Every post confirms that the verified user is the sender by checking the user's FaceID or fingerprint. The accompanying thumbnail selfie ensures that everybody in the app is who they say they are and are the age they claim to be.

What we love about TingMe app.

Social media's prevalence tells us how compelling it is. Kids see it on TV, in films, online and on other people's devices: they want it too.

This popularity has led to kids using platforms that are unsuitable for them. Far too many have found a way to bypass security and controls to have accounts prohibited by the terms and conditions of mainstream social media.

TingMe has taken a security and safety-focused approach towards delivering the main things kids want from social media. Using the TingMe app and platform has a similar feel to other social media as kids leave messages and media for others to see.



Allowing verified parents to monitor interactions but not communicate is a clever choice. It builds the feeling of an exclusive kids' only space while still allowing a level of supervision.

TingMe takes a sensible approach to parents' powers in the app, balancing monitoring and restricting adults' interaction in what should be a kids' digital playground. It is a child-only space which is exciting to kids and reassuring to parents.

The separation between adults and kids in TingMe is preserved by allowing parents to *unfriend* users and look at their kids' chats and communication using their kids' code. However, they cannot post as every chat contribution and upload needs confirmation with FaceID.

What skills does it teach?

TingMe is a social media app for kids. It is not directly educational, but its use will help develop communication and creativity skills. It also provides a safeguarded introduction to online communication and an opportunity for you to discuss online safety with your kids.

What age is it appropriate for?

Social media typically has terms and conditions requiring users to be over 13. TingMe is for kids under 14 years old and includes limitations and controls to support its use by them.

Is TingMe app easy to use?

Setting up a single account for your kids is a more involved process than you might be used to, but it is necessary. Providing suitable documentation to verify you as your child's parent or legal guardian is one of the safeguards to increase the safety of the service. Every user of the app has been approved by their verified parents.

Using the app itself is easy for kids. It uses familiar and intuitive controls to chat and post media.

Parents cannot communicate on the app, but they can monitor their kids' use, and this is simple to set up and use.

How will students benefit?

The core functions of TingMe are what underpins kids' desire to use social media. They want to socialise with like-minded kids and share media that resonates with them. Access to TingMe will give kids an outlet that could reduce their frustration at not being allowed to use other social media.

How will parents benefit?

TingMe gives parents a compromise position on the topic of social media. Kids might nag for access to inappropriate apps, and without a kid-friendly alternative, parents have to say no without any room for negotiation. TingMe can be that alternative.

Parents can supervise and monitor kids' use of the app. They can then choose how to intervene if they feel it is necessary. Their response could involve a real-world conversation, or they can report or defriend other users remotely. They can pause or even close the account if they feel the need.

How will teachers benefit?

TingMe is not an app designed for school use. However, as kids often talk about their social media experiences at school, teachers will prefer the conversations to be around one they are allowed to use rather than one they should not.

What can TingMe app improve on?

It isn't entirely clear from the app's description whether parents' monitoring of their kids includes being able to view their chats or posts. In this review, we found you *can* view them using your kids' code to access the app. This method works but you'll still be unable to post due to biometric protection.

It would feel more consistent with other apps if there was an option to let parents do this monitoring within their accounts.

How much does TingMe app cost?

You might be used to getting social media for free, but there are reasons why it can't be if aimed at kids. It isn't as easy for apps that give kids a social media experience to generate the income that sustains the service.

Mainstream social media sells users' data, shows them ads, and presents many opportunities to spend more money. Apps for kids can't (or shouldn't) do these things.

TingMe has one of the most straightforward and self-contained costs of any child-oriented social media. A one-off monthly payment gets your kids full access, and there are no further in-app purchases to push them into nagging you for more. As this includes three kids' accounts, it provides great value.

Is TingMe app safe to use?

TingMe uses the following safeguards:

- Only parents can create a profile for kids.
- Parents must be verified and can only create accounts for their kids.
- Parents must use official documentation to be verified.
- Verified parents vouch for their child's age.
- Parents can monitor their kids' accounts but not communicate with other kids
- Limited kids' data collection (date of birth, country, first name, selfie for biometric matching)
- Automatic rejection of inappropriate words, images, and videos

If this feels onerous to you, it should reassure you the parents of the other kids on the site have gone through the same process to minimise the risk of users who are not who they purport to be.

When kids want to post, they must use their fingerprint or FaceID to ensure only verified kids can send. This is a secure process using biometrics. If somebody whose face does not match the stored biometric tries to send a post, it will not work.

The safety features of TingMe are as strong as we have seen, but they should also be combined with education. Kids should know never to reveal personal details online, recognise that it is possible for people online not to be who they say, and know to speak to you if anything makes them uncomfortable. Remember that a negative conversation one kid can shrug off might play on another's mind. No app can account for this.

Online safety education and parental input is essential for kids who go online with any app, however many safety features it has.

Overall rating of the app.

TingMe's goal of building a safer social media platform just for kids is difficult to achieve. Still, its careful design and leveraging of the latest technology have succeeded. It does not replace the need for kids to understand online safety but gives them a safer place to taste online digital independence. It also provides a valuable alternative to what should be adult-only social media platforms in a way which will satisfy kids with the social experience they want.

TingMe has built a great social experience for kids and made it available at a fair price. We have awarded TingMe five stars.





Educational App Store

Supporting the digital wellbeing of children

