

TikTok stops young users from uploading videos after FTC settlement

TikTok will no longer allow children under 13 to upload videos, leave comments, build a profile, or send messages, after a settlement with the Federal Trade Commission today required the company to come into compliance with a federal children's privacy law.

The changes take effect today for all new and existing TikTok users, who are now being prompted by the app to enter their birthday. Some users have reported that their accounts and videos have been deleted without warning after inputting a birthdate that would make them younger than 13.

Younger users can watch a curated selection of videos

TikTok agreed to pay \$5.7 million to the FTC today to settle accusations that it was in violation of COPPA, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, which requires that apps and websites get parental approval for users under 13 years old. As part of the settlement agreement, all videos previously uploaded by users under 13 will be deleted, and the company is being required to come into compliance with COPPA when signing up younger users.

To come into compliance, TikTok has chosen to segment younger users into what it's calling a "limited, separate app experience." Users under 13 will still be able to watch videos, but TikTok says they'll be curated. It also sounds as though they'll be able to record, but not post, their own videos.

Some people over the age of 13 are complaining that their accounts have now vanished, after they entered the wrong birthday. TikTok has been responding to users on Twitter by asking users to submit a copy of their government ID on the "Report a Problem" section of the app, but users have reported that no such feature exists. We've reached out to TikTok for clarification.

There is no way to upload a photo of my ID in the report a problem section. All you can do is provide email address and write the problem

– Lois Song (@lololeeo) February 27, 2019

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/2/27/18243510/tiktok-age-young-user-videos-ftc-settlement-13-childrens-privacy-law>