

# TikTok announcement shows impact of Children's Code

Power of regulation to change behaviour by tech firms is already being felt

13 Jan 2021

TikTok has announced significant changes aimed at increasing protections for children on the popular social media app. Under the new measures, all TikTok users under the age of 16 will have their account set to private as default. In addition, under 16s will not be recommended to other users and will limit comments to friends only. There will also be lighter protections for children over the age of 16.

These changes have been introduced ahead of such measures being required by law under the Age Appropriate Design Code ("the Children's Code"), which comes into force in September. The Code is the first of its kind anywhere in the world, and sets out the specific protections that children require for their data, offering a high standard of data protection - by default. It was introduced into law as part of a cross-party amendment to the Data Protection Act 2018, and was led by the Information Commissioner's Office ("ICO").

**"Congratulations to the ICO, whose robust Children's Code has shown TikTok how to provide greater protection for children's privacy online. It is good to see them acting ahead of the September deadline. These changes are a big step forward for children, and important step on the way to building the digital world children deserve."**

Baroness Kidron, 5Rights Chair

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

## **About 5Rights Foundation**

5Rights Foundation develops new policy, creates innovative projects and challenges received narratives to ensure governments, regulators, the tech sector and society understand, recognise and prioritise children's needs and rights in the digital world. In all of our work, a child is anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our work is pragmatic and implementable, allowing us to work with governments, intergovernmental institutions, professional associations, academics, and young people across the globe to build the digital world that young people deserve.

5Rights is a registered charity. Charity number: 1178581.

### **Background**

The Age Appropriate Design Code is the first of its kind anywhere in the world: a statutory code of practice setting out the specific protections that young people require for their data, and forcing companies to provide a much higher level of privacy protection by default.

The Code will apply to all online services 'likely to be accessed' by all users under the age of 18, and requires such services to have regard both to the different capacity and needs of children at different ages and to the UK's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The Information Commissioner's Office is the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.

Spokespeople are available to comment on TikTok's announced changes

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