

Parent Checklist - Content Review

PARENTS ONLY- Before you press 'play'

A quick, practical "before you press play" checklist for any platform (Netflix/Disney+/Prime, YouTube, TikTok clips, games, etc.).

Use it to choose what's best for your child - not what's trending.

60 second check

- ☐ Check the age rating (BBFC/MPAA/TV rating) and the content descriptors (e.g., violence, threat, sex references, self-harm).
- ☐ Look up the title on IMDb → open Parents Guide → scan: Violence & Gore, Frightening/Intense Scenes, Sex & Nudity, Profanity, Alcohol/Drugs/Smoking.
- ☐ Use a second source when possible: Common Sense Media (parent + kid reviews) and/or your local ratings board's content advice (e.g., BBFC in the UK).
- ☐ Search: "Title + parents guide" or "Title + content warnings" (include "episode guide" for series).
- ☐ If you're still unsure, preview: trailer + first 5-10 minutes, or watch 1 episode ahead.
- ☐ Decide based on your child (temperament, stress level, recent behaviour), not peer culture.

Platform Safety

- ☐ Streaming apps: separate kid profile; set a PIN for mature profiles; lock out higher ratings; review "recently watched" and autoplay settings.
 - ☐ YouTube: prefer YouTube Kids or a supervised account; turn on Restricted Mode; disable/limit autoplay; review subscriptions and watch history; use curated playlists.
 - ☐ Shared devices: keep screens in common areas when possible; use OS-level parental controls (Apple Screen Time / Google Family Link / Microsoft Family Safety).
 - ☐ Social media clips: remember that short clips can still carry adult themes; treat "just a clip" like the full show - check context first.
 - ☐ Animation/anime: don't assume "cartoon = child-safe." Preview for sexualised imagery, coercive power dynamics, humiliation, or graphic violence.
- NB :** review these things monthly / bimonthly and in line with your child's age

Child-fit Check

Children can absorb the emotion of what they watch (fear, threat, sexualised power, humiliation) even when they can't explain it. Use this section to decide what's "too much, too soon."

- ☐ Sleep & anxiety: if nightmares, bedtime fears, or worry are up right now, avoid content with strong threat/horror/possession/body horror.
- ☐ Aggression & violent play: if you're seeing hitting, violent role-play, or emotional dysregulation, pause violent content and tighten previews.
- ☐ Self-harm/suicidal ideation themes: if your child is low, withdrawn, self-critical, or questioning self-worth/identity, avoid shows that depict self-harm, suicide, or detailed self-injury, and prefer protective portrayals (help-seeking, recovery).
- ☐ Trauma sensitivity: if there's recent bereavement, bullying, panic symptoms, or intrusive fears, avoid graphic violence, coercion, or intense threat.
- ☐ Sexual content: if your child is young, curious, or vulnerable to coercion/peer pressure, avoid sexualised content (especially content that normalises coercion, humiliation, or older teen/adult dynamics).

If they already watched something

- ☐ Stay calm. "You're not in trouble - I want to understand."
- ☐ Ask: "What part stuck in your mind?" "Did anything feel scary/confusing?" "Did your body feel tense/sick?"
- ☐ Look for changes for 1-2 weeks: sleep, appetite, clinginess, irritability, aggressive play, avoidance, intrusive images.
- ☐ Help them process: label feelings, reassure safety, do grounding (breathing, movement), and swap to soothing/prosocial content.
- ☐ Explain the difference between healthy and unhealthy in terms of the themes they have seen in line with expectations, legalities and behaviours, allow them to navigate answers for themselves, calmly educate where they get stuck.
- ☐ If you're worried (persistent fear, self-harm talk, major behaviour change), talk to a qualified professional.

Quick how-to: IMDb Parents Guide (step-by-step)

1) Search the title on IMDb.

2) Open the title page.

3) Scroll to Parents Guide.

4) Read by category and look for keywords relevant to your child (e.g., "body horror," "self-harm," "suicide," "sexual coercion," "schoolgirl," "humiliation," "graphic injury detail").

5) For series, check episode-specific notes where available

Selected research & guidelines

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