WhatsApp
Multi-Gaming Fact Sheet

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a popular App that allows users to send messages, photos, videos, audio videos and make audio calls. WhatsApp tells us that these exchanges are encrypted and therefore 'safe', however it is important to ensure the latest version is downloaded to protect users from any possible security issues.

In 2014 Facebook became the parent company of Whatsapp. When setting up a user account, it is possible to opt out of data sharing with Facebook.

Within the terms and conditions, it is stated that the user agrees to allow WhatsApp to access their contacts. This will then automatically connect them to others in their contact list who are using WhatsApp. You cannot move further in the account set up unless you enable this feature.

There are some features within WhatsApp that allow the user to make choices about the way they would like to use the app. The Live location feature allows sending live information regarding the user's location to others during a chat. This can be managed through app settings or the locations settings within your device. A blocking feature allows users to block other users. Read receipts allow users to display and share when messages have been read. This could cause some angst among young teens when a message has been sent and not responded to within the expected time. WhatsApp allows groups to be created within the app to allow for private chat and sharing of images, videos and information to a selected group. Unlike other social media, WhatsApp does not claim rights to the images and information shared between users.

There is a camera feature that allows the capture of photos, videos and disappearing images with filters. There are also settings for displaying these profile picture, video or disappearing images, information about the user and current status.

To register and account with WhatsApp a mobile phone number needs to be provided and is all that is required. The Licence agreement states the minimum age for users is 13+, however parents are encouraged to make their decision based on what they know about the maturity and responsibility of their own child.

Social Media can be problematic for young people who have unsupervised access before they are ready. Parents are encouraged to discuss the importance of positive, safe and respectful online communication with their children before allowing access to any form of Social Media.

Potential for

Adult content	★★★★
Violence	★
Cyberbullying	★★★★
Grooming	★★★★★
Inappropriate language	★★★★