



# AI COMPANIONS

## PARENT TOOLKIT

CYBER  
SAFETY  
PROJECT

# AI COMPANIONS

“AI chatbots are becoming part of kids’ everyday digital lives — they’re helpful, engaging, and even emotionally responsive. But we need to stay alert to the risks they bring, like misinformation, privacy concerns, and the potential for emotional over-reliance.”

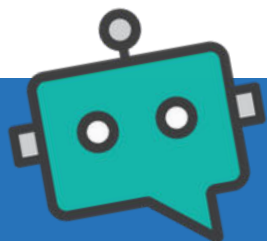
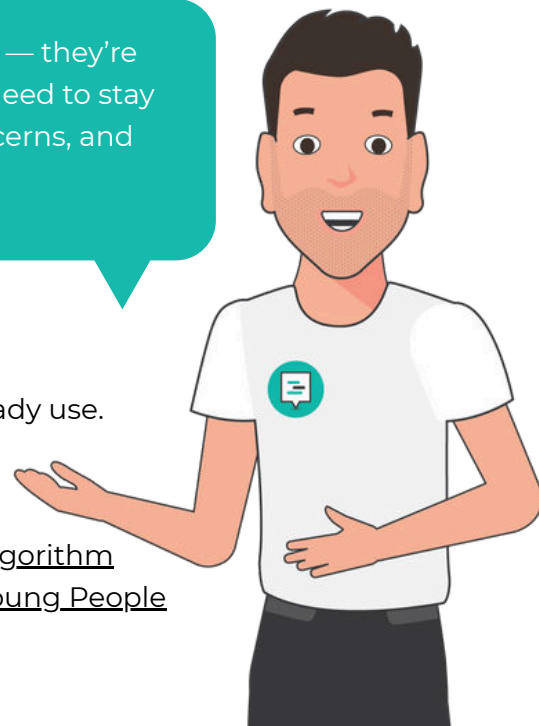
— Trent Ray, Cyber Safety Project

## Key Points for Parents:

- AI chatbots are designed to feel personal and engaging.
- AI is evolving rapidly and is often embedded in apps kids already use.
- Children may form emotional bonds with them.

## Recommended Reading:

- **Cyber Safety Project** – [When Your Child’s Best Friend is an Algorithm](#)
- **eSafety Commission** – [AI Chatbots and Companions: Risks Young People](#)
- **Common Sense Media** – [Talk, Trust, and Trade-Offs](#)



## KEY TERMS FOR PARENTS

**Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Technology that allows computers to think, learn, and make decisions like humans. It powers chatbots, voice assistants, and smart devices.

**Generative AI:** A type of AI that can create new content — like stories, pictures, or answers — based on what it has learned from data.

**AI Chatbot:** A computer program that can have conversations with people. It uses AI to respond in human-like ways, often mimicking emotions or personalities.

**AI Companion App:** Apps designed to be “friends” or “companions” for users. They can chat, offer emotional support, and even simulate relationships.

**Language Model:** The brain behind a chatbot. It’s trained on huge amounts of text to understand and respond to questions or prompts.

**Prompt:** The message or question a user types into a chatbot. The chatbot uses this to decide how to respond.

**Hallucination (AI):** When a chatbot gives an answer that sounds real but is actually made up or incorrect.

**Parasocial Relationship:** A one-sided emotional bond a person develops when chatting to a chatbot.

**Smart Device:** A gadget like Alexa or Google Nest that uses AI to respond to voice commands and questions.

# WHERE AI COMPANIONS ARE SHOWING UP...

**AI companions are becoming part of the digital spaces kids use every day.**

As these tools become part of everyday play and learning, it's vital that parents understand where they appear and how they might shape a child's thinking, relationships, and safety.

## SOCIAL MEDIA



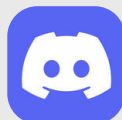
### Snapchat "My AI"

A built-in chatbot that kids can talk to like a friend



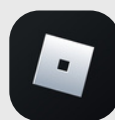
### Instagram AI Chat

AI-generated responses in DMs and comments



### Discord Bots

Users can generate AI bots that moderate and interact with users



### Roblox

Custom AI chatbots simulate conversations, role-play, and even respond to emotions

## SPECIFIC AI COMPANION APPS



### Replika

Designed to be a "friend" or "partner" with emotional intelligence



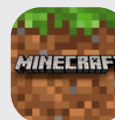
### Character.AI

Lets users chat with fictional or real-life characters



### Talkie

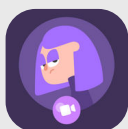
Customisable AI characters for chatting and role-play



### Minecraft

With AI integrated you can chat with intelligent NPCs (non-player characters).

## AI TUTORS



### Dualingo "Lily"

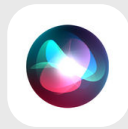
Role-play bot Lets kids practise real-world conversations with AI characters, like Lily



### Khan Academy

"Khanmigo" allows chats with historical figures, solves math problems and give feedback on your writing

## SMART DEVICES



### Apple Siri

Now understands context, offers assistance, and integrates with Apple's ecosystem



### Alexa

AI powered conversations, real-time translation, emergency assistance



### Google

Natural conversations, proactive suggestions, and smarter home automation

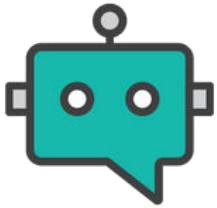
## WARNING



**Bad Rudi** and **Ani** are **R18+ rated AI chatbots** from Grok, a platform owned by Elon Musk's X. Both are designed with adult themes making them unsuitable for children despite their friendly or playful appearance.



# YOUR ROLE IN GUIDING SAFE AI USE



## Stay Curious and Informed

### How?

- Ask your child to show you the apps they use.
- Try the AI tools yourself to understand how they work.
- Subscribe to trusted sources like Cyber Safety Project and eSafety updates.



## Ask Tough Questions

### What to Ask:

- “What do you talk about with your AI friend?”
- “Do you ever feel like the chatbot understands you better than people?”
- “What would you do if the chatbot made you uncomfortable?”
- “Do you know who sees what you say to the chatbot?”



## Set Healthy Limits

### What This Looks Like:

- Create tech-free zones (e.g., dinner table, bedrooms).
- Encourage real-life friendships and problem-solving.
- Use parental controls to limit access to certain apps or features.
- Schedule regular check-ins to talk about digital experiences.



## Model Safe AI Use

### What This Looks Like:

- Use AI tools with your child to explore safe questions together.
- Talk through how you use AI and check its answers.
- Share your own boundaries around tech use to help them build theirs.



## Know When to Step In

### Signs to Watch For:

- Your child is spending more time with AI than with real friends.
- They're emotionally attached to a chatbot or upset by its responses.
- They're hiding conversations or reluctant to talk about their digital life.