

## Malaysian Govt to introduce parental control tools with telcos to keep children safe online



Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil during Question Time in Parliament on March 13, 2024. — Bernama pic

The Malaysian government is looking to introduce Parental Control tools through a collaboration with local telecommunication providers to prevent children from being exposed to troubling online trends.

Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil also reminded parents and guardians that they are responsible for monitoring their children's online activities.

"Most social media platforms have an age requirement whereby only those aged 13 years and above are allowed to register for an account. Based on a search, he said, be it X, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp or TikTok, they all have a minimum age limit set at 13 years, except Telegram, which is 16 and above.

"To ensure that the age limit condition is met, parents and guardians have the responsibility of monitoring their children's activities online," Fahmi told Parliament during Question Time on March 13, 2024.

He said this is because children could still benefit in a positive way from social media platforms with parental supervision.

"Parents or guardians must take their digital parenting role seriously and remain alert.

"In my own experience as an MP, when I meet children who are in Year One to Year Six, almost 90 per cent have a TikTok account.

"This shows that the existing guidelines are not sufficient. The government through the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) has worked with the five telecommunication providers in the country — CelcomDigi, Maxis, U Mobile, Telekom Malaysia (TM) and Time — will make available Parental Control Tools which will allow parents to monitor, filter, limit and block what their children are exposed to online," Fahmi said.

### Utilising Parental Control Tools

He added that parents and guardians could also utilise other Parental Control Tools that are available on other platforms.

He was responding to an Opposition MP who asked the government to state its methods for preventing children below the age of 15 from acquiring social media accounts that could expose them to troubling trends online.

In addition, Fahmi said Cabinet ministers had last month agreed to set up a working committee that will evaluate tabling a new law in relation to online crimes including security.

“We will have a meeting after this to look at a few aspects, and if there is a need to amend any Act or steps to be taken by MCMC, we will work on this as soon as possible,” he said.

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