A Guide to Report Inappropriate Content on Social Media

eSafetyLabel+ Greek Ambassadors Team
June 2019

Aim

The aim of this guide is to provide students and carers with adequate information about the process they can follow in order to report inappropriate or abusive content to administrators of a social media application.

Social media included in this guide

	Instagram
	Facebook
	Snapchat
	YouTube
	Twitter
	Tik Tok

Introduction

It is impossible to imagine a home without an internet connection. The Internet is soaked in our social texture, to a point where we "depend" on its use in our everyday life. In addition to sending and reading email, engaging in chat and socializing that are the basics that most people are doing, some people use internet for e-commerce and buy online, read ebooks, coordinate their businesses. However, regardless of the reasons we use the internet, we should always pay attention to who shares this connection with us, especially when it comes to children.

The Internet is positive for children - not just for digital education but also as a place to socialize, play and create. Whether they do it for work or play, they should be able to do it safely, create positive relationships and deal with online risks.

The dangers posed by the use of technology are often determined by human behavior and not by the technologies themselves. Children and young people who used to talk to strangers, harass or do things to younger children existed long before the Internet. Technology has however, increased the impact of these actions and the spread of possible consequences from them far more.

Social networking is a good example of how digital behavior can pose online risks. It is extremely popular with children and young people, encouraging them to be creative users of the internet rather than passive viewers.

Most social media set a limit on age for using their services, but there is virtually no control. As a result, many younger children are unaware of the terms and conditions of service, without realizing the risks that this could create. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) entered into force more than a year ago, on 25 May 2018, yet concerning the implementation of article 8 GDPR is still ongoing with two Member States of the EU (Greece & Slovenia) left to formally adopt their national implementation laws.

The public consultation on the adoption of legislative measures for the application of the GDPR opened on 20 February 2018 and successfully concluded on 5 March 2018. The Greek Ministry of Justice has subsequently published the Draft Law on the Protection of Personal Data. Article 6 of the Draft Law sets the age of consent for children at 15 years. According to the article, in relation to information society services directly offered to a child, the processing of personal data of a child, when based on consent, shall be lawful where the child who provides consent has reached the age of 15 years. Where the child is below the age of 15 years, such processing shall be lawful only if and to the extent that consent is given or authorized by the holder of parental responsibility over the child. As the draft law has not been adopted yet, the current GDPR article 8 age is 16 years.

The most recent Report of the European Commission Multi-stakeholder Expert Group on the GDPR application published on 11 June 2019 confirms the issues associated with the practical implementation of article 8 GDPR. First of all, stakeholders note that the information on who – the child or the parent – actually needs to give consent is often unclear. It is suggested that "this may have the consequence of denying services to children and keeping children away from the Internet until they have attained a certain age, which is not the purpose pursued by

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GDPR". In addition, the Expert Group also asks for clarifications in terms of age verification for the processing of children data, and more generally, the lawful grounds that can be used to process personal data of children.

Most social media tools also allow users to set their profile to 'private' view only by specific contacts. Many however do not apply these settings. Detailed online profiles with personal information, photos and accounts from everyday life can lead to people who are recognized, or even communicated in person.

Communication through these networks, however, changes the way we decide who will learn what about us. In the past, we decided what we would say to someone while we talked to him. Now we have to decide when we send the information, by posting on Facebook, Twitter, etc. It is an unnatural process and we need to develop a privacy policy and analyze our feelings about who can learn what about us.

At the same time, countless data for each one of us is increasingly being produced, stored and made searchable. These data are of value in too many dimensions (in marketing, control, etc.).

Thus, the average user, who does not know technical details of how this works, is at the end of the decisions chain that define this setting. Technology defines what is feasible, laws define what is legitimate, and businesses produce what is feasible depending on whether they are profitable. What is missing from the equation is legislation that cannot follow the speed of developments.

The rise of social media over the last few years has brought several schools into a difficult situation. While some schools have taken the decision to block sites like Facebook, this does not prevent students from accessing in their own time and thus problems spread into the classroom. As part of prevention, it is vital that schools spend time on students about how to stay safe on the internet and the importance of keeping certain information private. Online behavior has offline consequences and many teenagers completely ignore it. But what about teachers? What policy should schools choose if they engage in social networking?

School education staff can be extremely vulnerable to social media and it is equally important to be protected in the same way as students in cyberbullying and digital identity. The teachers need to understand the importance of fully exploiting any confidentiality arrangements and may need support for it.

Many schools have started to engage in social media to communicate with parents and other stakeholders. This is a positive move and shows how effectively information can be made public quickly. Socially educated schools can send reminders for their events and local events or, for example, inform parents during bad weather when school is forced to close.

Encouraging children and young people to develop safe and responsible behavior from a very young age is ultimately the best defense to keep them safe. Social networking poses little risk if users observe certain basic safety rules. For example, the Internet Safety Rule:

- Acceptance terms and conditions of use.

- Respect for the rights and feelings of others with careful thought about the long-term consequences of what we are going to be digitally.
- Keep privacy of personal information.

Schools ideally can help students develop positive digital behavior from childhood. It is important to develop their ability to assess the risks associated with digital activities. This will ultimately help protect children and young people as they grow and mature, no matter how technology and risks evolve.

Digital security, privacy issues, Internet harassment are but some of the problems of the parents in our time. It is a fact that the internet revolution has positively affected many aspects of our lives, but also its negative aspects. We are in front of a double-sharpened weapon that requires meticulous attention when used.

Children, when they have no control at all, can have free internet access and surf in dangerous sites, meet strange people, and even discover new things that we never thought they would learn. Because of their immaturity, innocence and predisposition to trust others, children are the most vulnerable category for internet harassment and in many cases of abuse. Are parents aware of these disturbing facts?

Of course, the majority, if not all of them know, but the point is that they feel helpless and do not have the necessary training for the preventive measures they need in order to keep an eye on what their children are doing. Parents need to address this issue seriously and to help them do this; we list a few of the tools that parents need to know about addressing the emerging danger that threatens children's safety. You do not need to be a technology guru or have advanced computer skills to be able to use these web applications. They are simple and used by anyone with basic skills on Internet.

Instagram

Instagram is a social networking app made for sharing photos and videos from a smartphone or/and a PC with Windows 10. Instagram is available for free on iOS devices, like the iPhone and iPad, as well as Android devices, like phones and tablets and Windows Phone.

Every subscribed user has the ability to share photos and/or videos with followers or with groups. Every subscribed user can see, comment and "like" photos and/or videos of other users. Instagram is a very popular app among teenagers. Additionally, subscribers have the opportunity to "follow" their favorite celebrities and comment on their photos. Nevertheless, while searching, teens may see videos or/and photos with inappropriate content and they may receive negative or abusive comments. Instagram gives the potential to report or/and block a user of inappropriate content.

Block / Unblock user (Android)

In order to block user's inappropriate content, we should have previously signed in to Instagram.

After signing in, we go to the profile of the user that we want to block, and on the right top of the screen, we click the three-dot icon ⋮ (see **Figure 1**). In this way, we stop receiving notifications of the specific user. To unblock a user, we follow the opposite procedure.
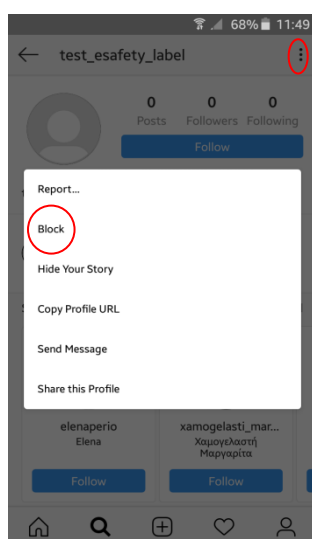
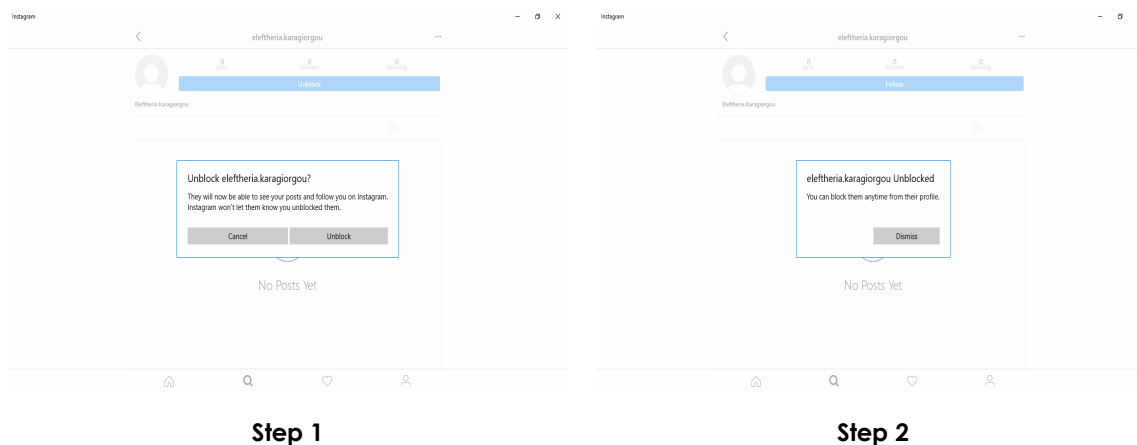| Block user | Step 1 | Step 2 |

Unblock user
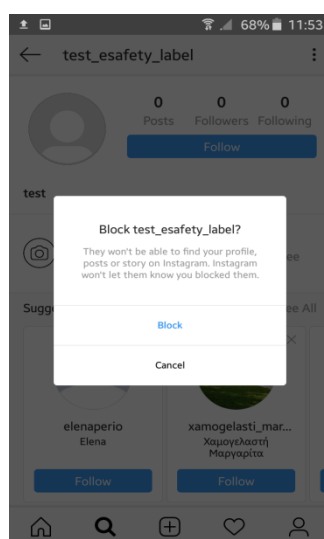
Step 1
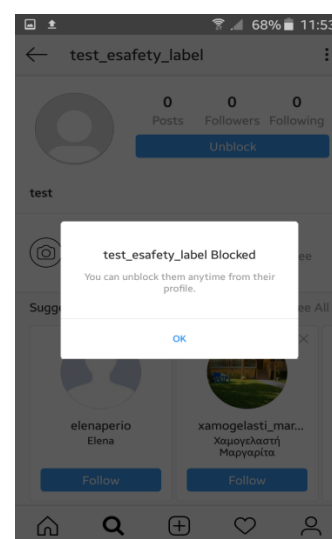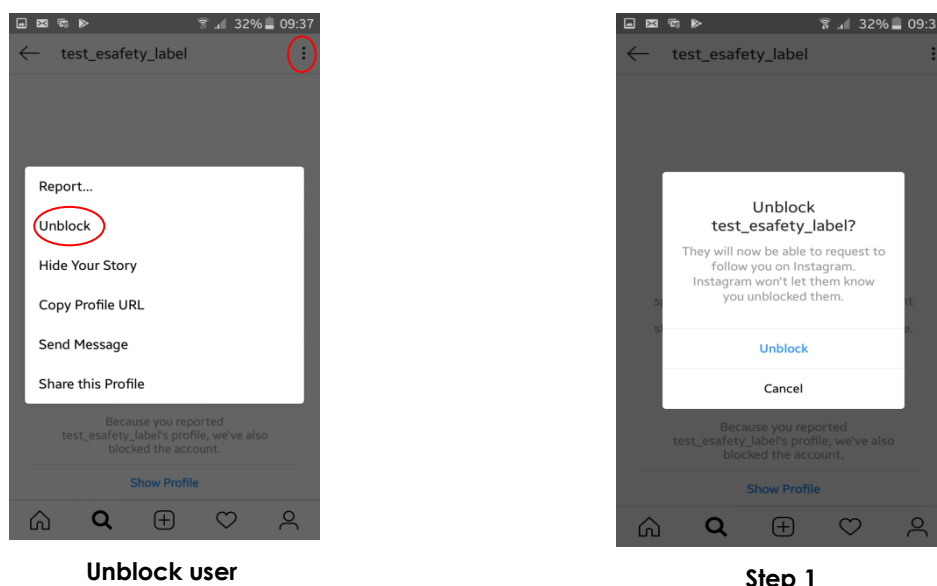
Figure 1

Report user (Android)

Instagram gives the potential to report a subscribed user if his/her videos and/or photos contain inappropriate content, like violence. After signing in, we go to the profile of the user that we want to report, and on the right top of the screen, we click the three-dot icon ⋮ (see **Figure 2**).

Report user

Step 1

Step 2
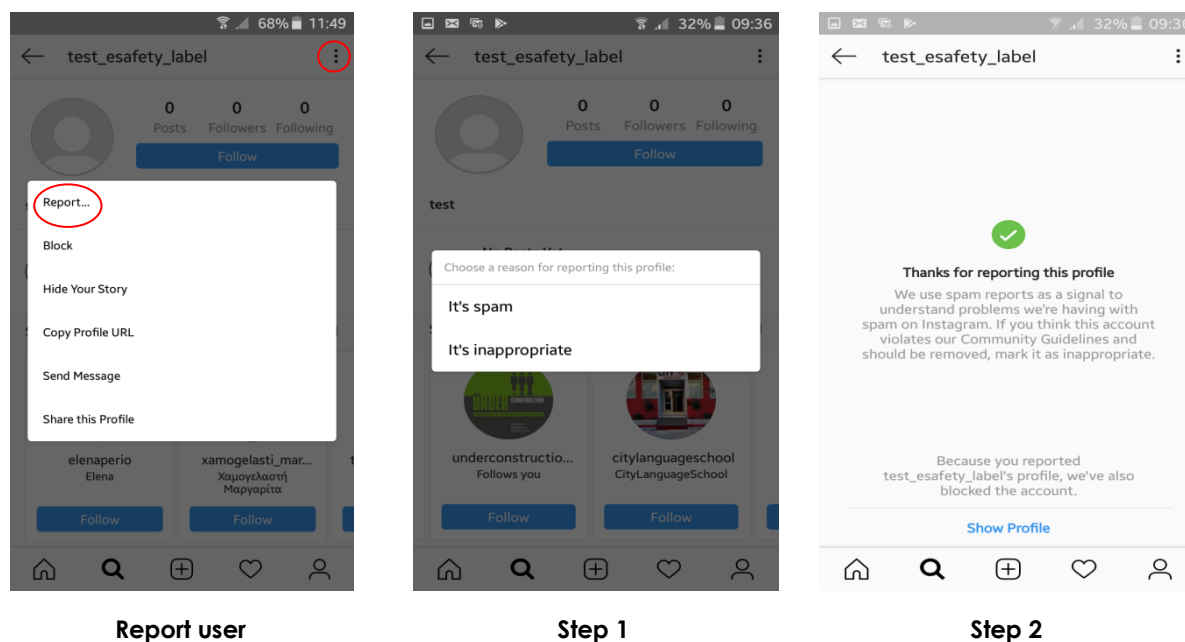
Figure 2

Block / unblock user (Windows 10)

In order to block user's inappropriate content, we should have previously signed in to Instagram. After signing in, we go to the profile of the user that we want to block, and on the right top of the screen, we click the three-dot icon ••• (see **Figure 3**). In this way, we stop receiving notifications of the specific user. To unblock a user, we follow the opposite procedure (see **Figures 4a and 4b**).

Block user

Step 1

Step 2
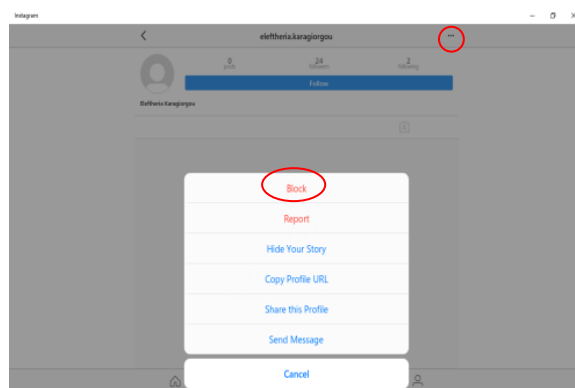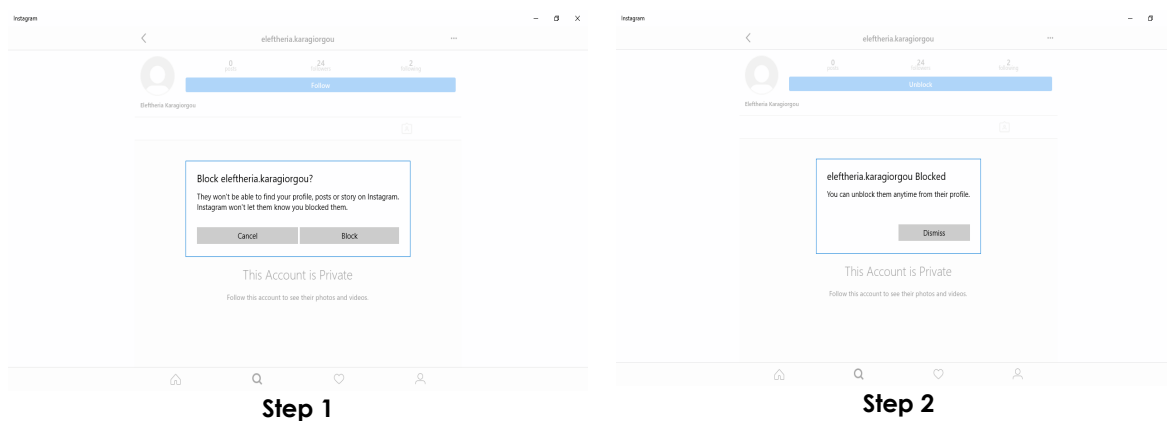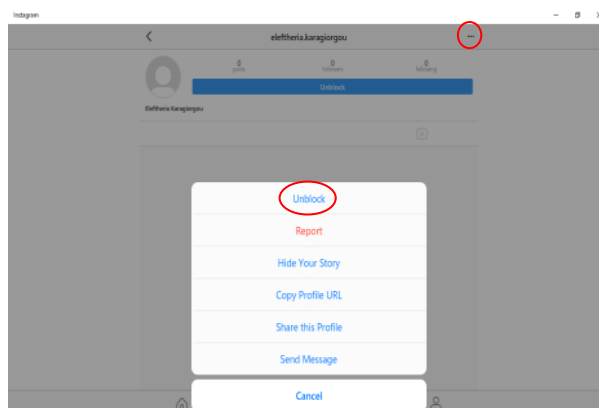
Figure 3

Unblock user

Figure 4.a

| Step 1 | Step 2 |

Figure 4.b

Report user (Windows 10)

Instagram gives the potential to report a subscribed user if his/her videos and/or photos contain inappropriate content, like violence. After signing in, we go to the profile of the user that we want to report, and on the right top of the screen, we click the three-dot icon ••• (see **Figure 5**).

Report user

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3
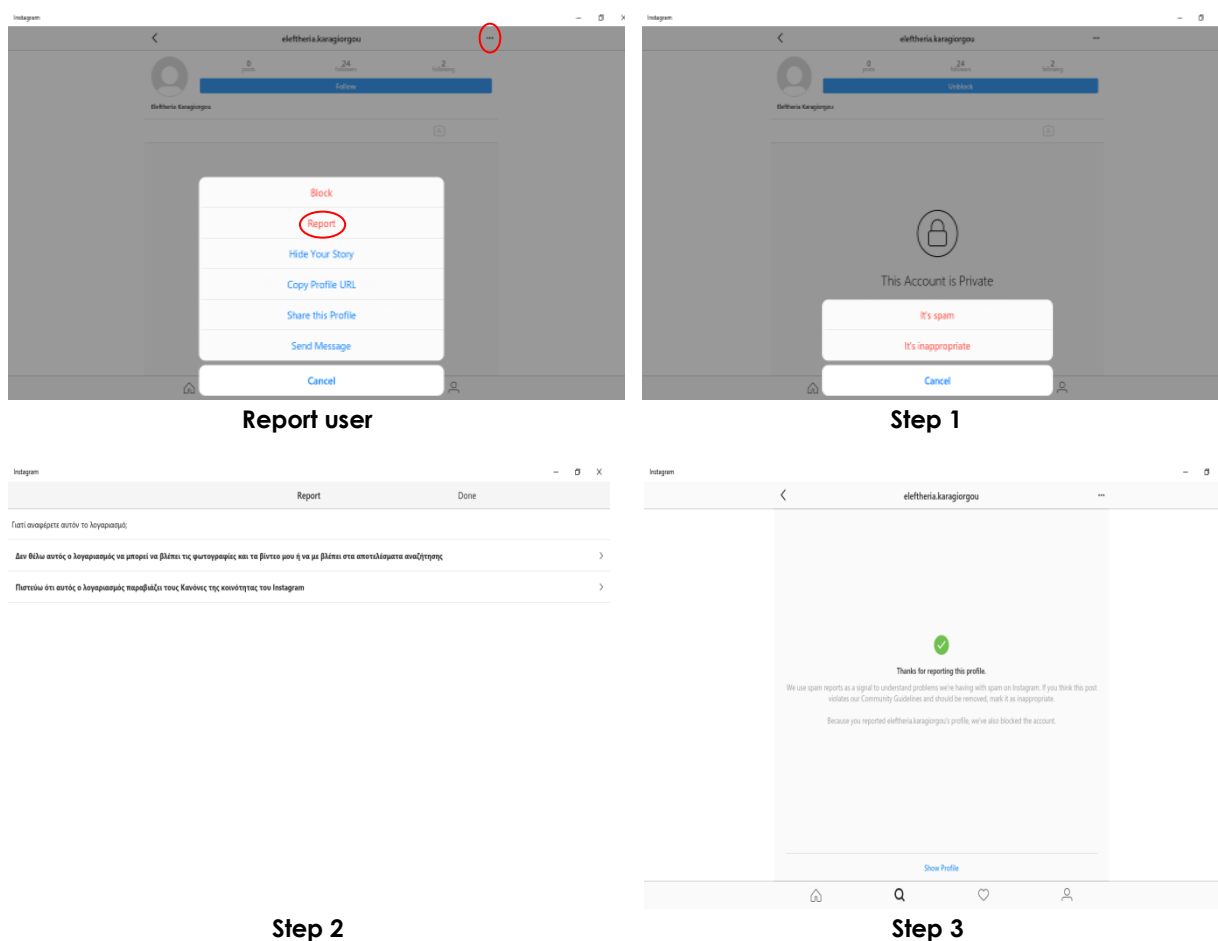
Figure 5

Facebook

Facebook is a social networking platform with which its users can communicate with each other through their contacts and notify them when they update their personal information. According to the Facebook community, "Users must feel safe" and "We are committed to removing content that encourages harm to the real world, including (but not limited to) physical, financial, and emotional harm."

While surfing the Facebook platform, young people may encounter content that is unsuitable for their age. Also, registered users may receive negative or abusive comments on their account.

The age limit set by Facebook for using its platform is 13 years. However, since May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation prohibits children aged 13 to 16 from accessing social media and the consent of their parents is necessary. In Greece, the age of 15 is chosen as the age limit for digital consensus.

Facebook provides the ability to report inappropriate content as well as the ability to block and report malicious users.

How to report a profile

To report a profile:
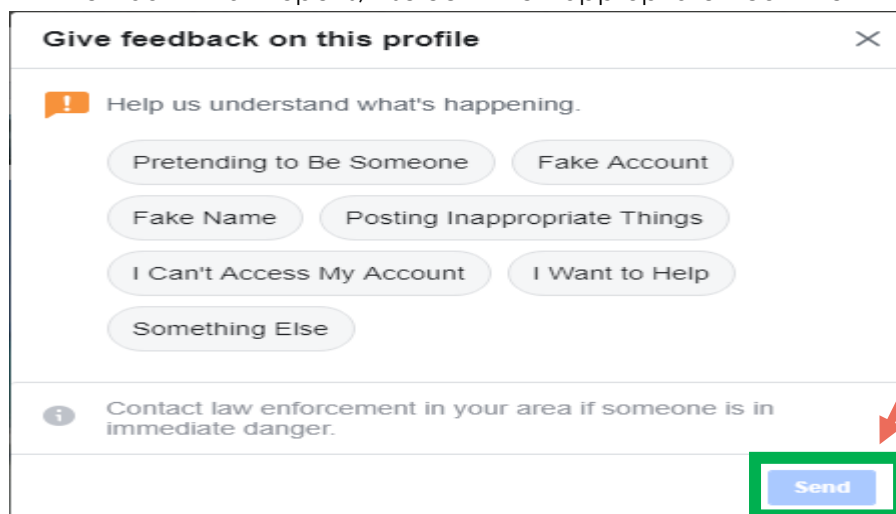
Tap the three dots

In the box that will open, click: **Give feedback or report this profile**
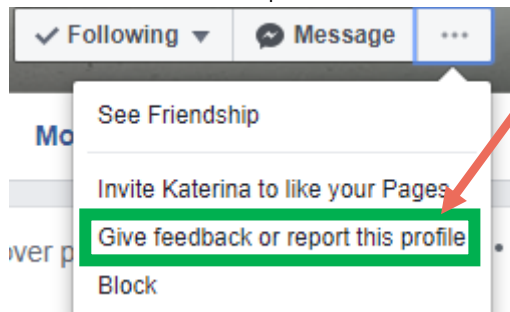
In the box that opens, select the appropriate comment and click **Send**

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Block / report user

To block and report malicious users:

Tap the three dots

In the box that will open, click: **Block**
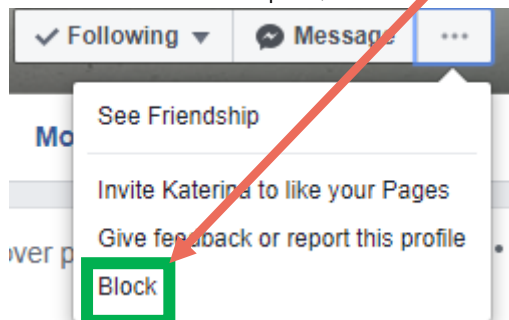
And then click **Confirm**:
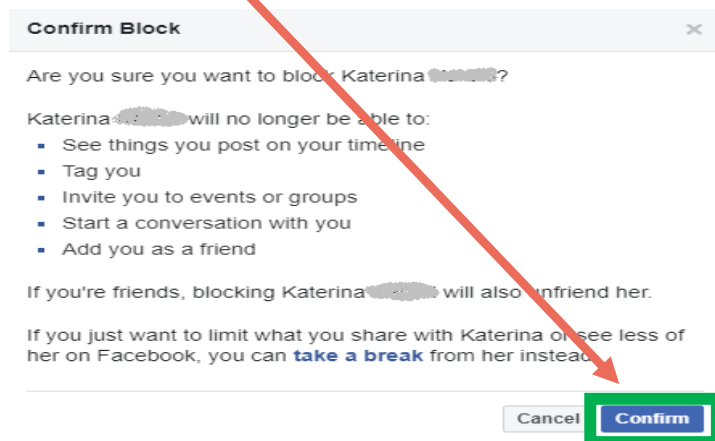
Report a conversation

To post comments on a conversation or report a conversation on Facebook:
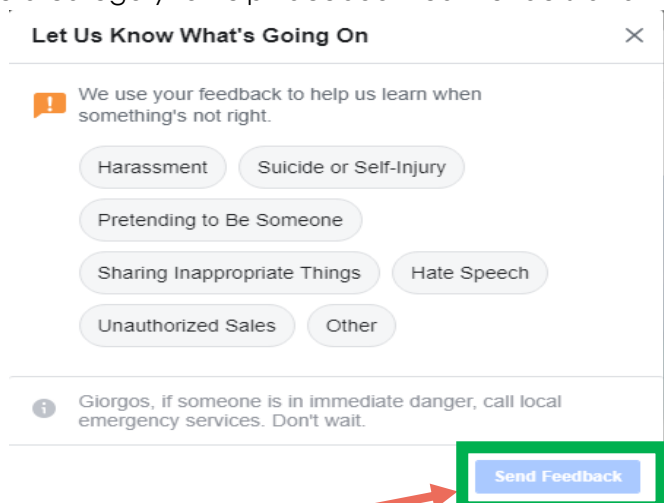
Click on the right at the top and open a conversation.
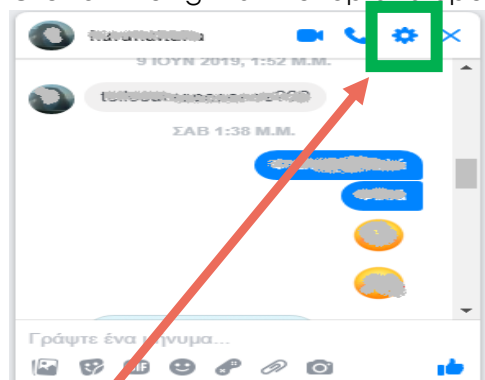
Then tap

Select **Something's wrong.**
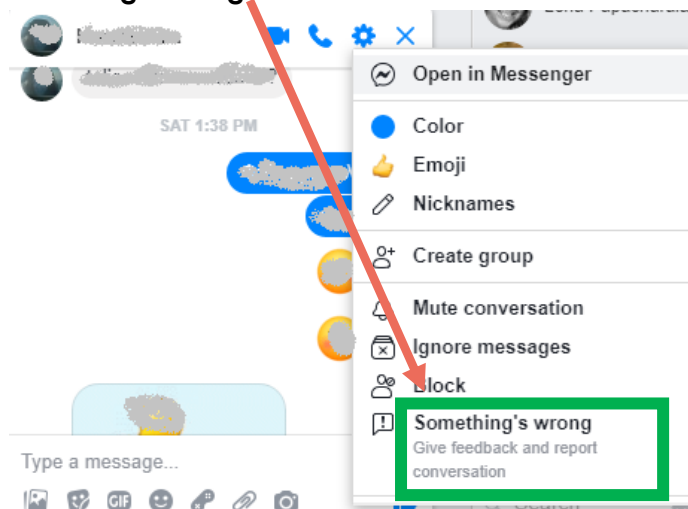
Choose a category to help Facebook team understand what's wrong.

Then tap **Send Feedback.**

Block user using an Android device

The following steps can be taken in order to block someone on an Android mobile device:

1. Tap ☰ .
2. Tap ⚙ **Settings & Privacy > Settings**.
3. Scroll down to **Privacy** and tap **Blocking**.
4. Tap **ADD TO BLOCKED LIST** and enter the person's name.
5. On the search results page that appears, find the person you want to block and tap **BLOCK > BLOCK**.

If you can't find someone using this method, try going to the person's profile and selecting **Block** from the ⋯ menu.

Note: When you unblock someone, you won't automatically be friends again. If you block a friend and then unblock them, you'll need to send them a new friend request.

Snapchat

General

Snapchat is a mobile application for sharing photos, videos, text, etc. It and can be downloaded (free of charge) and installed on iOS and Android devices while messages are sent for free to other Snapchat users. It is popular especially among young people, and a unique feature of this application is that messages are deleted from the recipient's mobile device after a short-predefined time limit (range 1 to 10 seconds).

Snapchat is intended for people who are at least 13 years old. Persons under the age of 13 are prohibited from creating Snapchat accounts. Users must be at least 18 years old for certain features or functionalities offered by Snapchat.

How it works – Interaction modes

By installing the Snapchat app on an Android or iOS device, the user must create an account by providing basic information such as his / her first and last name, date of birth, password, a unique username and a valid email address.

The user may allow Snapchat to access his/her contacts from the mobile device, so he/she can easily see who have connected their phone numbers to their Snapchat accounts. By tapping **+Add** (see **Figure 1**) beside any contact the user can add them as a friend. People who haven't connected their phone numbers to their Snapchat accounts or who are possibly not Snapchat users, can be easily invited to join Snapchat from a user by tapping **+Invite**. The user can add various visual (i.e., add text or stickers) and / or sound effects (i.e., add voice filters or mute audio) to his messages (Snaps), join snaps to create stories that can only last for 24 hours, start group conversations, share the current location and be able to see snaps or stories from nearby users (Snap Map) as well as search for an event, a celebration and more.
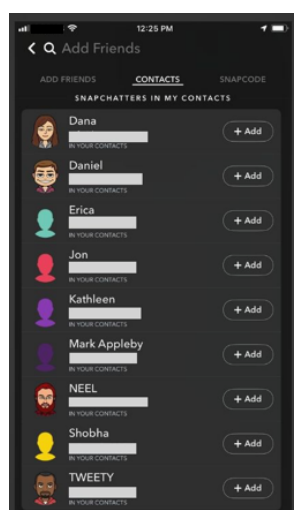
Figure 1

**Safety issues that need attention**

Considering the flexible communication and interaction framework provided by Snapchat, users should be particularly careful about eSafety issues, such as:

- digital footprint / reputation

- sexting
- cyberbullying
- personal data protection
- communicating with unknowns (non-friends)
- sharing current location

Report Content

With Snapchat the user can report inappropriate content as well as to block and report an account (not-trusted user). Particularly, the user can report inappropriate content directly

from the application (in-app reporting) by selecting the specific Snap and pressing the button as can be seen in **Figure 2**.
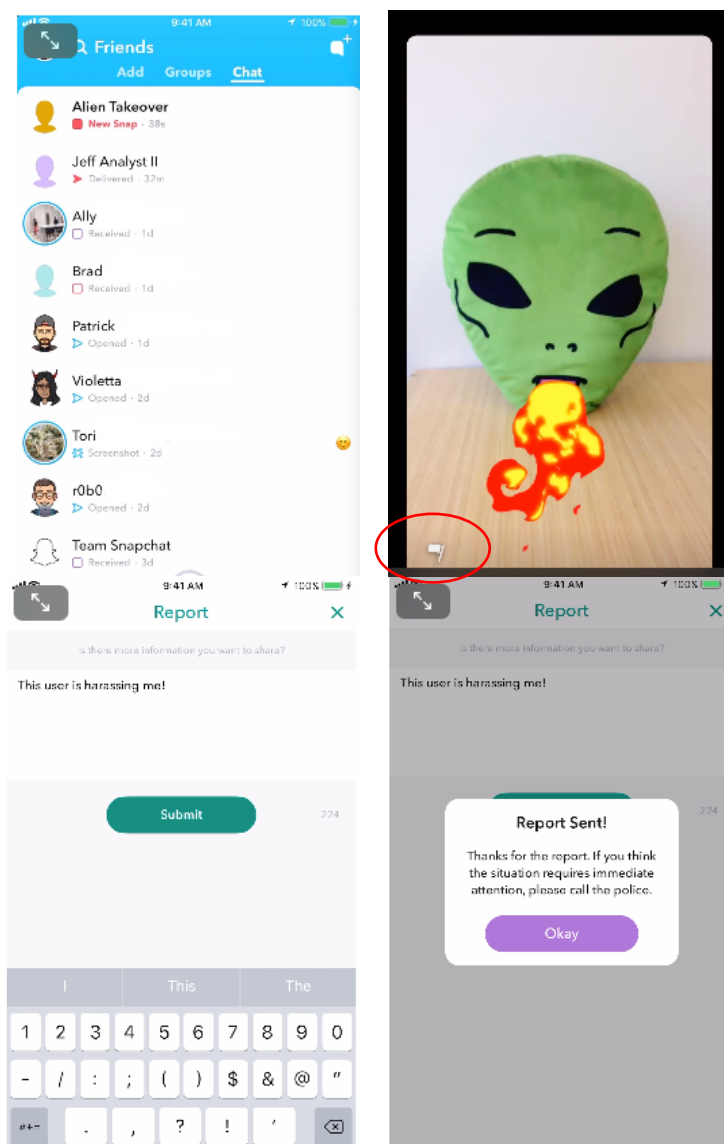
Figure 2

The user can report a Story on the web from the computer, by clicking the ⋮ button as can be seen in **Figure 3** and following the on-screen options.
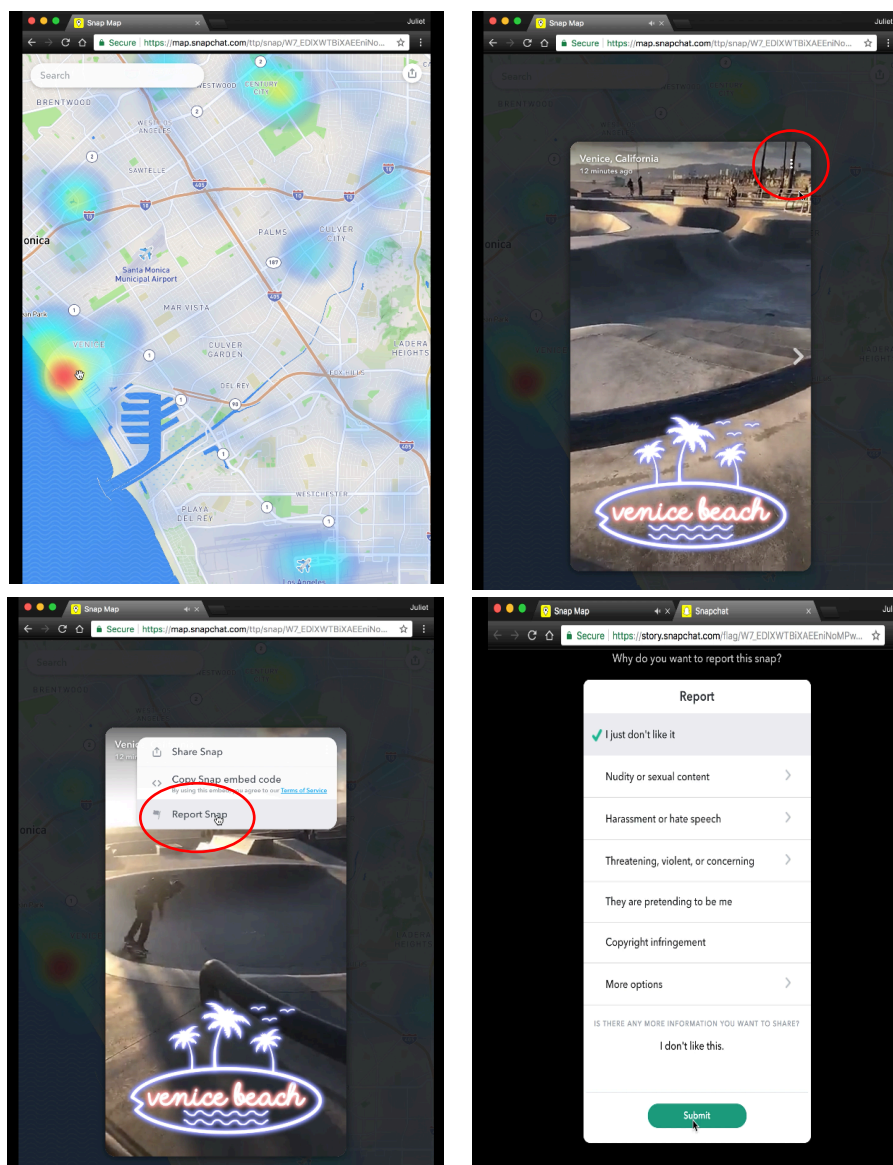
Figure 3

A specific account can be reported by selecting the Snapchatter's name and pressing the button ⚙ Settings, as shown in **Figure 4**. The process is completed by receiving a message on the mobile device screen and having previously selected the reason for the reporting.
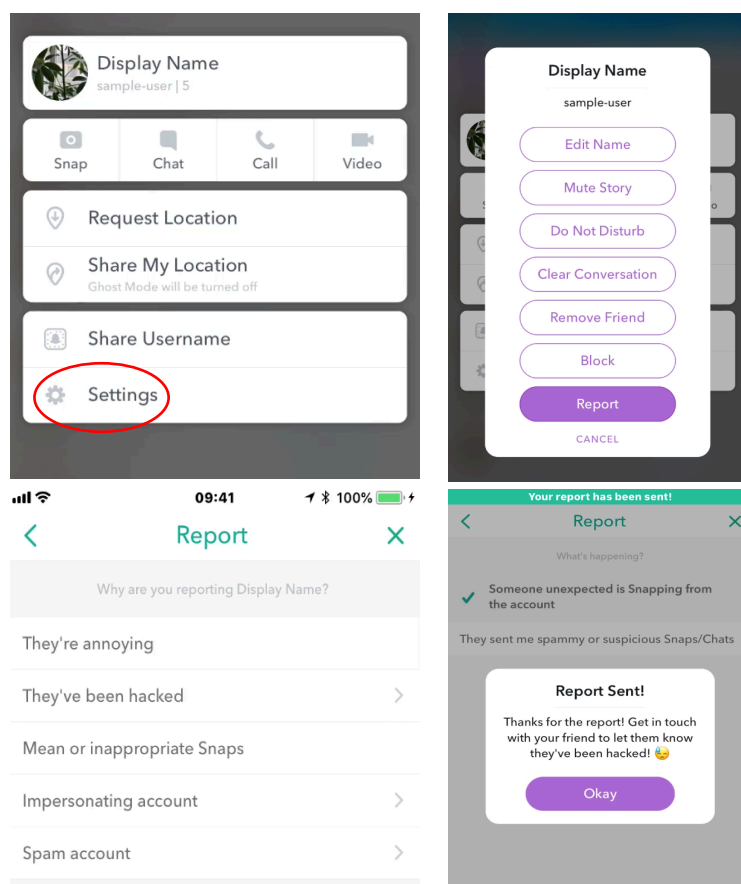
Figure 4

If the user is unable to report a safety concern in-app, then the report can be easily made via the Snapchat Support site (https://support.snapchat.com/en-US/i-need-help), as can be seen in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5

Specifically, the user can select the issue of interest from a pre-defined list as seen in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6

For example, if the user would like to report a Story, then the **Snap ID** must be retrieved, following the steps depicted in **Figure 7**. For the report submission, all relevant fields such as username, email, Snap ID must be provided. Additionally, the user may attach a file as also to describe in detail the specific issue (see **Figure 8**).

Figure 7

Figure 8

The reporting process varies according to the issue that the user will select from the predefined list depicted in **Figure 6**.

Useful links:

1. https://www.snap.com/en-US/safety/safety-center/ (last date accessed, 15 July 2019)
2. https://support.snapchat.com/en-US/article/Snapchat-Safety (last day accessed, 15 July 2019)
3. https://www.snap.com/en-US/community-guidelines/ (last day accessed, 15 July 2019)
4. https://support.snapchat.com/en-US/article/privacy-settings2 (last day accessed, 15 July 2019)
5. https://saferinternet4kids.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/snapchatpp.pdf (Greek version, last day accessed,15 July 2019)
6. https://saferinternet4kids.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Snapchat_Directions.pdf (Greek version, last day accessed, 15 July 2019)
7. https://saferinternet4kids.gr/nea/snapchat-2/ (Greek version, last day accessed, 15 July 2019)

YouTube

YouTube is a free video sharing service. Access is free to all users who can search and view any available videos. Registered users can also create their own channels, upload videos to their channels, share, rate, and comment on other videos, create play lists, and follow other channels and / or users.

YouTube is especially popular among young people as they use it to watch movies, music video clips, gaming, funny, hacks, how-to videos, and many more. They also sign into YouTube primarily to be able to follow their favourite YouTubers and comment on videos.

While browsing YouTube, young people may encounter inappropriate videos. Also, registered users can receive negative or abusive comments on videos uploaded to their channel.

YouTube provides the mechanism to report inappropriate content, comment, thumbnail, or title, as well as the mechanism to block and report malicious users.

The way of reporting varies slightly depending on the browser and / or the platform we use.

Report content (Windows)

In order to report inappropriate content, we should have previously signed in to YouTube. To sign in, we need to have (or create) a Google Account (Gmail).

After sign-in, we go at the bottom of the video that we would like to report and click the three-dot icon ••• More. **(Figure 1)**

At the dropdown menu that opens, we choose ⚑ Report. **(Figure 1)**

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the video: **(Figure 2)**

- Sexual content
- Violent or repulsive content
- Hateful or abusive content
- Harmful dangerous acts
- Child abuse
- Promotes terrorism
- Spam or misleading
- Infringes my rights
- Captions issue

Some of the options also provide more options to better identify the problem. **(Figure 2)**
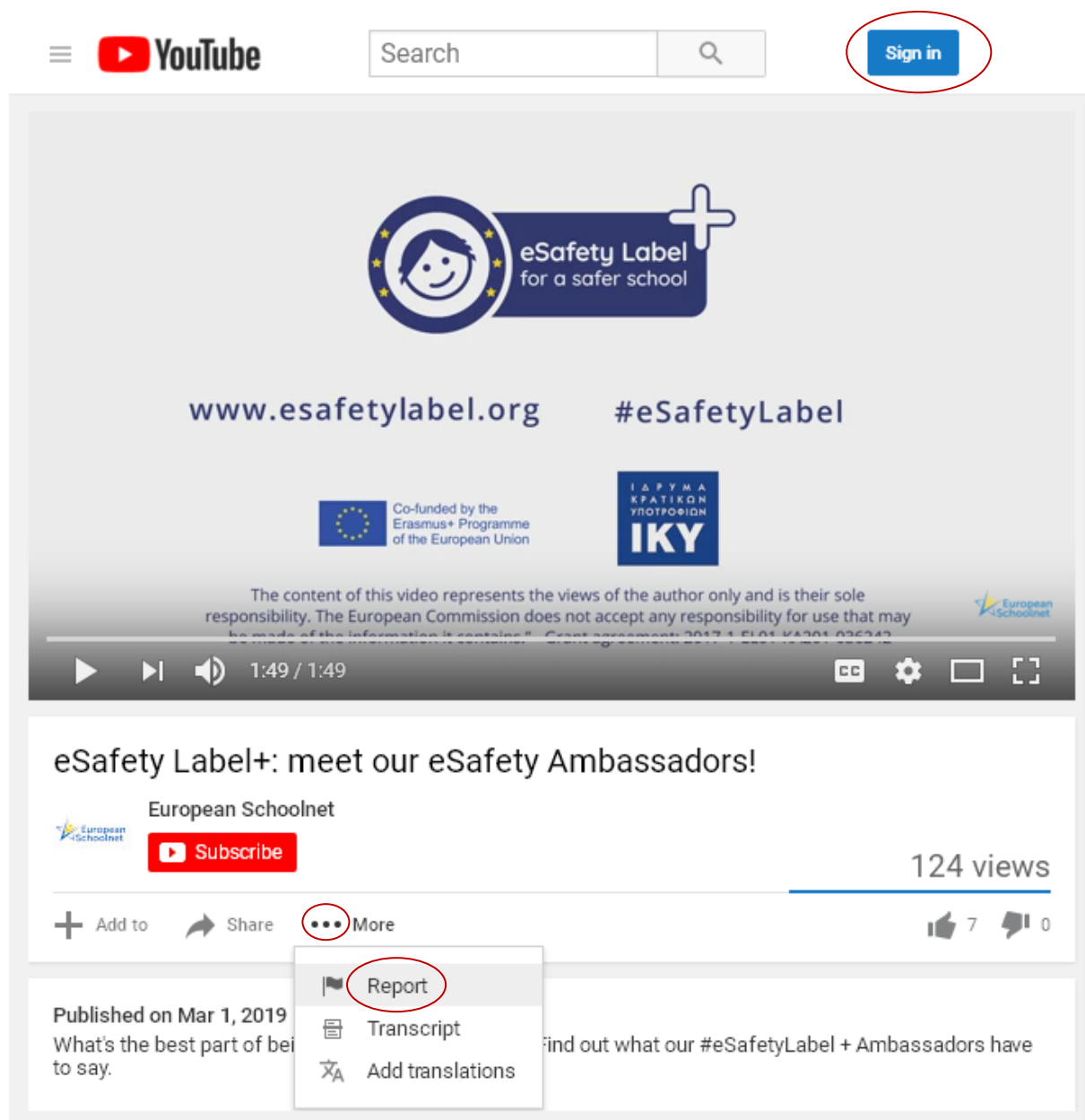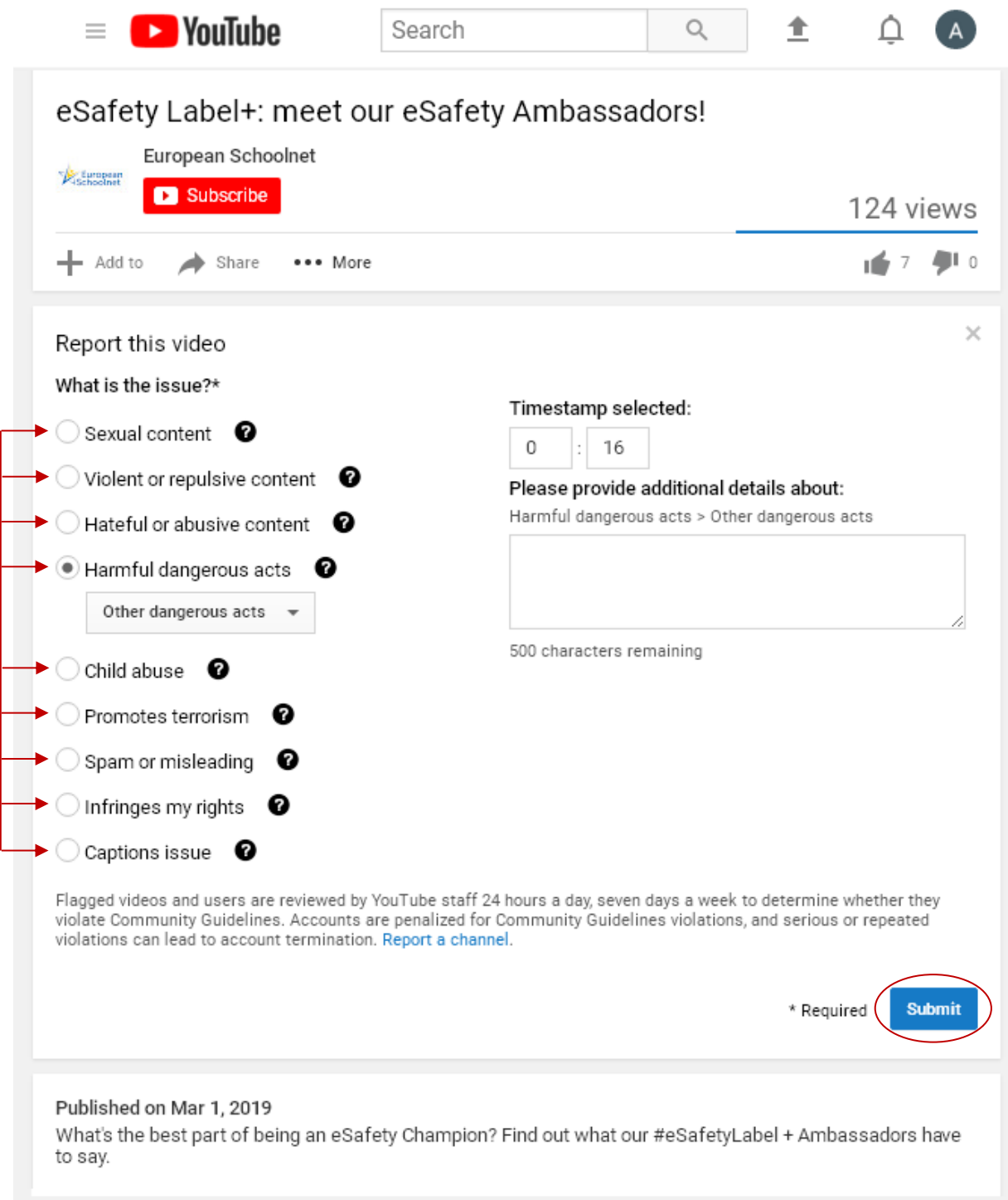Click the button: Report or Submit **(Figure 2)**

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Figure 1

Figure 2

▶ Report comment (Windows)

In order to report abusive comments, we should have previously signed in to YouTube. To sign-in, we need to have (or create) a Google Account (Gmail).

After sign-in, we click the three-dot icon ⋮ More, at the right of the comment that we would like to report. **(Figure 3)**

We click the option: ⚑ Report. **(Figure 3)**

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the comment: **(Figure 4)**

- Unwanted commercial content or spam
- Pornography or sexually explicit material
- Hate speech or graphic violence
- Harassment or bullying
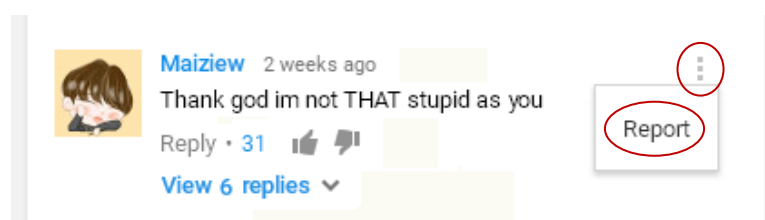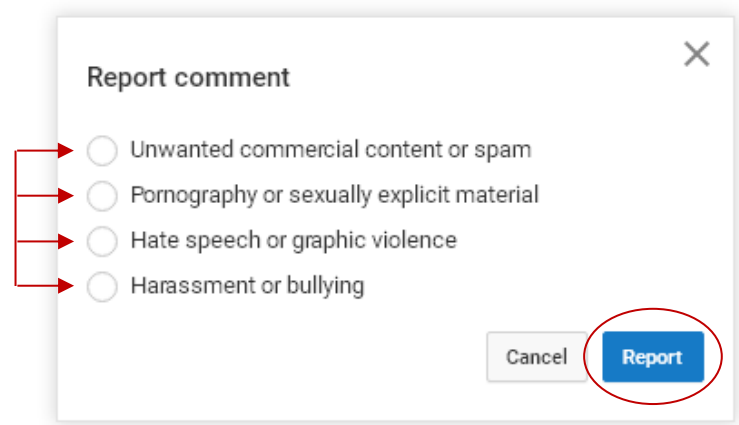
We click the button: Report **(Figure 4)**

Figure 3

Figure 4

▶ Report thumbnail or title (Windows)

In order to report inappropriate or abusive thumbnail or title we should have previously signed in to YouTube. To sign in, we need to have (or create) a Google Account (Gmail).

After sign-in, we click the three-dot icon ⋮ More, at the right of the thumbnail that we would like to report. **(Figure 5)**

At the dropdown menu that opens, we choose 🏳 Report. **(Figure 5)**

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the thumbnail or the title: **(Figure 6)**

- Sexual content
- Violent or repulsive content
- Hateful or abusive content
- Harmful or dangerous acts
- Spam or misleading
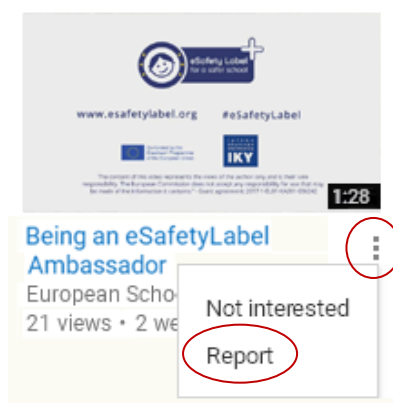
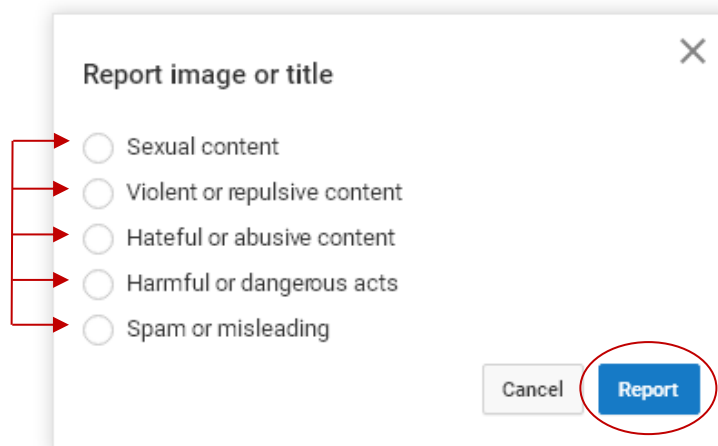We click the button: Report. **(Figure 6)**

Figure 5   **Figure 6**

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▶ Report content (Android)

In order to report inappropriate content, we should have previously signed in to YouTube. To sign-in, we need to have (or create) a Google Account.

Usually, Android mobiles are already connected to their owner's Google account.

After sign-in, we tap on the video that we would like to report and then tap on the three-dot icon ⋮ More. **(Figure 7)**
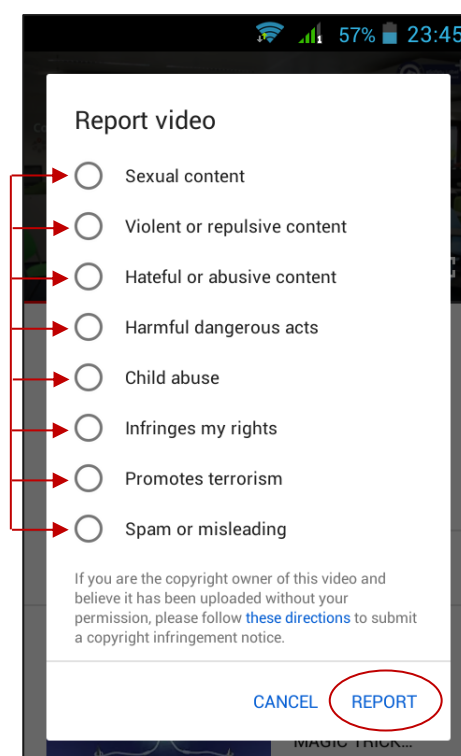
At the dropdown menu that opens, we choose 🚩 Report. **(Figure 7)**

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the video, and tap the related radio-button: Report **(Figure 8)**

- Sexual content
- Violent or repulsive content
- Hateful or abusive content
- Harmful dangerous acts
- Child abuse
- Infringes my rights
- Promotes terrorism
- Spam or misleading
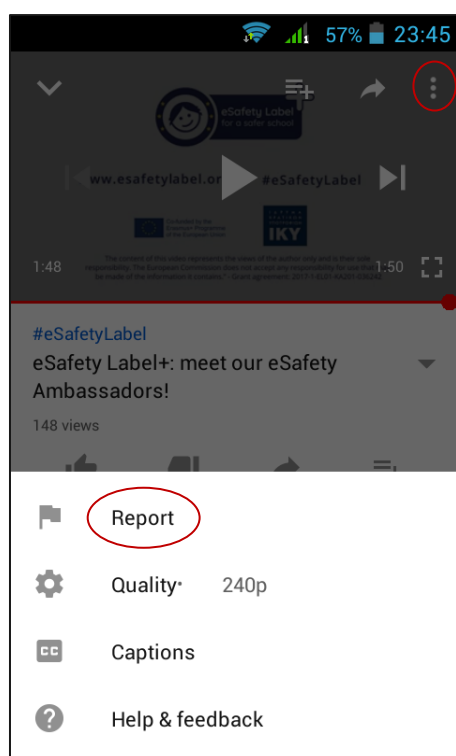
Figure 7

Figure 8

▶ Report comment (Android)

The process is exactly the same as the one we use to report a comment on Windows.

▶ Report thumbnail or title (Android)

In order to report inappropriate or abusive thumbnail or title we should have previously signed in to YouTube. To sign-in, we need to have (or create) a Google Account.

After sign-in, we tap on the three-dot icon ⋮ More, at the right of the thumbnail that we would like to report. **(Figure 8)**
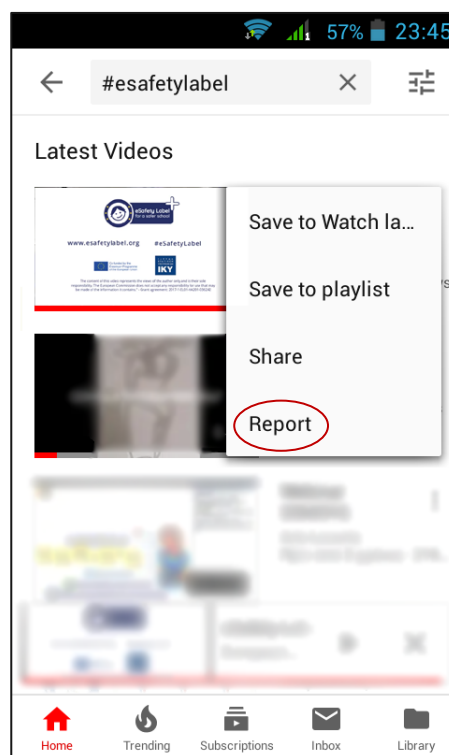
At the dropdown menu that opens, we choose ⚑ Report. **(Figure 9)**

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the thumbnail or the title, and tap the button: Report **(Figure 10)**

- Sexual content
- Violent or repulsive content
- Hateful or abusive content
- Harmful dangerous acts
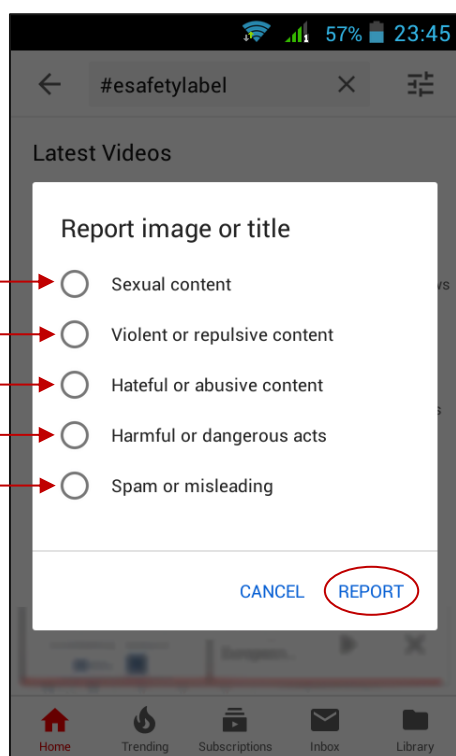- Spam or misleading
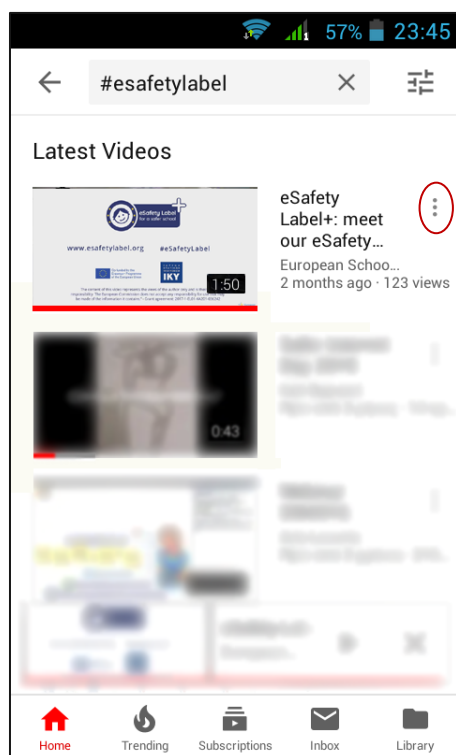
Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10

Figure 11

Note. If we use a browser to access the YouTube website (instead of using the YouTube app), in order to report a video, we first have to locate it, then tap More ⋮ **(Figure 11)** and follow the procedure previously described.

Twitter

Twitter is an online news and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets". Although it's main purpose originally was to be used as a Micro-blogging Internet service, it can be used for many things besides mico-blogging, such as for social messaging, for coordinating events, for business use, for news reporting and for marketing. It can be used by a family to keep in touch, a company to coordinate business, the media to keep people informed or a politician to build up a campaign.

Twitter as a Micro-blog

Micro-blogging is defined as a quick update usually containing a very limited number of characters. It can be used for keeping people informed on what you are up to without the need to spend a lot of time crafting an entire post on the subject. You just say what's up and leave it at that.

Twitter for Social Messaging

While Twitter may have started as a micro-blogging service, it is grown into more than simply a tool to type in quick status updates. With Twitter you have the ability to follow people and have followers and interact on your cell phone, thus, it can be a social messaging tool.

Twitter for News Reporting

Twitter has been embraced by the "new media" of the blogosphere and has slowly won acceptance among traditional media outlets and major News Media.

Twitter for Social Media Marketing

Twitter has become a favorite target for social media marketing. This new form of getting the message out has been used effectively by politicians during their campaigns and by news publications and celebrities as a quick way to connect with an audience.

Report content

In order to report inappropriate content, we should have previously signed in to Twitter. The process is similar in all platforms (Windows, Android, iOS). To sign in, we need to have (or create) a Twitter Account (https://twitter.com, **Figure1**).
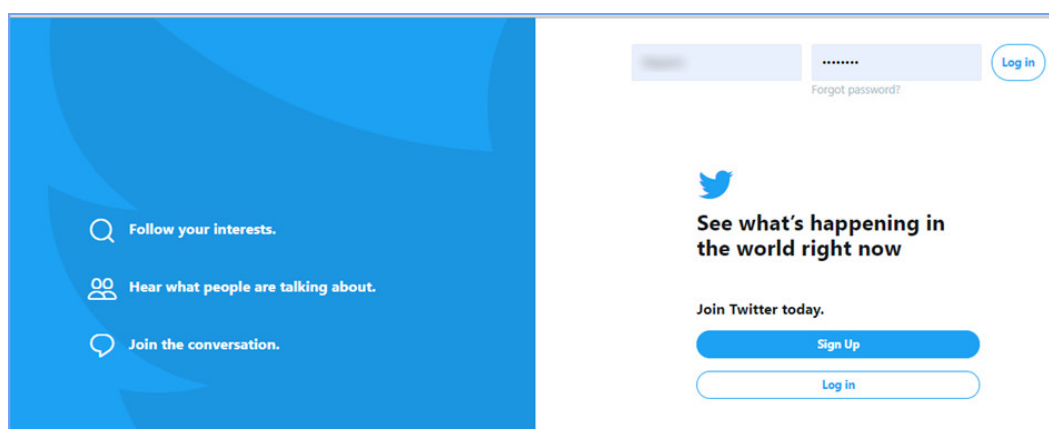

Figure 1 Signing up for Twitter

You can report directly from an individual Tweet or profile for certain violations, including: **spam**, **abusive or harmful content**, **inappropriate ads**, **self-harm** and **impersonation**.

After sign in, we open the profile we would like to report at the profile that we would like to report and select the overflow icon (three-dot) ⋮ **(Figure 2)**.
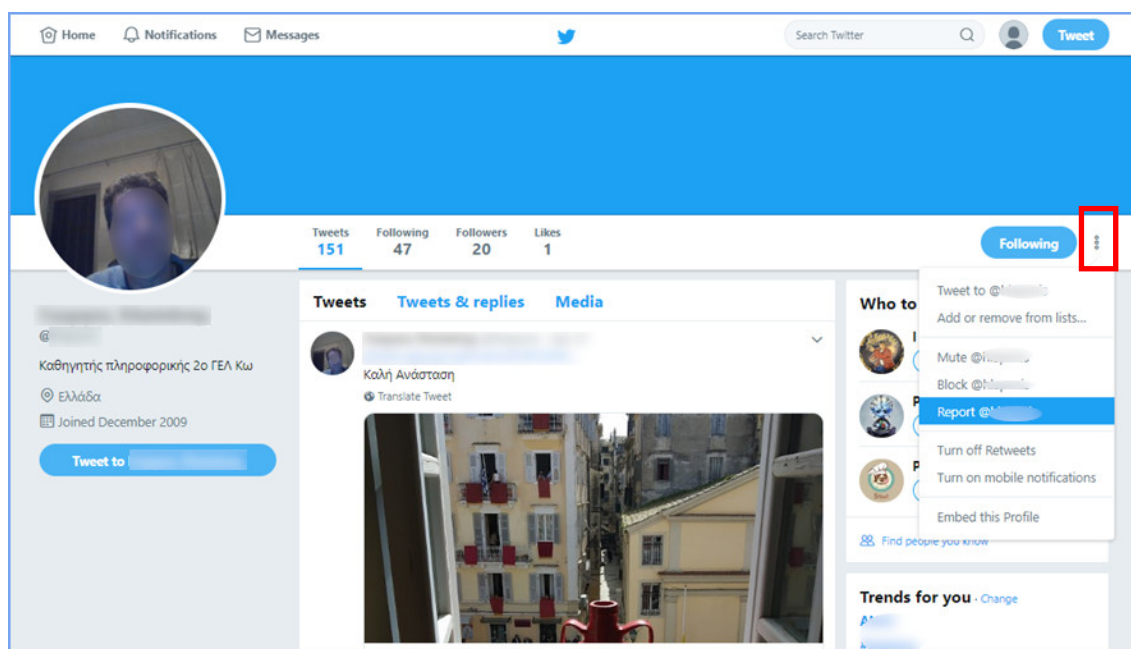

Figure 2 Report an account

We Select Report and then select the type of issue we'd like to report (Figure 3).

If we select **They're being abusive** or **harmful**, Twitter will ask you to provide additional information about the issue we're reporting. Twitter may also ask you to select additional Tweets from the account you're reporting so that they have better context to evaluate our report.
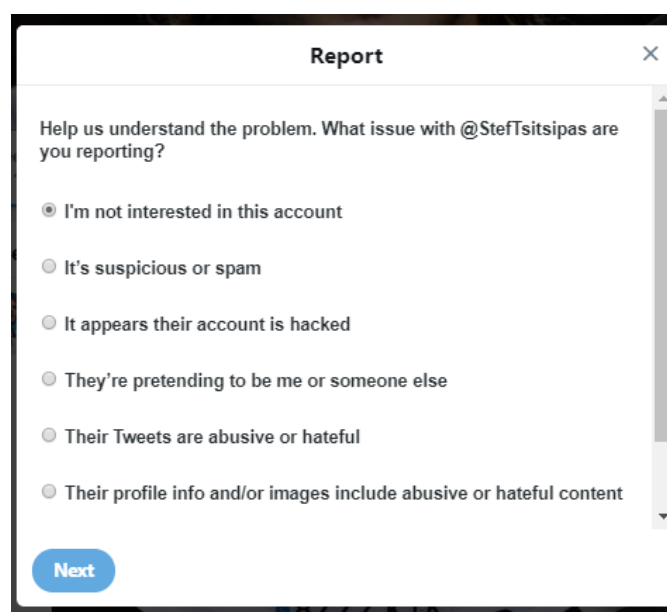

Figure 3 Choices for reporting

Twitter will include the text of the Tweets we reported in their follow-up emails and notifications to us. To **opt-out** of receiving this information, we can uncheck the box next to Updates about the report.

Once we've submitted our report, Twitter will provide recommendations for additional actions we can take.

Similar actions can be taken in order to report a specific tweet. In this case we Click or tap the ⌄ icon. After that we Click or tap Report Tweet and choose the type of issue we'd like to report to Twitter **(Figure 4)**.
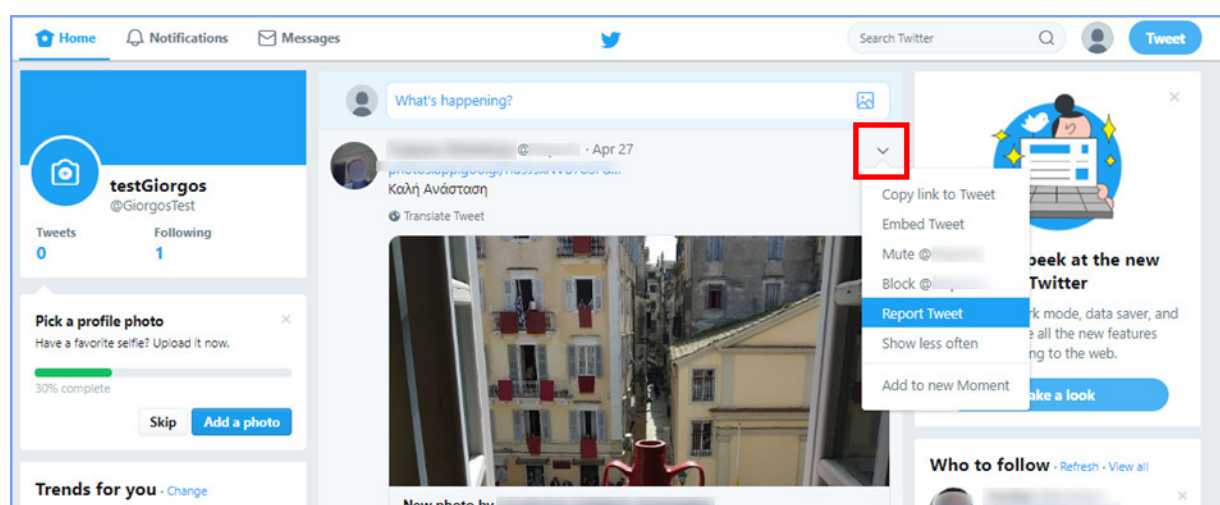

Figure 4 Report a tweet

Tik Tok

TikTok is an iOS and Android media app for creating and sharing short videos. The application allows users to create short music videos of 3 to 15 seconds and short looping videos of 3 to 60 seconds. The TikTok mobile app allows users to create a short video of themselves which often feature music in the background, can be sped up, slowed down or edited with a filter. To create a music video with the app, users can choose background music from a wide variety of music genres, edit with a filter and record a 15-second video with speed adjustments before uploading it to share with others on TikTok or other social platforms.

Users can control who can see their uploaded content, follow them, and send them messages by making their account private. With a private account, users can approve or deny followers and restrict their uploaded content and incoming messages to followers only. If a user has a public profile, anyone signed into the TikTok app can view that user's public videos. However, only approved followers can send that user a message. Whether users choose to have a public or a private account, they can always:

- block another from contacting them at any time
- save a video privately so that content will not be viewable by any other user

Even with a private account, profile information – including profile photo, username, and bio – will be visible to all users. TikTok provides the mechanism to report account, video, comments and chat.

Report an account (Android)

In order to report an account within the app we should have previously signed in.

After sign in, we go to the profile of the account we want to report and click the three-dot icon ⋮ **(Figure 1)**. At the dropdown menu that opens, we ⚠ choose Report **(Figure 2)**.

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the profile:

- Pretending to be Someone
- Posting Inappropriate Content
- Inappropriate Profile Info
- Other

Some of the options also provide more selections to better identify the problem. We click the button: Submit.
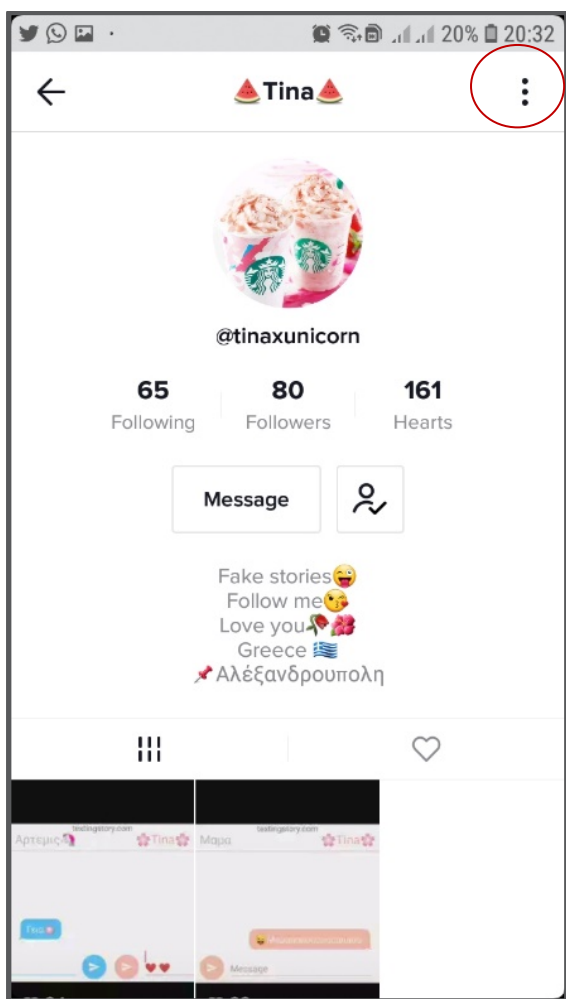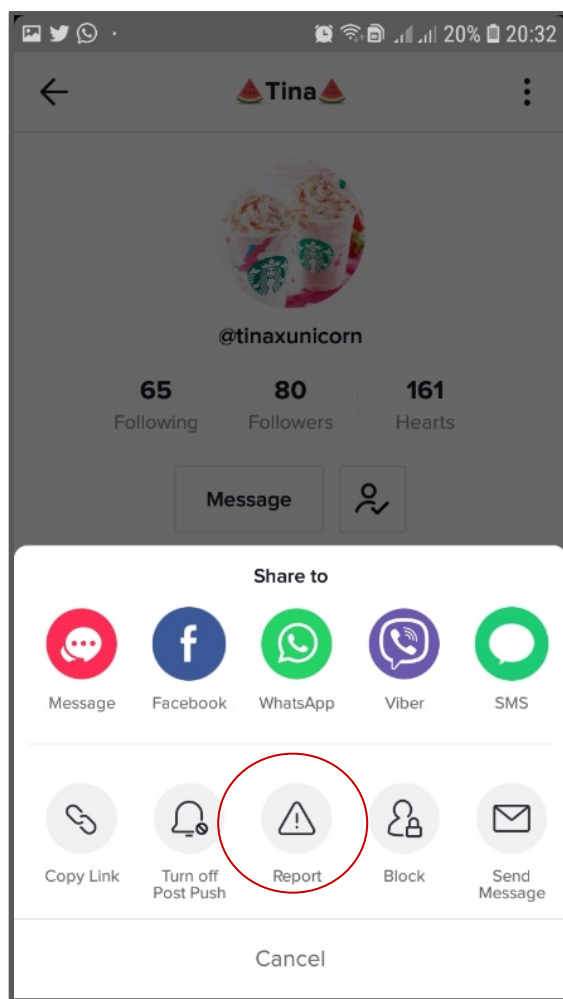
Figure 1

Figure 2

Report a video (Android)

In order to report a video, after sign in, we go to the video page we want to report and click

on **(Figure 3)**. At the dropdown menu that opens, we choose Report **(Figure 4)**.

From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the profile:

- Self-Injury
- Harassment or Bulling
- Pornography
- Violence or Harm
- Spam
- Copyright Infringement
- Hate Speech

- Terrorism
- Promotion of Drugs or Weapons
- Other

Some of the options also provide more selections to better identify the problem. We click the button: Submit
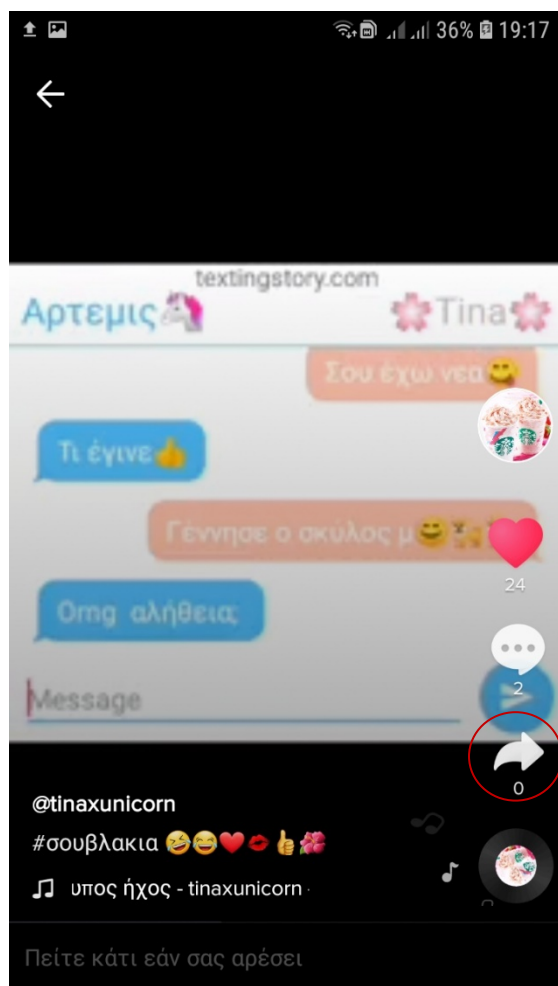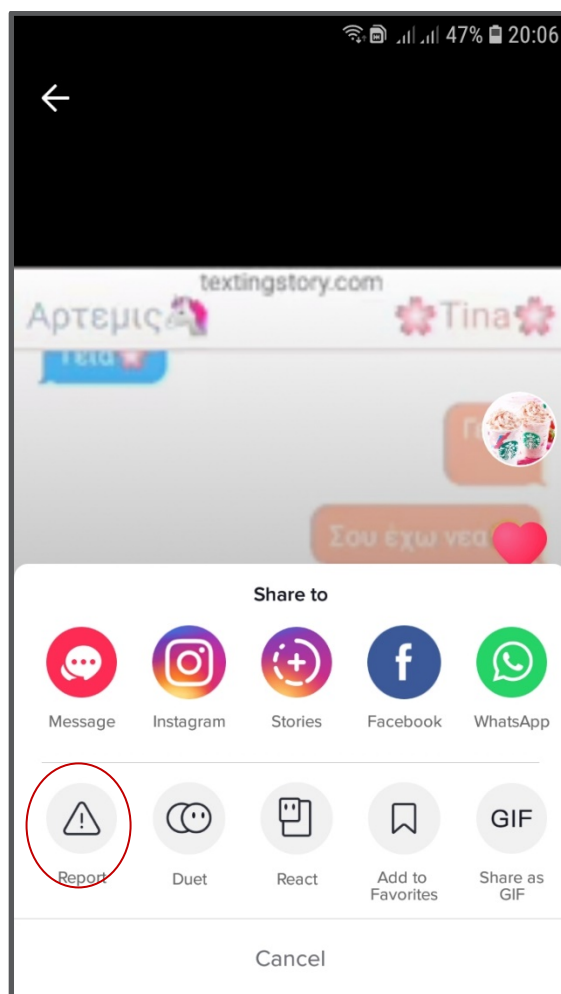

Figure 3

Figure 4

Report a comment (Android)

In order to report a comment, after sign in, we tap and hold the comment we would like to report. At the menu that opens, we choose Report **(Figure 5)**. From the list that appears, we choose the reason we want to report the comment **(Figure 6)**. Some of the options also provide more selections to better identify the problem. We click the button: Submit
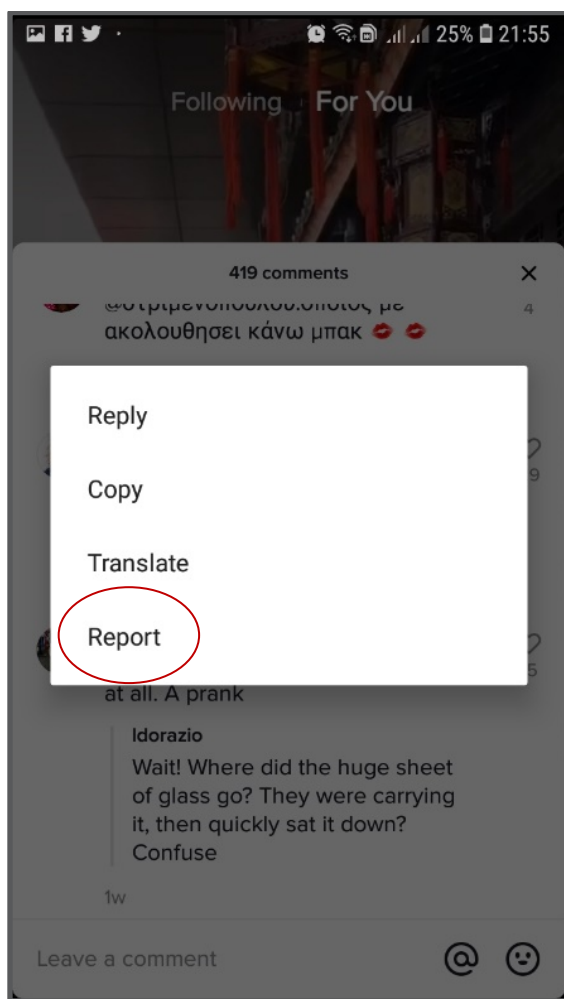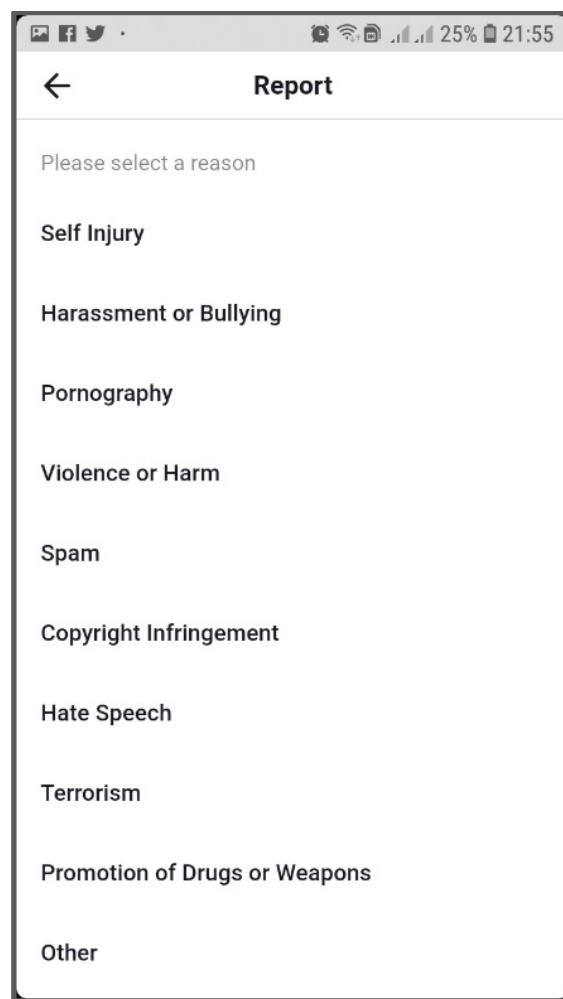
Figure 5

Figure 6

Report a chat (Android)

In order to report a chat after sign in, open the conversation you want to report and click on
⋮ . At the menu that opens, we choose Report **(Figure 7)**. From the list that appears, we
choose the reason we want to report the comment **(Figure 8)**. Some of the options also
provide more selections to better identify the problem. We click the button: Submit
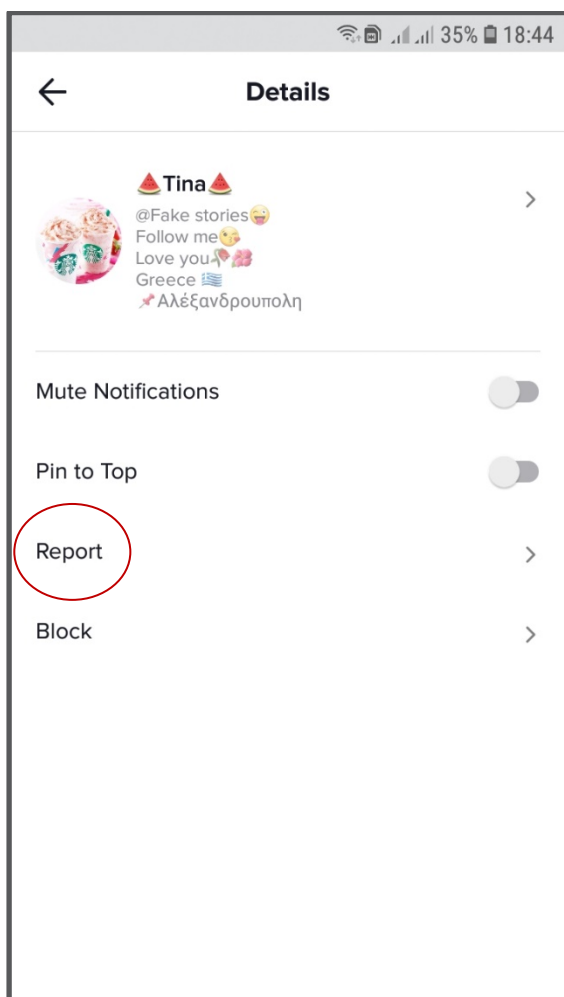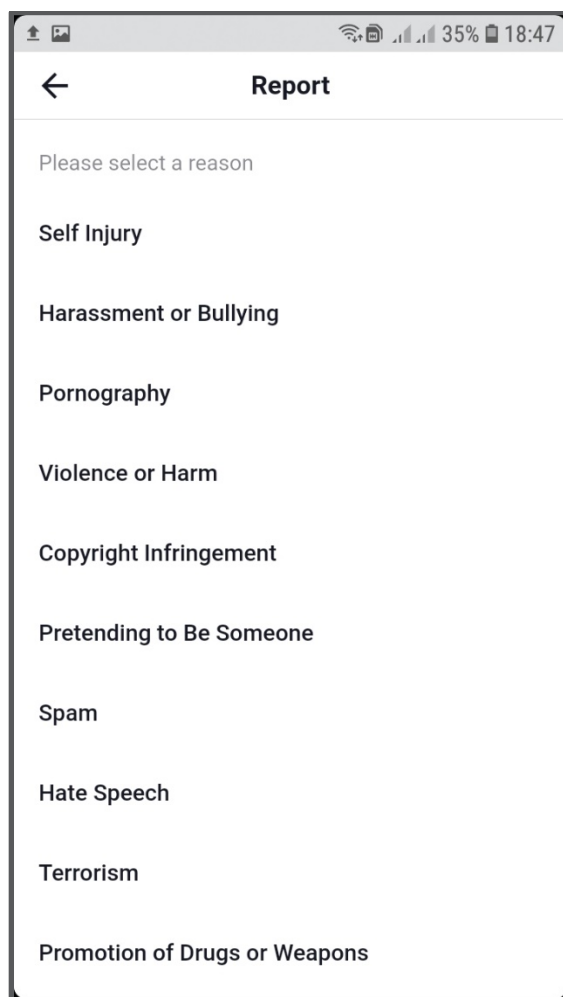
Figure 7

Figure 8