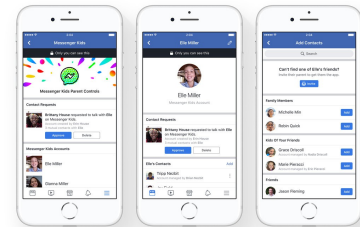


## Jeremy Hunt attacks Facebook over app aimed at children



5 'Stay away from my kids,' health secretary tells US social media platform after trial<sup>1</sup> of new service designed for under 13s

The new Messenger Kids app for kids will be aimed at children aged under 13, who cannot have their own accounts under Facebook's rules.

[Jeremy Hunt](#) has publicly attacked Facebook for releasing a version of its Messenger app aimed at children, and called on the social media company to "stay away from my kids".

The health secretary accused the company of "targeting younger children" (...)

He said the company was failing to act responsibly despite having assured the government that it would not target its service at children, who can only use the main social media website if they are over 13.

15 "Not sure this is the right direction at all," he tweeted. "Facebook told me they would come back with ideas to PREVENT<sup>2</sup> underage use of their product, but instead they are actively targeting younger children.(...)

Launching the app, Facebook said it had consulted widely and would require a responsible adult to set up an account for their child with all contacts added and approved by parents from their main Facebook account.

The child would not be given their own Facebook account, which is prohibited for those under 13. Instead, the app operates as an extension of the parent's account.

Facebook also said it would block children from sharing nudity, sexual or violent content, and have a dedicated moderation team (...) "Today, parents are increasingly allowing their children to use tablets and smartphones, but often have questions and concerns about how their kids use them and which apps are appropriate.

30 "So when we heard about the need for better apps directly from parents during research and conversations with parents, we knew we needed to develop it (...) "In addition to our research with thousands of parents, we've engaged with over a dozen expert advisers in the areas of child development, online safety and children's media and technology who've helped inform our approach to building our first app for kids."

[Rowena Mason](#) Deputy political editor

<sup>1</sup> Trial : essai

<sup>2</sup> Prevent : empêcher de



(341 words)

2/2