

Spotify Issues

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****NEWLY ADDED INFO AT BOTTOM**** Dec 2023

Spotify has both audio and visual content issues.

Here are just some of the issues:

1. Because Spotify is a free platform (with paid premium option), it has millions of users. They have given users the ability to upload photos for their public playlists, and to name them any names they'd like. While this may sound harmless at first, it has actually recently become a huge depository of very inappropriate photos and messages. We don't want to lead people to the wrong things, but trust us that it is there and is unfortunately too easy to be stumbled upon by mistake, like by searching certain innocent words, or even just punctuation signs.

2. Spotify contains not just music (and plenty of non-Jewish music, and not-tznius album covers, which is obvious) - but also podcasts and audiobooks. There are podcasts and audiobooks on every topic under the sun, including many very inappropriate ones. Teens have found many horrible audio books and podcasts on Spotify. Furthermore:

3. There is no way to exclude podcasts and audiobooks from Spotify. It is all one app, together. This is as opposed to Apple Music, where there is a separate "Podcast" app, and "Books" app for audiobooks, which can be blocked completely by Screen Time restrictions or filters. Apple also has a safer system for blocking "explicit" content, where it can be blocked with a code in Screen Time or by filters.

4. There are practically no parental controls available in the app. One can choose to toggle off "explicit" content for themselves, but then can toggle it back on too. Only in paid family accounts can the main account holder toggle off "explicit" content for the family, but even with it toggled off, you can still SEE all explicit content titles and photos, just not click it. And the label "explicit" has very specific parameters - there is plenty that should be labeled explicit but is not; for example, a lot of weird stuff, like custom made audio sounds that people created with very inappropriate titles.

5. Spotify now has a social media aspect to it, where users can follow other users, see their playlists, and can share "stories" of what they're listening to now, etc. While Apple lets you follow friends too, there are many more settings available, and you can opt out. Spotify also has a "Tik-tok style" video clip scroll feature on their homepage, with music video clips that scroll continuously.

6. Videos. Yes, there are YouTube uploads and more on Spotify. Speak to us to find out more and don't give kids ideas, but trust us that they're there.

7. Spotify now has a section of COMMENTS underneath podcasts ... anyone can comment on the podcast

These are all in addition to the obvious concerns of non-Jewish music, video clips of the music videos, song lyrics available, cover images, music videos in background etc.

Some filters are able to remove some of the images in the background, but usually not the videos or clips. Inquire for more: HelpDesk@TAGToronto.org

New:

There are videos on Spotify. YouTube videos. TikTok style scrolling reels.

Below are some photos of examples (ANY TOPIC OR SUBJECT can be searched).

MB smart can remove SOME images like in these screenshots but not the videos themselves. Also not the videos from ads. [update: mb smart can block a lot of the video content but it may affect podcasts that are in video format, eg Ben Shapiro Show]

Spotify

Spotify is very popular music streaming app that is much more than just music. Aside from secular music and album image covers, it also contains podcasts, audiobooks and videos which are all obviously very problematic. Spotify has 2 tiers - a free ("freemium") level that plays ads, and a paid ("premium") subscription tier that does not have ads. Because it has a free tier, it has exploded in popularity.

There is no way to disconnect the audiobooks and podcasts from the app. It is all one app bundled together (as opposed to Apple apps, which have a separate Music, Podcasts and Books app).

There is a social media aspect within Spotify - users can "follow" other users, people can "follow" you and see what you're listening to, and to the playlists that you create. People can even make playlists with whatever names and photo covers they'd like, which obviously leads to highly inappropriate content being uploaded to Spotify daily.

There are also videos that are on Spotify. Search up the word "YouTube" and you will see endless videos, as an example. This is aside from all the music videos available

there. There is also a "stories" feature, that brings you to an endless "TikTok-style" scrolling of music clips and videos.

Content that has what Spotify calls "explicit content" is labeled with an E and can be opted to be turned off by the user, but then can obviously be turned back on easily, so this is not a foolproof option. If one has a paid family plan, the main account holder can turn "explicit" off for their family members and it can't be turned back on by the family member. If a customer asks how, these are the steps to turn off Explicit content:

1. Open the Spotify app on your phone.
2. Tap the **Settings icon** in the top-right corner of the screen.
3. If you're a Spotify Premium subscriber, you can just toggle **Allow Explicit Content** on or off in this step. If not, tap **Explicit Content**.
4. Now toggle **Allow explicit content** off.

Important: there is still PLENTY of very very inappropriate content that gets through even with "explicit" is turned off. It barely blocks anything.

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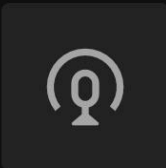
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