

Is It Time to Block Character AI?

A Parent's Checklist

Go through each section and check any statements that apply to your child.

Section 1 Section 1: Time & Usage Patterns

- My child spends more than 1-2 hours per day on Character AI
- They check the app first thing in the morning or right before bed
- They get angry or anxious when I ask them to stop or take the phone away
- Screen time reports show a sharp increase over the past 2-4 weeks
- They sneak onto the app after being told not to (using a second device, school computer, or a friend's phone)

Section 2 Section 2: Emotional & Behavioral Changes

- My child seems more withdrawn from family and real-life friends
- They've become irritable, sad, or flat when not on the app
- They talk about their AI character as if it's a real friend or relationship
- They've lost interest in hobbies, sports, or activities they used to enjoy
- For teens (13-17): They seem secretive or defensive when I ask who they're talking to online

Section 3 Section 3: Content Concerns

- I've noticed romantic or relationship-themed language when I glimpsed their screen
- My child (especially under 13) has mentioned the AI "loves them" or "understands them better than anyone"
- They've repeated ideas or phrases that seem out of character - or that sound like they came from an AI persona
- For younger kids (8-12): They can't clearly explain what they're doing on the app when asked

Section 4 Section 4: Real-Life Impact

- Homework quality has dropped or assignments are being turned in late
- Teachers have flagged distraction or disengagement at school
- My child is sleeping less or staying up late to use the app
- They've stopped making plans with real friends, or canceled social activities to stay home on the app

How to Read Your Results

0-2 boxes checked

Low concern for now. Keep the conversation open and check in monthly.

3-5 boxes checked

Worth a direct conversation. Set clear time limits and review what they're doing on the app together. Consider turning on screen time controls.

6+ boxes checked - or any item in Section 3

This is a strong signal to act. Block or restrict Character AI access now, and consider speaking with a school counselor or child psychologist if behavioral changes are significant.

Note: If your child is under 13, Character AI's own terms of service prohibit them from using the platform. A single check in any section is reason enough to block it.