

Tankee, a free safe-space video network for kid gamers, launching this fall

August 2 2018, by Omar L. Gallaga, Austin American-Statesman

Parents who feel a cold chill up their back whenever their kids venture into the world of online gaming have a new resource. This week, an Austin-based video service aimed at 6- to 12-year-olds called Tankee came out of stealth mode with plans to launch officially in the fall.

The company, which has five employees and is entering its first seed round of investment, is co-founded by Gerald Youngblood, who headed up AMD's marketing in the gaming space, and Dan Chiu, a former executive at ESPN Digital.

Youngblood, who has a 9-year-old son, and Chiu, who has many young cousins who are gamers, have created an online video service where all the [content](#) is screened in advance by humans in order to weed out any sex and violence, drug references, or abusive online chat that kids might find when they venture into gaming spaces with or without parental supervision.

Youngblood said that as he and his son bonded over gaming and watched online content together, it was difficult to find a safe space.

Contributed by Tankee Inc. Austin-based Tankee Inc. is a new company seeking to make a safe video network for kids interested in video games, ages 6-12. The company came out of stealth mode on Wednesday, July 25, 2018 in open beta and plans to launch in the fall.

"With e-sports, there's no filter. It didn't work," he said. "You'd have this

situation where you have Nickelodeon content and HBO content and they're all mashed together on the same channel, so it's really easy to get to the wrong thing."

As Youngblood points out, however, it's not only the content of games that [parents](#) need to worry about. How-to and gameplay videos on sites such as YouTube, live streams of games being played on Twitch and other spaces don't just feature the content of [video](#) games themselves. They may include questionable commentary from popular online influencers, abusive posts within in-game chats and user-generated content that isn't kid-friendly. Even when the parent is in the room, watching alongside the child, they can be in store for nasty surprises.

"It's a lot for a parent to try to do for their kid," Youngblood said. "We want to take on that responsibility with this content. We're happy to scan through all of that with real-live human beings to monitor the content so parents can take a little break."

Parents are involved in that curation, he said. "It helps to have that parental ear or eye when you're watching that content," Youngblood said.

Tankee takes the form of an iPad app that allows kids (with a parent sign-in to start) to view pre-screened videos; as of now, there's no live-streamed content. The videos are a mix of gameplay how-tos, music videos, play-alongs with family friendly influencers and some original content that Tankee is beginning to produce with some of the online stars it is featuring.

It's partnered with Warner Bros. Digital, Machinima.com and Super Awesome, a service that is already trading in kid-friendly technology that's compliant with digital privacy standards for those under 13 years old.

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Citation: Tankee, a free safe-space video network for kid gamers, launching this fall (2018, August 2) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-08-tankee-free-safe-space-video-network.html>

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