# Netflix explores the dark side of kidfluencing in new docu-series



Netflix has unveiled a new docu-series titled "Bad Influence: The Dark Side of Kidfluencing," which was released on April 9. This three-episode exposé has quickly gained traction on social media, with viewers expressing strong reactions to its unsettling subject matter. The series focuses on a YouTube group known as The Squad, which became widely popular for their light-hearted vlogs and elaborate pranks.

At the heart of The Squad is Piper Rockelle, who rose to fame on the musical.ly app (now known as TikTok) at the young age of nine. By the time she was 11, Rockelle had amassed a significant following on YouTube and had assembled a team of child influencers, collectively known as The Squad. However, while Rockelle became the public face of this social media empire, it was her mother, Tiffany Smith, who played a critical role in orchestrating her daughter's success and managing the group.

As The Squad's popularity surged, tensions began to arise among the parents of the children involved. Concerns were expressed regarding Smith's direction of their kids' behaviour both on and off camera. In 2022, a civil lawsuit was filed by 11 members of The Squad against Smith and collaborator Hunter Hill, accusing them of various forms of abuse, including "emotional, verbal, physical, and at times, sexual abuse." In a settlement reported by People Magazine in 2024, Smith agreed to pay $1.85 million to resolve the lawsuit, although she did not admit to the allegations.

Smith has consistently denied the claims against her, with Rockelle also defending her mother. In a statement to USA Today on April 7, Rockelle described the allegations as “mean, untrue, and honestly all about money,” maintaining her mother’s innocence and asserting, “My mum did not do any of those things that they said. And I’ll stand by my mum to the end.”

The docu-series features testimonies from former members of The Squad and their parents, who recount their experiences and outline their accusations against Smith. Notably, Smith herself does not appear in the series.

As viewers engage with the content, reactions have been visceral. On social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, one viewer expressed their distress, stating, "That Kidfluencing doc on Netflix has me sick to my f**\* stomach bruh what the f***." Another user shared their recommendation of the series, stating, "You gotta watch Bad Influence: The Dark Side of Kidfluencing. I'm on episode 2 and holy s*\*\*. It's a whole other level of disturbing." Other comments voiced sympathy for the impacted children, with one individual lamenting, "Those poor kids. Made their parents rich and all it cost them was their childhood and innocence."

"Bad Influence: The Dark Side of Kidfluencing" is currently available for streaming on Netflix, contributing to the growing discourse surrounding the psychological and ethical implications associated with children's presence in digital media.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.ladbible.com/entertainment/netflix/squad-influencer-netflix-documentary-tiffany-smith-piper-rockelle-453567-20250408> - This article supports the claim about the Netflix documentary 'Bad Influence: The Dark Side of Kidfluencing,' which focuses on the controversies surrounding Piper Rockelle's mother, Tiffany Smith, and the child influencer group 'The Squad.' It details allegations of abuse and exploitation, which are central themes in the docu-series.
* <https://www.biography.com/movies-tv/a64364284/piper-rockelle-youtube-controversy-now> - This biography.com article corroborates the information about the lawsuit against Tiffany Smith, highlighting the allegations of emotional, physical, and sometimes sexual abuse by members of 'The Squad' and their guardians. It also discusses the settlement and its implications for Piper Rockelle.
* <https://people.com/tv/piper-rockelle-mom-tiffany-smith-settlement-lawsuit/> - Although not directly available in the search results, People Magazine is mentioned in the context of reporting the settlement between Tiffany Smith and the plaintiffs in the lawsuit. This would corroborate the financial resolution and its timing.
* <https://www.usatoday.com> - Although the specific article is not listed, USA Today is mentioned in the context of Piper Rockelle defending her mother against allegations. This would support Rockelle's statements denying the claims and supporting her mother.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - The original source, Noah Wire Services, provides the context and background for the article about 'Bad Influence: The Dark Side of Kidfluencing' and its subject matter, though specific details may vary.