

Social Media Safety Guides

Your children may spend a lot of time on social media websites such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.

These popular sites are great for communication, however sometimes children may share too much personal information, discuss inappropriate behaviour or unintentionally place themselves at risk by what they share online.

We have collated some useful guides for parents below which help parents find more about the safety features available on many popular social networks.



There are a number of safety tools such as Reporting, Blocking and Privacy Settings. We recommend that parents look through the safety guides from Facebook

- [View Facebook Safety Tools](#)
- [Reporting photos/videos that violate my child's privacy](#)
- [Blocking](#): prevent someone from contacting you or seeing your content
- [Activity Log](#): a record of all of your Facebook activity
- [Social reporting](#): to help people deal with concerns that do not break Facebook's terms and conditions
- [View As](#): see what your Timeline looks like to other people
- [Timeline review](#): review photos or posts you've been tagged in before they appear on your Timeline
- [App privacy](#): control what you share with third party apps on Facebook
- [Tag review](#): lets you review tags that people add to your posts

- **Location:** review when your location is shared, including how to remove location from existing posts

Age Requirement

To be eligible to sign up for Facebook, you must be at least 13 years old.

If you need to report an account belonging to someone under 13, you can visit the link below.

- [Reporting Underage Users on Facebook](#)



Safety Tools

Twitter has advice in the [Help Centre](#).

The section on safety is at <https://support.twitter.com/groups/57-safety-security>.

Twitter has a range of safety features. For more information visit support.twitter.com.

- **Block**: Use the block function to stop a user from following you, tagging you in photos or accessing your tweets. Any @replies or mentions from a Blocked user will not appear in your mentions tab (although these Tweets may still appear in search)
- **Reporting**: Click on the in-Tweet reporting button or fill out the online forms on Twitter's support pages (support.twitter.com/forms) to send a message to Twitter's user support and safety team.
- **Mute**: Hide a user's tweets from your timeline without blocking them. A red mute icon will appear on their profile, visible only to the user, until they are unmuted.

- [Protect your tweets](#): When you sign up for Twitter, you have the option to keep your Tweets public (the default account setting) or to protect your Tweets. To protect your Tweets go to your Security and [Privacy Settings](#).
- [Photo tagging](#): in your privacy settings you can control who can tag you in photos.
- [Sensitive content](#): Twitter ask users to mark their Tweets as sensitive if they contain media that might be considered sensitive content such as nudity, violence, or medical procedures. For the viewer, the default setting is that if a Tweet is marked as containing media that might be sensitive, they will be required to click through a warning message before that media is displayed to them.

It can help to learn more about [location functions](#) and think carefully before sharing location information. You can delete all location data history in your 'security and privacy settings'.

Age Requirement

To be eligible to sign up for Twitter, you must be at least 13 years old.

However, the site does not ask for age upon registration.

Twitter suggest you contact privacy@twitter.com if your child is under 13 and using the site.



Safety Tools

There is information on safety in [Instagram's Help Centre](#).

Instagram also has [advice for parents](#). This advice explains what Instagram is, as well as how it works. It also offers key safety advice.

You can find out more about Instagram's safety features in the Help Centre. This includes:

- [Blocking](#): When people use the blocking feature, the person they block can't view their posts or search for their Instagram account.
- [Reporting a Post](#): You can report inappropriate posts, comments or people by using the built-in reporting features in the app.
- [Deleting or Reporting Comments](#): You can flag or delete a comment as abuse or spam by swiping left on it.
- [Privacy Settings](#): You can adjust your privacy settings to make your account private. This means that anyone who wants to see your photos or videos, followers, or following lists will have to send you a follow request for you to approve or ignore.
- [Location settings](#): Users choose when they share location on each post, this can also be edited at a later date
- [Tips for Parents](#): Instagram have created a page with some FAQs that parents may have about the site

Age Requirement

To be eligible to sign up for Instagram, you must be at least 13 years old.



Safety Tools

There is information on safety in [Snapchat's safety centre.](#)

Snapchat also has [guidance for parents.](#) It explains why young people might like Snapchat, how it works and how to avail of the safety tools available.

Privacy Policies

<https://www.snapchat.com/privacy>

Snapchat have [community guidelines](#) that outline what type of content is acceptable and unacceptable to snap. It explains that is not OK to snap the following:

- Pornography
- Nudity or sexual content involving minors
- Invasions of privacy
- Threats
- Harassment
- Impersonation

Age Requirement

To be eligible to sign up for Snapchat, you must be at least 13 years old.



Safety Tools

- **Privacy settings**: Normally if you know someone's phone number, it can be easy to find out if they are on WhatsApp or not. To control who can find your profile picture and your status, or when you were last online, there are privacy settings that can be adjusted so either 'everyone' on WhatsApp can see your profile picture, just 'your contacts' which are the contacts in your phone book, or nobody.
- **Blocking**: You can block specific contacts from interacting with you on WhatsApp. If you block someone, they can no longer send you a message, however you will need to delete someone as a contact in your phone book if you want them not to see your profile on WhatsApp. As each phone is different, you can learn how you can block people on WhatsApp on different phone networks.
- **Reporting**: You can report content to WhatsApp, although they state it is better to go to law enforcement if you believe your safety, or someone else's safety is at risk. It is important to screenshot the offending text/picture/video and to provide as much information as possible to WhatsApp as they won't be able to see the message otherwise.
- **Spam**: Should you receive a message from an unknown number, you will be immediately asked if you know this contact or if you would like to report it as spam.
- There is information on staying safe on WhatsApp on its [FAQ page](#).

Age Requirement

To be eligible to sign up for WhatsApp, you must be at least 13 years old.