

Social media **safety**

A guide for parents
and carers



Social media is a big part of most young people's lives. For many, it's a way to have fun with friends, so it's understandable that you may not want to stop your child using it. But there are some risks, so how can you help your child stay safe? Read on to find out how to set up privacy and parental controls on the major platforms.

You'll also find more information about online safety on our [blog](#).

Facebook and Messenger

Facebook and its instant messaging app, Messenger, are introducing Teen Accounts for young people aged 13 to 17. These have built-in protections, which under 16s need parental permission to change.

They also let you supervise your child. Once connected, you can see their contacts, how much time they're spending on the platforms, and more. You can set daily limits on use and schedule breaks for them.

To set up supervision, you'll first need to register for your own Facebook account, or login. Then, under 'Settings & Privacy', select 'Settings', and then 'Family Centre'.

You can also change your child's privacy settings directly through their account. Go to 'Settings & Privacy', and then select 'Privacy Centre'.

For more information, visit [**familycenter.meta.com**](https://familycenter.meta.com).

Instagram

Young people aged 13 to 17 are automatically given a Teen Account on Instagram. You can set up supervision through your own Instagram account in the same way as you would on Facebook.

You can also manually change preferences through your child's account. On their profile in the app, select the menu in the top right corner. From here, you can change their account's privacy, what content they see, limit who can interact with them, and filter comments and messages.

For more help with Instagram, visit [**familycenter.meta.com**](https://familycenter.meta.com).

**The
Children's
Society**

Snapchat

Snapchat's Family Centre lets you see who your teen is friends with on Snapchat and who they've been messaging over the last seven days. It also allows you to restrict sensitive content.

To use Family Center, you'll need to login or register for your own Snapchat account and add your teen as a friend by searching for their username. Then, simply search 'family' in the app and select 'Family Centre', following the steps from there.

To find out more, visit [**parents.snapchat.com**](https://parents.snapchat.com).



Tik Tok

On TikTok, accounts for young people under 18 are automatically set to private, although your child can change this setting. Under 16s also don't have access to direct messaging or group chat.

To see and change your child's settings on the app through their account, select their profile, tap on the menu in the top right corner, and choose 'Settings and privacy'.

If you have your own TikTok account, you can also set up Family Pairing to create screen limits, filter the content your child is shown, and customise their comment controls. To do this from the 'Settings and privacy' menu, select 'Family Pairing'.

For more information, visit [**tiktok.com/safety/guardians-guide**](https://tiktok.com/safety/guardians-guide).

WhatsApp

There are already some privacy settings in place on WhatsApp that apply to all users (for instance, no one can search for your phone number if they don't already know it). But you can also run a privacy checkup.

To do this in the app through your child's account, select 'Settings' (bottom right corner), and then select 'Privacy checkup' (this may be at the top of the page, or you can find it at the very bottom).

For more information, visit the [**WhatsApp Help Center**](https://www.whatsapp.com/help/center).

Discord

Discord is an app that allows people to send voice, video, and text messages. On the Discord **Parent Hub**, you can learn more about how your child might use the app and the safety features in place to protect them. If you set up your own account, you can also use the **Family Centre** to see who your child is interacting with.

Twitch

Twitch is a live streaming platform that can be accessed through an app, online, and through some game consoles. You can find out more about how your child might use Twitch and how you can help keep them safe at **safety.twitch.tv**.

The pocket guide for raising tweens

If you found this document useful, you might like to sign up to The pocket guide for raising tweens. It offers exclusive, tailored advice for parents and carers of children aged 8 to 13, so that you can support your child to feel safer, happier, and more hopeful. Find out more and sign up at **childrenssociety.org.uk/tweens**.

If you have seen something you're concerned about online or are looking for general advice or information about safeguarding or child protection, you can contact the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**.