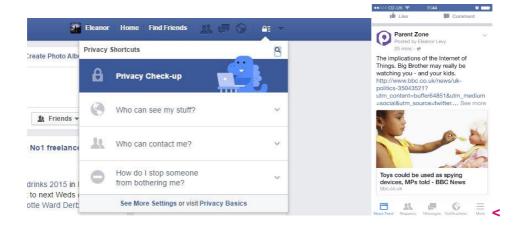# How to make social media safer for children

Safety and privacy settings for the most popular social media apps.
Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, WhatsApp, Kik Messenger

Facebook

Minimum age: 13

Facebook's privacy settings let your child control who sees their posts and timeline.
Click or tap the padlock icon at the top of any page and this takes you to the Privacy Shortcuts in the drop-down menu for further instructions. On the mobile app you will find it under **More** at the bottom of the screen. (**<**)

Your child can also block someone (click or tap the padlock icon on the right side of their timeline, then select How do I stop someone from bothering me and type in their user name), and report abusive or offensive content (choose Report post after clicking the arrow to the right of the name of the person, or **Report group** by clicking on the three dots to the right of Notifications at the top).
On mobiles and tablets, go to **Privacy Shortcuts** (see above) and then click on How do I stop someone from bothering me.

Find out more: www.facebook.com/safety/tools.

How to make social media safer for children

Instagram

Minimum age: 13

To set Instagram posts to private, your child should go to their profile by tapping the person icon. Then, tap the gear icon (iOS) or the three dots icon (Android) and turn on the Private Account setting.
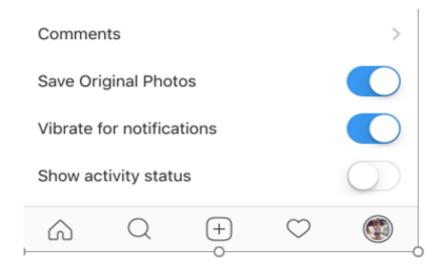
Your child can also block and remove followers by tapping their user name, then the three dots icon and selecting Block User.

In the direct message box, your child can see the people they have previously messaged and when they were last active. It also shows them if they are active (live).

It is easy to disable the 'last active' feature so people are not able to see your child's activity. You can guide your child through these three quick steps:

- Go into your profile and tap on the settings
- Scroll down to 'Show activity status'
- Turn on or off depending on your preferences

Find out more: https://help.instagram.com

How to make social media safer for children

Snapchat

Minimum age: 13

Snapchat has two privacy settings, one for who can send your child Snaps and another for who can view their Stories. To change these privacy settings, tap the gear icon in the top right of the Profile screen to access Settings. To change Who Can Send Me Snaps within **Settings**, tap Send Me Snaps and choose from Everyone or My Friends. To change Who Can View My Stories within Settings, tap View My Story and select either Everyone, My Friends or Custom. Any changes will be saved when you press the back button.

To block someone, go to **My Friends**, tap on the name of the person you want to block, then the **gear icon**, which brings up a list of options. Click **Block**.

There are some privacy concerns after a recent update. As of June 2017, Snapchat launched a location-sharing feature called Snap Map. Young people can share their whereabouts with all their friends or just a select few. They can even set it to 'ghost mode'
where they can see where others are without sharing their own location. This can be unsettling as you're not always aware of who is tracking your whereabouts.

There is the choice to not disclose location and location sharing is switched off by default. If you don't want anyone to view your whereabouts you can go into settings and put yourself in 'ghost mode'. *Find out more: https://support.snapchat.com/a/privacy-settings.*

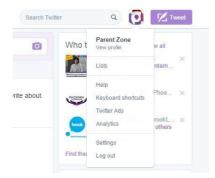# How to make social media safer for children

Twitter

Minimum age: no specific T&C but in their privacy policy they say that their services are not directed to people under 13.

Your child can choose to protect their tweets so they are only visible to the Twitter followers they have approved. On the Web, find **Settings** under your small profile pic, top right.

Go to **Security Privacy settings**, scroll down to the **Tweet privacy** section, tick the box next to **Protect my Tweets** and click the blue **Save** button. On a smartphone, go to **Me**, tap on the **gear icon** (iOS) or **overflow icon** (Android), select **Settings** and choose the account you'd like to edit. Then, for iOS devices, go to **Protect my tweets** and tap **On** and for Android devices, go to **Other** and tick the **Tweet privacy** box.

To block someone on the website and mobile, click on their tweet, select the **three dots icon**, then click **Block**. You can also **Report** a user or comment here.
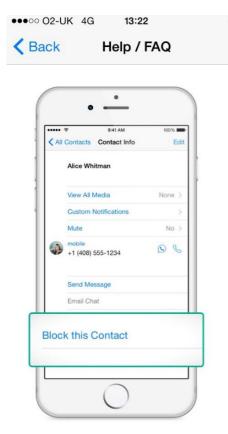*Find out more: https://support.twitter.com.*

How to make social media safer for children

WhatsApp

Minimum age: 13

To manage privacy, go to **Settings**, click on **Account**, select **Privacy**.
There are various methods to block a user so they can't communicate with you and you don't see their messages.

To find the right one for your device, go to **Settings** and click on **About and Help**. Choose **Help/FAQ** and scroll down to **How do I block or unblock a contact**.

To report a user, do the following:

On Windows Phone: go to **WhatsApp** > **More** > **Settings** > **About** > **Contact support**

On iPhone: go to **WhatsApp** > **Settings** > **About** > **Help**, then select **Contact us**

One Android: go to **WhatsApp**, select **Menu Button**, click on **Settings**, then **Help**, followed by **Contact Us**

Find out more:
https://www.whatsapp.com/faq/en/general/21197244.

How to make social media safer for children

Kik Messenger

Minimum age: 13

This instant messenger app for mobile devices received bad publicity after an investigation in the USA claimed it was being used by paedophiles to target children.

It has introduced a **New People** safety feature, available in the most recent version. Any messages from users you've not talked to before go into your **New Chats** section and you have the option to either start a chat with them or to delete, block, or report them as spam.

If you want to block someone who has contacted you, go to **Settings**, then **Chat settings** (on iPhone or Android), or **Privacy** (on Windows), then select **Block list**.

Tap **+** and then select the user you want to block. Tap **Block** to confirm.

This not only stops the blocked person being able to contact you, all previous one-to-one chats will be deleted from the app and the user's name will no longer appear in the list of contacts. If you want to report the person, make sure you take screen grabs of the offending messages before blocking them. But do not forward them to anyone as they may contain illegal content and you will be committing an offence. Keep them in case you need to show them to the police if they investigate.

Find out more: https://kikinteractive.zendesk.com/entries/23518788-I-m-being-harassed-on-Kik-What-can-I-do-.

If you have concerns that your child is being targeted online, contact the app directly, and report it to CEOP at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre.

CLICK CEOP Internet Safety

Note: The different apps regularly update both privacy and safety settings. Go to the app's help section to check the current procedures. The positions of the settings may also differ on mobile and desktop versions.

All information is correct as of January 2018