

Social media and social networking play an important role in many young people's lives – it's how they keep in touch and communicate with friends, family and schoolmates.

Personal mobile devices mean that children and young people can be active on social media anywhere and at any time. This can provide new opportunities for children and young people to learn and express themselves. But it can also present risks, including:

- Cyberbullying
- online grooming
- emotional abuse
- online abuse
- harmful content.



## Put yourself in control

Install parental controls on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices to manage internet safety. Set up a user account for your child on the main device they use and make sure other accounts in the household are password-protected so that younger children can't access them by accident.

## Check if it's suitable

The age ratings that come with games, apps, films and social networks are a good guide to whether they're suitable for your child. For example, the minimum age limit is 13 for several social media sites, including TikTok and Instagram. However, there are some social media platforms made for children which they can use safely.

## Explore together

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to talk with them about what they do and what sites they like to visit. Ask them to show you or play online games together to learn about the platforms and teach them good e-safety habits.



## Useful links

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online/>

[Digital Parenting - Vodafone UK News Centre](https://www.vodafone.co.uk/news/digital-parenting)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>