

Newsletter



Social media age limits

Who they affect. What they are. When they start. Why they exist.

From December 10, 2025, a new law comes into effect restricting the age of users for many social media platforms. The new law is called the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024.

It means young Australians **under 16** won't be able to **keep** or **create** accounts on specific social media platforms. While the list is still evolving, currently the platforms include: Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube.

The restrictions have been put in place to minimise the negative impacts social media can have on young people, especially their mental health and wellbeing. The legislation also aims to hold social media companies accountable for ensuring the safety of young people using their platforms.

PLUS:

- **Family / schools:**
Talking to young people about the restrictions
- **Young people:**
Preparing for the change, and how to stay safe and connected
- **Frequently asked questions**, plus helpful links and resources



Talking change with youth

FAMILIES: TRY THESE 7 TIPS TO START THE CONVERSATION

1. Get informed
2. Start the conversation with curiosity and calm
3. Talk about the “why”
4. Understand their current use and acknowledge what they’ll miss
5. Explore their feelings
6. Brainstorm alternatives
7. Support healthy online habits

If the conversation doesn’t go as you’d hope, pause it and give space if it’s needed. Then, reassure them that their feelings are valid and you’re available to talk later.

 [Click here](#) for more information on starting the conversation.

Family and other trusted adults have the chance to play a key role in helping young people navigate the change to social media access.

Having an open-minded, supportive and non-judgmental conversation is an important step to have with young people before the restrictions come in. Ask them, ‘if you lost your access tomorrow, what does that mean for you?’ In this moment, realising that the changes will affect young people differently is also something to be aware of and understand.

If you’re looking for guidance on supporting your young person through this change you can connect with an [ehedspace clinician here](#), or get tips and advice from other families navigating this time in our [Adults Supporting Young People online group chat here](#).



WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?

Here’s 7 tips to support young people in your work.

1. Stay informed and share accurate information
2. Invite young people’s perspectives
3. Recognise diverse impacts
4. Support connections beyond platforms
5. Watch for signs of distress or disconnection
6. Strengthen media literacy and coping skills
7. Advocate and collaborate

[Click here](#) for more information on these tips.



Managing change proactively

With social media platforms starting to take steps to align with the incoming legislation, there are actions you can take to prepare for the social media age restrictions. It's a chance for you to choose what, how and who you consume content from, and being proactive in your preparation means you can control how this change affects your mental health and wellbeing, as well your digital imprint.

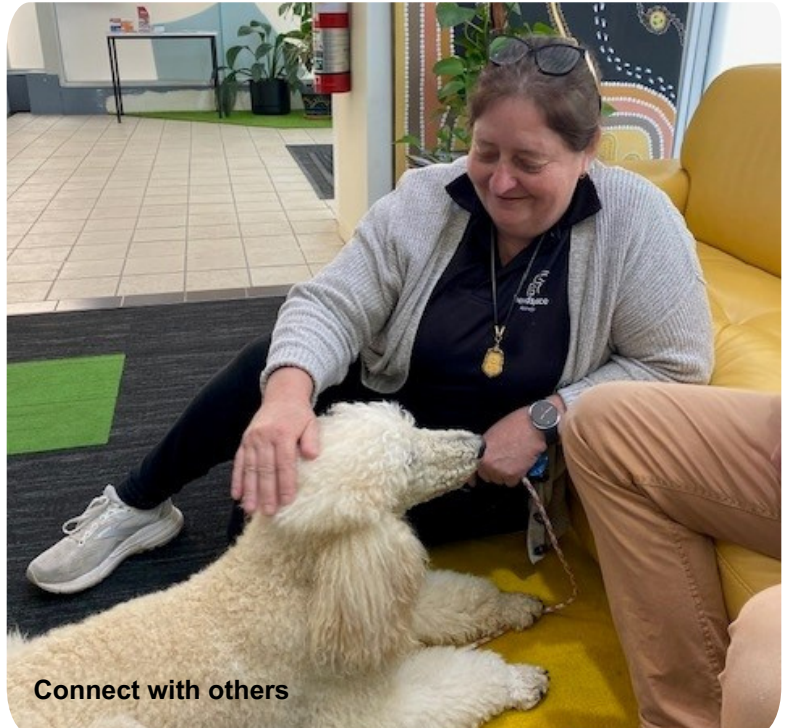
Our tips for a healthy headspace

- Learn how to handle tough times
- Get in to life
- Connect with others
- Stay active
- Sleep well
- Eat well



For details on these tips [click here](#).

Reach out for support if you need it during this time; talk to a trusted family, Elders, counsellor, teacher, your Sheikh or Iman. For professional support you can see your GP, visit headspace Bendigo in person or chat to someone on eheadspace.



Connect with others



Stay active

Taking control of your digital imprint: What you can do

The following is taken from the [eSafety Commissioner's 8-step action plan for under-16s](#).



First, map your digital world. Make a list of social media accounts you have and compare it to the [eSafety Commissioner's website](#) to see what you'll lose, if any. Accounts likely to be affected include: Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube.

Then, think about who you connect with on your identified platforms. Ask yourself, among other things, what digital communities do I belong to and what support services do I access via social media?

Then, protect your digital memories. Screenshot, save or download pictures, chats & posts.



Knowledge is power: The facts

The conversation around the social media age restrictions remains a lively debate. Below are a few of the most frequently asked questions.

Why are under-16s being 'banned' from social media?

It's important to note this is not a ban, it's a delay to having accounts. Under 16s will still have access to publicly available content that doesn't require logging into an account. Delaying access to social media allows space to build digital literacy, critical reasoning, impulse control and greater resilience. It's allowing extra time to teach under-16s about online risks, the impacts of harm and how to stay safer online. Doing this addresses the negative impact social media can have on the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

Will under-16s who already have accounts be allowed to keep using them?

No. Age-restricted social media platforms need to take reasonable steps to find, remove and deactivate accounts held by under-16s. If you will be affected, you can take steps to protect your digital memories. [Find out how here.](#)



How will the restrictions be enforced?

From December 10, social media platforms will be required to use technologies such as facial analysis software, behavioural data or ID checks to verify a user's age before allowing them to sign up for an account. Each social media company will be responsible for deciding which age verification method to use based on the system that will work best for their platform.

What social media platforms are banned and what isn't?

[Click here for the eSafety Commissioner's most up-to-date list.](#)

Other popular questions are:

- How will the age restrictions impact schools that use social media platforms?
- Will there be penalties for under-16s if they get around the ban?
- What are the penalties for age-restricted platforms that allow under-16s to have an account?
- Won't the age restrictions stop under-16s from accessing benefits of being online?
- What can I do now to help my family prepare?

[Click here for the eSafety Commissioner's answers to these questions and more.](#)



Helpful links to stay up-to-date

It's important to read and share factual information around this change. Below are some links we recommend:

- [eSafety Commissioner: Get-ready guide for under-16s](#)
- [headspace Bendigo website](#)
- [headspace: The Social Media Ban: Staying informed](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner: The digital rights of children and young people](#)

The eSafety Commissioner is holding **FREE**, 30-minute webinars on the changes for parents, carers, educators and youth-serving professionals. For dates and to register [click here](#)