

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO INSTAGRAM

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In Partnership with  netsafe



A LETTER FROM NETSAFE

Digital technology is an important part of Kiwis' lives – and an exciting one.

We're creating and connecting with others online in ways that have never been possible before.

Services like Instagram have provided us all with opportunities to capture and share a moment in time, to reach out to others with similar ideas, beliefs and values, or simply to tell the world what you had for breakfast.

It's an exciting time to be curious, inquisitive and interested in the online world around us.

But as we learn to share, post, tag, and like online, there are social rights and responsibilities that we need to understand too.

It's this set of knowledge and skills that help us to become successful digital citizens making a positive contribution online.

But how do we learn them? Who do we go to?

And who is responsible for helping young people to prepare for their role online?

Although young people are often digitally savvy, they're still developing. They need guidance on appropriate online behaviours and how to navigate challenges. Netsafe's research shows that when young people do reach out for help, parents are still a place that many turn to for support.

As a parent you don't need to be an expert in technology, but being familiar with the technology that young people are using and the challenges that they may experience is a great start.

This guide will give you that insight and prepare you to give your kids the guidance they need.

- The Netsafe Team

About Netsafe

Netsafe is New Zealand's independent, non-profit online safety organisation. Taking a technology-positive approach to the challenges digital technology presents, we work to help people in New Zealand take advantage of the opportunities available through technology by providing practical tools, support and advice for managing online challenges. [Netsafe.org.nz](http://netsafe.org.nz/) (<http://netsafe.org.nz/>)

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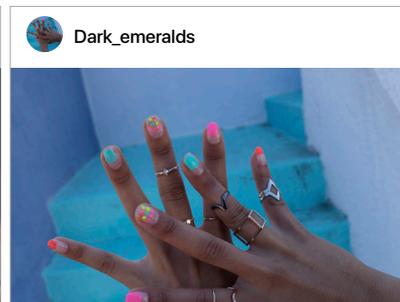
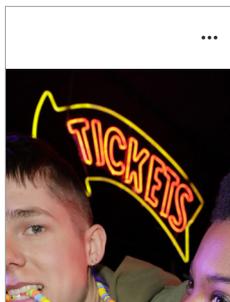
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WHAT IS INSTAGRAM?

Instagram is a photo, video, and message sharing app with a huge following, especially among young people. Young people use it to capture special moments, but also to carry on conversations in a fun way – using photos, videos, filters, comments, captions, emoticons, hashtags and links to talk about things and share their passions.

It's also a way for them to explore their interests, learn about different perspectives and experiences, and connect with the people they care about. It runs on the Apple iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch, Android phones and tablets, and the web.

Whether it's through Stories, Feed, Live, IGTV or Direct, our mission is to bring people closer to the people and things they love. In order to do this, we believe it's essential that Instagram is a safe, supportive place for people to express themselves. The minimum age to have an Instagram account is 13. Young people use Instagram to celebrate big milestones, share everyday moments, keep in touch with friends and family, build communities of support and meet others who share their passions and interests.



MANAGE PRIVACY



There are a number of tools you can share with your child that will give them more control over their digital identity and footprint. One of the first things you want to talk about with your child is whether their account is going to be public or private. Making sure they understand that they have control over who sees and interacts with the things they post online will empower them to feel like they can be themselves on Instagram.

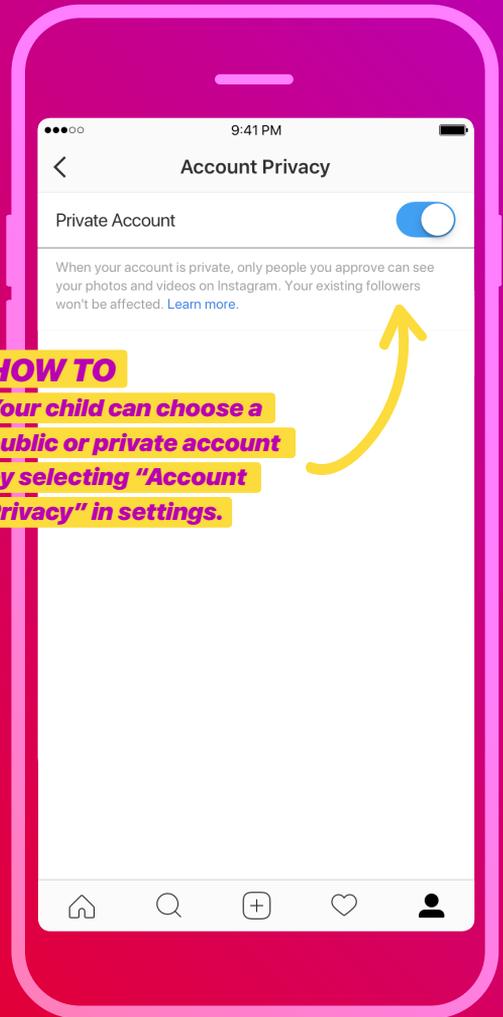


MANAGE PRIVACY

ACCOUNT PRIVACY

The first choice you can make with your child is whether their account is public or private. If your child's account is private, they approve the people who follow them, and can remove followers at any time. Private accounts mean your child's content can't be seen by anyone they haven't approved. If your child is public, anyone can see the content they post on Stories, Feed, or Live, and can follow them without needing approval. If your child already has a public account, they can switch to private at any time; they can also go from private to public. They can remove followers, choose who can comment and more. Your child can also turn off "Show Activity Status" so friends can't see when they're online.

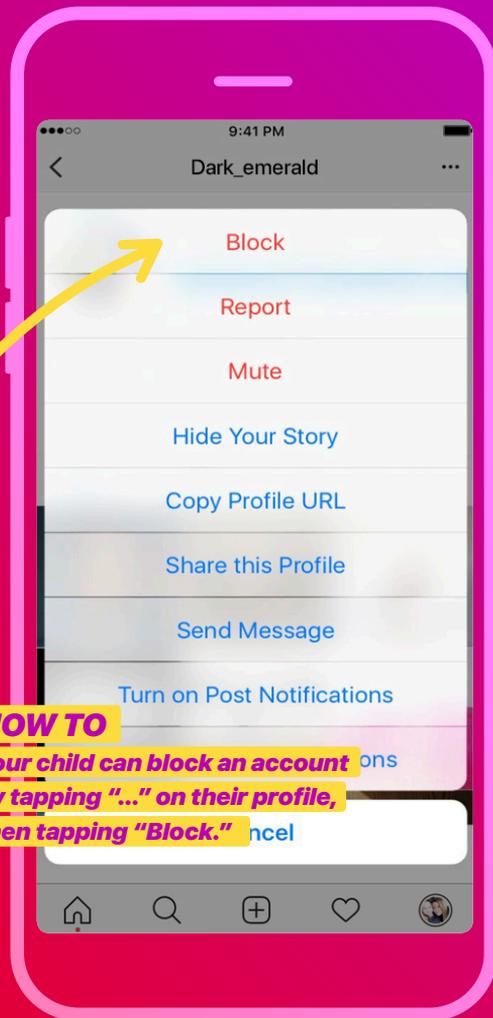
For more tips on privacy and setting a strong password, visit www.netsafe.org.nz/passwords/



MANAGE PRIVACY

BLOCK UNWANTED INTERACTIONS

Your child can block accounts they don't want to interact with. This will block people from seeing and commenting on their posts, stories, and Live broadcasts. When you block an account, that person is not notified. You can unblock an account at any time.



HOW TO

Your child can block an account by tapping "...\" on their profile, then tapping "Block."

MANAGE INTERACTIONS



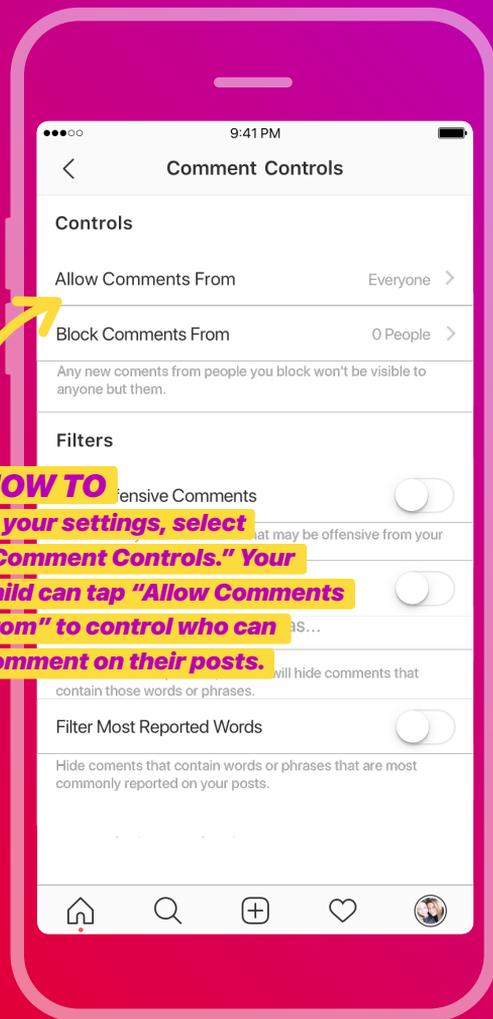
There is no place for bullying of any kind on Instagram and it's against our policies to create an account, post photos, or make comments for the purpose of bullying or harassing someone else. Let your child that if they spot an account, photo, video, comment, message or story that is intended to bully or harass someone, they can report it from within the app by tapping “...” on the top right corner of the post or profile, swiping left on the comment, or tapping and holding the message, and tapping “Report.”

Reporting is totally anonymous; we don't share your child's information with the person who has been reported.

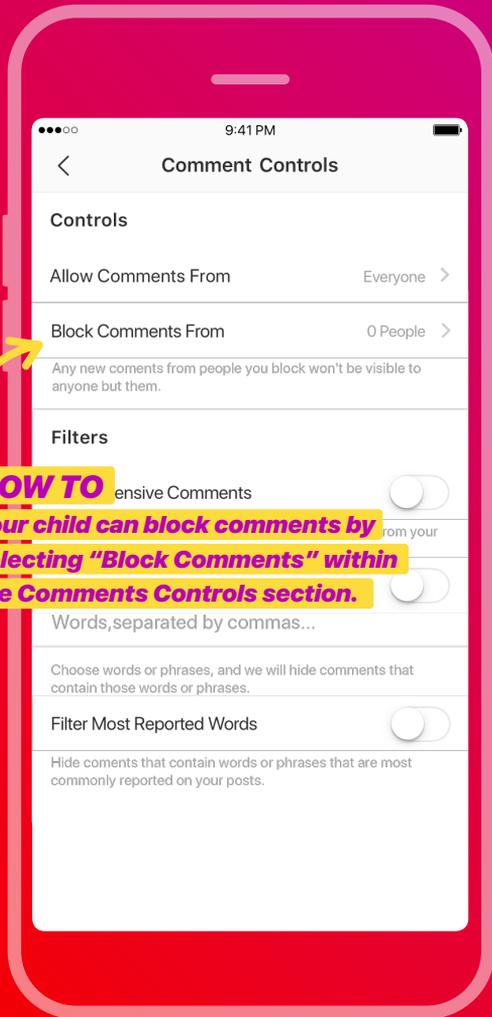
MANAGE INTERACTIONS

MANAGE COMMENTS

Your child is in control of who can comment on their photos and videos. In the "Comment Controls" section of the app settings, they can choose to: allow comments from everyone, people they follow and those people's followers, just the people they follow, or their followers. Your child can also remove comments entirely from their posts.



MANAGE INTERACTIONS



HOW TO Invasive Comments

Your child can block comments by selecting "Block Comments" within the Comments Controls section.

Filter Comments from your

Filter Most Reported Words

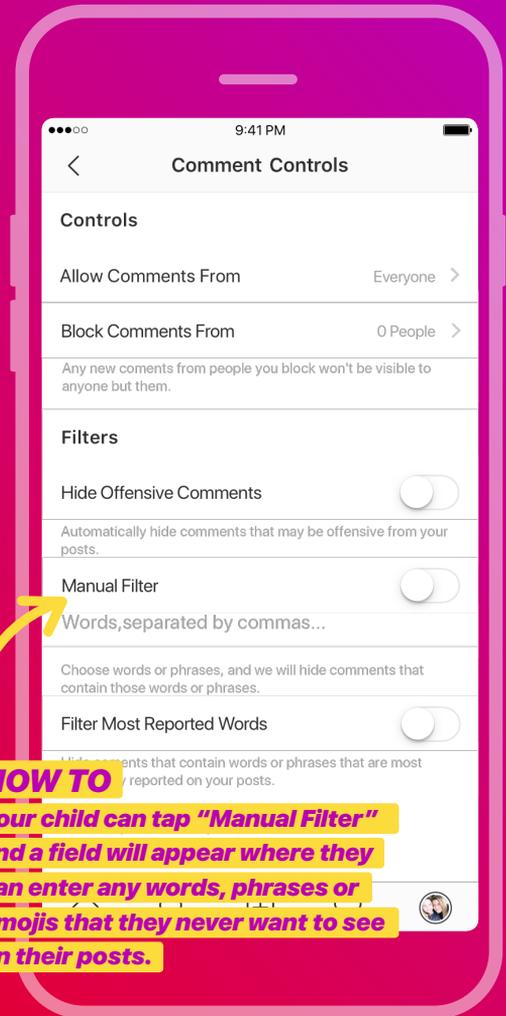
BLOCK COMMENTS

Your child can block accounts that they don't want to interact with. Comments will no longer appear from a blocked account. your child can turn off comments from all posts or individual posts.

MANAGE INTERACTIONS

FILTER OUT COMMENTS

We have controls that help you manage the content you see and determine when comments are offensive or intended to bully or harass. We've built filters that automatically remove offensive words and phrases and bullying comments. Your child can also create their own list of words or emojis they don't want to have appear in the comments section when they post by going to "Filters" in the Comment Controls section.



MANAGE TIME

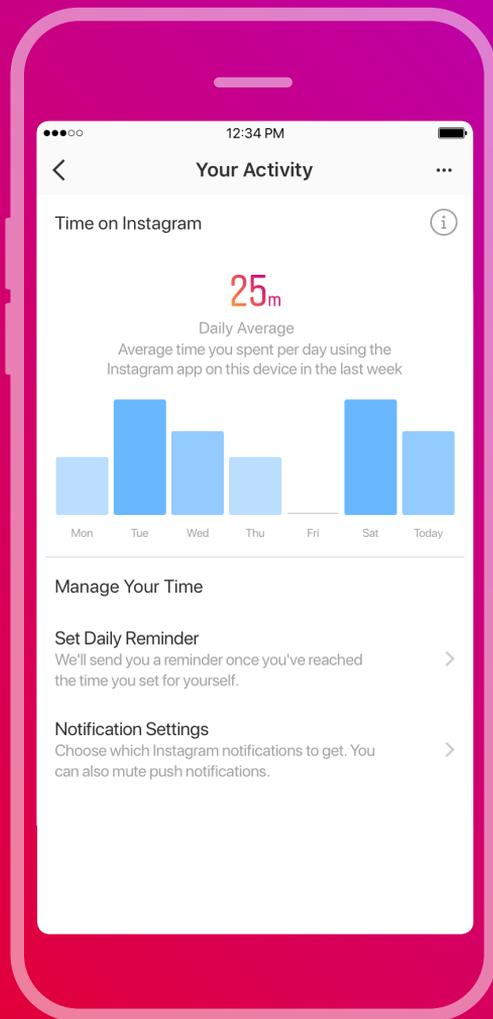
When it comes to spending time on Instagram, there's no right or wrong answer when it comes to how much is too much or just right. There are a number of tools to help you and your family understand and take control of the time your child is spending on the app. You can work together to decide what the right balance is for your family.



MANAGE TIME

VIEW YOUR ACTIVITY

Your Activity Dashboard shows your child how much time they've spent on Instagram for the past day and week, as well as their average time on the app. Your child can tap and hold the blue bars to see how much time they've spent on Instagram on a certain day.



MANAGE TIME

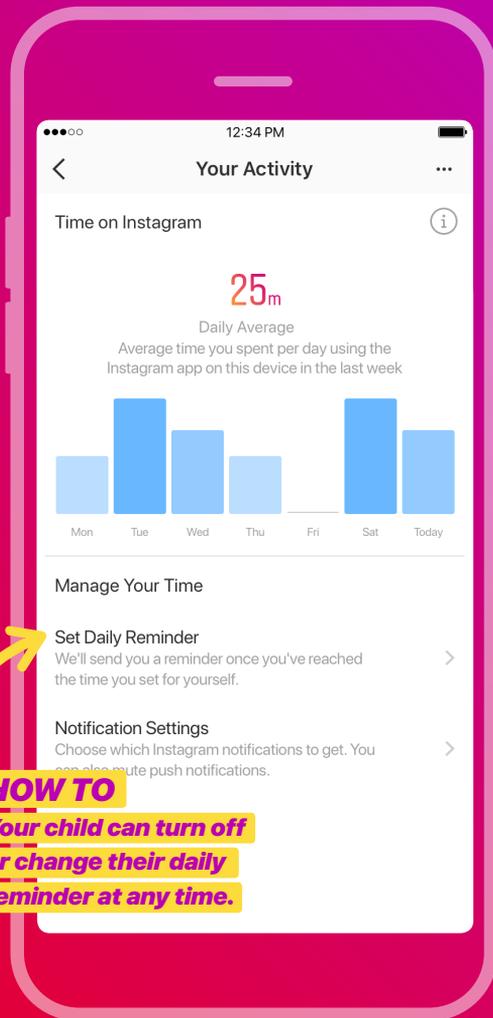
SET A DAILY REMINDER

Your child can use the daily reminder to set a limit on how much time they want to spend on the Instagram. Talk with your child about how they feel while using the app. Is there a point when they don't get as much out of it? Setting the daily reminder together can be a good way to talk about how your child is using Instagram throughout the day.



HOW TO

**Your child can turn off
or change their daily
reminder at any time.**



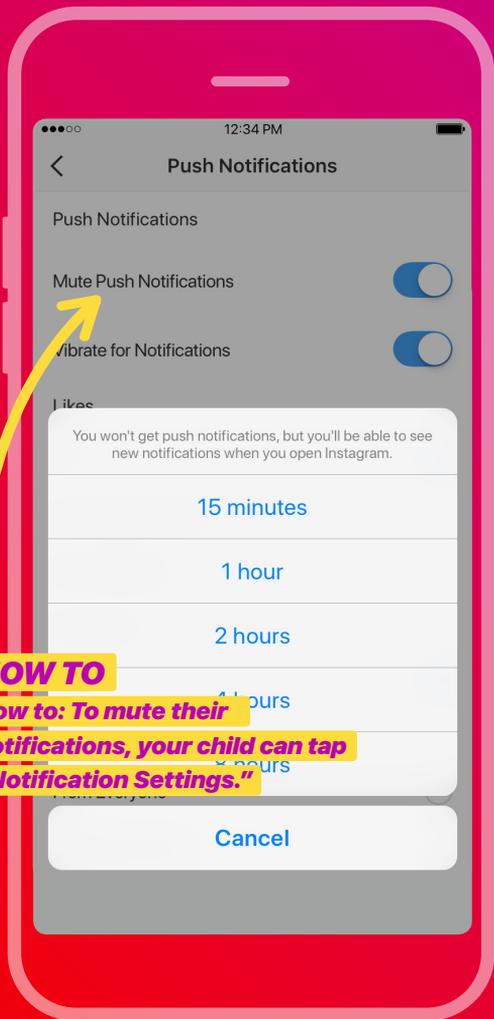
MANAGE TIME

MUTE PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

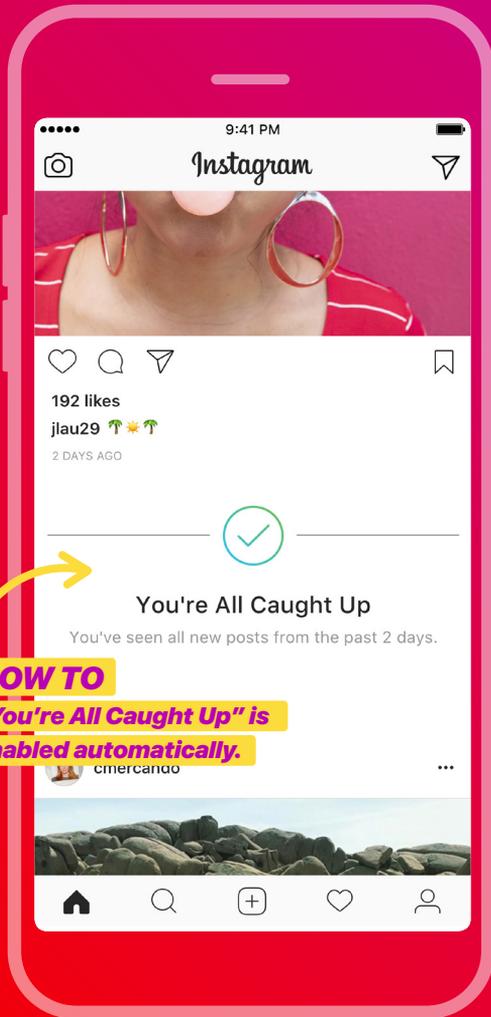
Your child can use the “Mute Push Notifications” feature to silence Instagram notifications for a period of time. When the preset time is up, notifications will return to their normal settings without having to reset them.

HOW TO

How to: To mute their notifications, your child can tap “Notification Settings.”



MANAGE TIME



YOU'RE ALL CAUGHT UP

Young people can feel pressure to see and interact with all of their friends' posts. When they scroll through every post on their feed since they last logged on, they'll see a message that says "You're All Caught Up."

This way, they'll know that they're up to date on everything their friends and communities are up to.

HOW TO

"You're All Caught Up" is enabled automatically.

NETSAFE'S TOP TIPS ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY FOR PARENTS

Online safety for parents is more important than ever. As young people begin to spend more time online, it's important that parents teach them how to stay safe. Check out Netsafe's 10 things to think about below.

1. SET EXPECTATIONS

Talk to your child about the type of behaviours you'd like them to adopt. For example, how long they should spend online, what apps and social media sites you'd like them to use and what is appropriate content to view. This will be different depending on the age of your child, and what you feel comfortable with. Technological options like parental controls can help, but it needs to be teamed with online safety education.

2. UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY DO ONLINE

Talk to your kids about what they're using the internet for. What's involved? Who's in their network? What information do they share? Are they using the internet to learn? To communicate

and create friendships with others? To create music or videos? Really listen to what they have to say – what might seem like 'just a game' to you, could in fact be a way for them to connect with people who have similar interests.

Showing an interest in the things they do helps to build your understanding of what their online world looks like and creates an environment that makes it easier to have more difficult conversations about in the future.

3. IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, TRY IT

You need to understand the technology to better understand the challenges that young people face online. Explore the websites and apps your child uses to improve your knowledge, and take the time to read terms and conditions. You could even ask them to show you how it works, as a way to start conversation around online safety.

4. SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

How often do you use your laptop or smartphone at the dinner table? How many angry posts have you published? Take a look at the way you use technology while young people are around. If you see something that troubles you – change it.

How good is your knowledge about online safety, privacy settings and even online shopping?

5. TEACH THEM THE BASICS

Once your knowledge is up to scratch, teach them the basics of online safety – here’s four ideas of what to start with.

1. Strong passwords

A strong password helps protect the information in your on online profiles or accounts.

2. Information to protect online

- Login details and passwords
- Bank account details
- Home address
- Phone numbers
- Birthdate
- Personal information that could be used to guess security questions for online accounts

You should also talk about personal details they could share online, such as where they are and the school they attend. This includes sharing their location – some apps allow you to share your current location with friends, or publicly.

3. Not everything is as it seems

It can seem like common knowledge to adults, but sometimes young people don’t understand that people are not always who

they say they are online. Talk to them about friending or communicating with people they don’t know offline. For young children especially, they shouldn’t friend someone online that they don’t know personally offline.

4. Digital footprint

Teach your child that they need to think about what they post online, and that what they post online leaves a “digital footprint” about them.

6. SETTING UP SOCIAL MEDIA

How old should kids be before they get social media accounts? The minimum sign up age for Instagram and many other platforms is 13. It’s always better that they’re honest with you about using an app or site, rather than doing it behind your back. This way, you can help them to stay safe online.

Tips for setting up social media accounts

1. Make sure you’ve taught them the online safety basics above
2. Help your child to set up the account
3. Depending on their age, use your email address to sign up
4. Enter their actual birth year so they see content relevant to their age

5. Become their friend, or follow them

6. Teach them about the safety tools available

7. GIVE THEM THE TOOLS THEY NEED

Most social media organisations have a safety centre with tools for staying safe online. Take a look at the safety centres of the apps or websites your child uses, and teach them how to use the tools available. Start with how to block people, how to report content and how to use the privacy settings, as discussed in this guide.

8. ONLINE BULLYING

Teach your child what to do if they're targeted online, so they have the tools to deal with it if it happens. Ask them what advice they'd give a friend who was experiencing online bullying. This is a good way to understand how they would deal with these kinds of situations if they were to experiencing it themselves.

Make sure you also talk to them about how you expect them to behave towards others online.

Let them know that if it's not acceptable offline, it's not acceptable online

Ask your kids to think about the person on the "other side" of the screen

Lead by example – think about how you're behaving toward others online

9. WHAT ABOUT SHARING INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT?

When it's appropriate you should talk to your kids about the risks of sharing personal information and images and what can happen to those photos or videos once created and shared.

10. WHAT IF SOMETHING DOES HAPPEN?

Let them know the options that are available to them – talking to a trusted adult, their school or Netsafe. We have a team of friendly people offering free and confidential advice for everyone in New Zealand. We can help young people with online bullying, abuse, harassment and other challenges they might face online. Let them know we can help.

If they come to you for help, count to ten before you react. When young people ask for help from adults, it's important to understand this was a big decision. If you overreact or take away the technology, then you're less likely to be the first port of call next time something happens. Focus on fixing the issue, not on punishing or confiscating their devices.

If you need help or advice, about any online issue you can contact Netsafe.

0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723)

help@netsafe.org.nz, [netsafe.org.nz/report](https://www.netsafe.org.nz/report)

TEN QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU START THE CONVERSATION

We partnered with social media and education expert Ana Homayoun, M.A., P.P.S., author of *Social Media Wellness*, to create a set of 10 questions you can use to guide a conversation with your child about Instagram. Our intention is that you use these questions to learn more about how your child is using Instagram, and to ensure they're using the app in a positive way.

- 01 What do you like about Instagram?
- 02 What do you wish I knew about Instagram?
- 03 What are the top five Instagram accounts that you enjoy following?
- 04 What are some things you think about before you post something on Instagram?



- 05 If you have multiple Instagram accounts, what do you share in each account?
- 06 How do likes and comments affect how you feel about a post?
- 07 Do you know your followers? (If your child has a private account, ask them how they decide who follows them.) What do you do when someone you don't know tries to contact you via direct message?
- 08 How do you feel about the amount of time you spend online?
- 09 Have you ever felt uncomfortable with something you saw or an experience you had online?
- 10 What would you do if you saw someone being bullied on Instagram? (Do you know about the reporting tools and the offensive comment filter on Instagram?)

GLOSSARY OF INSTAGRAM TERMS



BLOCK

Block is a tool your child can use if someone is bothering them on Instagram. When your child blocks someone, the other person isn't notified, but they'll no longer be able to interact with your child in any way.

COMMENT

A comment is a reaction to the content someone posts on Instagram. Comments appear below posts on your child's feed. Comments can use words or emojis.

COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

We want to foster a positive, diverse community. Everyone who uses Instagram must adhere to our Community Guidelines which are designed to create a safe and open environment for everyone. This includes things like no nudity or hate speech. Not following these guidelines may result in deleted content, disabled accounts or other restrictions.

DIRECT

Instagram Direct is where Young people can message each other individually or in groups. They can also share photos and videos with just the people they're messaging.

GLOSSARY OF INSTAGRAM TERMS

EXPLORE

Explore is where Young people will see photos and videos from accounts and tags they might be interested in. Explore is different for everyone – the content changes depending on accounts and hashtags your child follows.

FEED

Feed is where Young people can see posts from the accounts they follow. Young people generally see feed posts as being more celebratory or special. Feed posts can be photos or videos.

IGTV

IGTV is a place for vertical video up to one hour. Your child can find videos from their favorite creators, and can make their own longer content. IGTV is a standalone app as well as within Instagram.

LIVE AND VIDEO CHAT

Your child can go live to share with their followers in real time. When live, they can invite friends to join them, co-host a live session or leave comments and send hearts. They can also video chat in Direct with up to four people.

POST

A post refers to the media your child is putting on their Feed or on Stories. This can be video or photos.

PROFILE

Your child's Instagram profile is where their friends and followers will find their posts, and can access their stories. It also includes a short bio. If your child's profile is private, only their main profile picture and bio is visible.

REPORT

Reporting is a way your child can let Instagram know that a post, account or comment is inappropriate. Your child can report any post or comment that they believe violates our community guidelines.

STORIES

Stories disappear from the app after 24 hours, unless your child has enabled archiving, which makes their expired stories available only to them. Your child can share them in their Stories Highlights. Anyone who can view your child's stories can screenshot them.

For more tools and resources to help you navigate healthy social media habits with your child, visit parents.instagram.com

 Instagram

