



Navigating Social Media: A Parent's Guide to Child Safety

Understanding the Risks of Social Media for Children

Social media presents several risks for children, including:

- Exposure to adult content, graphic images, and inappropriate messages
- Cyberbullying, anonymous messaging, and online harassment
- Algorithms that promote harmful trends, unrealistic beauty standards, or addictive scrolling
- Data collection and lack of meaningful privacy protections
- Pressure to gain likes, followers, or fit in with online trends

Recommended Age for Social Media Use

While many platforms allow users from age 13, we recommend waiting until **at least 16+**. Most platforms aren't designed with child safety in mind. Teens are better equipped to handle peer pressure, digital drama, and content awareness as they mature. Delaying access allows time to build emotional resilience and critical thinking skills.

Protecting Your Child's Privacy on Social Media

To protect your child's privacy:

- Delay account creation as long as possible
- Avoid posting personal details (location, school, birth date, etc.)
- Use private accounts and restrict who can comment, tag, or message
- Disable location-sharing features like Snap Map
- Regularly review account activity and privacy settings together

How to Talk to Your Child About Social Media

Discuss safe and respectful social media use by:

- Being honest about the risks and why you're choosing to delay access
- Setting a family agreement for digital use, including age limits and check-ins
- Talking about body image, peer pressure, and how online content is often edited or fake
- Encouraging positive digital habits—like kindness, privacy, and screen-free time
- Keeping the conversation open, not judgmental—your goal is to guide, not control