



Instagram Settings

KEEPING YOUR CHILDREN SAFE ON INSTAGRAM

Keeping your children safe on Instagram can come be very challenging. As a parent, you want to equip your children with the skills for the Internet without limiting them out of fear. It is however possible, with a little effort to discover the correct balance.

Instagram is one of the social media apps that requires some research into in order to keep your children safe. There are over 400 million users who are active on a daily basis and more than a fifth of all teenagers have pinned Instagram as “the most important social media site”

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a photo app where people can upload photos or videos to our service and share them with their followers or with a select group of friends. As with any social network app that has the ability to share content – pictures, photographs or videos – there are innate dangers for parents and some rules will have to be adhered to in order to keep your kids safe.

Here are a few on them.

Stipulate precise Rules for Your Child

It is impossible to control what is posted on Instagram, but a conversation with your children as to what they are allowed to view, needs to be had. The rules need clear explanations as to why they are present as the kids will be more likely to comply with the rules if they have an understanding as to why they are important.



The guidelines can be broken down into three areas.

1. **Content rules** — Create rules as to what videos and images the kids can view. They should only view age appropriate content
2. **Time rules** — Dictate specific times where they can view social media
3. **Context rules** — Create specific places where it is acceptable to view your accounts

Instagram Settings

Instagram does cater for the settings to be configured in order to protect the safety and privacy of children and these should be carefully considered.

Set Your Child's Instagram Feed to "Private"

You and Your child need to change the default setting on Instagram to "Private", which means that not everyone can see the posts but only those that are approved as followers of the child's feed.

Changing the Instagram account to private:

1. Gain access to your child's Instagram profile by clicking the icon in the bottom right corner of the device that looks like a person
2. Click the **settings** icon on the **top right** corner of the device.
3. In the "**Account**" setting ensure "**Private Account**" is switched on.

Although this prevents unapproved people from viewing your child's feeds, they can still send content directly to a user.

Below we will explore how to monitor these incoming feeds.

Never Use "Location Sharing"

It is definitely a bad idea to allow anyone know the location of your child's pictures or photo's. If the location sharing setting is on, everybody will know the location of the child all the time.

You cannot switch off the sharing of your location altogether, but teach you child never to stipulate the location where the post was created.

You can retrospectively remove locations from existing feeds on a case-by-case basis.

This is how it is done:

Click the **three dots** above your post.

1. Click **Edit**.
2. Click the **location** name.
3. Click **Remove** Location.

Always Monitor Your Child's Usage

This may not be liked by your child, but it is advisable to check the Instagram account on a regular basis and talk about any issues that may have arisen and to verify some safety checks.

Below are a few methods to ensure your child's safety.



Ensure Personal Details Remain Private

All information on an Instagrams account is accessible even if the account is Private. Whatever is on their profile is available to all users.

The following can be done to **limit public information**:

- Edit your kids profile so that no information that you would not want in the public is removed.
- Make sure there is an understanding as to why such information is not accessible to all.
- Assist in making an alias that your child can utilise as they age.
- Regularly look into your child's profile to ensure that no mistaken information is present

Block Unknown or Harassing Followers

One of the problems with this platform is that unknown people can send messages directly to your child. There is no present way to stop this from happening, but you can block any users who send content not appropriate for your child.

This can be done as follows:



1. In your child's **list of Followers**, click to the **profile** of the user you wish to block.
2. Click the **three dots** in the top-right corner of the profile.
3. Click **Block**.

This can be done to anonymously block any user even if they are not on a list of followers. You can also reverse the process to allow a user access if you have mistakenly blocked them

Remove Photo Tags

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Although Photo Tags are a great feature of Instagram, they can also present an opportunity for people to connect with your child. On tagging you in a photo, it is uploaded to the "Photos of You" section in your child's profile. You will be notified that this has happened.

By doing this a user can get your child to look at a photo regardless if they are even present in it.

If this happens, you have some choices.

You can **hide the photo** from appearing on your child's profile:

1. **Open** the photo you wish to hide.
2. Click the **three dots** (settings icon) in the top-right corner of the photo.
3. Click **Post Options**.
4. Choose **Hide** from My Profile.

You can **un-tag** your child from being in the photo:

1. **Open** the photo you wish to hide.

2. Click the **three dots** (settings icon) in the top-right corner of the photo
3. Click **More Options**.
4. Click **Remove Me from Post**.

It is also possible to set the profile to only allow manually uploaded photos and avoid the appearance of automatically uploaded photos.

This can be done as such:

1. Click your **child's profile picture**, then Click the **three dots** in the top-right corner of the profile.
2. Click **Tagging Options**.
3. Click **Add Manually**.

Delete Photos

If you wish to remove any photos that have already been posted, follow these steps:

1. Click to your **child's profile**.
2. Continue to **find the photo** you want to remove.
3. Click the **three dots** in the top-right corner.
4. Choose **Delete**.

The photo will permanently be removed from the feed..

Retract Access by Third-Party Apps

Although some third party Apps are not legitimate, Instagram makes allowances for third-party apps to integrate with it. This could lead to a serious threat to your child's privacy, security and personal information.

You should regularly assess the apps integrating with your child's Instagram and retract access to all that do seem legitimate.

This is how you can do this:

1. Click to your child's **profile**.
2. Click the **three dots** in the top-right corner.
3. Choose **Linked Accounts**.
4. Scroll down the linked accounts.
5. Click **Unlink** to retract access for any illegitimate app.

Report Inappropriate Behavior

It is a good idea to read both their terms of service as well as the Community Guidelines for using Instagram. This will inform you as to what is and is not allowed.

Inappropriate Images, Videos, and Comments

If your child receives inappropriate photos or feeds, this is what you can do:

1. On the post you want to report, Click the settings icon (**three dots**) above it.
2. Click "**Report Inappropriate.**"

It is also possible to report inappropriate comments that a user has posted on one of your child's posts:

1. Click **Comment** while the image is visible.
2. Swipe to the **left** on the unpleasant or offensive comment.
3. Specify the reason for reporting the comment by selecting either **Spam** or **Scam** or **Abusive Content**.

Harassment and Bullying



Instagram has afforded the opportunity to report bullying or harassment in a number of ways.

As discussed in sections above, you can report any **inappropriate post or comment**, and then **block** the abusive user.

Conclusion

Although Instagram can be an amusing app for Children to engage with it does have an age restriction of **13 or older**. There may well be content that is not appropriate for younger users.

You as a parent will have to remain vigilant as to what is on the child's feed as well as what their profile contains. It is vitally important to keep discussing the merits and dangers involved in utilising social media, so that your child feels comfortable discussing any issues that may arise.