

Keeping Young People Safe Online:

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

What is eSafety doing?

- The eSafety Commissioner is collaborating with platforms that have large numbers of Australian children and features that pose risks.
- This early engagement is aimed at helping platforms prepare for upcoming age restriction enforcement.

How will it be monitored and enforced?

- eSafety will use its regulatory powers under the Online Safety Act to:
 - Monitor platform compliance
 - Enforce penalties
 - Ensure platforms are accountable for child safety
 - Major Penalties for Non-Compliance will be enforced if;
 - Platforms fail to take reasonable steps to prevent underage users from creating accounts and these platforms can face civil penalties.
 - Corporations may be fined up to 150,000 penalty units, which currently equates to \$49.5 million AUD.

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

No. Social media platforms subject to age restrictions will be required to take reasonable steps to identify and deactivate accounts held by users under the age of 16.

The term **reasonable steps** refers to actions that are fair, proportionate, and appropriate to the context. To support this, eSafety has developed regulatory guidelines outlining safe and supportive approaches for account deactivation. These guidelines are grounded in a robust evidence base, including insights from the Australian Government's Age Assurance Technology Trial and feedback gathered through stakeholder consultations.

Privacy considerations will be guided by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, ensuring that enforcement measures align with established privacy standards.

How will under-16s be stopped from finding a way around the age restrictions?

Social media platforms that restrict access based on age (typically 16+) must now:

- **Identify and deactivate underage accounts**
Platforms must proactively search for accounts held by users under 16 and shut them down.

- **Block new underage sign-ups** They must implement robust age verification systems to prevent under-16s from creating accounts.
- **Prevent circumvention tactics** This includes stopping users from using fake birthdates, VPNs, or other workarounds to bypass age checks.
- **Ensure fairness and error correction** If someone 16 or older is wrongly flagged and restricted, platforms must have a clear process to restore access.
- **Provide reporting and review mechanisms** Users should be able to report suspected underage accounts or appeal if they believe they've been restricted unfairly.

Won't under-16s still be able to see social media feeds without accounts?

They'll still be able to view publicly available material—like YouTube videos or Facebook business pages—without needing an account. Because they can't log into social media accounts, this will reduce their exposure to addictive design features like algorithmic feeds, notifications, and targeted content.

The government intends to ensure young people can still reach online services that offer mental health support or crisis information, even without logging in.

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How will the age restrictions impact schools that use social media platforms?

From 10 December 2025, new rules from the eSafety Commissioner will require certain social media platforms to prevent Australians under 16 from creating accounts. This may affect platforms that some schools currently use for communication or educational purposes, and alternative tools may need to be considered.

Platforms classified as age-restricted include:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Threads
- TikTok
- X (formerly Twitter)
- YouTube
- Kick
- Reddit

These platforms must take steps to restrict access for users under 16.

What's excluded from these restrictions?

Learning management systems (LMSs) used in schools—such as Google Classroom—are not considered age-restricted if their primary purpose is to support education. These platforms allow teachers to:

- Share course materials
- Manage assignments
- Communicate with students
- Enable students to access resources, submit work, and collaborate

Even if these systems include messaging, video conferencing, or content-sharing features, they remain excluded as long as their main purpose is educational.

Can students still view public content like YouTube videos? Yes—if teachers embed publicly available videos into an LMS and students don't need to log into YouTube or another platform, the content remains accessible.

As of 5 November 2025, platforms not considered age-restricted include:

- Discord
- GitHub
- Google Classroom
- LEGO Play
- Messenger
- Roblox
- Steam and Steam Chat
- WhatsApp
- YouTube Kids

These platforms either fall under specific exclusions or do not meet the criteria for age-restricted classification.

Next steps for educators and families:

- **Schools** should review their digital tools and ensure they align with the new rules.
- **Teachers** may continue using their own accounts to share age-appropriate educational materials, subject to school or sector policies.
- **Parents** are encouraged to stay informed and support safe online practices at home.

For the latest updates and platform classifications, visit [eSafety's official website](#).

Additional Resources and Links

Professional learning for teachers
| eSafety Commissioner



Social-media-age-restrictions-poster.pdf



What do the social media age restrictions
mean for educators? | eSafety Commissioner

