

## Keeping Your Children Safe On Social Media

### Why Do You Need It?

Digital parental control is an inevitable part of child guidance. Online life is an essential part of life for most children these days. As a parent/carer, it is imperative to understand that it is your task to help your child be safe while using their various technological gadgets and online platforms. Have conversations with your children so that they know that you have parental control over what they are doing online. Explain to them the risks of using social media and why you are limiting certain activities. They need to know every danger hidden behind innocent actions and the fact that everything that you are doing is to keep them safe. You wouldn't put them in the car without a seatbelt and so, this is their seatbelt for navigating the minefield of the internet.



### Setting up Facebook parental controls.

Even though Facebook was initially created for adults only, and you are not allowed to have your own account before 13 years old, more and more children lie about their age and register on Facebook. But why are there such age restrictions? Before a certain age, children cannot take full responsibility for their actions and estimate what is good or bad for them.

Social media can become a real threat to your child's safety. Exchange of excessive amounts of information, contact with strangers, affection of unwanted content, fake news, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, personal data theft and data collection – these are just some of the many risks our children and young people are unfortunately exposed/at risk of being exposed to.

Experts advise introducing your children to social media as late as possible. There are age restrictions and recommendations on these websites and apps for a reason.

Please note that the way to access privacy and security settings varies between devices e.g. desktop/laptop computer, tablet and phone. You must be vigilant in checking that the security settings match so that their privacy settings are universal across all their devices.

### How to Put Parental Controls on Facebook and Block Someone on Messenger?

Facebook allows you to apply a certain amount of restriction on your child's account. Yes, they cover the key activities and help you prevent any bad situations, but it is still not enough for complete safety.

Out of the possible restrictions provided by Facebook, you can:

- Restrict chatting functions
- Block inappropriate content
- Prevent identity theft
- Limit social interaction

## How to Set Up Facebook Parental Controls?

To turn on Facebook Parental controls, you need to access your child's account first.

Once you are on the account's setting page, click: Settings and Privacy → Privacy check-up.

With the Privacy Checkup tool, it is easy to set up parental controls for your child's account in only three steps.

### ← Settings & Privacy

- Settings
- Privacy Checkup
- Privacy Shortcuts
- Activity Log
- News Feed Preferences
- Language

← **Posts and Stories** ×

You decide who you want to see your posts and stories.

**Future Posts**

Choose who you'd like to see your future posts. That audience will be who can see your posts until you change it. You can always change it when you make a new post.

Friends

**Stories**

Control who can see your Stories. Stories are visible for 24 hours on Facebook and Messenger.

Friends

**Limit Past Posts**

Change who can see past posts that were Public or Friends of friends to only Friends. Anyone tagged in these posts and their friends may still see them.

Limit

Back Next

1. The first step is to choose who can see your child's posts and new content. Make sure you select "Friends" so that strangers don't have access to this data.

- The next step of privacy checkup includes your child's personal information, such as birth date, phone number, email address, and living place. We suggest restricting this information to "only me" access. This setting will prevent your child's personal data from being stolen and misused.
- Further steps will enable you to add people to the blocked list. There can be situations when you don't want any interaction of your child with some people.

← **Blocking** ×

When you block someone, they will no longer see things you post on your timeline, tag you, invite you to events or groups, start a conversation with you or add you as a friend.

💡 Tip: When you block someone, we won't tell them that you've blocked them.

+ Add to Blocked List

Back Next

Another useful setting you can apply for your child's Facebook account is to control who can send friend requests to your child. Set it to friends of friends to limit unwanted interactions.

← **Friend Requests** ×

You're in control of who can send you friend requests.

Who can send you friend requests? Friends of friends

Back Next

### **Remember to:**

- Periodically check your child's profile to make sure they don't pass any personal data such as phone number, address, or private photos to any strangers.
- Check privacy settings on their Facebook and make sure they are set for friends only.
- Show them how to block someone on Messenger and how to communicate about inappropriate content.
- Talk about cyberbullying and how to prevent it.
- Explain how to detect fake news and stay away from fraud.
- By using Facebook parental controls and privacy settings, you can protect your child online.
- In case you want even more protection, don't hesitate to use dedicated parental control software.

### **What Is the Facebook Restricted List?**

Privacy settings on any Facebook account are customizable. You have a vast variety of options that allow you to regulate all kinds of interactions. If you don't know how to block someone on Messenger – the Facebook restricted list is right for you. You can add those people you want to this restricted list but still remain friends. What happens is that your restricted friends will not see your posts as long as it is not set to public. If you tag this restricted friend in a new post – then they can see this post.

Once you find any suspicious friends in the list on your child's Facebook account, you can easily add them to the restricted list and limit the possible interactions, such as seeing posts or messaging. If you feel that your child is being threatened by someone online, you can block this person. Once someone is blocked, they won't be able to find your child's profile or message them. Use parental control software to monitor your child's safety.

### **How to Use the Facebook Restricted List to Protect Your Child's Life**

You are free to decide who goes to the Facebook restricted list.

When you want to restrict someone on Facebook, you need to:

1. Go to their profile.
2. Under their profile picture, you need to click the friend's icon.
3. Then, under the edit friends list, replace this profile with the restricted list.
4. If you want to change it back, repeat the same steps and put this person on another list.

Make sure you remember that restricting someone on Facebook cannot 100% keep your child safe. This person can still send messages to your child and see public posts. Once you know that someone is suspicious – the best solution is to block this person. When someone is blocked, they cannot find your profile or message you.

### **When you block someone on Messenger, what do they see?**

A blocked person on Messenger will not be able to send you any messages anymore, and your status will not be visible to them. Once they open the chat with you, they will see you are not active on Facebook at the moment. Once you block a person, Facebook will not notify them about it.

### **Can you block someone on Messenger without them knowing?**

Facebook doesn't notify a blocked person. The only way you can realize you have been blocked is to try to message the person. If you are on the blocked list, you will see the following message in the chat box: "This person isn't available right now" or "You can't reply to this conversation".

### **What age should a child have a Facebook account?**

According to the Facebook User Policy, you can have your account once you are 13 years old. Before that, it is illegal to get it.

### **Messenger Kids**

Messenger Kids is an app for children to connect and keep in touch with friends and family. Features include messaging, video calling, games and stickers.

Using the Parent Dashboard from their Facebook account, parents/carers can manage their child's friends, monitor their activity and change their account settings.

More information about it is available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/help/messenger-app/213724335832452>