

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about INSTAGRAM

Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms in the world, with over 1 billion users worldwide. The platform allows users to upload images and videos to their feed, create interactive stories, share photos and videos, exchange private messages, discover explore and tag content, and more. It also allows users to follow other users and share their own content.

AGE RATING: 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- ADDITION** Many social media platforms are designed to be addictive. Instagram is no exception. The platform is designed to be addictive, with features like the 'like' button and the 'follow' button that encourage users to spend more time on the app. This can lead to addiction, with users spending hours of their day on the app, neglecting their studies and other responsibilities.
- GOING LIVE** Live streaming on Instagram allows users to broadcast their lives in real-time to their followers. This can be a great way to connect with friends and family, but it can also be a risk. Users can be harassed or bullied while live streaming, and their content can be recorded and shared without their consent.
- INFLUENCER CULTURE** Influencers are people who have a large following on social media. They often promote products and services, and their opinions can be very influential. This can lead to unrealistic expectations and a focus on appearance, which can be harmful to young people's self-esteem.
- UNREALISTIC IDEALS** Instagram often shows a curated version of people's lives, with only the best moments being shared. This can lead to unrealistic expectations and a sense of inadequacy, especially for young people who are still developing their self-identity.

Advice for Parents & Carers

- HAVE OPEN DIALOGUE** Talk to your child about the risks of Instagram and the importance of staying safe online. Encourage them to talk to you if they have any concerns.
- REMOVE PAYMENT METHODS** If you're happy for your child to have an Instagram account, make sure you remove their payment methods to prevent them from making any purchases.
- USE MODERATORS** Instagram has a moderation team that reviews content, but it's not perfect. You can help by reporting any inappropriate content to the moderators.
- BE VIGILANT AND REASSURE** Be vigilant about your child's online activity, but also reassure them that you're there to support them. Encourage them to talk to you if they have any concerns.
- BALANCE YOUR TIME** Encourage your child to balance their time between Instagram and other activities, such as school, sports, and spending time with friends and family.

Meet Our Expert

Dr. Claire Sutcliffe is a child and adolescent psychologist with 20 years of experience. She has worked in a variety of settings, including schools, hospitals, and community organizations. She is currently working on her PhD in Psychology.

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

Group chats are a popular way for friends to stay connected and share information. However, they can also be a source of bullying, harassment, and other risks. It's important for parents and carers to understand the risks and provide advice to help their children stay safe.

AGE RATING: 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- BULLYING** Group chats can be a place where bullying and harassment often go unreported. This is because the group chat is often private, and the bully can target the victim without the victim knowing. This can be very harmful to the victim's mental health.
- SHARING GROUP CONTENT** Content shared in a group chat can be shared outside of the chat. This is because many people screenshot or take photos of messages without the sender's permission. This can lead to embarrassment and other negative consequences.
- EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION** Group chats can be a place where people feel excluded or isolated. This is because they may not be invited to all the chats, or they may be left out of conversations. This can be very hurtful and lead to feelings of loneliness.
- INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT** Group chats can be a place where inappropriate content is shared. This can include explicit images, videos, and messages. This can be very harmful to young people's mental health and can lead to legal consequences.
- UNKNOWN MEMBERS** Group chats can be a place where unknown members are added. This can be a risk because these people may be strangers who can harass or bully the other members of the chat.
- NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO** Group chats can be a source of notifications and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). This can lead to anxiety and stress, especially if the chat is very active and the user is not always online.

Advice for Parents & Carers

- CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS** Encourage your child to think about how their actions in a group chat might affect others. Encourage them to be kind and respectful.
- GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT** If your child is in a group chat, encourage them to talk to you about any concerns. Give them support and reassurance, but avoid judging them.
- BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE** If your child is being harassed or bullied in a group chat, encourage them to block the person, report the chat, and leave the chat. Encourage them to talk to you if they need help.
- PRACTISE SAFE SHARING** Encourage your child to be careful about what they share in a group chat. Encourage them to avoid sharing explicit content or sensitive information.
- AVOID INVITING STRANGERS** Encourage your child to avoid inviting strangers to group chats. Encourage them to only invite people they know and trust.
- SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS** Encourage your child to turn off notifications for group chats if they are not always online. This can help reduce anxiety and stress.

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All of these guides are available on our website under 'News & Events' then 'Handouts/Information'. Please take the time to download and read through these if your child uses them.

<https://www.stokemandeville.bucks.sch.uk/news-and-events/handouts/information>



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ROBLOX

Roblox is one of the most popular video games on the market for 2020. The game is a virtual world where users can create their own games and play with other users. It's a great way for children to learn about game development and programming, but it also has some risks.

AGE RATING: 7+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- CONTACT WITH STRANGERS** Roblox allows users to chat with other users, including strangers. This can be a risk because children can be harassed or bullied by strangers. They can also be tricked into giving out personal information.
- ONLINE DATERS** Roblox has a large user base, including many young people. This can be a risk because children can be contacted by online daters who may be trying to lure them into a scam or other harmful activity.
- IN-APP PURCHASES** Roblox has an in-app purchase system that allows users to buy virtual items. This can be a risk because children can be tricked into spending money on these items, or they can be scammed.

Advice for Parents & Carers

- SET PARENTAL CONTROLS** Roblox has parental controls that allow parents to restrict their child's account. Encourage parents to use these controls to limit their child's interactions with strangers and to control their spending.
- DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING** Encourage your child to disable private messaging on Roblox. This can help reduce the risk of contact with strangers.
- PRIVATE SERVERS** Roblox has private servers that allow users to play with only their friends. Encourage your child to use private servers to reduce the risk of contact with strangers.
- DEALING WITH STRANGERS** Encourage your child to be cautious when interacting with strangers online. Encourage them to avoid giving out personal information and to report any harassment or bullying.

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about REPLIKA

Replika is an artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot companion that developers claim users can form an actual relationship with. The chatbot is designed to be a supportive and understanding friend, but it also has some risks.

AGE RATING: 17+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT** Replika is designed to be a supportive and understanding friend, but it can also be a source of inappropriate content. This can include explicit images, videos, and messages. This can be very harmful to young people's mental health.
- POTENTIAL ADDICTION** Replika is designed to be a supportive and understanding friend, but it can also be a source of addiction. This is because the chatbot is designed to be very responsive and supportive, which can lead to users spending a lot of time with it.
- NO SELF-AWARENESS** Replika is designed to be a supportive and understanding friend, but it does not have self-awareness. This means that it cannot understand its own actions or the actions of other users. This can be very frustrating for users.
- NOT MEDICALLY CERTIFIED** Replika is designed to be a supportive and understanding friend, but it is not medically certified. This means that it cannot provide medical advice or other professional help services. This can be very harmful to users who are seeking help for mental health issues.

Advice for Parents & Carers

- SET UP PARENTAL CONTROLS** Replika has parental controls that allow parents to restrict their child's account. Encourage parents to use these controls to limit their child's interactions with the chatbot and to control their spending.
- TALK ABOUT THE DANGERS** Encourage your child to talk to you about any concerns with Replika. Encourage them to be aware of the risks and to avoid spending too much time with the chatbot.
- WATCH FOR WARNING SIGNS** Encourage your child to be aware of any warning signs of addiction or other mental health issues. Encourage them to talk to you if they have any concerns.
- SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP** Encourage your child to seek professional help if they are experiencing any mental health issues. Encourage them to talk to a doctor or a therapist.

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