

Beyond Like, Share, Comment: A Parent's Guide to Introducing Your Child to Social Media

Take these steps to introduce your child to a positive and safe social media experience:

- Determine if your child is ready for social media by asking 4 simple questions
- Help your child have a positive social media experience using 7 tips

Ages
13 and
above



4 Questions to Help Determine if Your Child Is Ready for Social Media:

Are they able to manage their time?

If your child has good time management skills, they will be able to balance social media activities with their existing responsibilities.



Do they obey the rules you set for their offline lives?

If your child follows the rules for household chores, homework, device use, or bedtime, chances are they'll be able to follow your rules on social media use.



Do they understand how to handle "relationships" and "reputations"?

Make sure your child only connects with people they know. Check if they understand that their online posts have a lasting impact on their **reputation**, and let them know that what they say and do online can shape how others see them, just like in real life.



Is your child confident, with a positive self image?

Ask your child to share three things they like about themselves. This helps you gauge their self-esteem and need for external validation, and whether if they can handle the peer pressures and comparative nature of social media.



Why Waiting Matters

Most social media platforms require users to be 13+. Delaying access helps protect your child's wellbeing and allows more time for healthy social development. Stick to the age limit or wait even longer before introducing your child to social media.

7 Tips to Help Your Child Have a Positive Experience with Social Media

1 Review the Platform

Always read reviews and try out the social media platform to better understand the benefits and possible risks of the platform.



2 Set Parental Controls

Activate **safety features** or **parental controls** to ensure your child's safety on social media.



3 Protect Online Privacy

Your child may not know the risks of sharing personal information online. Set guidelines such as setting profiles to private and only accepting requests from known individuals to prevent reputation damage or threats.

4 Know How to Flag Online Risks and Harms

Show your child how to report or block inappropriate content and users. Knowing how to act quickly helps keep their online space safe. Help your child understand the importance of **leaving a better digital footprint**, and **being discerning while evaluating online content**.



5 Create a Family Tech Agreement

Sign a **Family Tech Agreement**, which may include setting usage limits, protecting personal information online, or providing guidelines for their online behaviour. The contract shows trust and governs their social media use.

6 Manage Notifications

Guide your child to take control of their time on social media by adjusting the app notifications. Fewer alerts mean fewer distractions.

7 Have Regular Conversations

Talk to your child about the importance of online privacy, online safety, and **respecting others online**. Discuss your own experiences and struggles with them, and what you learnt from the experience. Create a safe space for your child to share their online experiences, and monitor their emotions to ensure that they aren't negatively affected by what they see online.

Your guidance is key to preparing your child for social media and ensuring they use it safely and positively. Rules should evolve with their age, but the basics stay the same: set clear guidelines, guide them to think before they act, report inappropriate content, and have open conversations. With these actions, you can effectively guide them on their social media journey.



Visit www.digitalforlife.gov.sg for simple tips and tools to keep your child safe online.

