

Social age Media changes



What Parents Need to Know

The law and who it applies to...

The new social media age laws came into effect on 10 December. Since then, we have been working closely with young people and schools and are seeing clear patterns emerge in how these changes are affecting students.

What's important to know:
The law applies to platforms, not young people

Young people are not breaking the law if they are on social media. Legal responsibility sits with social media companies. This is critical for safety - young people must know they can ask for help if something goes wrong.

Staying connected

Some young people are determined to stay connected on their favourite apps, while others are moving to new or unfamiliar platforms. Online connection remains important to them, which means guidance and education are essential.

Account access and data loss

Some companies have removed or deactivated teen accounts. Others have locked accounts, meaning young people can no longer log in but their content may still be visible. In these cases, young people may lose control of photos and videos they posted.

If your child still has access, support them to download their data, make accounts private, and remove identifying information now.

Digital footprint still matters

Private accounts, de-identifying profiles, removing school details, turning off sharing and enabling two-factor authentication remain critical safety steps.

Advice circulating online

Young people are sharing tips such as changing account names or stating a parent manages the account. Some have maintained access this way for now, but this may not continue as platforms use age-estimation technology, behavioural patterns and account history to identify under-16 users.



Concerning trends

We are seeing young people join platforms with weaker safety settings, use family members' identification, and move in ways that parents are less aware of — increasing the risk of scams, predatory contact and harm.

Moving forward

Eyes Open Social Media will continue working with students to build strong privacy and security skills they can apply across any platform. While we do not encourage use of restricted apps, we remain confident that education and informed decision-making are the strongest protections for young people online.

