SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

Working together to keep our young people safe
Secondary | December 2024

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Teen Accounts provide an added layer of protection to help safeguard children online, but they are not a guarantee against all online risks. They work best when combined with the active involvement and monitoring of parents. Think of them as a helpful tool to support, not replace, your role in keeping your child safe online.

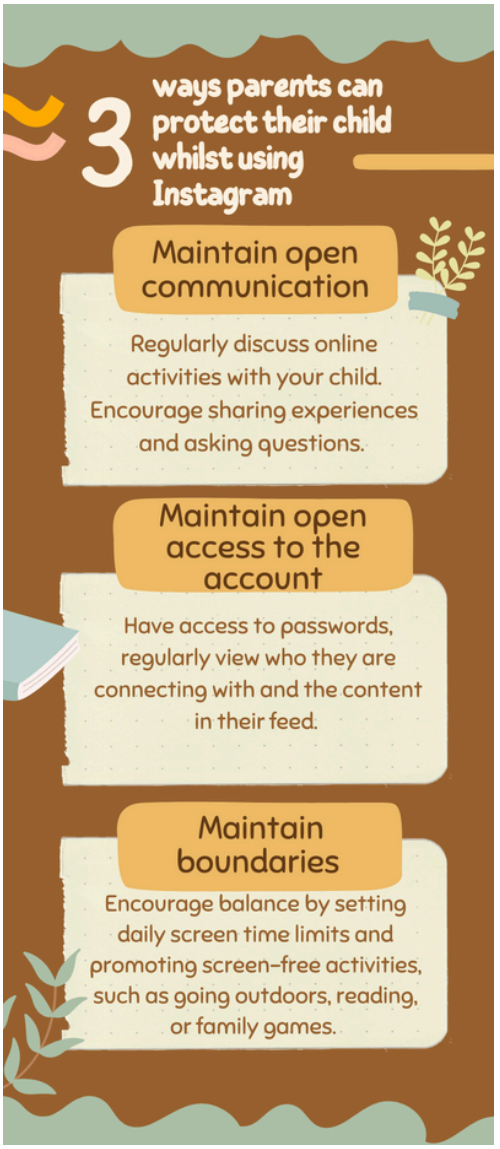
Instagram Teen Accounts

Earlier this year, Instagram introduced a new feature designed specifically for teenagers: the Teen Account. This new account type aims to create a safer, more controlled environment for teens on Instagram, offering parents greater peace of mind about their children's safety while using the platform.

The Teen Account comes with additional privacy protections and safeguards tailored for younger users. These features include limitations on who can interact with teens and enhanced controls over the content that teens can access.

Parents will also have access to specific tools that help them oversee their child's Instagram experience, allowing them to guide and support safe and healthy social media use.

Currently, the Teen Account is available to some users in the United States and the United Kingdom. Instagram plans to expand this feature globally, making it available to all eligible users by early 2025.



How will Teen Accounts work?

Private accounts: Teen Accounts are automatically set to private, meaning only approved followers can see and interact with your teen's posts. Follow requests must be accepted by your teen, ensuring they have control over their connections.

Message restrictions: Only those who follow the teen can message them.

Sensitive content restrictions: Teen Accounts are automatically set to the highest level of protection against sensitive content. This means your teen will have the most restricted view, helping to ensure they only see age-appropriate content while using Instagram.

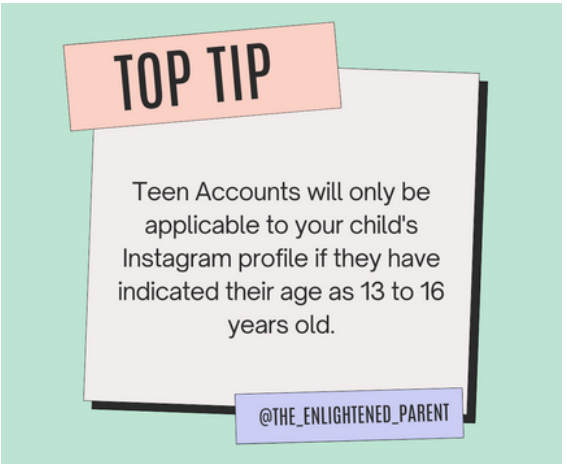
Limited interactions: Teens can only be tagged or mentioned in posts originating from those who they follow.

Time limits: Users are sent notifications after 60 minutes of use each day.

Sleep mode: Sleep mode is turned on between 10pm-7am which mutes notifications and sends auto-replies to direct messages.

The supervision feature gives parents more insight and control over their child's account. With this tool, parents can:

- view who their child is chatting with
- set daily time limits
- block Instagram access
- see the topics their child is exploring.



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Gaming streaming sites

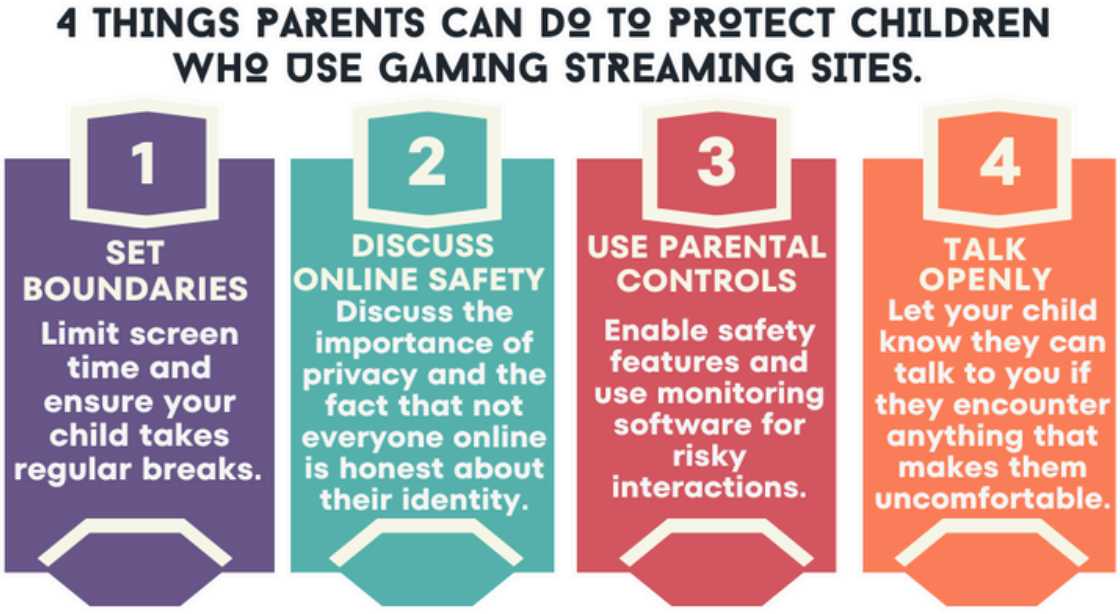
Gaming streaming sites are online platforms that enable users to watch others play video games in real time or view recorded gameplay sessions. Much like tuning into a sports channel to catch a football match, these sites offer the chance to witness games unfold live. This experience can be both entertaining and informative for computer game enthusiasts, as well as for those seeking to gain insights into a game before diving in themselves. It is thought that over 83% of 12-15 year olds play online games, many of them through gaming streaming sites.

Gaming streaming sites are also used to:
Watch others play: Viewers can watch players play popular video games in real-time for entertainment purposes.
Live interaction: Viewers can chat with the streamer (the person playing the game) and other viewers.
Learn new games and techniques: Many viewers watch streams to learn tips and strategies.

Some popular gaming streaming sites are:
Twitch: One of the most popular platforms for watching live video game streams. Streamers play games and interact with their viewers. Twitch has channels (separate groups) for nearly every type of game and is popular among younger audiences.
YouTube Gaming: A part of YouTube dedicated to gaming content, where viewers can watch live streams or recorded videos. It's similar to Twitch but integrated into the YouTube platform.
Discord: Though not a dedicated streaming site, Discord allows communities to stream games privately, often as a social activity among friends.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH GAMING STREAMING SITES

1 **Inappropriate content:**
- bad language
- themes of violence, aggression, or crude humour
- adult discussions and images
- references to drugs and alcohol.

2 **Unmonitored interactions and cyberbullying:**
- chat features allow viewers to interact with streamers and users, risking exposure to inappropriate messages
- the prevalence of negative comments and trolling during streams.

3 **Potential for grooming:**
- predators use platforms to connect with and manipulate children
- some users may pose as friendly, asking personal questions that can lead to children inadvertently sharing private information.