

Understanding Australia's New Social Media Laws

The Australian Government has introduced new legislation, the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024. This will soon change how young people access social media.

What's Changing

From 10 December 2025, social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, YouTube, X (Twitter) and others will be legally required to take *reasonable steps* to prevent users under 16 years of age from creating or maintaining an account. The new law does not prevent young people from viewing or accessing public content in many cases (for example, without logging in). Platforms must balance age verification while respecting privacy and offering alternative verification methods.

It is important to note that parental consent will not override this rule. Messaging apps like WhatsApp or iMessage and gaming environments such as Minecraft or Roblox are not currently included, unless they evolve to behave like social media.

Why It Matters

The aim of this change is to give young people a healthier digital environment. One that reduces exposure to harmful content, online pressure, and addictive algorithms. The focus is not on punishing children, but on holding platforms accountable for protecting them.

How You Can Support Your Child

- Start conversations early - Talk about what's changing and how it may affect your child.
- Plan together - Help them decide what content or photos to save before the law takes effect.
- Taper, don't cut - Reduce social media use gradually, replacing it with other ways to connect.
- Model balance - Show your own healthy digital habits, children notice what we do more than what we say.

This shift is an opportunity for families to reimagine connection. By building offline routines, encouraging creativity, and finding safer digital spaces designed for wellbeing rather than clicks.

Read More

For a detailed guide on helping your child transition through this change, explore:

Pendergast, K. (2024). *Ctrl+Shift+Connect: The Australian 16+ age delay (Parent & carer guide)*. Ctrl+Shift Global.

[Download the full guide here](#)

This guide offers practical steps for parents. From starting calm conversations to introducing safe, alternative online spaces and helps families navigate the upcoming shift with empathy and confidence.