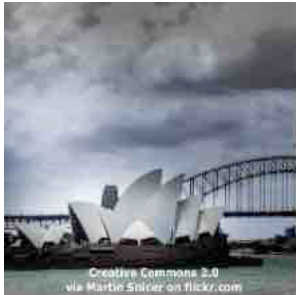


Teens in Australia banned from social media

11th December 2025



A big change has happened in the social media world. Australia has banned children under the age of 16 from joining many social networks. New laws say the under-16s cannot open accounts with sites like Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads,

TikTok, X, and YouTube. It is now the responsibility of these social media sites to make sure all of their users are aged 16 or above. Australia's government said it would fine the companies if they allowed children to access their sites. The fines could be as much as \$32.9 million. The companies said they would use different methods to check the age of their users. New users will have to upload identification and scan their faces.

Australia's Prime Minister said he introduced the ban because social media was harming young minds. He said a study showed that 70 per cent of children aged 10-15 who used social media looked at harmful content. This included information about misogyny, violence, eating disorders, and suicide. He advised children to do different things instead, like starting a new sport or learning to play a musical instrument. His message to children was: "Spend quality time with your friends and your family, face to face." Many children said they would now be lonelier without social media. Two 15-year-olds are suing Australia's government. They say their "right to free communication" has been taken away.

Sources: abc.net.au / reuters.com / fortune.com

Writing

No one under 16 should be allowed on social media. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

change / social media / the under-16s / new laws / responsibility / fines / age / scan / harming young minds / misogyny / violence / eating disorders / sport / instrument

True / False

- 1) Children aged 16 in Australia cannot open a social media account. T / F
- 2) It is the social media sites' responsibility to check the age of new users. T / F
- 3) Parents of children who use social media could get a \$32.9 million fine. T / F
- 4) New social media users now have to upload ID and scan their faces. T / F
- 5) The article says 70% of all children regularly look at violent videos. T / F
- 6) Australia's leader said children should play sport or play an instrument. T / F
- 7) Many children said without social media, they would feel lonelier. T / F
- 8) Two teenagers are suing Australia's government because of the ban. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. banned | a. financial penalty |
| 2. responsibility | b. illnesses |
| 3. fine (noun) | c. look at |
| 4. methods | d. social relations |
| 5. check | e. duty |
| 6. harming | f. suggested |
| 7. disorders | g. put an end to |
| 8. advised | h. damaging |
| 9. suing (to) sue | i. taking to court |
| 10. communication | j. techniques |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of social media?
- b) Should children be allowed to go on social media?
- c) Have you had any bad experiences on social media?
- d) Social media CEOs do not allow their children on social media. Why not?
- e) What are the best social media sites?
- f) What do you think of pre-social media communication?
- g) How well will social media companies make sure the ban works?
- h) Should children socialize in person rather than via their phone?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. A big change | a. as much as \$32.9 million |
| 2. It is now the responsibility of | b. disorders |
| 3. The fines could be | c. identification |
| 4. use different methods to | d. suing Australia's government |
| 5. New users will have to upload | e. about misogyny |
| 6. social media was harming young | f. has happened |
| 7. This included information | g. these social media sites |
| 8. eating | h. a musical instrument |
| 9. learning to play | i. check the age of their users |
| 10. Two 15-year-olds are | j. minds |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What harm might social media do to a 10-year-old?
- How can sites reduce levels of misogyny on social media?
- What do you think of non-stop photos of 'perfect bodies' online?
- How do we get children to spend quality face-to-face time with people?
- Is social media good to fight loneliness?
- Should children have the 'right to free communication'?
- What questions would you like to ask social media CEOs?

Spelling

- the under-16s cannot open atsncou
- It is now the nrbssptiiloey of these
- Australia's menveongtr
- allowed children to csecas their sites
- they would use different dmstheo to check
- New users will have to upload notianfeciidt
- he cuddteiron the ban
- This icdduenl information
- eating issdordre
- learning to play a musical iusntentmr
- Spend auyltq time with your friends
- their right to free nucacionmmtoi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. a	4. j	5. c
6. h	7. b	8. f	9. i	10. d

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	Where does the article say a big change has happened?
2.	Whose responsibility is it to check the age of new social media users?
3.	How much could social media sites be fined if children access their sites?
4.	What will companies use different methods to do?
5.	What will new social media users have to scan?
6.	What did Australia's Prime Minister say social media was harming?
7.	What kind of disorders were young children looking at information on?
8.	What did Australia's leader urge children to learn?
9.	How will many children feel without access to social media?
10.	Who is Australia being sued by because of the social media ban?

Speaking – Social media

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| • Facebook | • TikTok |
| • Instagram | • WeChat |
| • WhatsApp | • Telegram |
| • YouTube | • Reddit |

Answers – True False

1 F	2 T	3 F	4 T	5 F	6 T	7 T	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.