



Social Media Information for Parents



Your child has taken part in a **Be Strong Online** session, a new peer-to-peer learning programme from The Diana Award charity in partnership with Vodafone and supported by Parent Zone.

It was all about **social media**, covering things like how to think critically about what you see, the difference between online and offline communication and the impact of positive and negative experiences on social media.

The session aimed to engage and educate young people on some of the issues surrounding social media before they reach the minimum age limit for most social networks and become more likely to use them regularly.

Most of us have heard of the most popular social media platforms, like Facebook and Snapchat, but there are lots of others too. They all have their pros and cons, so it's a good idea to speak to your child about using them safely and responsibly.

Here are the important subjects to cover when you chat:

 **Age limits.** 13 is the most common minimum age for social media. Because these services are designed for older teens and adults, signing up at a younger age could expose your child to inappropriate content. It's best to discuss social media age limits before your child signs up – it's probably easier to have a conversation about it than to try to get their account removed once they've joined. Check out www.parentinfo.org/article/under-13s-and-social-media for advice on talking to your child about age limits.

 **Safety and privacy.** It's really important for your child to be familiar with the safety and privacy tools on any social media services they use. Make sure they know how to do things like limit who can see their posts and block or report other users. Before they set up their first account, it's a good idea to agree some ground rules about privacy settings – maybe you don't want them to make their photos publicly visible, for example.



Social media and self-esteem. Using social media safely isn't just about privacy settings and age limits. It's nice to get lots of likes and followers, but it's not a good idea to get too wrapped up in these numbers or comparisons to other online friends. Ask your child how their social media makes them feel – are they ever upset by the things people say or the number of likes they get?



Online reputation. Most young people have already heard that what goes online stays online, but it's worth reminding your child that their social media presence can influence what other people think of them. How would they feel if a particular post or image was seen by a teacher or relative?

You can read more about social media and how to talk to your child here:

<http://parentzone.org.uk/article/social-media-parents-guide>

More Info

www.antibullyingpro.com

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www.childnet.com

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.ceop.police.uk

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