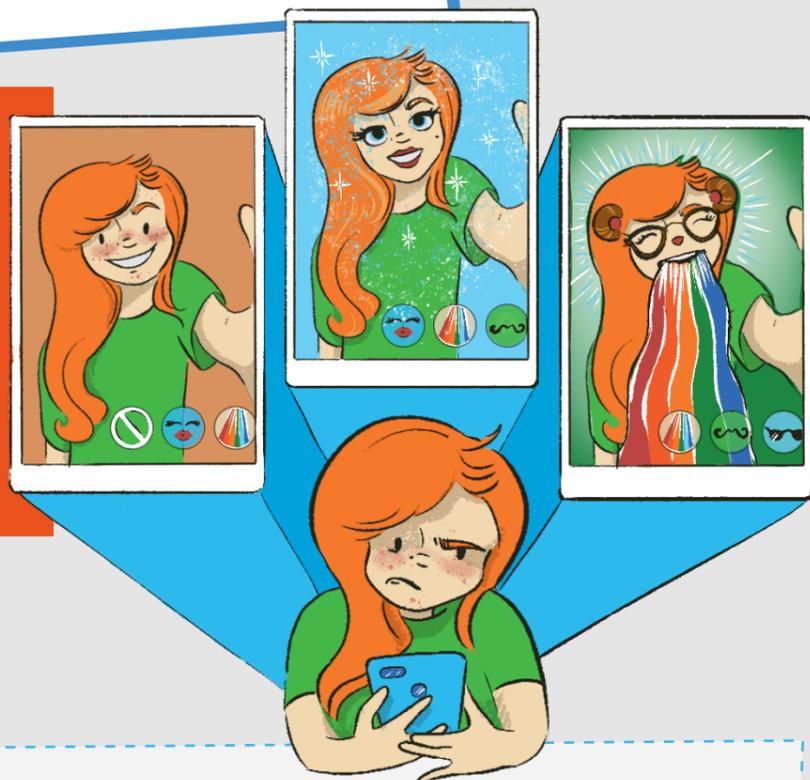


# Online Safety and Social Media

Social media is an online platform that allows users to connect with others online. Depending on what platform you use, social media can allow you to communicate and share information with others with the intention to update or engage a specific audience. This can often include sharing videos, images, status updates or posts with a group of followers that can sometimes cover a global scale.



A lot of the time, social media is a positive place where users support each other. Despite this, it can also house toxic and harmful behaviours, which can be directed towards specific individuals or groups with the intention to harass, or cause upset.

## Benefits of Social Media



- 1 Available and accommodating to most audiences
- 2 Can promote positivity and healthy expression
- 3 An accessible platform to connect with others
- 4 An instant platform for news and global awareness

## Considerations for Social Media

- 1 Harmful and offensive content may be seen across platforms
- 2 Can be used to promote misleading information
- 3 Can promote unhealthy expectations and pressure for young people
- 4 Can impact digital wellbeing if not managed correctly



## Harm on Social Media

Many social media platforms have adapted to include reporting features in order to tackle certain types of online harm. Some of these harms to watch out for include:

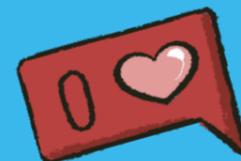
- 1 Fake online profiles
- 2 Misinformation or fake ads
- 3 Scamming or fraud attempts
- 4 Radical online content



## Socialising Online

Social media provides a lot of freedom in how to connect with other users as well as how information and content is made available. This has provided certain platforms with worldwide appeal, giving anyone an opportunity to connect and engage with others. To promote keeping safe on social media, ensure that young people know how to:

- 1 Report harmful content online
- 2 Block and report users who are being offensive or harmful
- 3 Manage privacy settings to limit exposure to known friends and family members
- 4 Speak to a trusted adult if they are concerned about something online



To find out more about Social Media visit the SWGfL hub:  
[swgfl.org.uk/topics/social-media/](https://swgfl.org.uk/topics/social-media/)

or scan the QR code



## Further Support

**Professionals Online Safety Helpline:** [saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline](https://saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline)

**Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service:** [swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service/](https://swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service/)

**Report Harmful Content:**  
[reportharmfulcontent.com](https://reportharmfulcontent.com)

