



Australia U16 Policy Survey – February 2026

Methodology

This research was commissioned by Snap and executed by YouGov. Interviews were conducted online from February 13 through February 19, 2026, among a nationwide sample of n=500 Australian Parents of Teens (ages 13-17).

The figures have been matched and weighted to be representative of Australian parents of teens ages 13-17 based on the 2023 PEW Global Attitudes Survey. Results from the overall sample have a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points. Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding. Quotas and weights were used to ensure the national demographic representations among this age cohort.

Data Tables

Current Awareness and Perceptions of the U16 Restrictions

How familiar are you with Australia’s under-16 social media restrictions?	Parents of Teens
Very familiar	38%
Somewhat familiar	53%
Not very familiar	9%
Not familiar at all	1%

Overall, do you support or oppose the restrictions that stop teens under 16 from using social media?	Parents of Teens
Strongly support	39%
Somewhat support	34%
Neither support nor oppose	9%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	8%
No opinion	1%
Don’t know	0%

Has your support for these restrictions changed since they went into effect in December 2025?	Parents of Teens
I now support them much more	13%
I now support them somewhat more	16%
My support is about the same	56%
I now support them somewhat less	4%
I now support them much less	6%
No opinion	5%
Don't know	1%

[IF SUPPORT MORE (n = 146)] What is the main reason you support them <u>more</u> now?	Parents of Teens
I have seen positive changes in my teen's / teens' behaviour or wellbeing	13%
I have learned more about the potential harms of social media for teens	25%
I have seen evidence that the restrictions are working as intended	13%
I feel more confident that the restrictions can be effectively enforced	12%
I have had positive conversations with my teen(s) about the restrictions	12%
I have heard or read more about the benefits of the restrictions	14%
My teen(s) are spending less time on their phone or device	11%
Other	0%
Don't know	0%

[IF SUPPORT LESS (n = 47)*] What is the main reason you support them <u>less</u> now?	Parents of Teens
I have seen my teen(s) find ways to bypass the restrictions	21%
I am concerned about how age verification is being implemented	12%
I have seen negative effects on my teen's / teens' ability to stay connected with friends	6%
I don't believe the restrictions are being effectively enforced	2%
I am concerned about my teen(s) moving to platforms or spaces that are harder to monitor	10%
It puts too much responsibility on families instead of on platforms	9%
I have learned more about the potential benefits of social media for teens	4%
The restrictions are too broad and should be more targeted	2%
I've learned more about the downsides of the restrictions	7%
I'm concerned the restrictions may delay teens from learning how to navigate the internet and social media safely	16%
Other	8%
Don't know	2%

* Statistical assumptions cannot be made of base sizes of n < 50

Before the under-16 restrictions went into effect in December 2025, how often did your teen(s) use each of these platforms? <i>Showing % "At least Daily" (Almost constantly + Several times a day + About once a day).</i>	Parents of Teens
YouTube	66%
TikTok	55%
Snapchat	49%
Instagram	46%

Are you aware that Australia's under-16 restrictions apply to some social media platforms but not to others?	Parents of Teens
Yes, I'm aware	77%
No, I wasn't aware of this	23%

[IF AWARE (n = 387)] In your view, are the platforms that are restricted generally more harmful to teens than the platforms that are allowed?	Parents of Teens
Yes, the restricted platforms are more harmful	36%
No, they're about the same	42%
No, the allowed platforms may be more harmful	9%
I don't know enough about the differences	14%

Before the under-16 restrictions, how involved were you in monitoring your teen's / teens' social media use?	Parents of Teens
Very involved – I actively monitored and set rules	25%
Somewhat involved – I checked in periodically and had some rules	47%
Not very involved – I was aware of their use but did not actively monitor	21%
Not involved at all – I did not monitor their social media use	7%

Overall, which of the following best describes your view of social media's impact on teens, even if none of the options are completely accurate?	Parents of Teens
The benefits of social media use for teens outweigh the downsides	18%
The downsides of social media use for teens outweigh the benefits	43%
The benefits and downsides of social media use for teens are about equal	30%
Don't know	9%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about potential benefits of the under-16 social media restrictions? <i>Showing % "Total agree" (Strongly agree + Somewhat agree).</i>	Parents of Teens
The restrictions will help protect teens from harmful content online	70%
The restrictions will help improve the mental health of teens	64%
The restrictions will reduce online bullying among teens	65%
The restrictions will give parents more control over their teen's / teens' online activity	60%
The restrictions address my biggest concerns about my teen's / teens' online safety	55%
The restrictions will help protect teens from contact with strangers or unsafe individuals online	71%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about potential concerns of the under-16 social media restrictions? <i>Showing % "Total agree" (Strongly agree + Somewhat agree).</i>	Parents of Teens
It's too early to know if the restrictions are working	63%
The restrictions will make it harder for teens to stay connected with friends	44%
The restrictions will push teens to other online spaces that may be less safe	63%
The restrictions will cause teens to lose important memories and content they've saved over the years	42%
The restrictions treat all social media the same when some platforms are more harmful than others	50%
The restrictions are easy for teens to bypass by creating new accounts or lying about their age	70%

Implementation Challenges Surrounding the U16 Restrictions

How concerned are you, if at all, about each of the following potential issues with the under-16 social media restrictions? <i>Showing % "Total concerned" (Extremely concerned + Very concerned + Somewhat concerned).</i>	Parents of Teens
Finding ways to bypass the restrictions	79%
Teens being required to share personal information or biometric data (such as facial scans) to verify their age	78%
Difficulty of enforcement	79%
Teens moving to platforms that are harder for parents to monitor	83%
Teens losing access to supportive online friends and communities	68%
Restrictions not addressing root causes of online harms	86%
The restrictions creating a false sense of security for parents	79%

[IF CONCERNED ABOUT ISSUES (n = 484)] Thinking about the issues you are concerned about, which of the following apply to you? Please select all that apply.	Parents of Teens
I have directly observed these issues with my own teen(s)	24%
My teen(s) have discussed these issues with me	32%
Other parents I know personally have experienced these issues with their teen(s)	22%
I have seen, heard, or read about these issues through news coverage or media reports	34%
I have seen discussions about these issues on social media or online forums	30%
These are concerns I have based on my understanding of how the under-16 restrictions work	31%
I have not observed or heard about these issues happening, but I'm concerned they could happen	19%
Other	1%
I am generally not very concerned about these issues	13%

Since the under-16 restrictions went into effect in December, have you noticed any challenges with how the restrictions are working? Please select all that apply.	Parents of Teens
My teen(s) have found ways to continue accessing restricted platforms	22%
My teen(s) have experienced difficulty staying connected with friends	16%
My teen(s) have lost access to content or memories that were important to them	15%
My teen(s) have moved to other apps or platforms instead	20%
My teen(s) have become less open with me about their online activities	14%
The restrictions have created tension or conflict in our household	11%
I'm not sure if the restrictions are being applied to my teen's / teens' accounts	14%
Other	3%
I have not noticed any challenges	38%

[IF TEEN(S) HAVE MOVED TO OTHER APPS OR PLATFORMS (n = 107)] You noted that your teen(s) have found other platforms or apps to use instead. Which of the following unrestricted platforms or apps have your teen(s) begun using? Please select all that apply.	Parents of Teens
Discord	34%
Messenger	49%
Pinterest	18%
Roblox	32%
WhatsApp	65%
YouTube Kids	30%
iMessage	30%
Telegram	19%
Lemon8	6%
Yope	1%
Coverstar	4%
Other	2%
Don't know	4%

[IF TEEN(S) HAVE MOVED TO OTHER APPS OR PLATFORMS (n = 103)] Thinking about the other platforms or apps your teen(s) have started using since the restrictions went into effect, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? <i>Showing % "Total agree" (Strongly agree + Somewhat agree).</i>	Parents of Teens
These platforms have the same level of safety features as the restricted platforms	50%
I feel confident that I can monitor my teen's / teens' activity on these platforms	64%
These platforms have adequate parental controls	47%
I am concerned that these platforms may expose my teen(s) to greater risks	60%
I know enough about these platforms to feel comfortable with my teen(s) using them	58%

Currently, each social media platform is responsible for verifying users' ages individually. Some have suggested that app stores (such as Apple's App Store or Google Play) should verify a user's age once, before any app is downloaded. In your view, who should be primarily responsible for verifying a user's age?	Parents of Teens
Each social media platform individually	26%
App stores (such as Apple's App Store or Google Play)	10%
The government, through a national age verification system	20%
Parents, through parental control settings on devices	29%
Internet service providers	3%
Other	1%
Don't know	11%

How confident are you that the under-16 restrictions can actually be enforced?	Parents of Teens
Very confident	13%
Somewhat confident	34%
Not very confident	30%
Not confident at all	21%
Don't know	3%

Overall, do you believe the under-16 restrictions are achieving what they were meant to achieve?	Parents of Teens
Yes, definitely	11%
Yes, somewhat	36%
No, not really	20%
No, not at all	15%
Too early to tell	16%
Don't know	3%

Alternative Policy Solutions

How much do you support or oppose each of these approaches to keeping teens safe online? <i>Showing % "Total support" (Strongly support + Somewhat support).</i>	Parents of Teens
Age restrictions that stop teens under a certain age from accessing social media	70%
Requiring platforms to provide stronger parental control tools so parents can monitor and manage their teen's social media use	76%
Requiring platforms to show age-appropriate content in feeds and recommendations for teen accounts	79%
Digital literacy education in schools teaching teens how to navigate social media safely	77%
Requiring platforms to automatically apply stricter privacy and safety settings to teen accounts	77%
Government setting required safety standards for teens, allowing platforms flexibility in how they achieve them	61%
Allowing teens to message friends privately while restricting their access to public feeds, comments, and content sharing	66%

Which of the following approaches to protecting teens online do you support the <u>most</u>?	Parents of Teens
Age restrictions that stop teens under a certain age from accessing social media	16%
Requiring platforms to provide stronger parental control tools so parents can monitor and manage their teen's social media use	13%
Requiring platforms to show age-appropriate content in feeds and recommendations for teen accounts	12%
Digital literacy education in schools teaching teens how to navigate social media safely	13%
Requiring platforms to automatically apply stricter privacy and safety settings to teen accounts	15%
Government setting required safety standards for teens, allowing platforms flexibility in how they achieve them	10%
Allowing teens to message friends privately while restricting their access to public feeds, comments, and content sharing	13%
Other	2%
Don't know	5%

In your opinion, who should have the primary responsibility for keeping teens safe online?	Parents of Teens
Parents and families	40%
Schools and educators	2%
Social media platforms and technology companies	18%
Government	12%
Teens themselves	3%
All of the above, equally	22%
Other	1%
Don't know	2%