



### Newsletter Topics: The Under-16 Social Media Ban | WhatsApp - Auto Saving?

## Social Media Ban

### Will the ban work?

Not all experts agree on the ban. Ian Russell, whose daughter Molly died after being exposed to harmful online content, has questioned whether a blanket ban is the right solution. He argues that the focus should be on making platforms safer, rather than relying on a ban that young people may find ways around.

Legislation cannot replace parenting. Whatever the law says, your child will continue to encounter digital technology throughout their life. The skills they need to navigate these spaces safely will remain important.

### Practical Tips for Parents

- Talk openly about the difference between public social media and private messaging. Explain why some apps are banned and others are not.
- Check your child's messages and chats regularly – this is part of safeguarding, not an invasion of privacy.
- Use parental controls on devices, phones, and Wi-Fi. Visit Internet Matters or the NSPCC for guidance.
- Discuss screen limits and overnight use – the government is also considering curfews and restrictions on "infinite scrolling" for under-18s.
- Be aware of age restrictions that already exist – many platforms currently require users to be 13 or older.

- Encourage your child to block and leave any chats where someone is being unkind or threatening.

### Further Support

**NSPCC:** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) – advice on supporting children's wellbeing online

**Internet Matters:** [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) – parental control guides

**Thinkuknow:** [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) – online safety resources for parents

**Report online abuse:** Contact the police via 101 or report through the following online form: <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report/>

## WhatsApp - Risks of Auto Download



If your child uses WhatsApp or similar apps, here's something worth checking: many of these services are set up to automatically save every incoming photo or video straight to your child's camera roll.

This might seem convenient, but it comes with risks. Group chats, in particular, can flood your child's device with images they never asked to receive. When autosave is switched on, your child loses the ability to choose what stays on their phone - and that could mean unwanted or inappropriate content being stored without their knowledge.

There's another safeguarding concern too. If images are automatically saved, it becomes far more difficult to identify the original sender should any issues arise later on. You can switch this off in just a few taps.

### For WhatsApp users:

- Head to **Settings** (found by tapping your profile picture in the bottom corner)
- Select **Chats**
- Turn off **'Save to Photos'**

Once disabled, your child will only save what they actively choose to keep - putting control back in their hands.

For more information: [WhatsApp Help Center](https://www.whatsapp.com/help/faq/android)

