

Addressing the pressure to be perfect toolkit:



internet
matters.org

Making Instagram work for your child

Instagram provides a number of helpful tools that allow users to control their privacy levels and customise their experience. For young people, these tools can be especially helpful for creating a safe space to connect with others.

Find advice as well as tips below, on how they can customise their Instagram settings.



Manage privacy

When first using Instagram, we encourage parents to **set their child's account to private**. If the account is private, your child can approve the people who follow them and they can remove followers at any time.

Conversation starter:

Talk regularly with your child about who they are connecting with **online** and the things that they are talking about.

How to set an account to private

- Go to **Settings**
- Tap **"Account privacy"**
- Swipe to set as **"Private"**

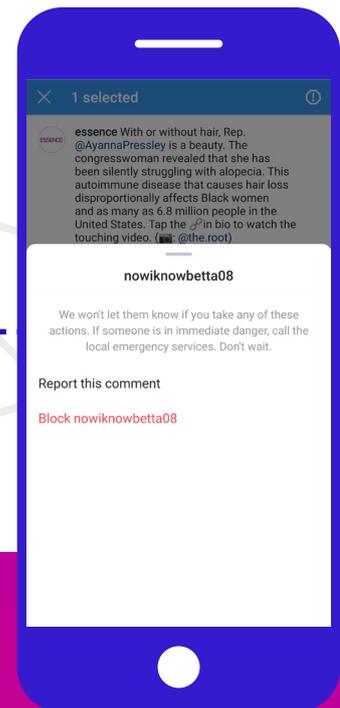
Making connections safer

Block unwanted interactions

Blocking is an immediate way to disengage from any negative interactions. This will block people from seeing and commenting on their posts. When you block an account, that person is not notified. You can unblock an account at any time.

How to block an account

- Tap “...” on profile
- Tap “Block”



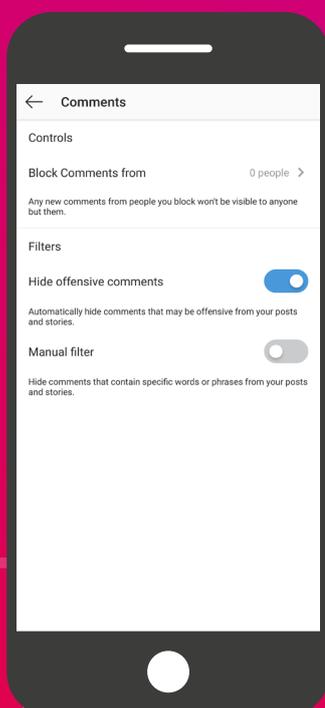
Manage comments

Your child can also control who can comment on their posts.

In the “Comments” section of the app settings, they can choose to:

- allow comments from everyone,
- allow comments from people they follow and those people’s followers,
- allow comments just the people they follow, or their followers.

TIP: You can also hide offensive comments and add a filter to hide specific words or phrases from your posts and stories.



How to block or allow comments on post

- Go to your profile and tap the **menu icon**
- Tap “Settings”
- Tap “Privacy” > “Comments”
- Next to Block Comments from, tap “People”
- Enter the name of the person you want to block, then tap “Block” next to their name
- To unblock someone from commenting on your photos and videos, tap “Unblock” next to their name and then tap “Unblock” again to confirm

Report bullying

Bullying is against Instagram's community guidelines, and it's against their policies to create an account, post photos, or make comments for the purpose of bullying or harassing someone else.

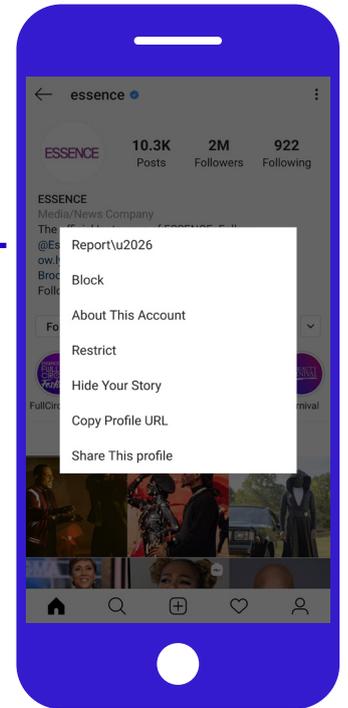
Conversation starter:

- Talk to your child about how comments can sometimes be misunderstood online so it's important to think about what they post.
- Let your teen know that if they experience any kind of bullying, or they spot an account, photo, video, comment, message or story that is intended to bully or harass someone, they should tell you and that they can and should report it.

How to report something

- Tap "..." on the right corner of the post or profile
- **Swipe left** on a comment or **tap and hold** the message
- Then tap **"Report"**

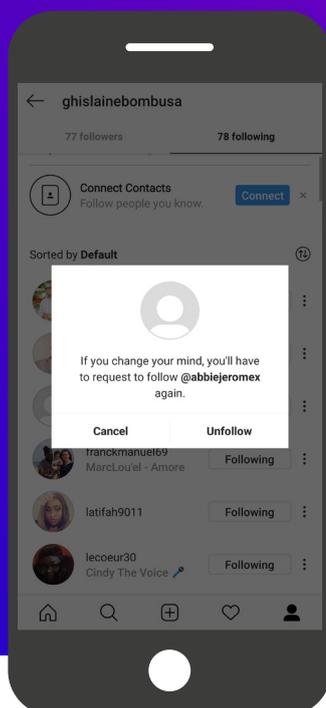
NB. Reporting is totally anonymous



Follower check-ins

How to unfollow someone

- Tap **"Following"** from account profile
- Tap **"Following"** next to any name you want to unfollow. The button will turn blue
- Or you can also go to someone's profile and tap **"Unfollow"**



Permission to unfollow

Young people may unintentionally keep following an account that is having a negative impact on them simply because they haven't stopped to think critically about that person's attitude and the impact it might be having on them.

Conversation starter:

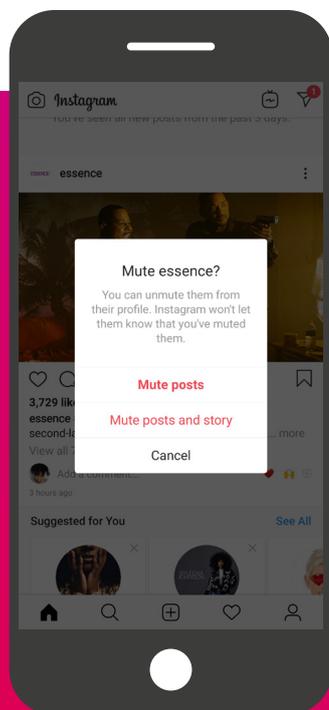
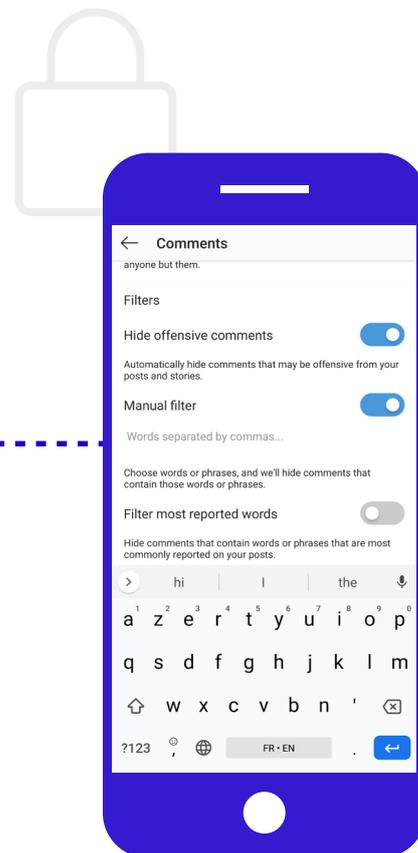
Encouraging a regular review of their follow list can help open up discussion about their wellbeing and be an opportunity to create some distance from any awkward or uncomfortable situations.

Filter it out

Instagram has filters that automatically remove offensive words and phrases and bullying comments. Your teen can also create their own list of words or emojis they don't want to have appear in the comments section when they post by going to **"Filters"** in the comments section.

How to filter words

- Go to your profile and tap **"Settings"**. Tap **"Privacy"** > **"Comments"**.
- Next to Block Comments from, tap **"People"**. Next to Hide offensive comments, swipe to toggle the feature on.
- You can also manually filter specific words or phrases from your posts or stories:
 - Next to Manual filter, swipe to toggle the Go to your profile and tap the menu icon . Tap **"Settings"**. Tap **"Privacy"** > **"Comments"**.
 - Next to Block Comments from, tap **"People"**. Next to Hide offensive comments, swipe to toggle the feature on.



TIP: Muting will keep posts from those accounts from showing up in their feed, but the other person will not know they've been muted.

Mute an account

Through your ongoing conversations, you may identify accounts that your teen isn't interested in interacting with but is hesitant to unfollow, as the person will see their action.

How to mute accounts

If you don't want to see someone's posts in your feed, you can mute them:

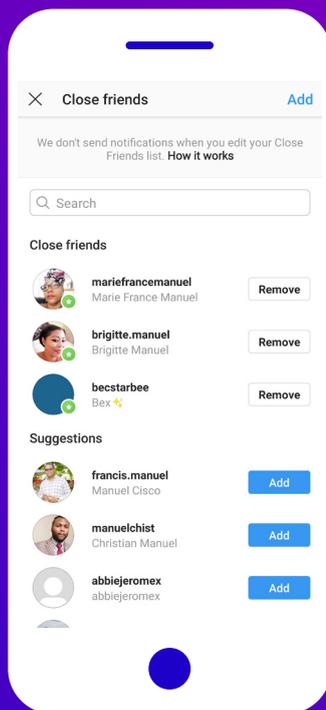
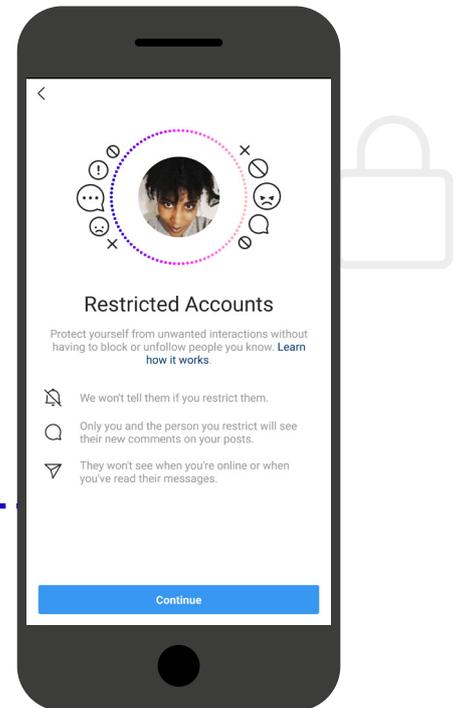
- Go to their profile by **tapping the search icon at the bottom**.
- Type their name into the search at the top and select their profile when it appears.
- Tap **"Following"** below their profile info and tap **"Mute"**
- Swipe to toggle the feature off – next to Posts.
- To unmute them, swipe to toggle the feature on, next to Posts.
- You can also mute them from feed:
 - Tap (iPhone) or (Android) next to their post. Select **"Mute"** then **"Mute Posts"**.

Use “Restrict” to control access

Restrict is another way to control which comments can be seen by your followers or publically. Comments from anyone on your “Restricted” list will not appear publicly unless you approve them first. Restricted people also won’t be able to see when you’re online or when you’ve read their messages. Young people may feel more comfortable using “Restrict” or “Mute” as an initial response, and then blocking or unfollowing if the problem persists.

How to restrict an account

- Access **Restrict** by swiping left on a comment. Through the Privacy tab in Settings, or directly on the profile of the account you intend to restrict.
- Tap **“Restrict”** to add the account to your restricted list.



How to create a Close Friends list

- Go to the **main menu**
- Tap **“Close friends”**
- Tap **“Add”** next to profiles to add close friends

Building strong connections

Young people should be inspired on Instagram and feel empowered to explore new things. However, **it's important to check in and make sure your child isn't becoming discouraged by comparing themselves to others** and feeling that they don't measure up to unrealistic ideals.

Conversation starter:

Ask them about how things like Instagram accounts, or people's lives on Instagram can appear “perfect” when they aren't, can be incredibly helpful, as this can encourage them to follow people who are just as inspiring but more relatable.

Use “Close Friends”

Even with have a private account, there are ways to post that are **even more selective**. The “Close Friends” setting on a story will keep anyone who isn't on a “Close Friends” list from seeing the story. Importantly, people who are unable to see the story won't know that they are missing something.



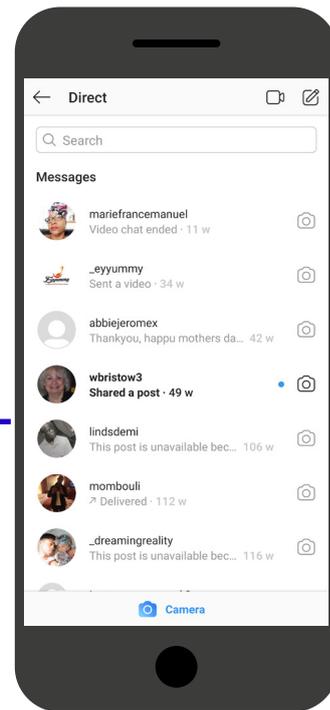
Send messages directly

Direct Message (DM) is the most private way to share on Instagram, so we suggest using it when sharing something very personal – after considering whether or not to share it at all.

How to send a DM

- Tap the  at the top right of your Feed
- Then choose who to share it with (up to 15 people)

NB. You can also send a message to someone by tapping the same icon from their profile.



Share the young people's version of the Addressing the Pressure to Be Perfect toolkit with your child to support them.



[Internetmatters.org/instagram-parents-toolkit](https://internetmatters.org/instagram-parents-toolkit)

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