

A resource by Beyond The Post



In support of



A GUIDE TO SHARENTING

A detailed guide to sharenting responsibly on social media



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FOREWORD



In today's digital era, children's lives are regularly documented on social media (often from birth). While social media has made it possible for parents to capture precious moments and stay connected with their loved ones around the world, it also brings about hidden dangers.

With a passion to safeguard children's online privacy and safety in an era of sharenting, **Beyond The Post** was launched. This is a student-led campaign by 4 final year students from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information at Nanyang Technological University.

We hope that our specially curated E-Resource 'A Guide to Sharenting' provides a fruitful starting point on your mindful sharenting journey. Join us in our effort to make the internet a safer and better place for our little ones!

Happy reading!
Team Beyond The Post

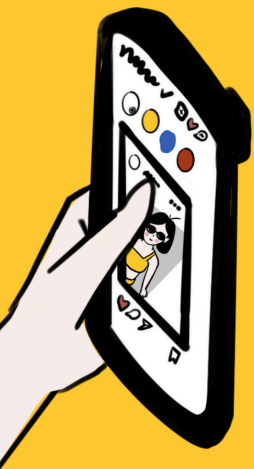
WHAT IS SHARENTING?

You may not have heard of the word before, but chances are, if you've been on social media before, you'd be no stranger to the phenomenon.

According to Collins Dictionary, sharenting is defined as:

“The habitual use of social media to share news, images, etc of one's children.”

In other words, if a parent were to share any information about their child on an online platform, be it in the form of an Instagram story, Facebook post, YouTube video, or even a blog post, they are practising sharenting, the word being a **catch-all term that encompasses all types of social media posting.**



Why sharent?

According to a survey conducted among 107 millennial parents in Singapore, the top reasons they practice sharenting are to:

1. Keep friends and family updated on child's life
2. Capture child's everyday moments
3. Seek support from other parents

SHARENTING IN A NUTSHELL

In today's digital society, sharenting has become increasingly normalised. After all, social media is used by the young and old to share about their lives with others, and parents are no exception.

Did You Know...

90%

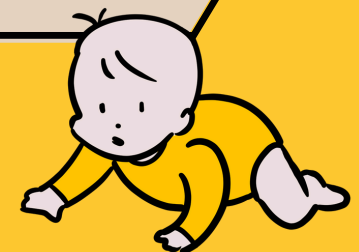
Of toddlers have some kind of social media presence by the time they are **two** years old

1500

On average, parents will post about 1,500 photos of their children online by the time they are **five** years old.

74%

Of parents online use social media to share posts about their families, access resources or seek support from fellow parents.



WHAT IS OVERSHARENTING?

Just as one can overshare about their life to others, one can also overshare the life of their child too.

Oversharenting, a combination of the words, 'oversharing' and 'parenting', refers to the practice of parents sharing identifiable and/or intimate information about themselves and their children online.

What is Personal Identifiable Information (PII)?

Personal Identifiable Information refers to information that can, directly or indirectly, allow the identity of an individual to be inferred, such as one's IC or passport details, date of birth and home address. Here are some examples of PII that could be revealed when a parent overshares:



Child's birthday celebration posts can reveal their birth date, if posted on the same day as the celebration.



Child's uniform may reveal the information of the school that they are attending



Child's full name and IC number on their hospital tag

What is intimate information?

Intimate information refers to an individual's personal or private experiences. Here are some examples of intimate information that could be revealed when a parent overshares:



Child in any state of undress



Inappropriate and graphic details



Embarrassing moments

Case Study: Hey Jimmy Kimmel, I Told My Kids I Ate All Their Halloween Candy

Since 2011, late night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel has posed a yearly Halloween challenge to parents: Tell your kids you ate all their Halloween candy and post their reactions on YouTube. The funniest videos of each year were featured on Jimmy Kimmel Live!.



The result? Viral videos of children's reactions ranging from meltdowns and tantrums to tearful acceptance. While one's first reaction may be to laugh, maybe it's time to stop and consider: How would I feel if I were the child in that video?

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

While there's no doubt sharenting comes from a good place, there have been concerns raised about its possible effects on children.

Studies conducted have uncovered several implications associated with oversharenting in four areas:

1. Online Safety and Privacy

When a parent posts about their child on social media, little breadcrumbs of information revealed in photos, videos and blog posts may be used by malicious parties in the long run. This information could potentially compromise their child's online safety in more ways than one.

According to British bank Barclays, oversharenting may account for **2/3s of identity fraud cases among young people by 2030.**

2 in 3

identity fraud cases among young people will be caused by oversharing by 2030

50%

of images on one child pornography site were taken from social media



Additionally, people can use innocent images uploaded on public platforms for malicious intent. An Australian study found that **roughly half of the images on one child pornography site were taken from social media.**

There are even **role-playing communities** that steal the photos and identities of real children (found from their parents' social media accounts), creating new accounts and identities for them. They then pretend to interact as these false identities.

Case Study: Nirvana's Naked Baby Album Cover

Spencer Elden, the baby on said album cover (now 30), has since filed a lawsuit against the band, claiming that the widespread image of himself naked in a swimming pool constituted 'child pornography', causing him 'permanent emotional distress'.



While his lawsuit was dismissed earlier in 2022, the case gives us much to think about.

How would you feel if you were the baby on that album cover?

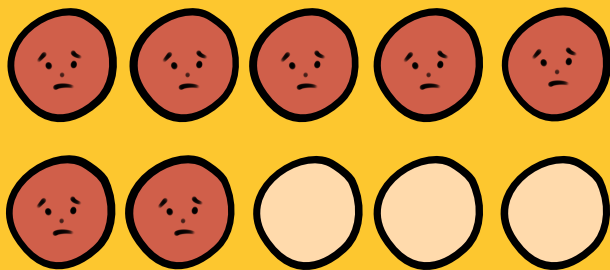
2. Digital Footprint

As soon as a parent shares that first photo of their child online, their child's digital footprint has been established.

A 'digital footprint' refers to the trail of data one actively or passively leaves when using the Internet.

This digital footprint may have far-reaching consequences for a child.

When it comes to employment, **7 in 10 recruiters in Singapore conduct online checks on potential candidates as part of the hiring process.** Therefore, sharenting may impact a child's future job prospects.



7 in 10 recruiters in Singapore conduct online checks on potential candidates as part of the hiring process.

As the saying goes, the Internet is forever. Even if a post is deleted, it can still live on in screenshots, digital archives and videos on other platforms. Any unpleasant moment posted could become part of a child's digital footprint, and may follow them through adolescence, impacting them years down the line.

3. Family Relationships

Oftentimes, sharenting is done without a child's permission, with **only 24% of parents asking for their child's consent before posting.**

For some, this may be because their child is too young to provide consent. However, when older children discover photos and videos of themselves shared online without their permission, they may come to resent the posts their parents made of them years ago. This may lead to strained family relationships.

4. Child's Mental Wellbeing

Although sharing everyday moments of your child online may seem harmless, embarrassing posts of a child can affect their **personal development, self-esteem** and even lead to more serious outcomes such as **cyberbullying**. Frequent sharents may also find it hard to remain fully present with their child, negatively impacting their child's **sense of security**.

What do experts think about oversharenting?



"As children become aware of others' opinions of them, some may laugh it off but others could experience humiliation. **They may also feel hurt and angry that their parents are active participants in sharing their embarrassment,**" said Dr. Lin Hong-hui, principal clinical psychologist at The Psychology Atelier, in an interview with Channel News Asia.*

*read the full article: [Ask a therapist: How does pranking my child on social media affect them in the future?](#) (Channel News Asia, 2022)

We encourage parents to put themselves in their children's shoes and ask themselves: If a similar post of yourself was uploaded, how would you feel?

! Before you hit 'Post', stop and think...*

 <p>Does the post contain PII of my child that could endanger their safety?</p>	 <p>Is my child in any state of undress?</p>	 <p>How will my child feel if he/she sees this content in the future?</p>
 <p>Is there anyone who shouldn't see this about my child, now or at any point in the future? (E.g. a potential employer)</p>	 <p>Would I want someone to share this about me? (E.g. A picture taken of me during my shower)</p>	 <p>Why do I sharent in the first place?</p>



MINDFUL SHARENTING

After exploring the potential implications of sharenting, it is important to know how exactly parents may enjoy its benefits while avoiding its pitfalls.

“Mindful sharenting refers to the practice of parents sharing about their children online, while taking into consideration their best interests, including the autonomy, safety and privacy of their children.”

When sharenting, experts also recommend **three key steps** to kick-start your journey to protect the digital wellbeing of your child.



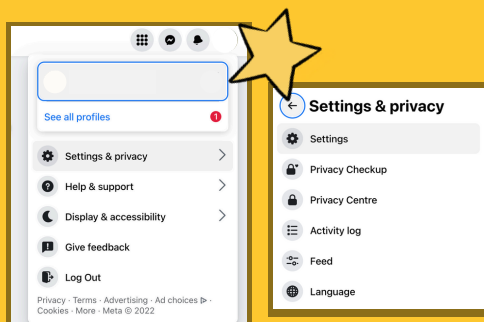
1. Adjusting privacy settings
2. Practicing self-censorship
3. Considering other ways to store memories

*Adapted from [Cliques Click](#) (Media Literacy Council, 2019), and [Beanstalk Issue 36](#) (Early Childhood Development Agency, July 2022)

ADJUSTING PRIVACY SETTINGS

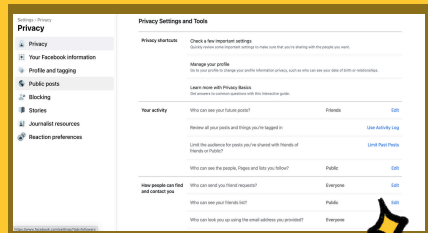
On Facebook

1. Access the privacy settings on the far right corner on your main feed page (Desktop) or your menu page (Mobile)
2. Click the drop down arrow and select the 'Settings and Privacy' option
3. Next, click 'Settings'
4. Click the 'Privacy' from the 'Privacy Settings and Tools' tab



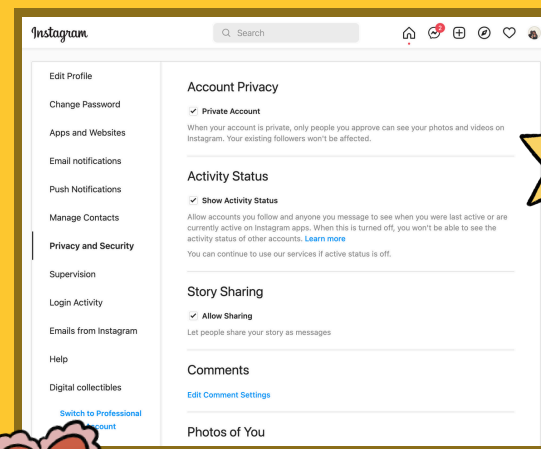
From here, Facebook has a number of categories that allows users to adjust the level of visibility of posts. This includes:

- Managing your profile information and activity
- Controlling limits for tagged posts
- Public post filters
- Managing block lists



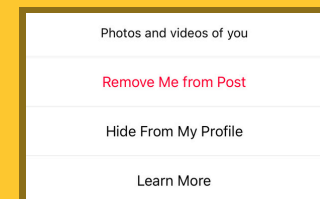
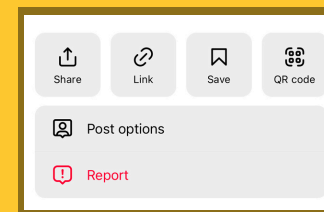
On Instagram

1. Instagram's privacy settings can be found on the far right of your Profile page (Use Instagram's **mobile** application to access the full settings page)
2. Next, click your profile icon and select 'Settings'
3. Once you've reached the 'Edit Profile' page, select the 'Privacy and Security' tab to adjust your account privacy



You can also remove yourself from a tagged post by:

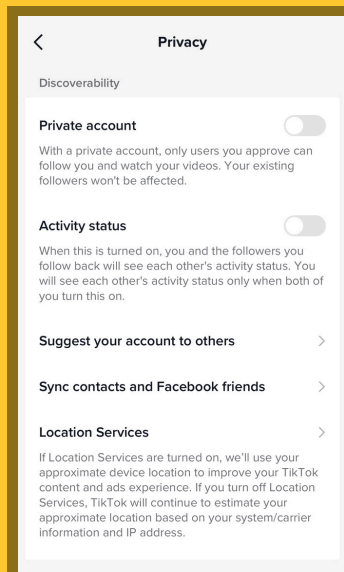
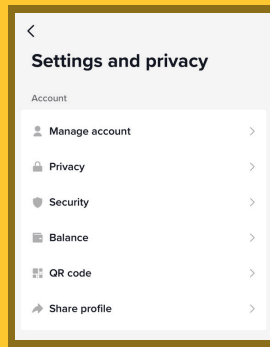
- Clicking the three dots on the top right corner of a tagged post
- Selecting 'Post Options'
- Clicking the option 'Remove Me from Post'





On TikTok

1. Tap 'Profile' on the bottom right
2. Tap the Menu icon on the top right
3. Tap 'Settings and Privacy'
4. Go to 'Privacy'
5. Turn 'Private Account' on or off



Regardless of your account type, other people will be able to search for your account.

But by adjusting your privacy settings, you can control:

- Who can comment on your videos
- Who can send you direct messages
- Whether your account is suggested to others.



Turning off geotagging

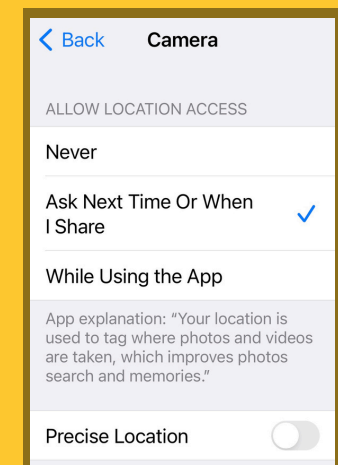
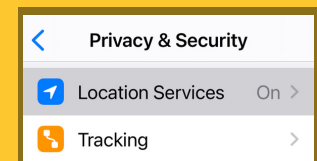
When a photo is taken on a camera app, some electronic devices automatically tag these photos with the location it was taken.

This means that even though a photo posted on social media is not tagged with a location, that location is embedded in the image itself, and can be made visible to the wrong person through just a few clicks on their end.

Thankfully, you can turn off geotagging on your electronic devices by following these simple steps:

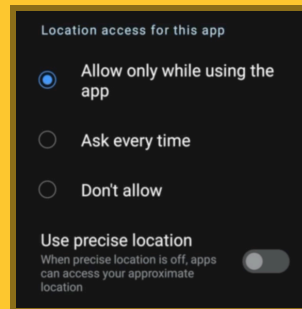
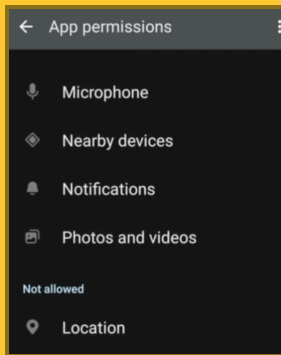
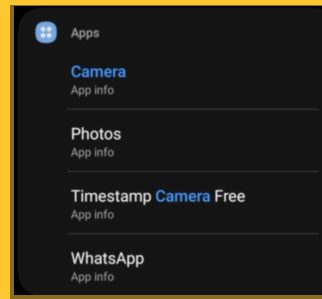
On Apple

1. Open 'System Preferences'
2. Go to 'Privacy & Security'
3. Go to 'Location Services'
4. Tap 'Camera'
5. Adjust your location access to 'Never'/'Ask Next Time Or When I Share' and switch off 'Precise Location'



On Android

1. Open your 'Settings' application
2. Access your Camera App settings
3. Go to 'Permissions'
4. Go to 'Location'
5. Adjust your location access to 'Don't allow' / switch off 'Precise Location'



Still wondering how it's done?

Check out Beyond The Post's website for [full video tutorials](#) on adjusting your privacy settings!

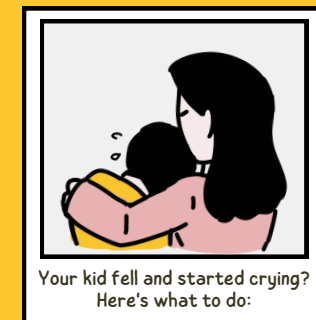
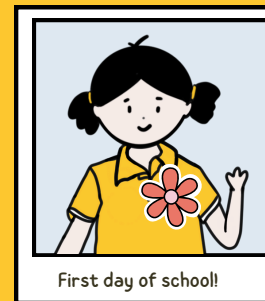


PRACTICING SELF CENSORSHIP

Obscuring details

Revealing details such as a child's school crest, IC number, location, face and intimate parts could place them in danger, or result in embarrassment in the future.

Parents can spot these details and use alternate methods of posting, such as utilising different camera angles, omitting details from captions, or using emojis, stickers and digital markers to hide sensitive information.



OTHER WAYS TO STORE MEMORIES

SCRAPBOOKING



1. Choose a topic

What are the events or moments you would like to document? Having a specific storyline or theme would help in crafting out a layout for the book.

It may seem intimidating at first, so start small by focusing on a specific event or story before building up the rest of your scrapbook!



2. Select the layout of the page

- Select a piece of paper (coloured or themed-based) to be the primary page. This will be used as a template to be build on or accessorised later on.
- Decorate photos with any type of accessory, embellishment or sticker that can also correlate with the theme you had in mind.
- Extra paper can be used as a separate background to a picture as well. This can draw the main focus to the photo, like a centerpiece.





3. Choose your photos

- First, select the photos you would like to include in the scrapbook. Choosing to feature an event on a page would be a good start in deciding its layout!
- Second, choose a focal point for your layout that you want readers to be drawn to. The layout can then be arranged to allow for the photo to stand out from the rest of the items on the page.
- Do note that **not every picture needs to be used** as it can overwhelm the content of the page. Less is more.
- Cropping a picture can help make the picture more prominent in the scrapbook. This can make a half blurry picture useable as well.



4. Embellish with text and decorations



- Captioning your photos and writing journal entries is a great way to recall what was happening in a highlighted moment.
- Take your time to think of descriptive and thoughtful text. The captions you use could include dates, names, brief descriptions, and locations.
- Customize your scrapbook page as much as you want. Your drab pages can have more sparkle, depth, and substance with embellishments.
- The options of scrapbooking embellishments are endless. You can use ribbons, stamps, pressed flowers, watercolor drawings, and even paint chips from your local hardware store.



*Digital scrapbook

If you're pressed for time, assembling a digital scrapbook using ready-made templates on free editing sites like **Canva** is also an option!

Find a template that suits you, insert your chosen photos, and save them as images to look back on, or send them to your friends and family in private chats!

POSTCARDS



Postcards are another way of keeping in touch with your loved ones, without requiring the lengthy text or embellishments of a scrapbook! Simply choose an eye-catching photo, pen a short message, and mail it to your recipient!



Want to explore social media alternatives? Start with Beyond The Post's festive Canva templates!



[Scrapbook template](#)



[Postcard template](#)

PRIVATE SHARING



Want the convenience of sharing photos digitally, without the risks that social media brings? Try sharing your photos privately by creating albums only you and your loved ones can access!

Secured platforms



Google Photos



Dropbox



flickr
Flickr



Private updates

Instead of sharing on a public platform, you can also update your friends and family in private chat groups on messaging applications. For a more 'personal' touch, consider calling your loved ones on Zoom, WhatsApp, Facetime or Google Meet!

WHAT TYPE OF SHARENT ARE YOU?

Take this quiz and find out if you are an Extrovert, Star, Private, or New-Age Sharent!*

1 How often do you post about your child on social media?

- A** Daily - I want to capture and share every moment
- B** A few times a week, to keep my friends and family updated
- C** I tend to keep it to special occasions, like birthdays or holidays
- D** I do not share much about my child on social media

2 When you were expecting, how did majority of your loved ones hear the news?

- A** Through an announcement video I shared on social media
- B** An ultrasound I posted on social media
- C** Through group messages to my friends and family
- D** I updated my friends and family in person



3 It's your child's first day of pre-school! What do you do?

- A** Post an album - my child has grown up so much
- B** Post one photo of my child - it's a once-in-a-lifetime moment
- C** Send updates only to my close friends and family
- D** We will celebrate the occasion privately as a family



4 Your child is making a scene at NTUC. What do you do?

- A** Take a photo/video. I want to show my followers how I handle this
- B** Write about the incident on social media, without a photo/video
- C** Talk about the incident with my friends and family
- D** Keep my child's tantrum private

I chose option 'A' times

I chose option 'B' times

I chose option 'C' times

I chose option 'D' times



If you mainly answered **A**, you are...

THE STAR

Sharent!

Keeps up to date with the latest trends and online platforms



Actively uses social media to document their child's development in real time



Values the connections they form with their online community



Why not consider reviewing your privacy settings and practicing self-censorship?

If you mainly answered **B**, you are...

THE EXTROVERT

Sharent!

Uses social media primarily to stay connected with their loved ones



Their busy schedule makes it difficult to catch up with their peers offline



Updating their friends and family on their child's developments brings them joy



Why not consider updating your loved ones in a closed group chat, or over a Zoom call instead?



If you mainly answered **C**, you are...

THE PRIVATE

Sharent!

Uses social media to commemorate their child's special occasions and milestones



Tries to keep social media updates to positive news only



When it gets serious, they first turn to friends and family privately



Why not consider utilising offline mediums for documenting your child's memories?

If you mainly answered **D**, you are...

THE NEW-AGE

Sharent!



Aware of the potential dangers of oversharing on social media

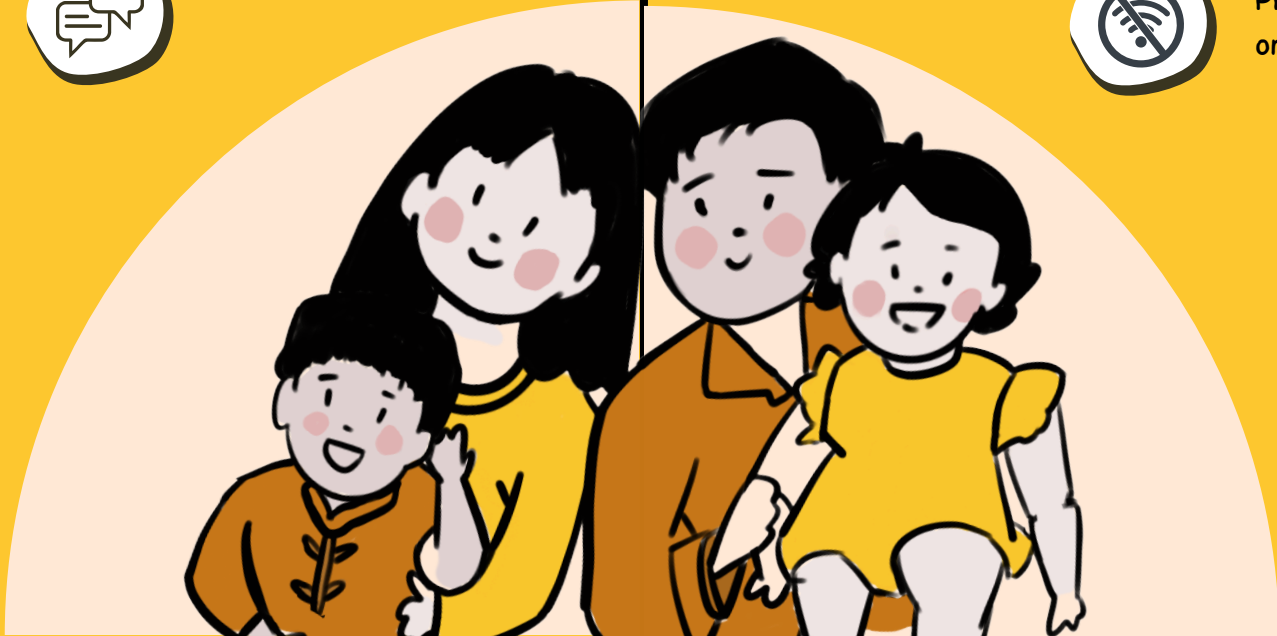


Believes in being 'in the moment' when bonding with their children



Prefers to update their loved ones offline and in person

Why not consider advocating for responsible sharenting among other parents?



BEYOND THE POST'S RESOURCES

Our Sharenting Checklist

- Does the post contain any sensitive information of my child that could put them in harm's way?
- Are there any personal identifiers in the photo that could expose my child's location?
- Is my child in any state of undress in the photo?
- Is there another medium or secured platform that can be used to record this memory?

Check out Beyond The Post's Instagram and Facebook for more information about sharenting.

Take our pledge to safeguard the digital wellbeing of children!



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Find out more about how parents can safeguard the safety and wellbeing of their children online!



Helping Your Teen Navigate Instagram Safely



TikTok Guardian Guide



Screen Smart, an educational comic on online safety. for children aged 6-12



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Media Literacy Council's Resources



Be Internet Awesome Family Guide



Guess The Emoji - Online Safety with Google



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We would like to thank the following organisations for affirming their commitment to making the Internet a safer place for our little ones.

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