# SOS | SAFE ON SOCIAL
## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

# Posting photos of your kids online

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For starters. Talk with your partner to be sure you are on the same page. Discussing these types of consent as a family when your children are old enough is a good idea. It's an excellent opportunity not just to set family rules (after all, your children might share photos of you or their siblings) but also to talk about the importance of being thoughtful, careful, respectful, and kind online and off.

**Reasons people post pictures of their children online?**

Many parents post their kids' stories, photos, and videos on social media because they're proud of their families and want to stay connected with relatives and friends.

**Why do loads of people choose not to show a child's face on social media?**

It's about a child's right to privacy. Children's rights advocates have been urging parents to think twice before sharing information about their kids, including their pictures because there is a conflict between the kids' right to privacy and their parents' right to post.

**Get your child's consent.**

Once your kids are old enough to give their consent, you should ask for permission before sharing any photos. If they don't want a photo shared, respect their decision. Together, you can decide what can be shared and what should stay private and, in doing so, protect their privacy. This will be a great life lesson as well. You are teaching your children about consent by default, and that they own the right to say yes or no to anything about their bodies in real life and online, including in photos.

**How others may use the photo you share of your child.**

Think about whether your child will care about old photos and stories about them on social media, others

may be able to use that information to make fun of, insult, and even bully your child as they grow older. A photo to go from what you think is a cute photo of them in the bath, or when they are sick in hospital, or an inside family joke to gossip and bullying fodder for an entire high school student body.

**What do you do if a  family member or friend shares a photo of your child on their social media?**

You may never know if they do. They may screenshot something or save something from WhatsApp. Make your stance clear, as the parent you absolutely have a right to say no to having photos of your kids online.  If you know that they are sharing them, and you are not comfortable with it, you absolutely have the right to explain child online safety and use this cheat sheet to explain the risk. Give them a copy if you would like to, you have our consent to do that.

**How it could impact your child's future?**

You can't prevent anyone from taking a screenshot of your post and disseminating it beyond your reach. Your deleted posts, look like they are gone from your social media profile, but usually still live on in internet archive web-sites and on social media servers themselves. Consider carefully how your photos and stories may impact your child when they are much older, even an adult. Think about how your posts may impact your child if they decide to be a politician.

**Your Social Media Posts Might Attract Dangerous People**

Photos and videos of children shared by their parents on social media sometimes turn up on disturbing web-sites and forums, some of them dedicated to online child abuse and exploitation.

According to the eSafety commissioner's office in 2015, one site offered at least 45 million images, half of which were photos of children taken from social media accounts. The photos were of everyday family activities and the children were clothed but were accompanied by inappropriate comments. We hear about these cases all to often. Be vigilant check your privacy often and only share photos of your kids with a small trusted circle is always the best option.

**Is there anyone on earth who shouldn't see this about your child, now or at any point in the future?**

If the answer is yes, don't share it.

**Tips**

It's understandable to want to share about your family on social media. If you do decide to share, try asking your children what they're comfortable with and take some precautions.

NEVER post photos in School uniform or using hashtags like #firstdayofschool or geo-tagging the image to where your child goes to school. This is the same for Dance classes, Gymnastics, Sports uniforms, etc. Make sure your child's school never posts the full names of your child alongside images of them online if you have signed the school's permission to publish forms.

Never post photos on your socials that have other kids in them unless you have permission from every parent of every child. Yes, this includes drama performances and school assemblies. Remember you don't

know what is going on in another person's life. We have witnessed kids that have been photographed and the parent that took the image did not know they were in witness protection or the subject of custody orders and DV. This is the reason you sign a permission to publish form at your child's school. Please only ever photograph your own kids to share online unless you have permission.

Remember online stranger danger could be a friend or family member collecting photos of your children. Be vigilant.

Pay close attention to privacy settings on your social media pages. You can use privacy settings, and you absolutely should, but there are always ways around them (such as screenshots), and even when you take something down, that doesn't mean it's completely gone.

Choose your photos carefully and watermark the ones you post publicly.

Ask friends and family to refrain from posting photos or videos of your child or sharing anything from the family on WhatsApp.

If you separate from your partner, make sure they know never to post photos that include your children in their profile shot on Tinder, etc. Also make an agreement on what, if any, kinds of photos can be shared of your kids. Write it, agree on it and sign it in any co-parenting arrangements. It's about your kids safety.

Ask your child what they think is appropriate to share with others. These conversations are useful for preparing your child for the future.

Ask yourself why. You should have a good reason before you post a photo of your child out into the world. Please get in the habit of asking it of yourself before you post.

Is this something you want to be on your child's digital footprint? Even if it's not embarrassing, how does it paint your child? Think about it. How will it look to a future employer when it comes up in searches?

**To report suspected online child exploitation go to:**

**www.accce.gov.au/report**

**If you or someone you know is affected by physical child sexual abuse or exploitation including historical child sexual abuse, please report to police in your relevant state or territory. If you think a child is in immediate danger call Triple Zero (000), Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000, or your local police.**

Keep yourself educated and one step ahead of your kids with what you need to know now sign up today
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