

Social media and friendships

Who is this resource aimed for?

This is a universal resource for secondary aged students but is also specifically helpful for those with a high volume of friendships.

It is not surprising that social media has changed the way that friendships have developed. In the past, friendships were often formed from face-to-face contact such as meeting in schools, neighbourhoods or community groups. Now there is also the option for people to make friends through a range of social media activities.

Social media can be really helpful, especially for people that may find it more difficult to go outside or communicate with others. It can mean that people plan what they are going to say (or type) and can

meet people with a shared interest that they may not be able to meet otherwise.

Different social media have different advantages and limitations. Some may be easier to block things that you feel uncomfortable with, others you can report things that contravene (break) the rules. Sometimes people meet in person those that they have meet online.

Have a look at the statements below and make a decision which ones are a **must**, a **maybe**, and a definite **no**.



Meeting a person you have met online but not telling anyone where you are meeting	Arranging to play online with a friend	Meeting a person online and meeting them at their home to play computer games
Muting a person online because they are annoying	Using the chat function to talk to people	Blocking/mute all chat functions on games
Opening up an image that someone has sent you online	Sharing a private picture of yourself with another person online	Following someone online in every media channel and sending them messages asking where they are and what they are doing on a regular basis
Joining groups online and reading about how they wish to hurt other people	Meeting a person face to face in a public place after talking to them online	Talking about how you want to hurt another person online

Look at the decisions you have made and share with another person. Do they have the same opinion or do they disagree? ?

Here are some specific organisations that might help you if you are worried or want to find out more;

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Command)

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Childline www.childline.org.uk - 0800 1111

childline

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