

AGINFO 36 (2025)

Leaders' guide to navigating the Social Media Minimum Age Restrictions

10 December 2025

Background

Today, 10 December 2025, the Australian government have introduced the Social Media Minimum Age (SMMA) obligation. This new law aims to protect young people under the age of 16 from the pressures and risks they can be exposed to as account holders on some social media platforms.

There is a list of social media platforms which must stop under 16s from creating or keeping an account on their platform. The list includes:

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Kick](#)
- [Reddit](#)
- [Snapchat](#)
- [Threads](#)
- [TikTok](#)
- [Twitch](#)
- [X](#)
- [YouTube](#)

This list of age-restricted platforms will continue to evolve. To see the most up to date list of which platforms are age-restricted and which are not, go to the e-Safety Commissioner's website - [Which social media platforms are age-restricted? | eSafety Commissioner](#)

Worth noting is that:

- Under-16s will still be able to see publicly available social media content that doesn't require logging into an account.
- Most standalone gaming and messaging apps, as well as many services that support health and education, will not be affected by the new law.

What does this mean for Girl Guiding in Australia?

The legal responsibility is on the social media platforms to stop under 16s from holding social media accounts. It is not GGIA's legal responsibility to ensure Youth Members are complying with the law. However, the GGA Code of Conduct requires that all Adults in Guiding adhere to the laws of Australia. No Adult in Guiding should encourage or communicate with members under 16 years on age restricted platforms.

As a Child Safe Child Friendly (CSCF) community, and in keeping with the Code of Conduct, we have an obligation to work within the spirit of the Social Media Age Restrictions. As such, across GGiA, we should aim to:

- Not target or intentionally engage with Guides who are younger than 16 via age-restricted social media platforms; and
- Not target Guides younger than 16 as the audience of any Guiding communications via age-restricted social media platforms.

Minor changes have been made to our CSCF Framework to reflect updates to the law where needed. GGA is working with the SGGOs to update our broader policy position relating to all communication with Youth Members going forward. We will keep you updated on this.

What needs to be done now and how do we do it?

Unit Leaders: Where Units currently connect directly with Youth Members under the age of 16 years using a social media platform, the use of that social media platform should be immediately reviewed.

To ensure Youth Members are complying with Australian Law, Youth Members under the age of 16 should be removed from these groups.

If Units currently use any of the identified age-restricted social media platforms to communicate with Guides who are younger than 16, you are encouraged to:

1. Talk to your Guides in person, about the need to find a new way of communicating with them. Encourage Guides to be inclusive of the needs of the whole group in their decision making.

2. Talk to your Guides and their parents/guardians about alternative communication solutions which could include:

- Replacing the Guide's social media account with that of an adult family member
- Relying on emails to convey non-urgent information
- Using a messaging platform like WhatsApp for time sensitive communication

Note: Please communicate with your leaders that this is also a good opportunity to check that all forms of digital communication with Youth Members of any age also includes the Youth Member's parent/carer.

Supporting the Wellbeing of <16yrs Youth Members

This Social Media Age Restrictions are intended to keep children safer online, but the full impacts of the law will not be understood for some time. Children who are cut off from social media sites may become anxious or feel isolated.

We ask that Adults in Guiding, as always, care for the wellbeing of our Guides, some of whom may find this a challenging time. As such Leaders can facilitate Guides to gain expert support.

If adults become aware of a Guide needing support, they could recommend to the Girl that they:

- **Talk about it.** Chat with their friends, family or someone they trust about how they are feeling.
- **Stay connected in new ways.** Look for alternatives like gaming, texting, voice notes or video calling.
- **Reach out for more support.** Support and content to help navigate the change can be found at:
 - o eSafety - [How will the social media age restrictions affect me? | eSafety Commissioner](#)
 - o Headspace - [headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation](#)
 - o Beyond Blue - [24/7 Support for Anxiety, Depression and Suicide Prevention. - Beyond Blue](#)
 - o ReachOut - [A Safe Place to Chat Anonymously, Get Support & Feel Better | ReachOut Australia](#)
 - o Kids Helpline - [Kids Helpline | Phone Counselling Service | 1800 55 1800](#)
 - o 13Yarn - [13YARN - Call 13 92 76 | 24 /7 Crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders](#)

Need more information?

- For more information on the SMMA Obligation go to [eSafety website](#)
- For more ideas around how to support Guides through the transition go to [Social media age restrictions: Get-ready guide for under-16s | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- For a good digital newsletter by the eSafety Youth Council go to [The Digital Landscape](#)

If you have any questions, please contact admin@girlguides.org.au