

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Tuesday, 8 October 2024

KEEPING KIDS SAFE ON SOCIAL MEDIA – BY LISTENING TO PARENTS

The Allan Labor Government is launching public consultation on age limits for social media, with the findings set to shape a new social media education program to keep kids safe online.

Premier Jacinta Allan today joined Minister for Education Ben Carroll and students and teachers at Mount Waverley Secondary College to kick off an online survey giving parents, teachers and young people the opportunity to share their experiences and concerns about social media use.

Findings from this consultation process will then shape a new social media safety program – *Safe Socials*.

The program will be delivered in schools as a resource for students, teachers and families about how to navigate and live with social media.

Safe Socials builds on the success of other education programs pioneered by the Labor Government, such as *Safe Schools* and *Respectful Relationships*, and the state's Australian-first ban on mobile phones in schools.

A \$3.5 million investment will support the Department of Education to develop the new digital literacy resources.

The program will also include a dedicated website and fact sheets to help parents and carers understand social media safety.

Parents are worried about their kids using social media, but they feel powerless to push back against the tech giants.

That's why the Labor Government will work with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to introduce age limits, so kids aren't using social media before they're ready.

But age limits are only part of the equation. Social media is a reality of life, and young adults need tools to navigate it safely – especially those who are above the age limits of any proposed national ban.

The survey at engage.vic.gov.au/safesocials will be open until November 1, with groups able to participate.

The consultation process will also include a series of roundtable discussions, led by the Parliamentary Secretary for Children, Nathan Lambert, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Nina Taylor – bringing together key stakeholders to capture the diverse needs of the Victorian community.

The process will also inform the Commonwealth's laws for national age limits on social media.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"Parents – and young people – always tell me they're worried about social media, but they feel powerless against the social media tsunami."

"That's why we're keeping kids off social media before they're ready, and giving them the tools to stay safe online once they're older."

Quote attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

Media contact: Zoe McLaughlin 0474 593 035 | zoe.mclaughlin@minstaff.vic.gov.au

“Victoria led the nation by banning mobile phones in schools because we could see the harm it was doing, and we’re now consulting on how to best protect our students from the harms of social media – and developing resources to provide teachers with high-quality, best practice materials to teach digital literacy and safety.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Youth Natalie Suleyman

“There are benefits to social media, but when it comes to kids and young people, the bad often outweighs the good. Age limits will give parents the power to push back against the tech giants, and Safe Socials will help kids old enough to sign up know how to use it safely.”