



The Social Media & Employment Project

A report on the Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery
Early Career Research Award (DECRA) Project: *The impact of social
media on the employment prospects of young Australians*

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Executive Summary

Social media like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok have revolutionised social lives and have had a big impact on how we connect, learn, remember, and even how we work and find jobs. For young people who have grown up using social media, the digital traces of life generated through social media use can also represent important personal histories. However, as young people move into professional lives, their past disclosures can, for better or worse, be resurfaced. What one says and does on the internet can persist, potentially having a negative impact on young people's futures.

This project investigated how young Australians use social media, how they represent themselves on social media when preparing for employment, and how employers use social media for making employment decisions. After rapidly redesigning the study in the context of COVID-19 and stringent lockdown measures in 2020 and 2021, we conducted 13 focus groups with 72 young people aged 16-35 (average age 22.5) and 12 interviews with managers and recruiters who used social media to vet job applicants, all via Zoom. We also conducted an extensive content analysis of 312 international news media stories on people losing their jobs because of a social media post, and an analysis of 36 school technology policies that often covered social media use at school.

Our key findings are:

1. Many young people are **acutely aware of being surveilled and seen on social media** (by peers, family, and both current and future employers) and for some this manifests as anxiety about being 'cancelled' (or the possibility of reputational harm) in the future.
2. The extent to which young people learn about the relationship between social media use and **'professional identity'**, and how to manage privacy on social media, varies significantly and is shaped by peers, parents, and schools.
3. Schools tend to take a **conservative approach to discussing social media** use in their public policies, focussing on risk and bullying.
4. Contributing to a focus on risk are **numerous news stories about people being fired from their jobs** due to a social media post (made by themselves or a third-party where they are featured) demonstrating a public interest in these stories.
5. Some young people **use social media to their advantage** to find work, including in creative fields such as illustration or drag performance, but also as aspiring influencers and content streamers.
6. Young people employ **complex and varied privacy management strategies** when it comes to social media including maintaining multiple profiles on the same platform, using aliases and pseudonyms, segregating audiences both within and across platforms, and using different platforms for different purposes.
7. Recruiters are **using social media platforms in their hiring practices**. This is either using platforms such as LinkedIn to recruit employees directly, or screening personal social media profiles of applicants to determine suitability for a role and judge 'team fit'.
8. In schools and families, there is a need for more **holistic, positive discussion of social media** as a tool for young people that is not just focussed on risk and catastrophe but also acknowledges pleasure, fun, and the productive capacities of social media.

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Introduction and Background

Social media has become fundamental to how we live, from everyday communication, the flow of news and information, leisure, content sharing, and the recording and archiving of personal memories, through to professional networking, 'personal branding', and social media as work itself. We have now entered a period in time where entire generations have grown up using social media. For people finishing high school today, Facebook has always existed. For this generation, social media presents new challenges and opportunities as they embark on pathways towards futures that will largely be dominated by work and employment.

Social media platforms can be powerful, productive tools for young people. They are used to connect people and build communities, to learn about the world and one's self, to build movements of solidarity and social justice, and to simply stay in touch with friends and family (Carlson & Frazer 2020; Moran 2020; Robards et al. 2021; Tiidenberg 2016).

For some people, social media can help them feel like they are not alone in the world. For LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, single parents, people who are geographically isolated, and many more, social media can be a life line and enable important social connections (Nowland et al. 2018; Patulny 2020; Robards et al. 2018).

However, being present in digital spaces also raises a number of challenges that require the combined efforts of many different groups to address. We cannot leave it up to young people alone to solve these problems. In addition to challenges around harassment, bullying, mental health, body image, and more, in our research we focus on concerns about reputation, privacy, and how young people's futures might be impacted by social media use, but also how anxieties and concerns about imagined futures impact on young people's social media use today. Many young people are aware of the risks associated with social media use, including worries about how their personal data are used (Pangrazio &

Selwyn 2018), about privacy (Yao et al. 2022; Duffy & Chan 2019; Hanckel et al. 2019; Marwick & boyd 2017, 2014), and about how future employers might use social media to monitor them (Hurrell et al. 2017).

Research has shown that employers are increasingly using social media to inform their employee recruitment and management decisions (Carrillat et al. 2014; Nikolaou 2014). Using social media in this way may be cost-effective for employers, but raises significant questions around privacy and how to prepare young people for this reality (Jeske & Shultz 2015). A collision between precarious employment futures for young people and the continuing centrality of social media



in the lives of young people continues to be under-researched. For young job-seekers, being on social media can be a means of standing out and crafting a professional identity (van Dijck 2013), of finding job opportunities, and being entrepreneurial (Carrillat et al. 2014). However, a key challenge here is the blurring of boundaries between public, professional, and private lives. Young people should be able to hang out, connect, learn, and grow freely, without worrying that their utterances and mistakes will be used against them years in the future. Learning how to be in the world – including in digital spaces – is also about learning personal limits and respect for others.

In this project, we wanted to understand both how young people imagine their futures through social media (and how this shapes their social media use today), and also how employers are using social media in their recruitment processes and screening practices. Throughout the project, we were guided by three **Research Questions**:

1. What **strategies** do young people use to manage **privacy** and create **professional identities** on social media as they prepare for employment futures?
2. What are the **roles of schools and educators** in training young people into the 'soft skill' of presenting professional identities through social media?
3. In what ways do employers, managers, and recruiters **use social media when vetting prospective employees**?

Methods: What we did

To answer the questions above, we designed this project to have a number of different research methods:

- 13 focus groups with 72 young people, aged 16 – 35
- 12 interviews with recruiters, managers and HR staff, aged 20 – 42
- An analysis of news media articles (n=312) covering job terminations as a result of social media use
- An analysis of school social media policies (n=36)

We did not initially set out to study news media coverage or school technology policies, but the impact of COVID-19 meant we had to pause our primary fieldwork (interviews and focus groups) and make new plans to shift these to Zoom. While we figured this out, members of our team shifted to conducting desk-based research to make the most of the time, which is where these sub-studies on news media articles and school policies emerged from.

In summary, our project had four main 'research pillars':

1. Media analysis
2. School policy analysis
3. Young people (focus groups)
4. Managers and recruiters (interviews)

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Pillar 1 News Media Analysis	Pillar 2 School Policy Analysis	Pillar 3 Focus groups w/ Young People	Pillar 4 Interviews w/ Managers
<p>What are the dominant themes in news articles discussing the role of social media in employment?</p> <p>Methods: Thematic analysis of 312 news media articles, over a 10 year period</p> <p>Keywords: Hiring, firing, all social media platforms, sponsorship, recruitment, etc.</p> <p><small>Robards & Graf 2022 in <i>Social Media + Society</i></small></p>	<p>How do schools frame social media use and behaviour with students in official policy documents?</p> <p>Methods: Thematic analysis of public policies related to technology use on school websites (public and private schools)</p> <p>36 public policies from 200 schools</p>	<p>How do young people conceptualise 'professional identity' in networked publics? Current and future.</p> <p>Methods: 13 focus groups with 72 young people, aged 16-35 (avg 22.5)</p> <p>Groups: High school (x3), retail/customer service (x3), creative (x2), health workers, education, government, mixed LGBTQ</p>	<p>How do HR managers and recruiters use social media to vet potential applicants? Or people booking creatives for shows?</p> <p>Methods: 12 interviews with recruiters, managers and HR staff, aged 20-42 (avg 33.3)</p>

For the news media analysis sub-study, our research question was: what kinds of social media posts get people fired, according to news media stories? To answer this question, we draw on a content analysis of **312 news media articles**, sourced through three news databases: Factiva, MediaCloud, and the Australia & New Zealand Newsstream. We used these databases because of their comprehensive and global collection of news articles. The Australia & New Zealand Newsstream database was selected to increase the representation of local sources as the project is based in Australia. We used search terms “social media AND employment AND fired” and also replaced “social media” with specific popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Searches were conducted in the first half of 2020, to include a ten year window, with all articles collected published between 1 January 2010 and 17 July 2020. This timeframe was set because social media platforms became widely adopted and ubiquitous during this time. The number of stories about people being fired as a result of a social media post increased over time, with just 16 stories in 2010 and 14 stories in 2011, compared with 71 stories from the first half of 2020 alone in the final corpus. This demonstrates a growing public interest in these kinds of firings and continued scrutiny of social media by employers. Stories were initially coded to identify the nature of the dismissal, the industry, country, and which social media platforms were involved, and then examined in more depth to provide a deeper reading. [See the section below on Pillar 1 for a summary of findings.](#)

For the school technology policy analysis, our research question was: what do school technology use policies say about social media? We examined the public websites of 200 schools in Australia (sampling the biggest secondary schools in each state in Australia, balancing government and private schools) to find **36 publicly available technology policies**. These policies were then analysed and coded to identify themes and explore how these policies framed the use of smartphones, social media, and how to act in digital spaces. [See the section below on Pillar 2 for a summary of findings.](#)

For the focus groups and interviews we recruited our participants through Meta’s advertising platform (including Facebook and Instagram) and word of mouth, with volunteers completing a form that allowed us to recruit a diverse group of participants. Participants also received a gift card to thank them for their participation.

Of the 72 young people we spoke to in focus groups, the average age was 22.5. 38 were female, 32 male, and two were non-binary. 21 were employed casually, 17 full-time, 11 part-time, and one ran their own business (so 64% were in some form of employment). Some combined some casual work with part-time work. 26 were unemployed. 34 were currently studying, often combining study with some form of work. For those that were employed, they worked in a wide range of jobs from delivery driving, hospitality and retail to health, education, and government jobs. They were also from a diverse range of backgrounds in terms of race and ethnicity, including self-identified Caucasian (23%), Australian (19%), Asian (15%), Indian (13%), Chinese (11%), Jewish, Swedish, Malaysian, Filipino, Croatian, along with a number of descriptions that involved combinations (ie 'half white, half Fijian Indian, and 'Chinese heritage, Australian raised', 'Afro/Persian'). The group was also diverse in terms of sexuality, with 70% identifying as straight or heterosexual, 19% bisexual, and the remaining 11% as gay, queer, pansexual, or asexual.

The employer group was smaller (n=12) but still relatively diverse in terms of gender (7 female, 5 male) and race/ethnicity (7 Australian/Caucasian, 3 Indian, 1 Taiwanese, and 1 South African/Dutch) although all identified as straight or heterosexual. The employers were from a range of industries and backgrounds including specialised recruiters in Human Resources teams for large companies, and also more local managers in workplaces such as tech business, a bank, a hospital, schools, and a grocery store. This group was still relatively young, with the average age being 33.

The interviews and focus groups were all conducted on Zoom, with the exception of one focus group that was able to take place in a high school in metropolitan Melbourne between COVID-19 lockdowns. Focus groups were usually an hour in length, with recordings commencing after an initial ethics preamble and resolving technical problems (average recording length = 50 minutes), whereas interviews were sometimes shorter and ranged between 30 and 50 minutes (average recording length = 41 minutes). Focus groups followed a three-part structure, first centering on a discussion of social media use in general and privacy settings in particular, second talking about social media use at school or work, and third discussing how social media use might be understood in the future as today's young people become leaders and managers. Interviews were also semi-structured, beginning with general questions about the participants' work, role with hiring and social media use. We had open-ended questions about hiring practices and how social media is used during the recruitment process. We also created social media posts to prompt discussion around how certain disclosures might affect the recruitment process, informed by our news media analysis in Pillar 1 of the study. The open-ended format of the focus groups and interviews allowed the participants to discuss whatever topics arose, and allowed us to better follow themes and probe for a deeper understanding as we went. The recorded interviews were uploaded to Dovetail for transcription, and coded for analysis.

The research process and the impact of COVID-19

Our research took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic had a number of impacts beyond the immediate health impacts, including social isolation, pressures around housing, employment, study, and relationships, and also led to mental health challenges for many. Although not directly explored in our research, the pandemic has caused a major shift in the professional life of many Australians, as more jobs shift to 'work from home' or 'hybrid' roles, and notions of 'professional identity' have also changed. Originally, we intended to conduct interviews and focus groups in person, building relationships through partner schools, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic we had to modify our research design. We shifted largely to digital methods, recruiting participants through Facebook and Instagram via boosted posts and conducting interviews and focus groups on Zoom.

Pillar 1:

News Media Analysis

As part of our background research, we undertook a news media analysis of stories about documenting job terminations due to social media posts. We analysed a total of 312 news media articles that documented stories of employees being fired because of social media content. The articles were divided into two broad categories. The first category is 'self posts' (n=264), which consist of self-made content that resulted in job termination. The second category of 'third-party' (n=48), was content that was created by other people that resulted in a job termination.

The top themes in the stories about why people were fired because of a post on social media were:

- **Hate and discrimination**, including racism (racist posts by the fired person or posts by others capturing/recording racism), LGBTQ+ issues (including both queerphobic posts OR posts where people were fired for coming out as LGBTQ+ by conservative employers), and misogyny
- **Violence and abuse**, especially prevalent in posts by others ('third-party') used to hold powerful actors (such as police) to account
- **Offensive** posts, including 'insensitive' or 'controversial' posts
- **Workplace conflicts** including privacy violations with clients/patients, disparaging co-workers, and criticising management

Racism was the most common reason people were fired in these news stories, followed by other forms of discriminatory behaviour (such as queerphobia), offensive content, workplace conflict, political content, acts of violence, and abuse. In an article in the journal [Social Media + Society](#) we examined these narratives through the lens of what van Dijck (2013) describes as 'professional value', and ultimately our goal in this longer article was to question how these stories normalise the 'hidden curriculum of surveillance' (Duffy & Chan 2019) putting additional pressure on employees and young people who are called to act on social media through the prism of future employment.

What kinds of jobs featured most prominently in these stories of people being fired because of posts on social media? Law enforcement was the most highly represented occupation in our corpus of stories on job terminations (n=62), followed by education workers (n=41) (including school teachers, principals, academics, coaches, and teaching support staff), hospitality (n=27), media (n=24), medical (n=22), retail (n=12), government (n=10), and transport workers (n=10). The remaining stories covered firings from a wide range of occupations, including finance, manufacturing, public service, technology, and real estate. It was unsurprising that the jobs most represented in our study were police, teachers, and health workers. These are 'everyday people' in highly accountable and 'public' roles, responsible for the safety and health of the people they serve. This aligned with other research, such as Rossler and Scheer's (2020) study that found participants thought it was appropriate for police departments to use social media as an indicator of character, and Drouin et al.'s (2015) research that indicated teachers were also held to a higher standard when it came to their social media conduct than people in other professions. This analysis helped inform the design of the focus groups and interviews covered in [Pillars 3](#) and [4](#) below.

Pillar 2:

School Social Media Policies

The second pillar of this study was an analysis of the policies, tools, and documents that high schools in Australia used to frame and govern technology use, and in particular social media use by students. We did this to help us understand what kind of issues schools highlighted and what kind of advice schools offered students when it came to social media. We acknowledge that these documents, found on public websites, might not actually inform day-to-day conversations about social media, but they are one piece of the puzzle and allowed us to get an understanding of how social media use was understood by schools without intruding or taking up time from teachers and school administrators during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The broader context for these policies is also key here. A number of other documents exist in schools for governing student social media use beyond 'policy', including classroom management / reference tools and images, and education materials that are aimed at the development of self-regulation in terms of 'cyber safety', overall mobile phone use, respectful relationships and communication (at times developed or delivered by external trainers such as 'Safe on Social'). 'Behaviour matrixes', images representing school values systems (eg. posters on classroom walls, and the school website) are significant for capturing 'what should and should not be done' on social networks in terms of respect and inclusivity and are at times used as a point of reference to visualise and discuss student behaviour with parents.

There is considerable variation in school social media policies depending on the school, state or territory, and the depth and focus of these policies also vary. Of the 200 school websites we examined, only 36 (18%) had policies that dealt with social media and technology use. This was higher in some states (in Queensland 33% of school websites visited had such policies, and 28% in Victoria) and lowest in the territories (0% in the NT, 5% in the ACT). Policies could relate to the overall use of devices at a school, or be in response to online behaviours that relate to the school's value system. Policies that address online behaviours are often directed towards online bullying, harassment and consent. However, there are some policies that cite cyber safety/security as well as privacy. Social media policies are often not stand-alone, instead they are supplemental to other existing school policies.



There were three broad themes in our analysis of these policies, and a range of sub-themes for each:

1. **Opportunity:** Identities, social connection, friendship, teaching and learning
2. **Risk:** Sexting, child pornography, school reputation, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour, drug use, mental health and wellbeing, miscommunication, public exposure, security and identity theft, teacher and student relationships
3. **Futures:** Later regret, loss of control, reputational harm, and uncertainty

Risk was clearly the dominant focus in these documents, as they served as risk management mechanisms for students but also schools themselves. There are a number of documents that exist in schools that outline student social media use beyond simple 'policy'. These include classroom management, tools and images for reference, phone use, communication and educational materials that are used for the development of self-regulation and cyber security. These are often developed and delivered by external trainers.

Teachers also have a responsibility in directing personal mobile phone use in class amongst students, and setting clear expectations when it comes to phone use and value systems. However, there is ambiguity around the responsibilities of teachers in their own personal and professional use of social media.

Understanding both the themes in the news media (Pillar 1) and the ways schools frame social media use (Pillar 2) was helpful for us in approaching the design of our focus groups and interviews in Pillars 3 and 4.

Pillar 3:

Themes in the focus groups with young people

Building on what we learnt from the news media analysis and the school social media policy analysis, our focus groups with young people explored understandings of and strategies for privacy on social media, how social media was discussed at school and/or work, and tips for people just starting out on social media. We also discussed how young people imagined what is said and done on social media today might come up again in the future. We used examples like leaders, athletes, and celebrities to talk about how highly visible people on social media had been judged for what they say and post, and we explored how this influenced their own social media use and practices.

We identified a number of themes in our focus groups, but to return to our research questions we can map these themes to preliminary answers to these questions:

RQ1: What **strategies** do young people use to manage **privacy** and create **professional identities** on social media as they prepare for employment futures?

Consistent with general research on young people's attitudes and behaviours around social media and privacy (Yao et al. 2022; Duffy & Chan 2019), **for our participants it was common to restrict access to**

profiles, setting them to private. Albert (19, Male) explained 'I have private social media accounts, so they're not open to the public because it's not really my jam and yeah, I just keep everything kind of close to me. I don't really want to be publicly accessible, even on Facebook'. Some participants varied their privacy settings across platforms, for instance Finley (25, non-binary) told us about how they were more careful with Facebook but they used an alias on Instagram and the purpose of their profile there was a bit different: 'my Instagram is under a handle that's like, not at all related to my name or like a name I'd have on a resume. So it's a bit more like, like off the cuff and has like, you know, like stupid memes and like jokes I post and things like that'.

Despite Facebook normalising the use of 'real names' on the internet, **using aliases, pseudonyms, or handles that did not connect to 'real names' was common** for other participants too. Jade (18, Female) described how she used an alias on TikTok: 'Yeah... my TikTok is under a username that's not identifiable to me. And it is like only queer people or people who I'm like very comfortable with'. Jade's point here illustrates how different platforms can be used to connect with different groups and communities, and how using a username that is not connected to a 'real name' can help create separation between different groups.

Not all of our participants were equally as worried about their privacy settings. Jasmine (16, Female) for instance, said she was 'very public' on all of her social media platforms except for Snapchat: 'I don't really care who sees what I post'. She explained she wanted to explore streaming (on Twitch, for instance) and content creation, and to be successful here she understood she had to develop a significant social media presence. Logan (23, non-binary) also explained that in pursuing their career goals in drag performance and fashion, building a public profile through social media was vital:

my primary interest in being present on social media is as a public figure. And so I use Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit for all of my drag stuff. And then when it comes to my upcoming fashion design business, I'm using TikTok in addition to that, not because I really enjoy the platform, but a lot of the demographic that I am selling to will be present on that platform (Logan, 23, non-binary)

In this way, Jasmine's 'very public' approach to social media and Logan's ambition to become a 'public figure' are strategic, based on their professional goals. It's important, though – even for people aspiring to become social media influencers, content creators, public artists, and streamers – to reflect carefully on the boundaries in their lives and what they are and are not willing to share in different contexts.

Most of our participants were also discerning with who they accepted friend and follow requests from on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. For instance, Finneas (18, Male) explained that he would only accept friend requests from people he knew, or at least see if he had other friends in common, to ensure he had 'some degree of familiarity... but even then I still prefer to have talked to them first'. Beyond initial decisions about who to friend or accept as friends/followers, our participants also described revisiting the list of people they let see their content. Shari (21, female) for instance, explained: 'I regularly go through a cull of my friends list, because we do add a lot of people fleetingly. So I try to keep it [the number of followers] very low because I think there was some point where I had like a ridiculous number of friends, like over a thousand or something. But yeah, I didn't, you know, I just thought it was pointless with all these people seeing my page, so I just limited it to about 100 or something like that'.

When it came to **adding or accepting follow requests from people at work**, this was more complicated. Finley (25, non-binary) explained that when they were working their hospitality jobs 'it's pretty much okay to like drop the veneer and chat a bit of shit with the people you're working with', but in other more professional roles ('like not-for-profits or company places'), they felt they 'had to sort of be like on all the time. So sharing

my social media would be too revealing'. This is a great example of how the expectations of workplaces (such as levels of professionalism and a sense of 'being on') shape young people's boundary-work when it comes to social media.

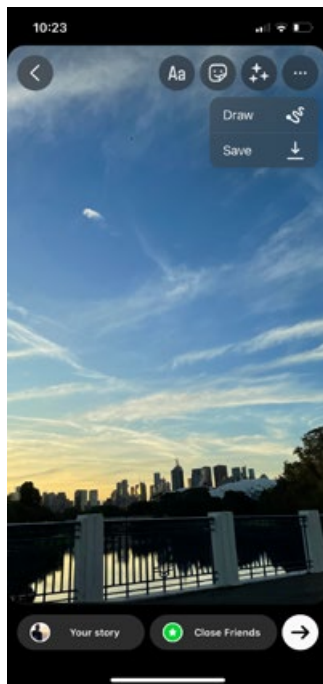
Using different platforms for different audiences and groups was also common.

Mitch (28, male) talked about how he used different platforms in different ways. He explained that he wouldn't put anything 'controversial' on Facebook because he had such a wide network of people there, whereas on other platforms like Instagram where he had a smaller network of close friends, he could post more freely without worrying how all the people in his wider network might read it. A related privacy strategy was **maintaining multiple profiles on the same platforms**.

David (18, male) described how his friends used a second account on Instagram, where one was more public, and the other 'more their personal life, you know, not the one that we used to show to the wider spectrum of people'. Lucy (19, female) also maintained multiple profiles, and varied what she posted across them, using aliases and pseudonyms as well: 'Like **I tend to really filter the content** so that I'm posting very little on my main accounts. That's more just for people who know me and then I have **other accounts that I have under different names where I can post more freely**'. Lucy was careful to manage her posting and privacy strategies because she wanted to go into a career of nursing and midwifery, which she saw as requiring a particularly professional image because the job meant she was in a trusted role with high expectations. She explained, 'I have to be very conscious of what I post, especially if I share opinions about, you know, childbirth and things like that about midwifery practices. I have to be very, very careful about that or not share a lot of information about what I'm doing or who I'm working with because **that can have an impact on my career as well in the future**'.

Our participants also reflected thoughtfully on their **social media use over longer periods of time**, as they scrolled back through old posts or old posts were resurfaced to them algorithmically ('on this day, X years ago' or 'memories'). Kody (23, male) explained how he would **periodically review old posts** to decide if he wanted to leave them or delete them: 'For a while, like over the last year, when memories – cause memories pop up on Facebook, like on this day – so if I see something that's like, you know, maybe a little cringe or whatever, I'll just, I'll just delete it there. As far as tweets, probably every couple of weeks, [I] just scroll back through and see if the tweets I tweet are still necessary on my profile'. Kody worked in a marketing team, and so was especially aware of the image he was projecting both personally and professionally. Ally (20, female) also described going back through her profile when she used to post 'permanent posts', but now she **tends to post more temporary stories that have a limited time period of visibility**: 'I used to go back and edit the posts that I thought were embarrassing. Cause that's probably what they were and well, nowadays I just don't do permanent posts. I just put on my story and that's a temporary, like 24 hour window. I just, yeah. So it's all temporary'. While the move to these more temporary forms of posting on social media are welcome, because they give users more control over how they share and with whom, it's important to remember they can be taken out of context and shared through screenshotting. However, they do challenge the persistent-





by-default logic of earlier forms of social media, where posts would stay up until deleted.

In our focus groups, privacy strategies and imagining professional identities on social media were **closely connected to imagined current or potential employers** who may view the profiles of our participants. Often, this led to a conservative approach to the content they would post. For instance, Eva (20, female) explained that anything she wouldn't talk about in a job interview would be out of bounds for social media too: 'so as far as things like political views, religious views, anything that is kind of a slightly darker humour, regardless of whether that... makes up your current identity. If it's not to be mentioned in an interview, I probably, I wouldn't post it'. Similarly, Anil (24, male) took a very careful approach to what he would post on social media, because of how future employers might interpret it: 'I'm like really cautious with regard to what I post on my Instagram, I'm like kind of, low-key conscious that my potential employers might check it out and they might form a negative opinion of me. Especially in terms of, if I like go out, have a good time, I kind of refrain from posting anything just because it might come back to haunt. I mean, maybe I'm

being a bit paranoid at this moment, but yeah'.

These conservative, cautious, and careful approaches to social media use are the product of sustained panics around what young people say and do on social media. These worries work to produce what Duffy and Chan (2019) describe as the 'hidden curriculum of surveillance' that young people like Eva and Anil have internalised. The down side here is that young people always feel like their everyday use of social media is being watched: they don't have the freedom to post happy memories, share their views, or experiment through digital media, because of concerns around how future employers might read them and how their posts may come back to 'haunt' them.

Despite these various strategies described above around privacy and professional identities on social media – like strict friending practices, using aliases, using different platforms for different groups, maintaining multiple profiles, and regularly reviewing old posts and friends lists – there was still **a concern that posts could be taken out of context**. Howie (25, male) for instance warned that 'people can take screenshots and... use it against you'. Ally (20, female) was also worried about screenshots, explaining 'even if you delete it [a post on social media], it's still like been there. One of my friends who has a screenshot [of an old post] that they send to me sometimes, like just as a joke. It always stays with you'. This concern about the persistence of digital traces through screenshots – subverting the user's ability to edit or erase their own posts, outside the control functions platforms have – was troubling, and points to the need for better technological and social solutions.

Overall, our participants had developed a complex range of privacy management strategies, often connected to emerging or imagined professional identities. The use of social media privacy tools indicates that young users are aware of how to use the privacy tools provided by platforms. However, the use of multiple/fake name accounts, processes of regularly reviewing old posts or friends lists, and concern around screenshots implies that our participants feel that the privacy tools alone are inadequate to ensure their privacy. They often have to take extra steps to protect themselves and revisit whether their previous choices – about posts or friends – align with their current selves and imagined future selves.

RQ2: What are the **roles of schools and educators** in training young people into the 'soft skill' of presenting professional identities through social media?

While partially answered in our analysis of school policies (Pillar 2), we also asked young people themselves about the role of schools and educators in helping students to understand how to use social media in the context of future employment. **The guidance young people get on how to craft 'professional identities' on social media varied a lot.** Some people do get some of this at school, but it's also about figuring it out as you go, from platform-to-platform and job-to-job. For instance, Sana (35, Female) explained 'the closest thing we had to sort of social media for professionalism was back in high school, they got someone to come in and chat to us about LinkedIn in high school... and there wasn't really a conversation about what's appropriate... for me it's just been sort of feeling it out... I just kind of **absorbed how to act from what I saw**'. For this reason, it is important to model different forms of social media use, comparing what is appropriate with different groups such as close friends (Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) family and wider groups of friends/acquaintances (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, etc.), to what goes into a more professional profile that might be more like a resumé (LinkedIn) or a portfolio of creative work (Instagram, Tiktok, etc.) or a networking tool (LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.). However, at the same time, **we must also draw on and centre young people's own knowledges when it comes to new social media platforms**, and rapidly changing conventions for how different platforms are used. Learning here is a dialogue.

The range of experiences with training and support provided in schools was often **underpinned by broader policies around whether or not mobile phones and social media were even permitted at school or in class.** At Jeff's (17, male) school, mobile phones and thus social media use at school was banned, following an incident in class: 'There was this one time, there was a viral video of a teacher [taken] in class, so they banned phones. You can't go to class with your phone. Well you can, but when you get caught there will be consequences. So phones are not allowed in school'. On the other hand, in the very same focus group, Akari (18, female) explained that phones and social media were an important part of school life for her: 'In the prefect teams, the leadership teams as well, we use social media to campaign and advertise for certain events that were coming up. So like all the prefects, I helped them make all the posters, but we post them online... on Instagram. And then ask everyone to reshare. It just spread the word around'.

For Finneas (18, male) the support at school was only at the level of 'cyber bullying... it was very bare bones. It was just like, don't use any of the school computers to do anything dodgy, and... no cyber bullying. It was quite basic'. Whereas for Eva (20, female) she recalls a 'whole day session in both high school and primary school' devoted to discussing privacy and social media. She remembered discussions at high school about using Google to search for your name and any aliases or usernames on Instagram to see what results appeared:

So I guess from that experience, I just realised, yeah, it's, it's not that private, even if you do set it to private, but I'm also kind of like, well, you do have some discretion as to what you post onto social media... Like you post, some like really dumb things when we were young. Yeah, I definitely did, but it's yeah, there should be, you do have a certain level of discretion (Eva, 20, female)

Even the earlier support she received at primary school she considered beneficial, despite not fully realising it at the time: 'So my primary school actually did have people come in and tell us about like the legal ramifications, I didn't understand any of it at the time, until maybe later in high school'. Eva's experiences of **early discussions of social media privacy helped frame and anticipate further discussion later on**, scaffolding these reflections up and providing space, language, and strategies for managing privacy and being more considered with social media use.

Pillar 4:

What recruiters and managers said

RQ3: *In what ways do employers, managers, and recruiters use social media when vetting prospective employees?*

The final part of our study was focused on social media use in the recruitment process. We wanted to understand how recruiters and managers use social media during the recruitment process and how it affects their decision making. We asked managers and recruiters about how they make their hiring decisions and how social media affects their judgement.

The recruiters and managers discussed the use of **common screening practices**. These screening practices are used universally across all jobs and by all managers/recruiters. Recruiters first look at resumés, skills, cover letters and sometimes LinkedIn. This is the basic form of screening that is used to see if the candidate meets the minimum requirements for the job. But employers also often look beyond the minimum job requirements, to get a good **workplace or team ‘fit’**, looking to see if they can get a better understanding of a candidates’ character and personality. Saanvi (26, female) – a recruiter for a large telecommunications company – described how she undertook a preliminary assessment of candidates, but then the hiring manager was interested in other qualities beyond skills and experience:

The hiring manager is not just looking at this person, to see if they can do the job, right. Experience and skills is something I assess. I look at that in terms of their CV in the phone screen. The hiring manager is also looking at fit. Will this person fit in the team? You could have a great person with all the skills, really does a great job, but if they don't get along with the team, the people around... A lot of the roles that I deal with in terms like strong stakeholder engagement is significant, right? They are meeting with a lot of people, quite high senior managers.

Employers who screen social media profiles often look for ‘red flags’ that might impact on workplace fit. This is of course highly subjective and can be different between employers, professions, and career stage. Common ‘red flags’ that were mentioned include posting about drug use or extreme alcohol use, illegal activity, and talking negatively about co-workers, bosses or a company they worked for on social media. Posting about ‘politics’ was also a contentious issue that could disrupt workplace fit, although this was difficult for participants to define. Some described objectionable content as material that was ‘really far left or really far right’ (Sam, 20, male, supermarket team leader), ‘politically incorrect’ (Jack, 42, male, highschool coordinator), or ‘political commentary that is also... discriminatory’ (Naomi, 42, female, government recruiter).

Discussions around professional identity on social media were also highly subjective and varied depending on the industry and hiring manager. Employers have differing ‘ideals’ of what professional identity looks like and what is ‘acceptable’ in a non-professional context too. Certain jobs were more stringent when it comes to

a 'professional identity'. **Careers in education, health, and government work appeared to have a higher standard of what is viewed as an appropriate 'professional identity'.** This is likely due to the public visibility and 'guardian'-type roles people in these professions take on. April (34, female), an office manager in a hospital department, explained the reputational risk associated with posting about drugs or alcohol:

I guess it just comes down to being aware of, of what you're posting and, and who those posts are visible to at the end of the day, if you're employed, I guess you're sort of putting your reputation on the line and it could come back to bite you in the ass. If you're posting, you know, crap about drugs or alcohol or anything and your employer happens to see that then yeah. That obviously is not representing your company very well.

LinkedIn was seen by recruiters and managers as a good resource for both employers and job seekers. Job seekers are able to use LinkedIn to promote their professional identity, away from platforms where use might be mixed, for instance on Facebook or Instagram. For employers, LinkedIn affords keywords search that can be used on candidate profiles to quickly identify candidates for a role. This seemed to be a more common practice among larger corporate employers. Shray (31, male) was a recruiter for a large company, and in addition to preliminary application and qualification checks, he also used Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to do background checks on applicants:

We use Seek, and we also look to see if there is any possible candidates through LinkedIn, like to filter and try to get in touch with them sometimes. Sometimes you get replies through direct messaging, usually it's LinkedIn. Depending on the company [he is recruiting for] and how quickly they want it [the job position] to be filled. Obviously most people in LinkedIn, most of them are professional... compared to other social media, it's very focussed on your employment and employment history, certifications, and your qualifications. So it's kind of a shortcut.

Being professional and creating a professional identity online that stands out to employers through these platforms was seen as a possible advantage for the recruiters and managers we spoke to. This did involve some level of job candidates having to 'market' themselves. Especially on LinkedIn, **presenting or sharing work-related content, or stories related to professional development, was seen as creating a professional identity.** Carter (35, male) was a senior recruiter at his company, and explained the importance of reflecting on how you want yourself to be portrayed when considering more professional social media use, balanced with 'social' use:

You need to see the balance a little. So it's not all just social focused or party focused... you need to be able to see the side that is professional, someone who's driven and that sort of thing. That could be really good. Ask yourself when you are posting general content, who do you think that's going to go to in the future and what are you trying to portray? What are you trying to put out there? And is that something you'd want to have to represent the future? And you'd be proud of in the future? Just remember that that's key for later on in life and how it may impact you.

Reactions to mock posts: Alcohol, bikinis, conspiracy theories, and vaccination

As part of our interviews with recruiters and managers, we used example images of social media posts that we had fabricated ourselves based on the Pillar 1 news media analysis to prompt discussion. We mocked up five social media posts to elicit reactions from employers: two on alcohol consumption (depicting different levels of consumption), one of a woman wearing a bikini on a beach, and two 'controversial' text posts (one 'flat Earth' conspiracy theory and one anti-vaccination post with racist elements). We put these to the employers to ask them what they would make of these posts if a potential employee had posted them. The idea was to get them to engage in some hypothetical scenarios to test and better understand the way they read and interpreted different social media posts. The goal of this exercise was to better understand the tensions between private and professional life, and how employers react to personal social media in a professional context. We used these posts as a way to get the recruiters talking about specific examples.

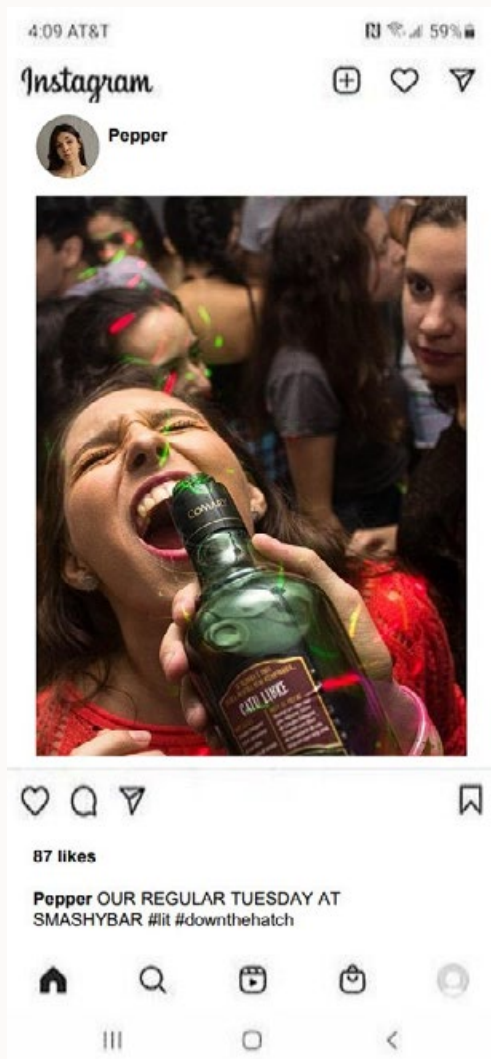


***Nothing negative**, obviously just two guys celebrating St. Patrick's day. So I don't think there's anything wrong with that. They're obviously having a good time dressed up, no issues at all.*
Avril (34, Medical)

*He's at St. Patty's day. And I'd be wondering, is he in New York or is he overseas or what's he doing? Look, it's... I would say it's okay. **But probably because he's got alcohol in his hand, it's probably not a good look.***
Jack (42, Education)

*I wouldn't go based just on this or even consider, but again, like the person's having a good time on St. Patrick's day, and this is probably your friend or colleague. And, you know, **I don't think that would cloud my judgement** as much adding or not adding or, you know, going ahead with this person.*
Ariel (27, Recruitment)

*I kind of loved some Patty's day myself. So to me that, that in itself, **that one single picture is neither here nor there.** People will celebrate St. Patrick's day. **I don't necessarily see that as being a huge issue.***
Naomi (42, Education)



This is probably **perceived as a little bit more irresponsible**. They're not having a drink. They're drinking straight from the bottle. Yeah. It's our regular Tuesday [reading comment]. That's a weekday. Yeah. Yep. And if they called in sick on Wednesday. That'd be pretty sus.
Sheryl (30, Medical)

Obviously the comment says our regular Tuesday at 'Smashy bar'. So one might think that this is something that this person is going to be doing every Tuesday. **So how is that going to affect their employment on a Wednesday when they come into work?**
Avril (34, Medical)

Yeah, that one, I'd probably be like okay, alright. **I might look at a few more photos and see if this is a regular recurrence.**
Naomi (42, Education)



*Yeah. Well, that's quite obvious, isn't it? Can't see the beach can yeah? That would never be a good look. **Keep that in your private photos in your phone.***

Jack (42, Education)

*Yeah. I was just going to say as well, like I'm pretty, I'm, I'm pretty open-minded so I think other people it would affect, especially at the bank, but yeah, I will say, **I think it depends on the person that you get who's reviewing or interviewing because lots of people are far more conservative, so.***

Linette (41, Bank)

*Someone who likes to travel, I suppose. Enjoy the beach and enjoy the sun. Having a good time. Again, good photography, so this is marketing. I'd be like, **"oh, okay. This is good".***

Saanvi (26, Recruitment)

*Yeah, no, **I have no issue with that whatsoever. That wouldn't, that wouldn't concern me.** Yeah.*

Naomi (42, Education)



***That probably would deter me,** especially seeing as we're being one of the first to roll out vaccines during this time. I mean we're medical people, we believe in science.*

Sheryl (30, Medical)

*Personally, I think with things such as COVID, **you really need to keep your opinions to yourself.** I don't think you need to air all over social media and for myself working in a healthcare role, if I saw something like that, then **that'd be a huge no-no for me.***

Avril (34, Medical)

***That's not good.** That would, if you were putting that up online, that would, yeah. **That would be a bit of a no-no I think** it's, it's a sensitive thing at the moment. Everyone is entitled to their opinion, but controlling bodies will always outweigh the individual. So, look, if you're going to do that well, then people are going to judge you for the writing, something like that, regardless, regardless if you agree with them or not, yeah. **You have to have a bit of discretion in what you're doing** and what you believe in society.*

Jack (42, Education)

So that to me would concern me.** The first thing is that person probably wouldn't be eligible for employment as a teacher in [State] because you have to be double vaccinated. That would concern me **that could potentially be a deal breaker, to be honest.

Naomi (42, Education)



***I would question the intelligence.** And again, I would probably, if this was thrown at me, **I would really test who, who they are on the phone screen.** Like I'm fairly, you know, probe a lot to really get, you know, that, that level of intelligence out.*

Saanvi (26, Recruiting)

*I don't even know. That's a very unusual thing to post. They sound very different and very unusual and **it probably would be a bit of a red flag to me** because it makes you look like a little bit crazy or not all there. So again, that stuff doesn't need to go on social media. So yeah, a bit of a red flag.*

Avril (34, Medical)

These prompts revealed a number of perspectives. The recruiters had mixed viewpoints regarding the two drinking posts, with the St. Patrick's day post generally being viewed as a celebration or a good night out, with only one participant, Jack (42), who worked in education, reading it as negative. In contrast, Naomi (42), who also worked in education, had a more neutral outlook towards the St. Patrick's day post. She does not view the post as a 'huge issue', even stating that she likes 'St. Patty's day' herself. This contrast in outlook between two different education workers, responsible for recruiting teachers, is noteworthy as it highlights the variability in what is viewed as acceptable and unacceptable on social media within a single industry in the Australian context.

Unsurprisingly, the second drinking social media post elicited more unfavourable responses, centred on a woman out at a bar drinking straight from the bottle. Sheryl (30) and Avril (34), who both work in the medical industry, perceived the post as being irresponsible and careless. They both noticed immediately from the comment that the person in the post is regularly going out to drink on a Tuesday. Both also had the impression that this was unprofessional behaviour and expressed concerns over how this would affect employability. Again though, Naomi (42) had a more neutral outlook, preferring to see if this was a regular occurrence in the context of other posts before making a decision on how this would affect her view of the candidate. While this was a small group of recruiters, this contrast between opinions on the same social media post reveals that there is variance in what is seen as inappropriate between industries. Both our recruiters and our young participants (in Pillar 3) reflected on how the expectations around 'professional identity' on social media varied from industry to industry, which was also confirmed in our new media analysis (Pillar 1) where we found that police, teachers, and medical employees were held to a higher standard when it came to social media use.

Inspired by a story in our news media analysis of a basketball coach in the US being fired after posting a photo of herself in a bikini to Facebook (Robards & Graf 2022), the bikini post at the beach had mixed reactions from our participants. Saanvi (26, telecommunications recruiter) read it as being associated with travel, enjoying time in the sun, and having fun. Linette (41, bank manager) had a more neutral opinion, noting that it really depended on the person doing the hiring. While it is beyond the scope of this report, it is also worth noting the role age, gender, and cultural background play here, where young women in particular are often more closely scrutinised for their social media use (Warfield 2017).

The final two social media posts were text-based and contained what our recruiters saw generally as controversial content, the first post contained anti-vaccine rhetoric with some racist undertones. Unsurprisingly due to the nature of the content, the posts were viewed in a very negative manner: 'red flag', 'no-no', 'deal breaker'. Due to the content containing racism and denial of science, participants in the medical and education industries regarded these posts as significant 'red flags' and the person who made the post would not be a good 'fit' for their workplaces. These examples work to demonstrate how social media posts can contribute to decision-making around who gets hired and fired. Employers interpret social media posts based on their own frames of reference and the industries they work within.

Tips for young people

We asked both young people in focus groups and employers in interviews what advice they would give to young people just starting out on social media. We used these responses to compile two one page guideline documents: one for teachers, schools, and parents; and one for young people themselves. See [appendix 1](#) and 2.

Conclusion

This study has identified a range of strategies employed by young people to manage privacy on social media, with a focus on social media use in the context of employment and employment futures. We studied high profile news media stories of people being fired because of a social media post, and have also explored the role schools and educators play in training young people in the 'soft skill' of presenting professional identities through social media. While this varies from school to school there is significant appetite for more time to be spent on this in schools. Importantly, we have also included the voices and perspectives of employers and job recruiters to understand their practices related to the use of social media in job vetting and recruitment processes.

We have found that because of a focus on the risks associated with social media use – in the news media and in the way schools frame social media use – young people can often be quite anxious about the possibility of future reputational harm from social media. On the one hand this has led to young people employing complex and varied privacy management strategies when it comes to social media including maintaining multiple profiles on the same platform, using aliases and pseudonyms, segregating audiences both within and across platforms, and using different platforms for different purposes. At the same time however, this does put the burden on young people, as they navigate the 'hidden curriculum of surveillance' (Duffy & Chan 2019) on social media – not just managing friends, family, and other people in their lives on social media but also imagined future audiences like potential employers. This pressure to imagine how social media disclosures might be interpreted by future hypothetical audiences results in a significant burden for young people. On the other side of the equation, many employers see what is on social media – even posts intended to be private – as 'fair game' when it comes to vetting job applicants. We would argue for a reversal of that burden, such that managers and recruiters observe boundaries between personal and professional social media use, and respect the privacy of applicants and employees alike. We acknowledge however that this is a difficult broader cultural problem embedded in heightened expectations around 'professionalism', and complicated by the celebrated centrality of work and career in people's lives. Ultimately, we hope this study and this report will help advocate for reducing the burden on young people who have grown up on the internet, and reorienting responsibility to be shared with employers who should be called on to respect boundaries around privacy on social media.

Where to next

The next phase of our project will be writing academic articles and book chapters for publication, and working to get the summary findings covered in this report out to as many people as possible. In particular, we want to get the guidelines we developed working with young people and employers to schools, teachers, parents, career advisors, and young people themselves. We welcome any media enquiries or invitations from schools to speak to parents, teachers, and students about this research.

Please contact brady.robards@monash.edu for more information.

About our team

Brady Robards



Chief Investigator

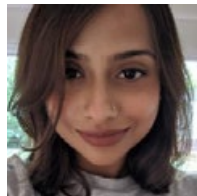
Associate Professor Brady Robards is the Chief Investigator on this project, and was the Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) Fellow funded to undertake this study from 2019 to 2022. Brady is in the School of Social Sciences at Monash University. His research is in the sociology of youth and digital cultures, with expertise in young people's social media use, qualitative digital research methods, gender, and sexuality. Email: brady.robards@monash.edu



Darren Graf

Research Assistant

Darren received his Masters in media studies from Monash University in 2019, on the topic of digital privacy in social media. Darren played a key role in this project, leading the data collection for Pillar 1 (News Media) and coordinating the logistics around participant recruitment and the scheduling of focus groups (Pillar 3) and interviews (Pillar 4). Darren has also worked on data analysis, the organisation of findings, and data collection around news coverage of the role of social media in both recruitment and employee termination.



Richa George

Research Assistant & PhD Candidate

Richa is a PhD candidate in the School of Social Sciences at Monash. Her previous research focused on the domestication of Netflix by young people in India and her research interests include young people, digital cultures, gender and power. Richa's PhD project is exploring social media use and the formation of identity and gender among young men from marginalised backgrounds in Australia. In the Social Media & Employment Project, Richa contributed to supporting focus groups (Pillar 3) and data analysis.



James Goring

Research Assistant

James is a Research Fellow in the school of Education at Deakin University. His research interests are the sociologies of youth and education. On this project James coordinated the school social media policy analysis (Pillar 2) and also led the development of school partnerships.

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Appendices

A guide for Schools, Teachers, and Parents on how to help young people think about social media and their futures

The Facts:

1

Young people who use social media are experts on how social media platforms work and the cultures that exist on social media, and we can learn a lot from listening to them.

2

Young people can benefit from support, guidance, and conversation to figure out boundaries, friending/following strategies, and how to interpret the content they are seeing.

3

It's important to understand that social media platforms are often seen by young people as private spaces, or spaces where they can hang out with their friends and also figure out who they are, away from prying (adult) eyes, so we need to be respectful of that.

4

Lots of young people today don't have the same kinds of liberties young people in previous generations had to explore, experiment, and make mistakes – think about how far your grandparents, parents, and you could roam around town unsupervised when you were young. How has that changed? Today young people are monitored and controlled by lots of systems and people, so opportunities to hang out informally have largely gone online.

5

This one is not new, but many young people are also often very anxious about their reputations and how they are seen by different people: friends, teachers, family, and even people they haven't met yet like future bosses, uni lecturers and admissions officers, and friends they might make down the line. Social media makes this more complicated.

6

We need to help young people develop strategies and tactics to look after themselves, and each other, without adding to the anxieties and pressures they already face.



The Tips for Parents and Teachers (from young people themselves, and employers):

1

Talk to young people about privacy settings:

Each platform has a number of different privacy settings that all users should learn about, and check on every now and then (as the default settings can change). Look at your own social media privacy settings, then talk to young people about theirs. Go and look together at the different settings in apps, like Facebook's 'Privacy Checkup'. For private accounts, talk about reviewing and tidying up follower lists every now and then too.

2

Reflect together on the purpose of social media – why are you using it?

Just for friends? Building a business or portfolio of work? Aspiring influencer? To stay in touch with family? Learning about new topics? Connecting with different communities? You can have multiple profiles and use different platforms for different purposes, and modify your privacy settings and your sharing strategies for each.

3

Discuss moderating use and and curating content:

We have to take control over our social media, not just time spent on apps (although this can be helpful) but things like unfollowing or muting people or content that is distressing, nudging or training algorithms to show more of or less of the kind of content you want to see, and going back to archive, delete, or edit old posts and tags from time to time.

4

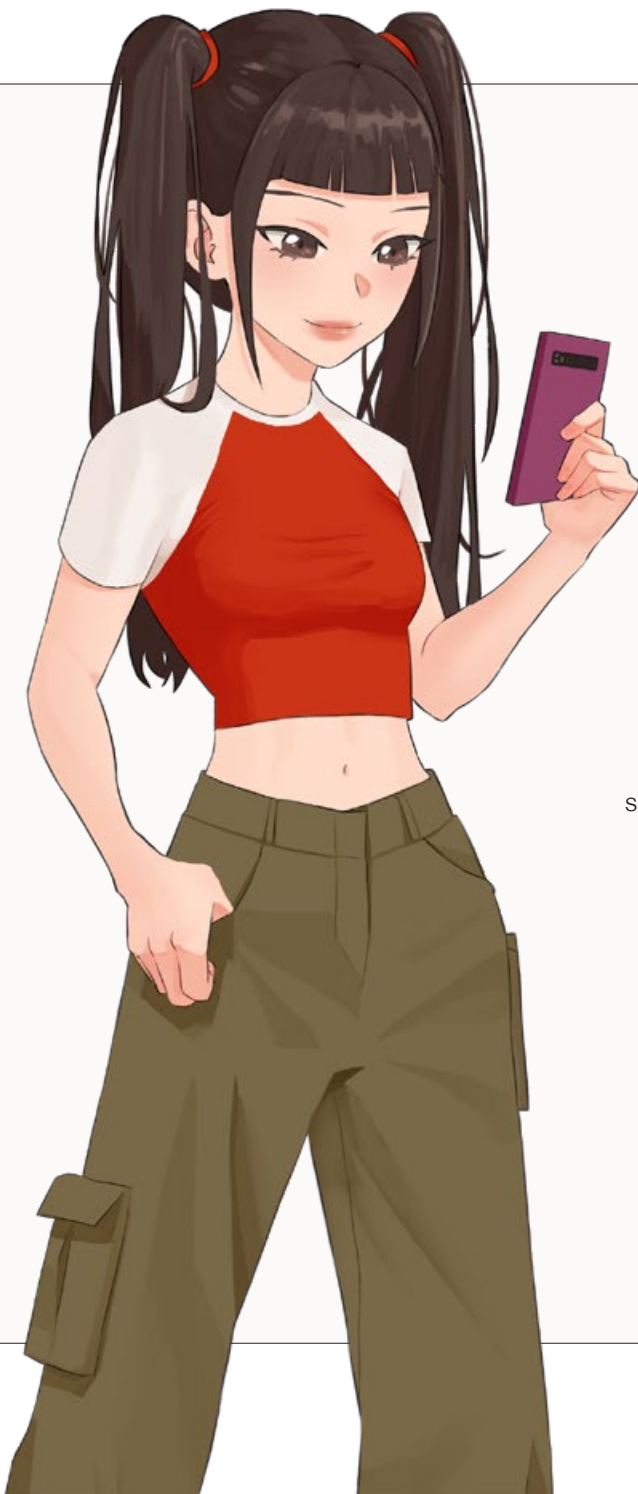
Be data conscious:

Talk about boundaries with information that gets posted (such as any addresses and the names of schools or workplaces) but also explore what data of yours social media companies collect and use (and why they do that).

5

Like any social space, there are risks and dangers with social media, but they can also be fun, help us learn and connect, and reflect on our own lives. Talk to young people about how they look after themselves and their friends, and how to balance the risks and the rewards.

A guide for young people to help you think about social media and your future



We have all said or done things we regret or wish we could take back – that’s totally normal and part of growing and learning.

Social media can make this more complicated though, as what we do and say can stick around and be taken out of context.

Think of cringey posts we made when we were younger, pictures or videos other people take of us and put online, or screenshots that circulate and are saved in places we can’t even see.

Some employers are really good at respecting boundaries and acknowledging that people grow and change over time. What we say and post when we are in our early teens is different to how we will think and act in our 20s and 30s. But some employers think that everything online is fair game when making hiring decisions, so we need to be aware of the reality. Up to 90% of employers use social media to vet job applicants. How do we best prepare for this?

Tips from young people and employers:

1

Check your privacy settings!

Each platform has a number of different privacy settings that all users should learn about, and check on every now and then (as the default settings can change). Check to see who can see what, and make use of functions like Instagram's 'close friends list' to share stories with smaller groups. If your account is private, every now and then review your followers list too.

2

Think carefully about what you are using social media for:

Just for friends? Building a business or portfolio of work? Aspiring influencer? To stay in touch with family? You can have multiple profiles and use different platforms for different purposes, and modify your privacy settings and your sharing strategies for each.

3

Social media moderation and curation:

We have to take control over our social media, not just time spent on apps (although this can be helpful) but things like unfollowing or muting people or content that is distressing, nudging or training algorithms to show more of or less of the kind of content you want to see, and going back to archive, delete, or edit old posts and tags from time to time.

4

Be data conscious:

Be aware of the personal information you post, such as any addresses, the school you go to, where you work, and other identifying information. Also explore what data of yours social media companies collect and use – take a look for instance at Facebook's ad preferences they have for you (Settings > Ad Preferences).

5

Remember things can be taken out of context and screenshot.

Look after your friends, and point out when you think things they have posted are not okay, might come back to haunt them, or might upset someone else. Be respectful of the privacy of people you follow too.

The Social Media & Employment Project