

Talking to new people on social media



When you are chatting to new people on social media you cannot actually see who they are or how they react when you say things.

It is a sad fact that not everyone is kind or behaves well towards other people.

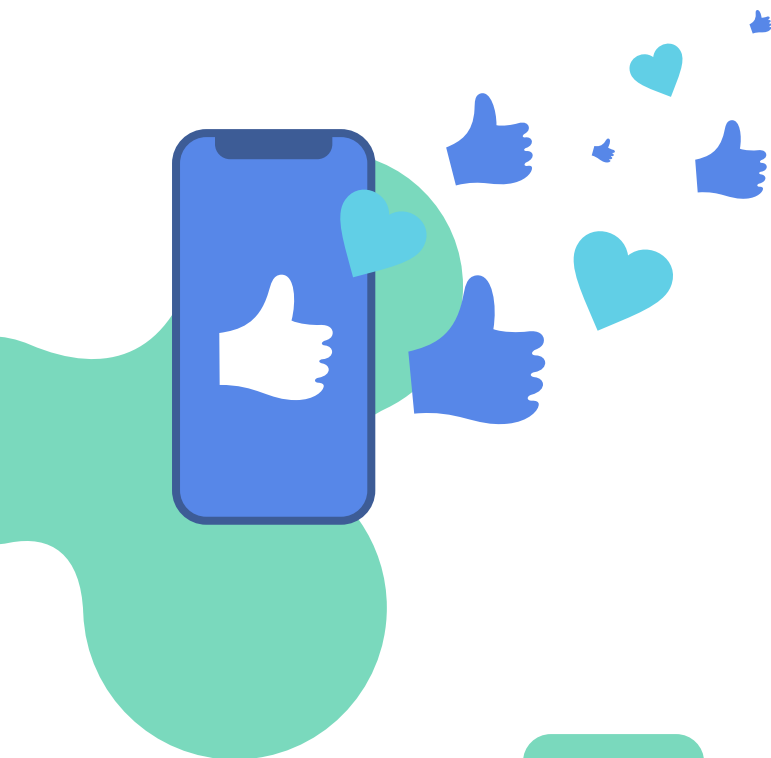
Because we are humans we love to connect with other people, to chat, laugh and share. But it is best to do this with people you know well.



Does having a huge list of friends on social media show I am popular?

Not really!

This is because people can quickly see that you have simply added all sorts of people as friends whether you know them or not.



But I love getting lots of 'likes' so I need a lot of followers

Yes, it does feel good when we get likes, but **they have no meaning if they are not from real friends** – like people you know and care about.



I want lots of people to see my photos

We all want to be admired – but we need to look for this feeling of being admired by people close to us that we know offline and trust.

This is because people we do not really know can try and make us do things we would not normally do – just so we can get to feel they admire us.

Make a group chat with people who care about you like family and close friends.



But I feel they are not strangers!

Many young people say this because they have been chatting to someone online for a while and they feel they know this person. But if you think about it – **anyone could pretend to be someone else online.**



So how can I grow my friends list safely?

- Follow other young people you meet at school, youth clubs, sports or out-of-school clubs.
- Add a sister or brother, cousins and other family members
- Connect with people with similar interests to you – such as joining a group
- Invite people from your contact list (that you already know)
- Leave nice and helpful comments/emojis on other people's posts you have an interest in



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