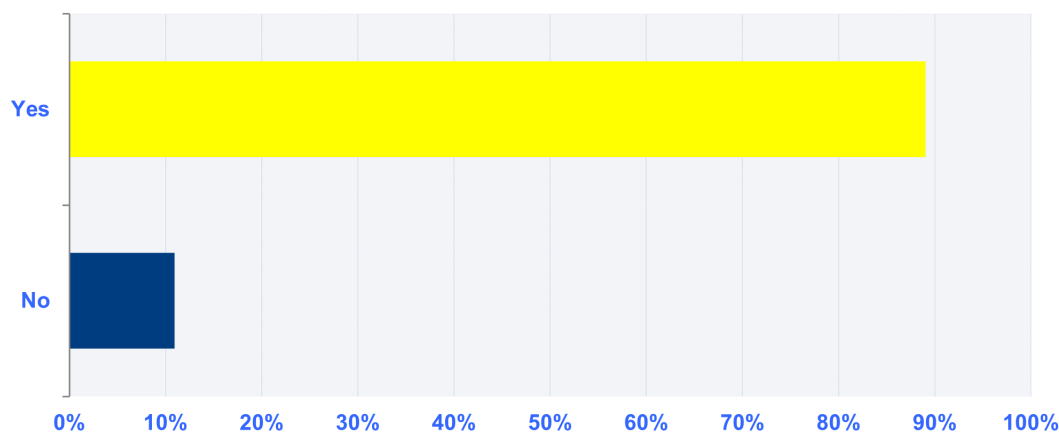




Should SA Children Under 14 Be Banned From Holding Social Media Accounts?



The SA state government is considering banning kids from social media.

The Australian-first legislation would ban children under the age of 14 from holding social media accounts, such as Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram and X.

Premier Malinauskas said the ban is motivated by growing evidence that social media is harming children's mental health.

SAASSO recently asked parents and school staff if they agree with banning kids under 14 from social media.

- 89.06% voted in favour of the ban
- 10.94% voted against the ban

998 respondents completed SAASSO's survey.

92.64% of respondents were parents.

42.89% worked in a school.

- 90.08% of parents voted in favour of the ban.
- 75.34% of non-parents voted in favour.

- 92.33% of school staff are in favour of the ban.
- 86.56% of non-school staff are in favour.

- 96.26% of school leadership are in favour of a social media ban.
- 95.19% of teachers voted for the ban.
- 91.74% of SSO's voted yes.

While there was overwhelming, across the board support for a ban on social media for children, many comments questioned how and if such a ban could be implemented.

There was several comments along the lines of, 'I voted yes, but how will this work'?

A number of comments also singled out YouTube as being a useful education tool for teachers and children.

Others noted that age restrictions for social media accounts already exist.

Selected Comments



Not sure about YouTube. That already has child restrictions and they use it for learning.

It wont work. It may help some parents reasoning with their child "you can only get snapchat at 14". But those whose parents don't try to restrict will just log on anyway, then use their parents account to verify.

I think if we ban it they will want to do it more and find a way to use it anyway. I think it comes down to parents and monitoring their accounts. Educating the kids on cyber safety. My main question is how would it be monitored and what's stopping the child from putting a different birthdate on there.

This is such a problem! Please help us to fix this dire situation of screen addiction in our young people.

They won't all respect this legislation but will send a clear message to families that this material is dangerous.

I feel they are to young to understand the gravity of their actions prior to this and can do things that can easily get them into trouble.

Social Media has a huge detrimental impact on students education! There are significant issues that flow into school, leading to lost learning time and huge increase in workload for teachers and leaders.

The phone ban is working well in our school, perhaps this will also.

If your child has ever been bullied you wouldn't hesitate to vote yes.

As a mother and a high school psychology teacher, I believe that children's brains are not developed enough to be adequately able to navigate the addictive, isolating, and damaging environment that social media creates.

I voted yes but how will this work? I read in your (SAASSO's) update last week that Australia will use an 'age assurance' system. This is just a self declaration of age. It doesn't prove anyone's age - fundamentally useless.

Am unsure how this can successfully be enforced and monitored

I work as a senior nurse for child and adolescent mental health service. Social media has a huge influence and for the most part negative pull on young people. Too many young people don't have the cognitive capacity/ability to use social media safely and are highly vulnerable to its power and influence.

I don't like the precedent but we have to do something

Children under 14 shouldn't even have a phone let alone internet access to silly apps

I don't know how this would work but something need to be done to protect children from online content

My child has learnt more from YouTube than what he has learnt from school. If guided social media is not a bad thing.

I voted yes, but my primary children's teacher sets YouTube videos for the kids.

Good idea.

Worth a shot.

Children are being exposed too easily to not age appropriate materials and information. And having access to social media also means the children don't have a switch off time... they get home and then are wrapped up in this social media world.

I've ticked yes but it feels like censorship

My daughter learns how to build Lego on YouTube.

Many kids will get around the ban but that's not a reason not to try.

Provided they are used in an appropriate way with parental oversight I don't have a problem with it. Facebook is very useful for sharing team information and practice videos for my daughter's dance team.

Definitely primary school age kids should not be on social media. Problem with setting an age is that you will get a mixed bag in year 8 of school where some will have and some will not.

One of my kids is ready for social media. One isn't. My children my decision.

I applaud your ambition, but I'm skeptical of it happening

I think the theory is sound but unsure how it could be implemented. Parents and the social media companies need to be on board. Many of the accounts children now have they shouldn't.

Something addictive that can do harm. Think alcohol or cigarettes - banned until you are 18. Why not the same for social media? Given the addictive nature and potential harm to mental well-being.

Voted yes but you're trying to put the genie back in the bottle

Not healthy for students under 14 years. I total support this intervention. Hopefully it will be successful.

How do you plan on policing this? Children lie about their age on social media. Parents let their children have access. Police hands are tied, it's not like they are going to be arresting people (or the children) for having access to social media below the age of 14.

They already have a 14 year old age limit. How is Mali going to enforce it?

I voted yes, but kids YouTube is very useful for school and all sorts of arts and craft and kid friendly content.

Voted yes but there's a big difference between Tim tok and kids YouTube and messenger.

Some apps are useful tools but some are rampant with bullying. Anything is worth a try.

I think the ban should go until you are 18, but one step at a time. It's just not healthy and what benefit does social media provide. Bullying, celebrity obsession and perpetuating unrealistic beauty and lifestyle aspirations

I'm voting yes but won't this leave them inexperienced and vulnerable at 15?

I think this legislation would help parents be able to enforce guidelines and make it easier for them to be able to challenge pressure from their children.