



## INSTAGRAM

Instagram: yet another phenomenon that has swept our social media world, with the largest users being our young people!

### What exactly is Instagram?

Instagram is an online photo sharing application where users can upload photos directly from their "smart" device and creatively edit them as well. Think of it as one's personal picture book.



### What is the importance of Instagram to a teenager?

Instagram, like other social media applications, plays a very influential role in your teenager's social life. They use it to fit in and feel trendy, learn about themselves and as well as how to relate to others. Acceptance and popularity seems to be of significant importance for teenagers on Instagram. The number of followers, and *likes* on their pictures seems to be correlated with how they feel about themselves in real life. Teenagers want to build relationships in this virtual world, and want the biggest amount of followers. They do this by making their profile as interesting as possible by posting pictures, quotes and videos. Teenagers seem to believe that this reflects on who they are as a person.

Though the program has its pros, it also has its cons and it can be quite harmful to your child in various ways.

#### Pros:

- Fast, easy, efficient and very straight forward;
- Photos can be directly uploaded and shared simultaneously onto a few different social networks of their choice;
- Takes world-class photos – no digital camera necessary;
- Provides a variety of filters;
- Privacy settings are good and effective;
- Outside users have to request permission to see photos – this prevents them from posting harmful comments;
- Used safely it can be a positive self-reinforcing application;
- *Likes* and comments can boost a teenagers self-esteem;
- Keeps them in contact with their local and/or long distance friends.

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**Before your teenager sets up an Instagram account, talk with them about making positive choices that will keep them safe!**

### Setting up an Instagram Account



- 1 Your child **must be at least 13 years old** to start up an Instagram account. Check with your teen to see if they already have one, if not, ask them if they are interested.
- 2 Make sure you know whether your child has set their **Instagram account to public or private**.



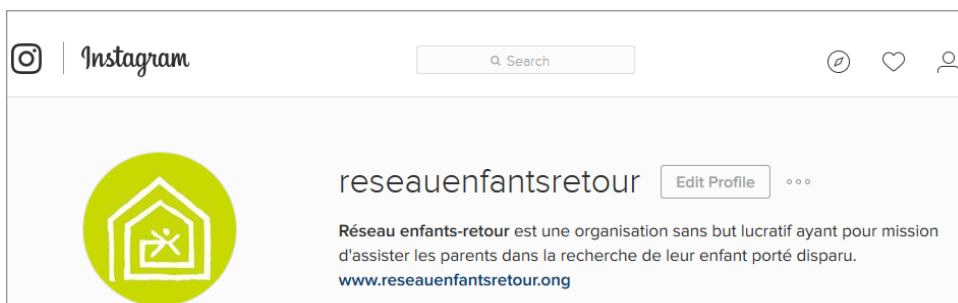
#### iPhone or Windows Phone

1. Go to your profile by tapping 
2. Tap 
3. Turn on the **Private Account** setting

#### Android

1. Go to your profile by tapping 
2. Tap 
3. Turn on the **Private Account** setting

- 3 **Create a "Bio" (optional):** Though the account may be private, all "Bios" are public to the world. Be very careful with what information you share. Some make the mistake of putting a small picture of themselves with their first and last name, the school they attend, location and other revealing personal information.



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- 4 **Accepting followers:** If someone would like to view your child's account they can send a follow request. Your child has the choice to approve or deny the request.
- 5 **Posting your first photo:** It is a common trend to #Hashtag photos. Please note that anything your child hashtags, for example, #selfie, whoever searches "#selfie" is now able to access this photo, even if your profile is set to private.
- 6 **Cyberbullying is not tolerated on Instagram.** Your child has the right to block any account that is messaging her/him through Instagram or making them feel uncomfortable in any way. To do so, take the following steps:

- ⇒ Tap their username to open their profile
- ⇒ Tap ... (iPhone/iPad) or ⋮ (Android)
- ⇒ Tap **Block this user**

Report user
Block this user
Cancel

If there are any photos or videos that are derogatory or discriminatory to your child, or any comments on their personal photos or videos it is suggested to report it. By clicking the three dots on the bottom right or top right of a photo (depending on your mobile device).

After clicking "report inappropriate", your child has a choice from the following:

Report inappropriate
Embed
Cancel

I don't like this photo
This photo is spam or a scam
This photo puts people at risk
This photo shouldn't be on Instagram
Cancel

Please remember that any social media account represents THE OWNER. Whatever is shared is open to positive or negative comments, not only from people that know you but by those that don't know you as well. Based on your photos, your followers can get a sense of what you like, where you go and can access your friend's accounts.

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### Safety Tips for Parents

Being in the loop about your teenager's whereabouts is as important on and offline. It is important that you are aware of any types of social media they are a part of; you should also have access to these accounts. If your child refuses to give you any access, this should make you question what your child is posting and perhaps not wanting you to see.

Creating an open discussion about Instagram and other social media tools can help your teens make positive choices. As mentioned in our **Spotlight on Safety - Volume #22 "Communicating with your teen... Yes! It's possible"**, take advantage of everyday tasks to speak with your child (preparing supper, walking, driving to school). This approach may feel less like an interrogation, and teens may open up more.

### Asking questions such as:

- Can you tell me about Instagram? Pros, Cons? [Hint: This opens the door to see what they already know]
- Do you have an Instagram account? Why do you have one?
- Is your account public or private?
- What kind of photos do you like to post?
- What accounts do you like to follow?

Overall, Instagram is a fun, easy application that provides hours of entertainment if used wisely!

