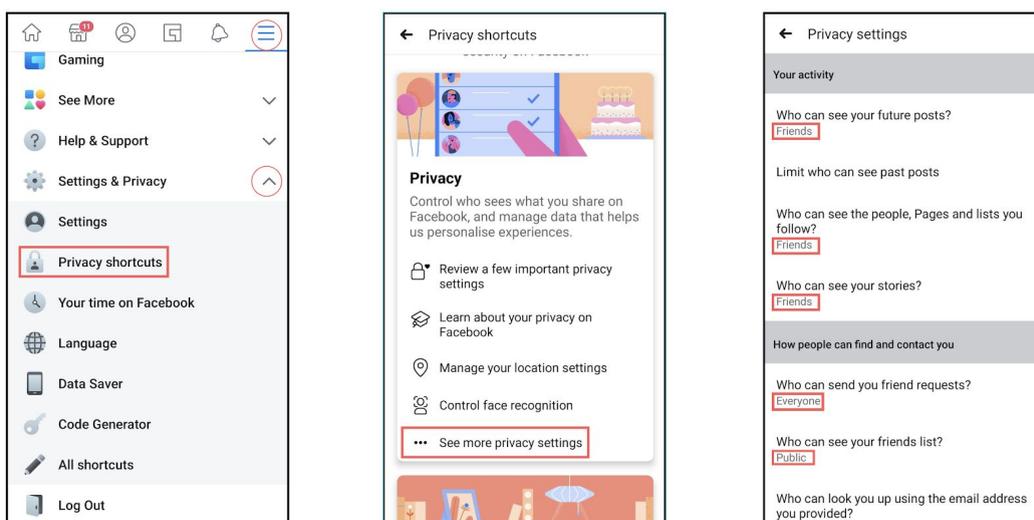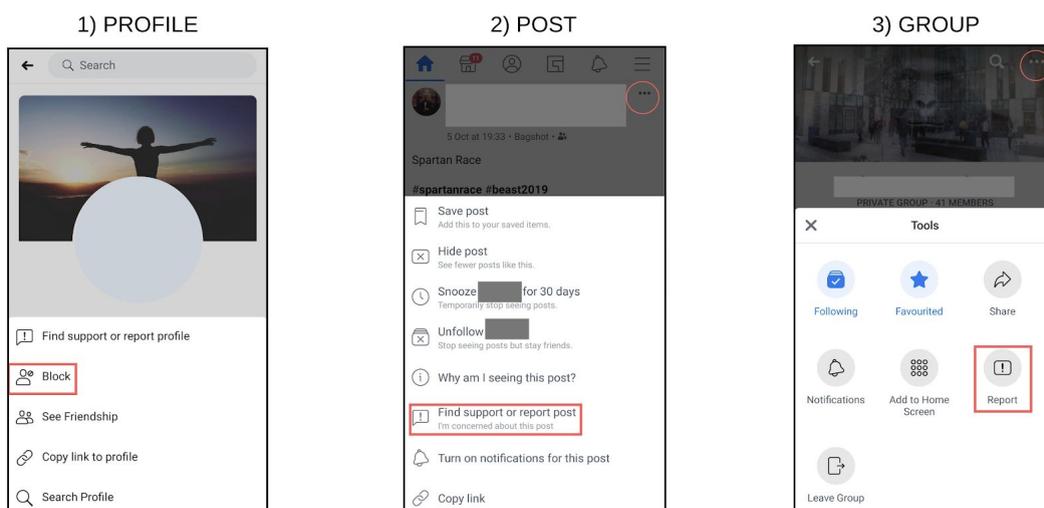parentzone
The experts in digital family life

Understanding social media settings

Facebook - *Minimum age: 13*

Facebook's privacy settings let your child control who sees their posts and timeline. In the app version, click on the **three-line menu** in the top-right corner, go to the **'Settings & Privacy'** tab and then click on **'Privacy Shortcuts'**. From this menu, your child can adjust who can view their content – everyone or only their friends.
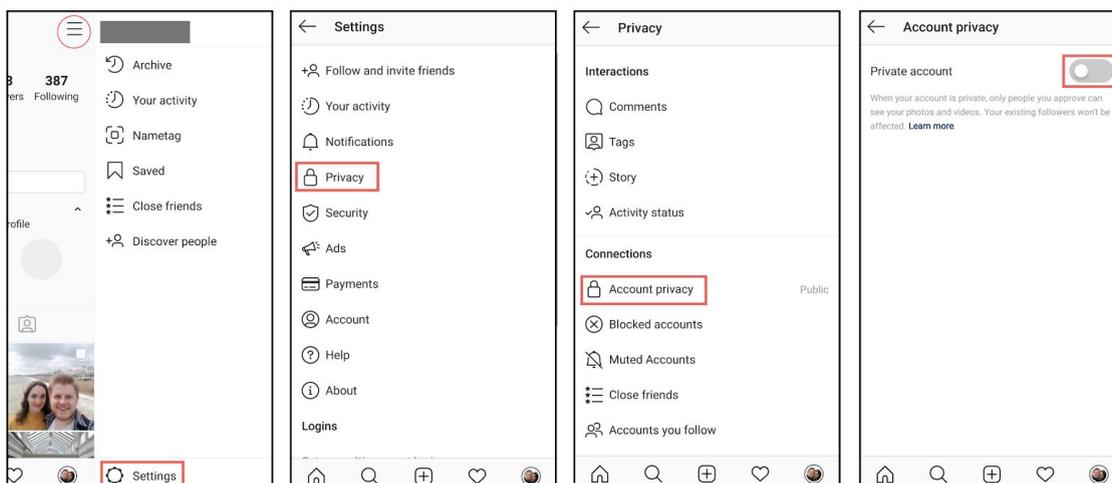

Your child can also block people or groups as well as report posts and pictures. Below is a graphic showing how they can easily do each. If they want to block a person **(1)** all they have to do is to go on their profile, click the three-dot **'More'** button and then press **'Block'**. To report a post or image on their timeline **(2)**, click on the **three-dot menu** next to a post and click **'Find support or report post'**. To report a group **(3)**, click on the **three-dot menu** at the top of the group's page and hit **'Report'**.
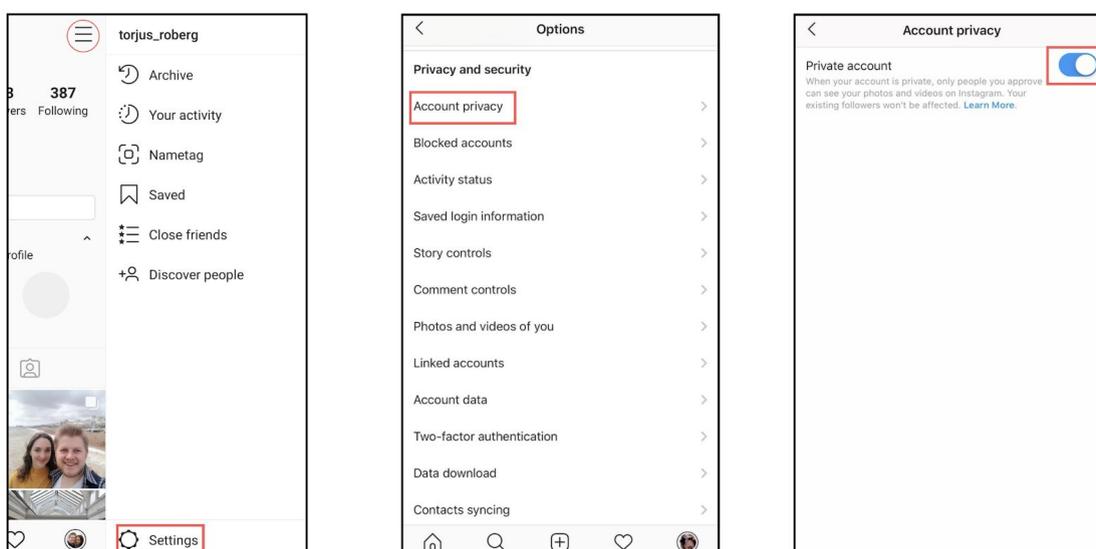
1) PROFILE   2) POST   3) GROUP

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Instagram – *Minimum age: 13*

To set Instagram posts to private, go to your profile by tapping the person icon. Then, tap the **three-line menu** (iOS) and click on the **'Settings'** gear icon at the bottom. Scroll down to **'Privacy and Security'** and click on **'Account Privacy'**. You will now have the immediate option to set your account to private or public using the **slider**. For Android, go onto your profile and click the **three-line menu**. Click the **'Settings'** gear icon at the bottom and then click on **'Privacy'**. Finally, click on **'Account Privacy'**, and use the **slider** to set account to private. Your child can also block and remove followers by tapping their user name, then the three dots icon and selecting **'Block User'**.
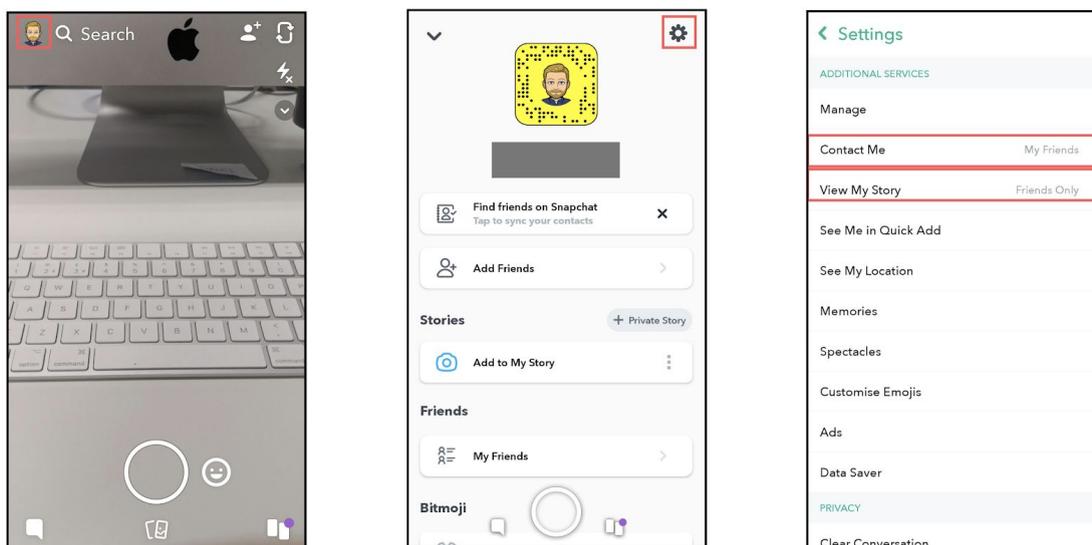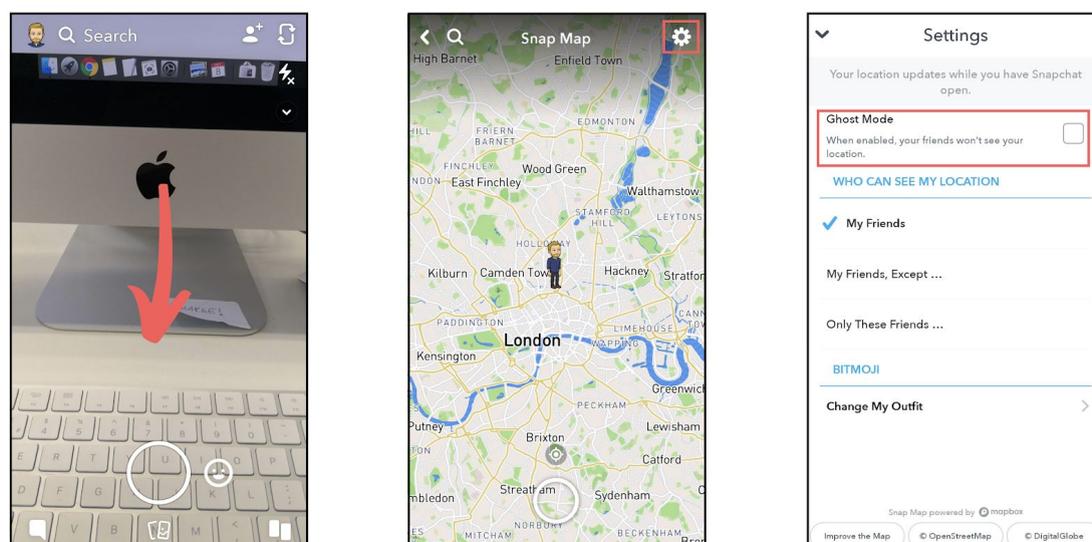
Android:

iOS:

Snapchat – *Minimum age: 13*

Snapchat has two privacy settings, one for who can send your child Snaps and another for who can view their Stories. To change these privacy settings, click the **'Profile'** icon (top-left corner of camera mode) and then the **gear icon** in the top-right corner. From this menu, you can decide who will be able to see your child's stories or contact them.
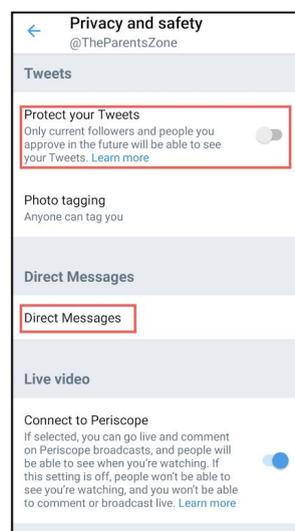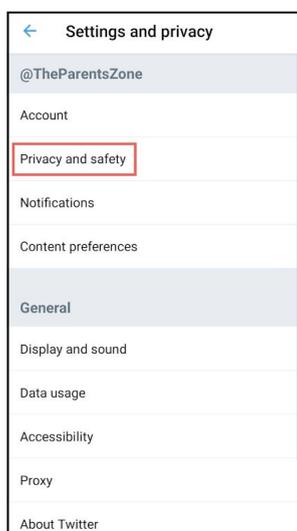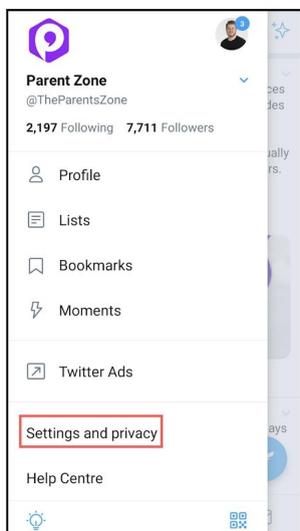

To block someone, go to the **'Friends'** page then click and hold on a user's name until a menu appears. You will then be given the options to either **'Report', 'Block'** or **'Remove Friend'**. If you want to report a Snap or a Story, tap and hold the picture or video until **'Report'** appears underneath.

Snapchat also has a location-sharing feature called Snap Map. If enabled, it will allow a child's friends to see where they are at any time. To disable Snap Map, **swipe down** when the app is in camera mode and hit the **gear icon** in the top-right corner. You can then select 'Ghost Mode' which means that your child's location will not be shared.

Twitter - *Minimum age: no specific T&C but in their privacy policy they say that their services are not directed to people under 13.*
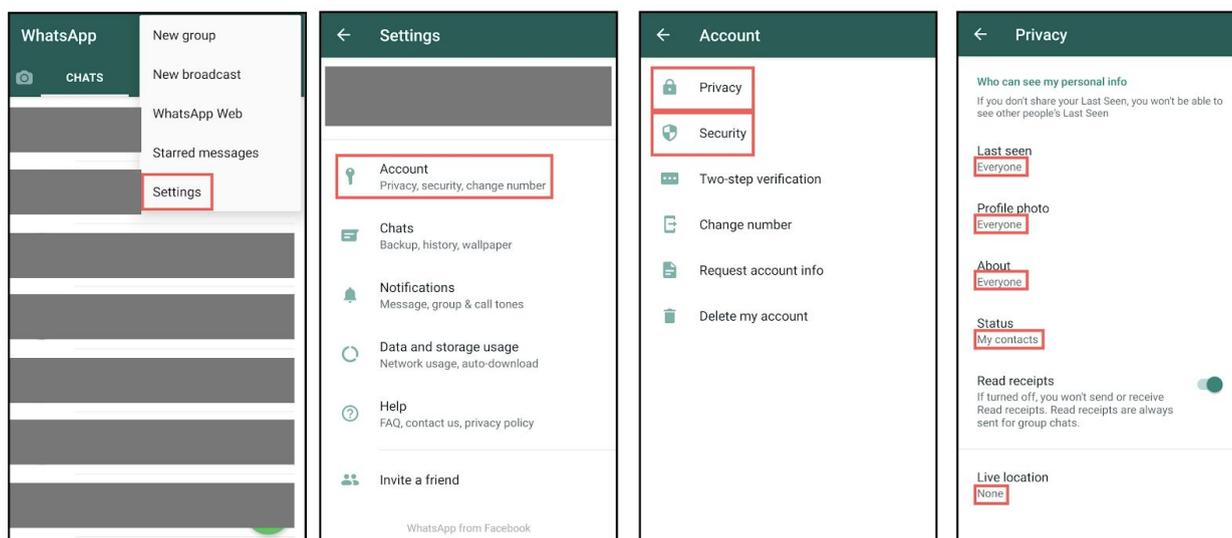
Your child can choose to protect their tweets so they are only visible to the Twitter followers they have approved. On the app, tap the **'Profile'** icon in the top-left corner, go to **'Settings and Privacy'** and then hit **'Privacy and Safety'**. You will then be able to enable protected tweets and customise other safety settings like who can get in touch with your child on Twitter.

If your child wants to block and/or report another user, head over to their **profile** and hit the **three-dot menu** in the top-right corner and select **'Block'** and/or **'Report'**. If they want to report a specific tweet go to the tweet, click the **arrow** in the top-right corner and click **'Report Tweet'**.

WhatsApp - *Minimum age: 16*

On WhatsApp, you can customise who can view your child's information and toggle live location. Tap the **three-dot menu** in the top-right corner, hit **'Settings'** and then go to **'Account'**. From there, you can access both privacy and security settings and adjust them according to your child's needs.

If your child wants to block and/or report another user, tap and hold the user until a green tick appears next to their name. Then click the **three-dot menu** in the top-right corner and select **'View Contact'**. Scroll all the way down and the options **'Block'** and **'Report Contact'** should appear.