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## Experts highlight parental role ahead of Australia's social media ban



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Canberra, Aug. 19 — As Australia prepares to enforce strict age limits on social media, experts are stressing the essential role of parents in protecting children online.

Under new legislation effective Dec. 10, 2025, major platforms including TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Reddit, Snapchat, and YouTube must take “reasonable steps” to block users under 16. The law aims to shield young people from harmful online content and interactions.

Associate Professor Lesley-Anne Ey from the University of South Australia (UniSA) cautioned that legislation alone cannot guarantee safety. “Because children’s brains are still developing, they often act on impulse without considering the consequences,” she explained. “They tend to take risks assuming they are safe, but they are not.”

Ey emphasized that digital literacy and ongoing conversations between parents, schools, and children are critical to tackling risks such as bullying, grooming, sexting, and AI-generated deepfakes. She argued that simply delaying access to platforms without education leaves children unprepared for digital challenges.

She recommended combining protective strategies with practical tools, trained parents and teachers, and open communication to help children thrive safely online. “We need to ensure children can grow and participate in a digital world that will only continue to expand,” Ey said.

The upcoming ban has sparked national debate, but experts agree that parental involvement remains the most effective safeguard against online risks.