



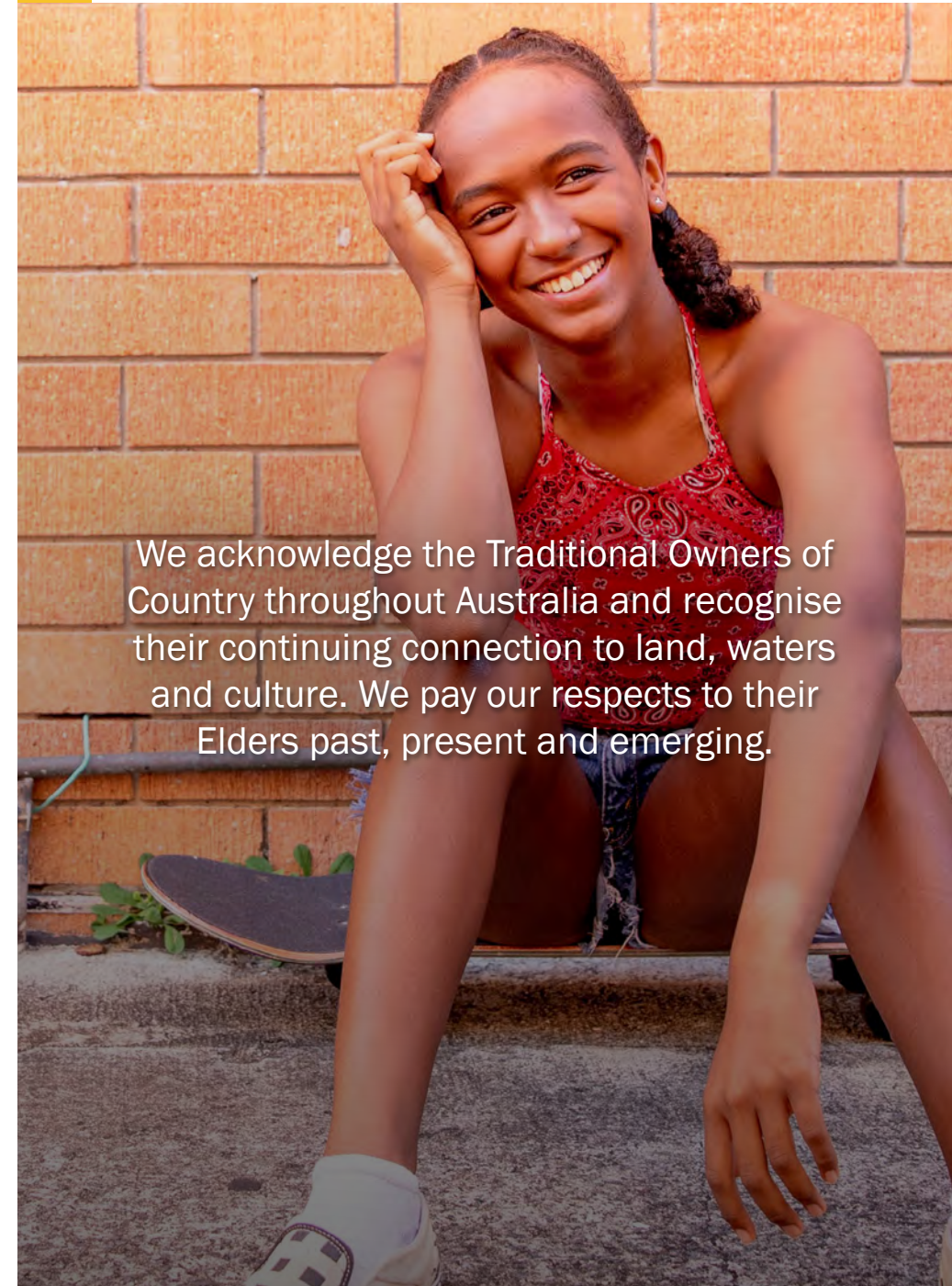
REACH
OUT.COM



A Parent's Guide to Instagram

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



01 /

Introduction by ReachOut

[ReachOut](#) is the most accessed online mental health service for young people and their parents in Australia. Our trusted peer-support program, self-help information, and referral tools save lives by helping young people be well and stay well. The information we offer parents via [ReachOut Parents](#) makes it easier for them to help their teenagers, too.

At ReachOut we believe that social media companies have an obligation to make their platforms safe for young people. We are pleased to see Instagram continue to update their safety features to help ensure this. However, safety features are only effective when they are known about and used. Parents and carers play a vital role when it comes to educating their teens about these features.

We partnered with Instagram in 2019 to develop the first Parents Guide because parents and carers told us that they were concerned about their teenagers when it came to social media. Fast forward to 2021 and social media remains as relevant as ever in the lives of young people across Australia. In some cases even more so, as we deal with the challenges that COVID-19 restrictions have brought to our lives and as we seek to remain connected.

Issues that can play out on social media such as bullying, body image, privacy, safety and screen time have not gone away. This Parents Guide to Instagram provides parents and carers with practical information and tips as they navigate this journey with their teens, updated with a snapshot of the new measures Instagram has put in place to help manage these issues.

ReachOut has included more tips – such as conversation starters – in this guide, so that parents and carers can use this information in practical ways with their teens when it comes to staying safe on the platform. We hope you find this guide a useful and practical tool.

[ReachOut.com/Parents](https://reachout.com/parents) provides a comprehensive service for parents and carers to help support their teenagers' mental health and wellbeing, including through self-help information, connecting with other parents and carers in our forums and direct one-on-one parenting support with family professionals.

Ashley de Silva
Chief Executive Officer
ReachOut Australia

**REACH
OUT.COM**

If you or someone you know needs crisis support, contact:

IN AN EMERGENCY
Call 000

LIFELINE
13 11 14

KIDS HELPLINE
1800 55 1800

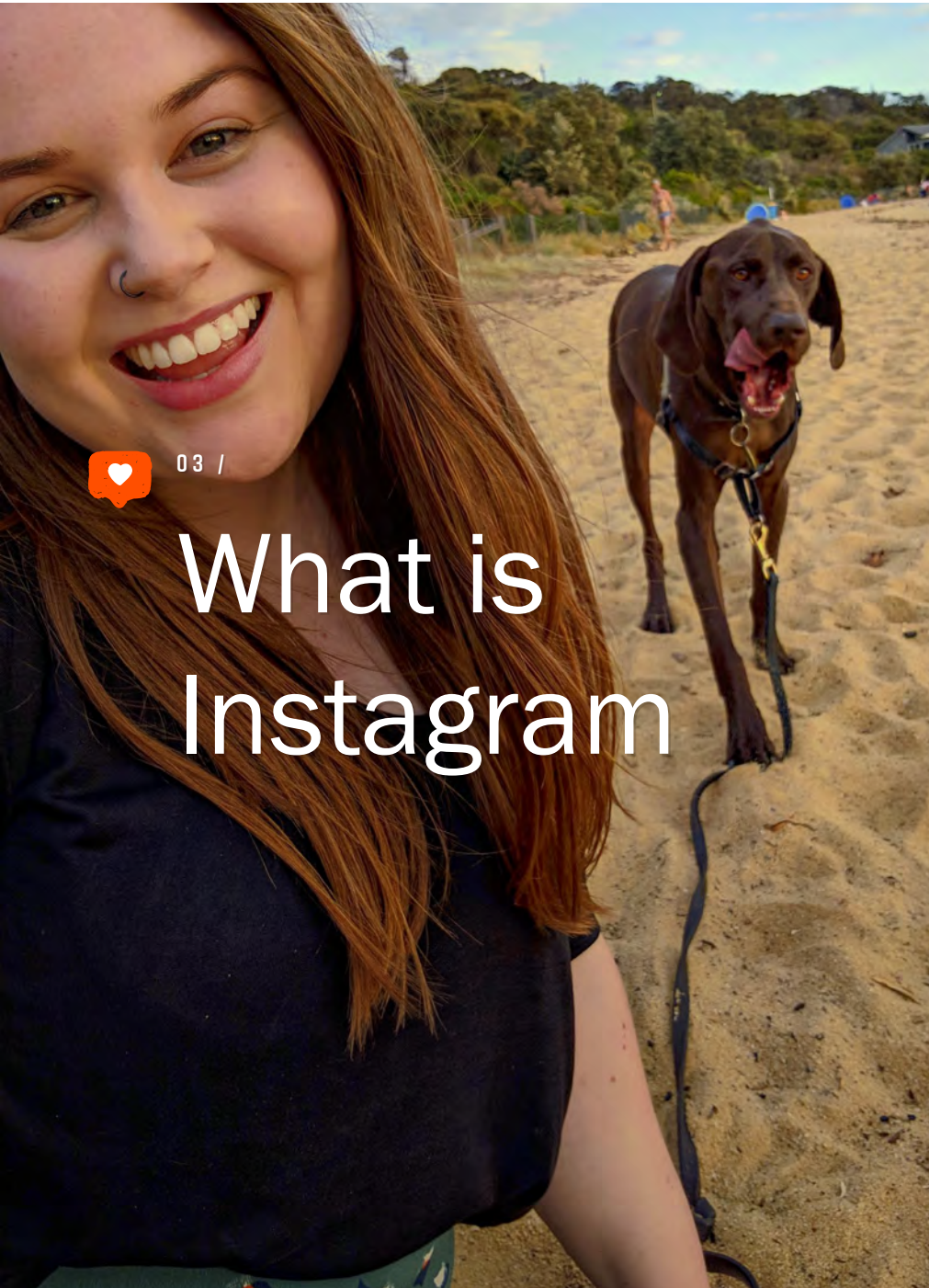
SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE
1300 659 467





Five Tips from ReachOut for Starting a Conversation With Your Teen About Social Media

- 1 Let your teen know that you're always open to chatting about social media, even if they don't feel like it at that moment.
- 2 [Ask them open-ended questions](#) about their social media use, such as: 'What do you post on your Instagram account/s?' or 'What are some accounts you enjoy following?'
- 3 Take the approach that you're curious, and want to understand their experience, rather than that you're trying to fix a problem.
- 4 Continue to ask questions such as: 'How do you feel about the amount of time you spend online?' Listen to what your teen has to say, and respond in a non-judgemental way.
- 5 Ask them what they would do to [keep their social media use positive](#), and support them in coming up with their own solutions.



Instagram is a photo, video, and message sharing app with a community of people that use it to connect with each other through their passions and interests.

Instagram is especially popular among young people: they use it to capture special moments, connect with one another, and carry on conversations in a fun way using photos, videos, filters, comments, captions, emojis and hashtags.

Instagram runs on Apple iOS, Android devices and the internet.

The minimum age to have an Instagram account is 13.

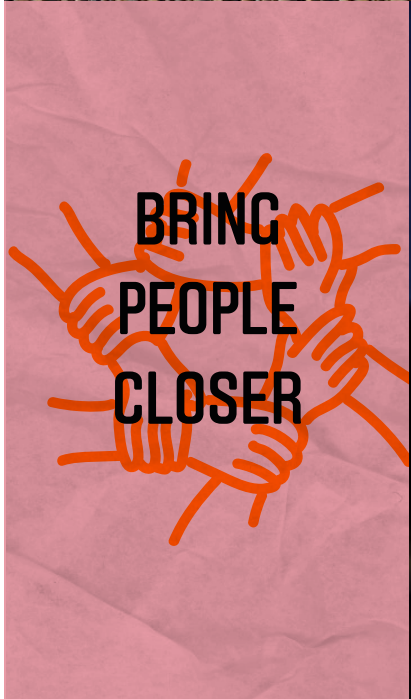
Whether it's through Stories, Reels, Feed, Live, IGTV or Direct, our mission is to bring our app users closer to the people and things they love. We know that it's essential to make Instagram a safe and supportive place for all young people who use it.



**COMMUNITY
OF PEOPLE
CONNECT TO
EACH OTHER**



**CAPTURE
AND SHARE
SPECIAL
MOMENTS**

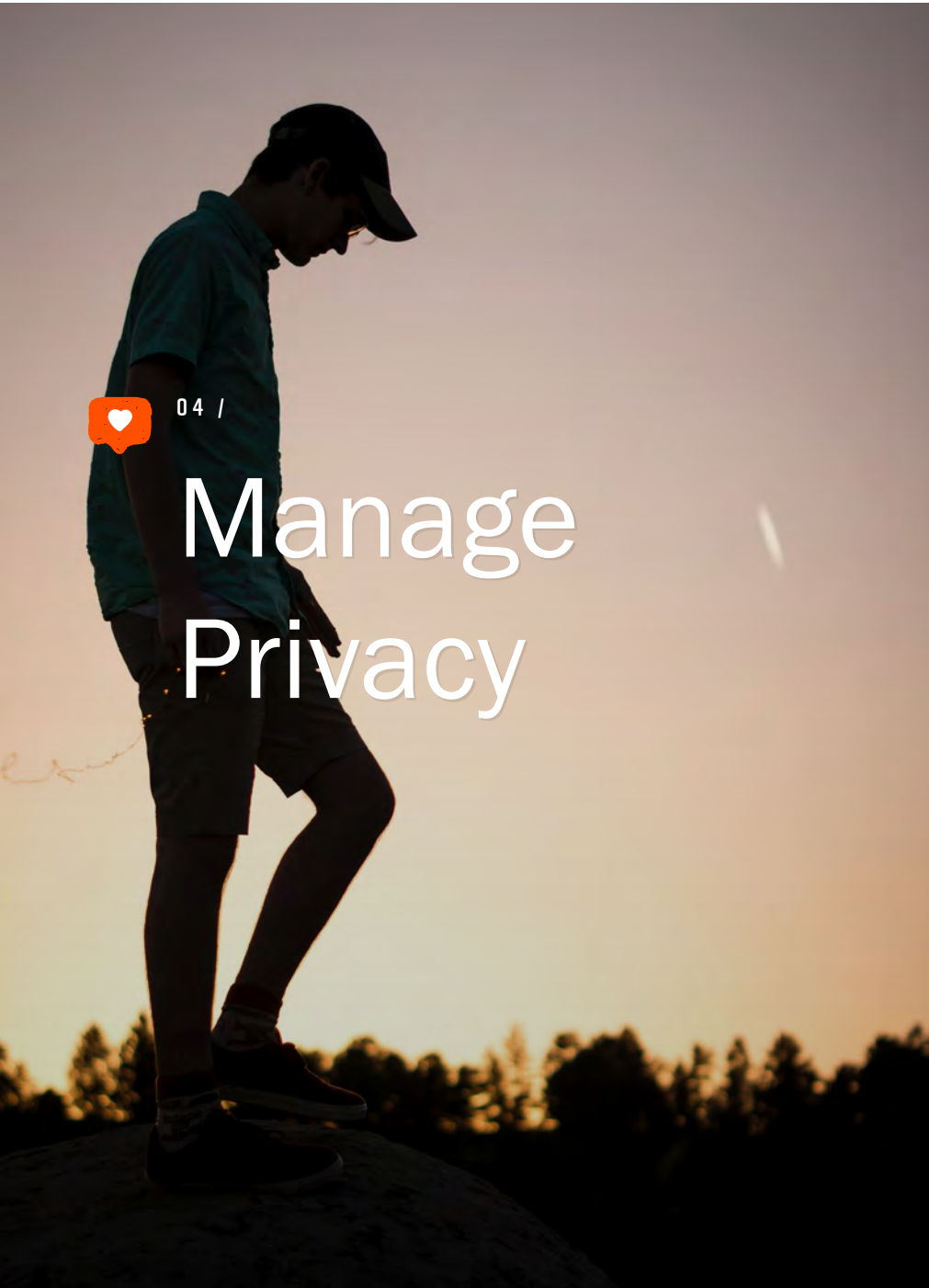


**PUSH
CULTURE
FORWARD**



**SAFE AND
SUPPORTIVE
PLACE**





There are a number of tools you can share with your teen that will give them more control over their digital identity and the data they share with others.

One of the first things you might want to talk about with them is whether their account will be public or private. We recommend that teens make their account private.

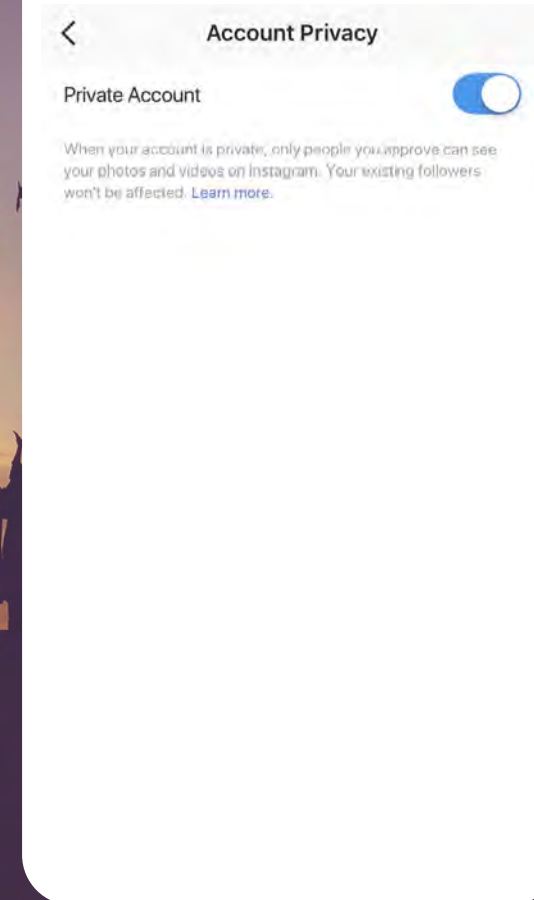
Understanding that they have control over who sees and interacts with the things they post online will empower them to be themselves on Instagram, while remaining safe online.

Account Privacy

It can be helpful to talk with your teen about the importance of privacy and staying safe online. We recommend that teens make their account private.

A private account means your teen's content can't be seen by anyone they haven't approved. Additionally, they can remove followers, choose who can comment, and turn off the 'Show Activity Status' so that their Instagram followers can't see when they are online.

If your teen's account is public, anyone can see the content they post on Stories, Feed or Live, and can follow them without needing approval. If your teen already has a public account, they can switch to private at any time.

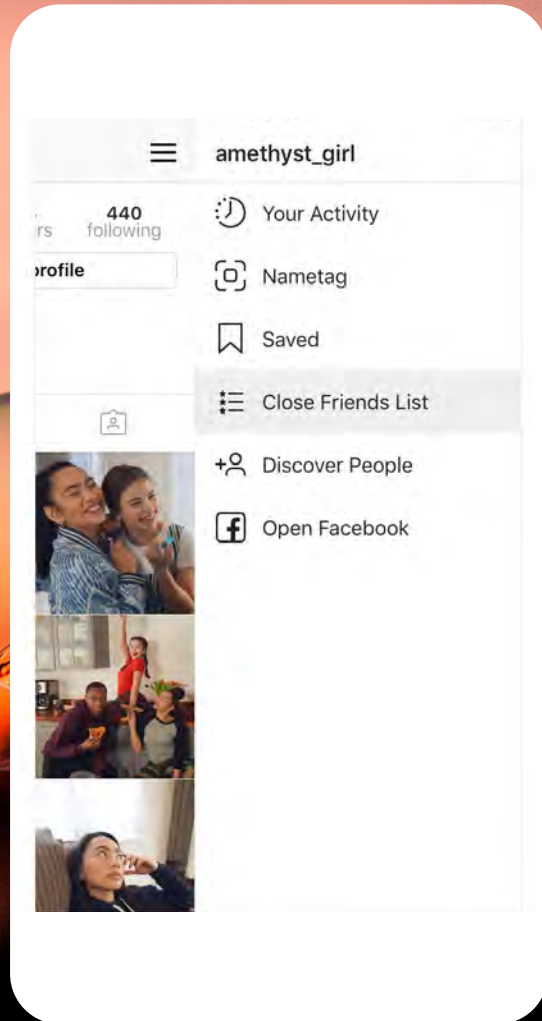


➤ Share Stories With Close Friends

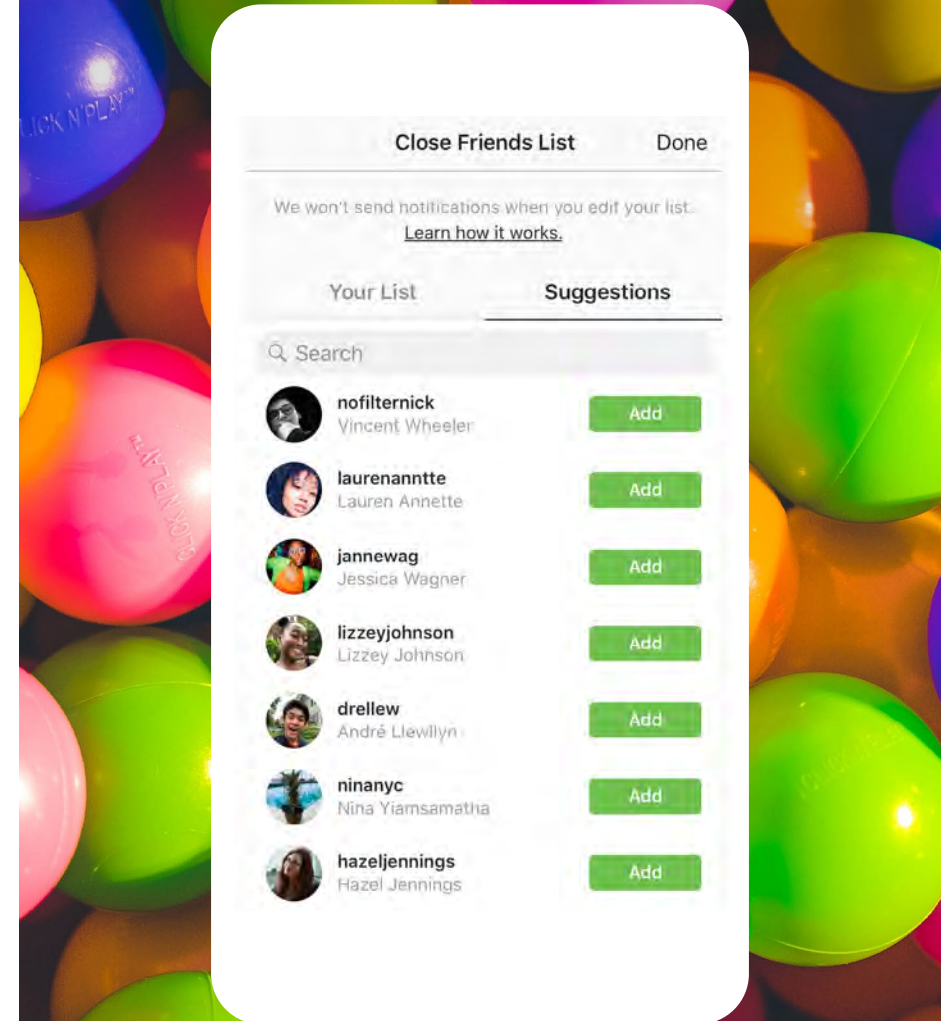
Your teen can create a Close Friends list and share their Stories with only the people on that list. They can add and remove people from it at any time. People aren't notified when they are added to or removed from a Close Friends list.



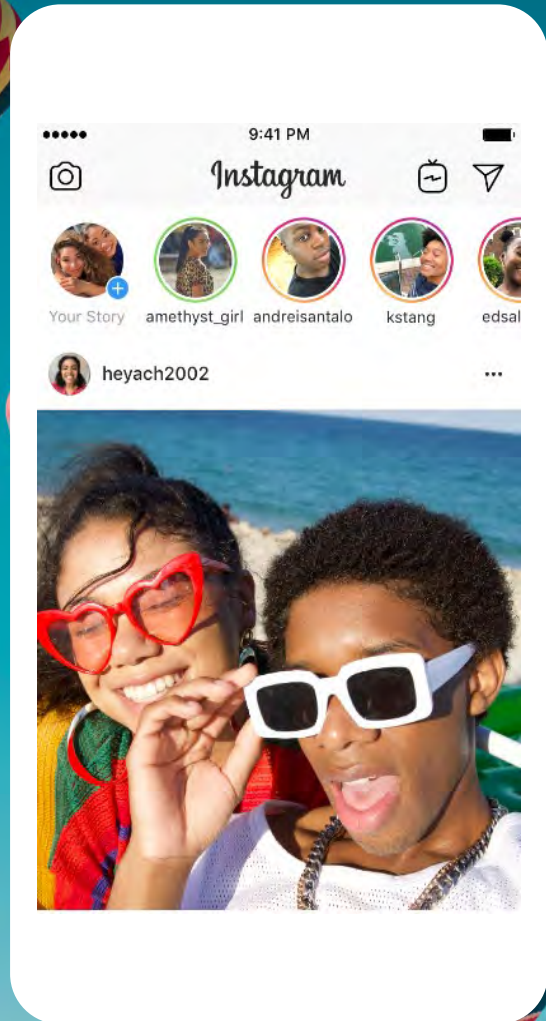
SETTINGS → CLOSE FRIENDS LIST



ADD AND REMOVE PEOPLE FROM YOUR FOLLOWER LIST



STORIES SHARED WITH CLOSE FRIENDS WILL HAVE A GREEN RING



STORIES SHARED WITH CLOSE FRIENDS WILL SHOW A GREEN TAG

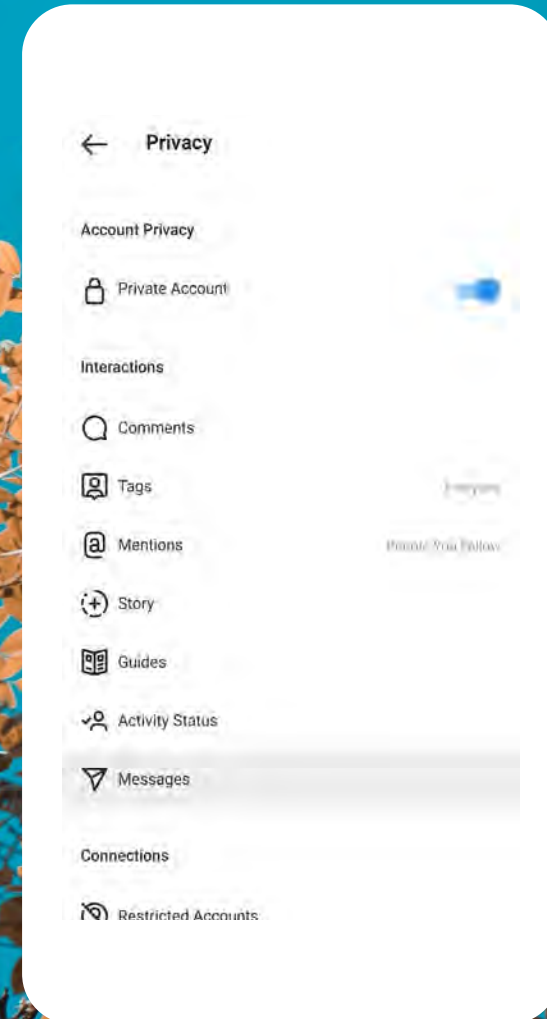


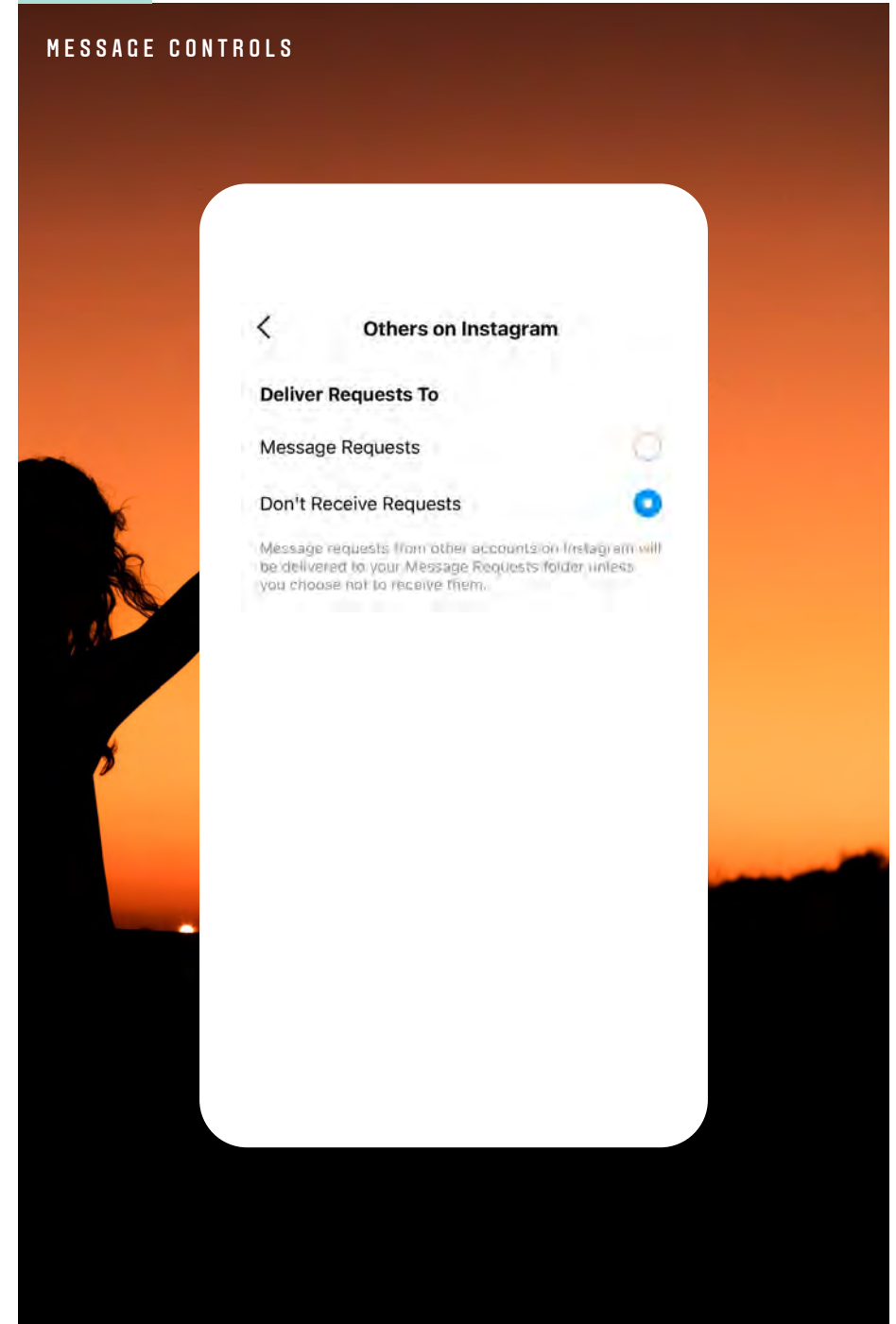
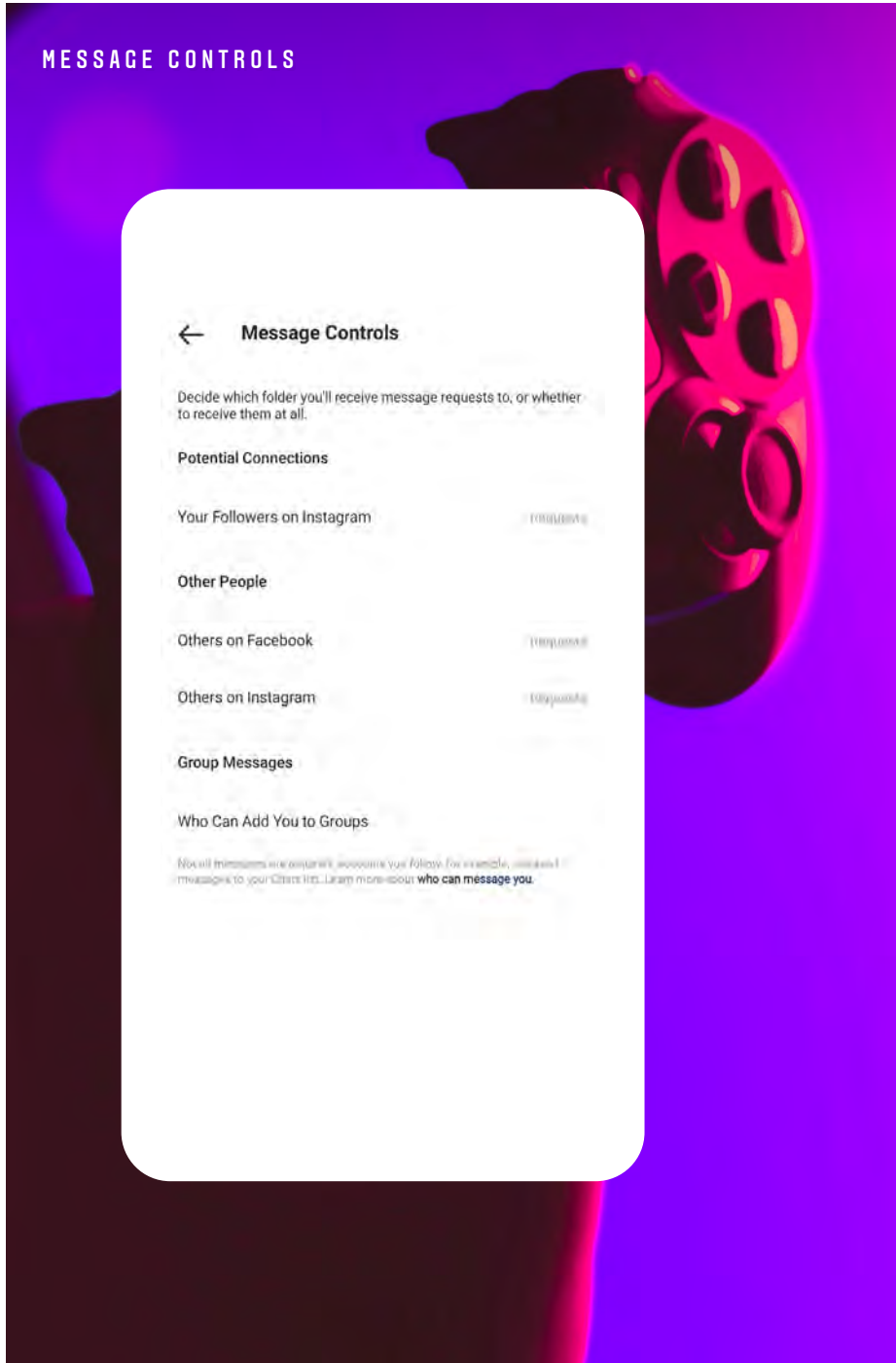
Message Controls

Your teen can also choose who can message them on Instagram and who can add them to groups on Instagram Direct.

They can also decide whether message requests go to their Chats list or Message Requests folder, or whether they receive them at all.

SETTINGS → PRIVACY → MESSAGE CONTROLS

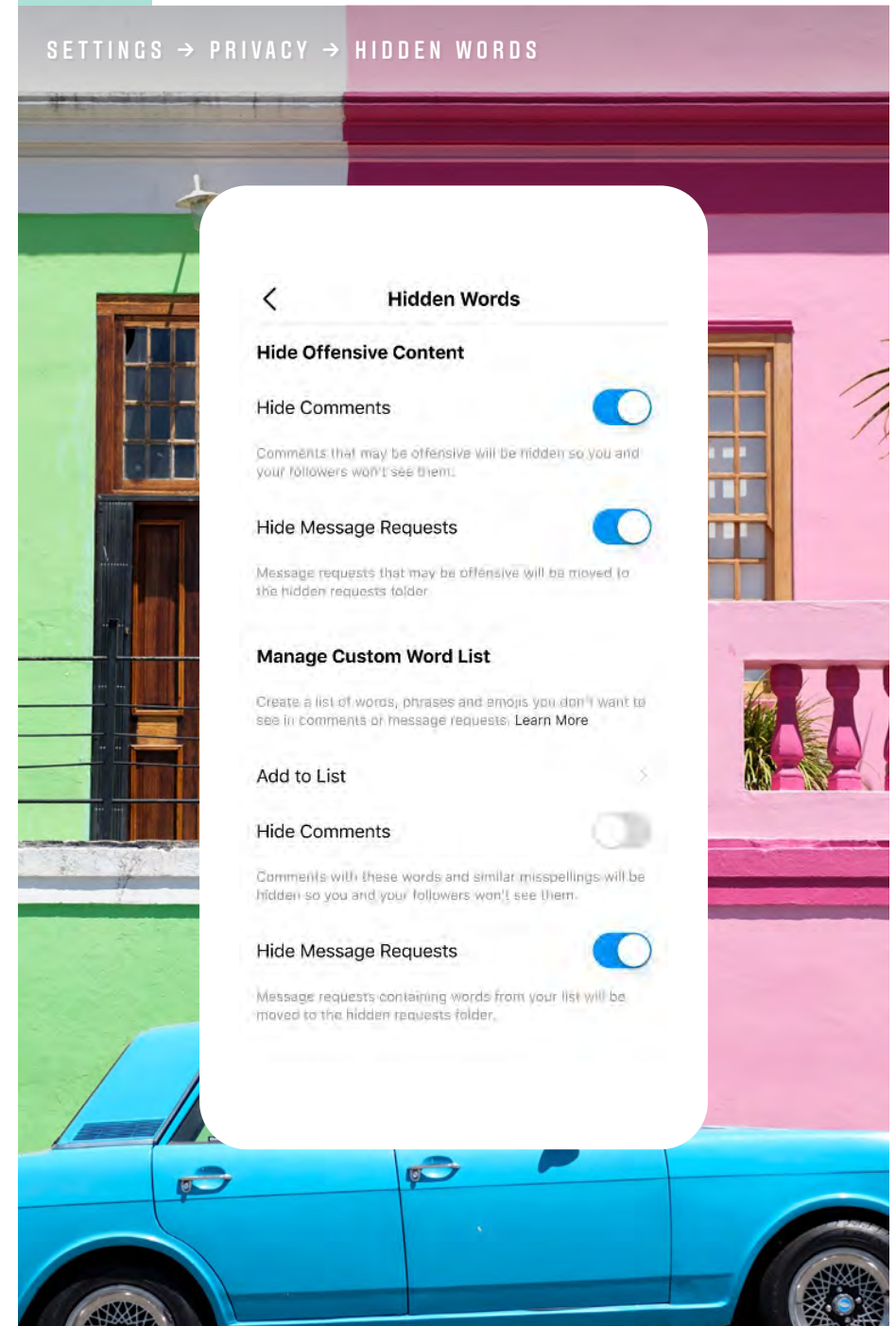


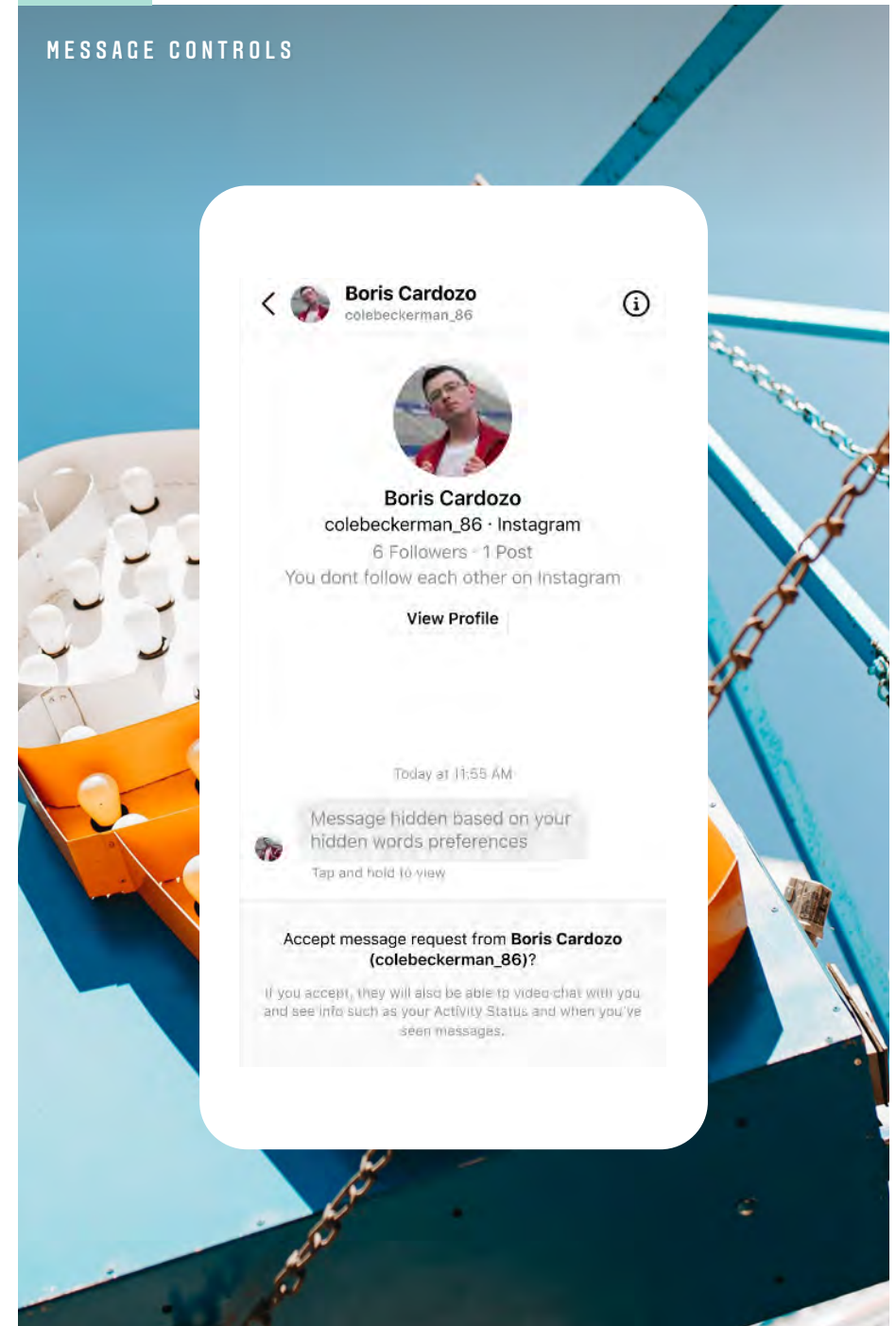
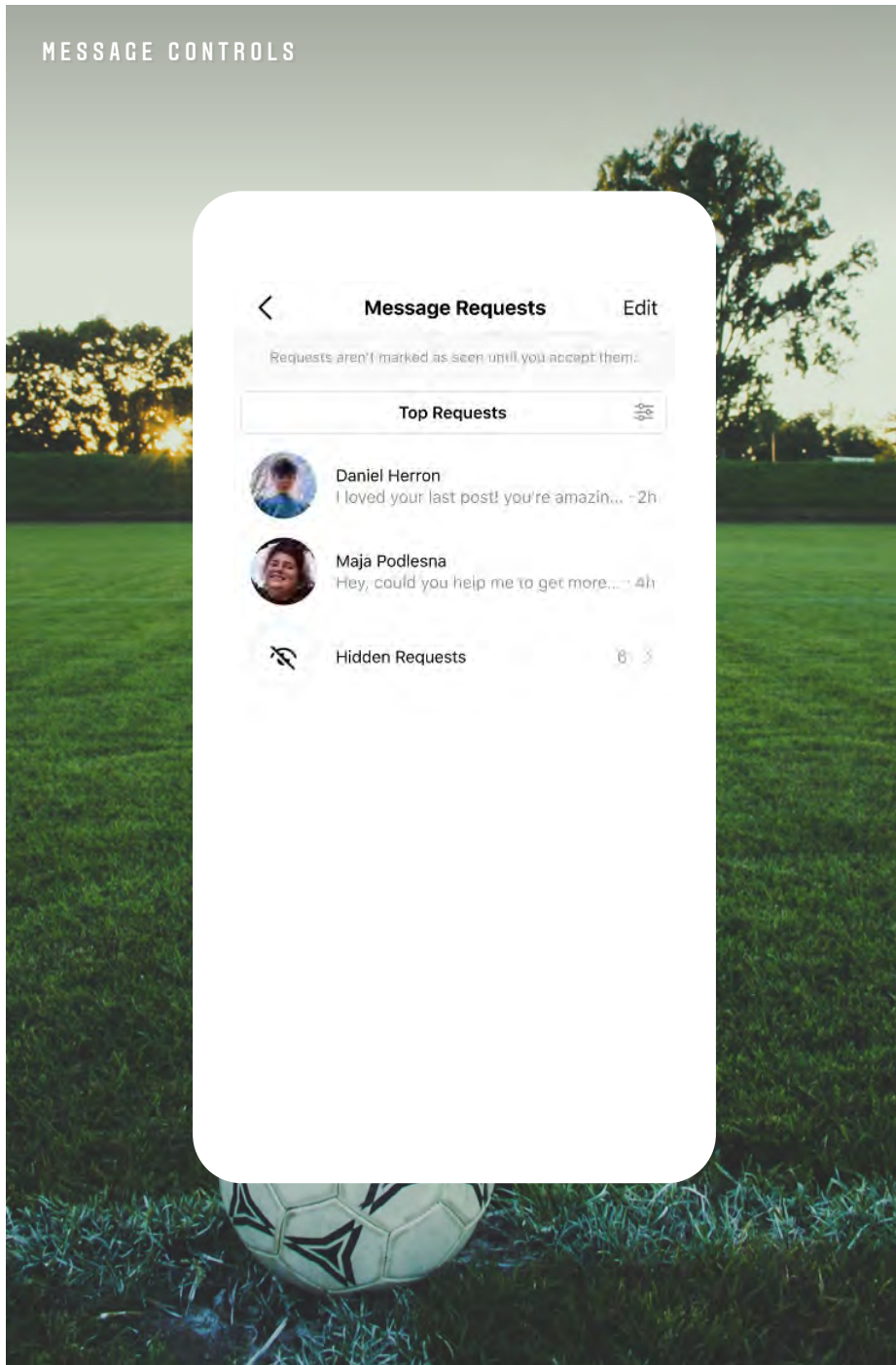


Hidden Words

DMs (Direct Messages) are a place for private conversations, but your teen has control over the kinds of messages they can receive. Hidden Words helps protect your teen from ever having to see bullying comments or abuse in their DM requests, and can be personalised to any words, emojis or issues they would prefer to filter out.

When switched on, this new tool can automatically filter DM requests that contain common offensive words, phrases or emojis – or the words, phrases or emojis your teen chooses – into a separate Hidden Requests Folder, so your teen never has to see them if they don't want to.

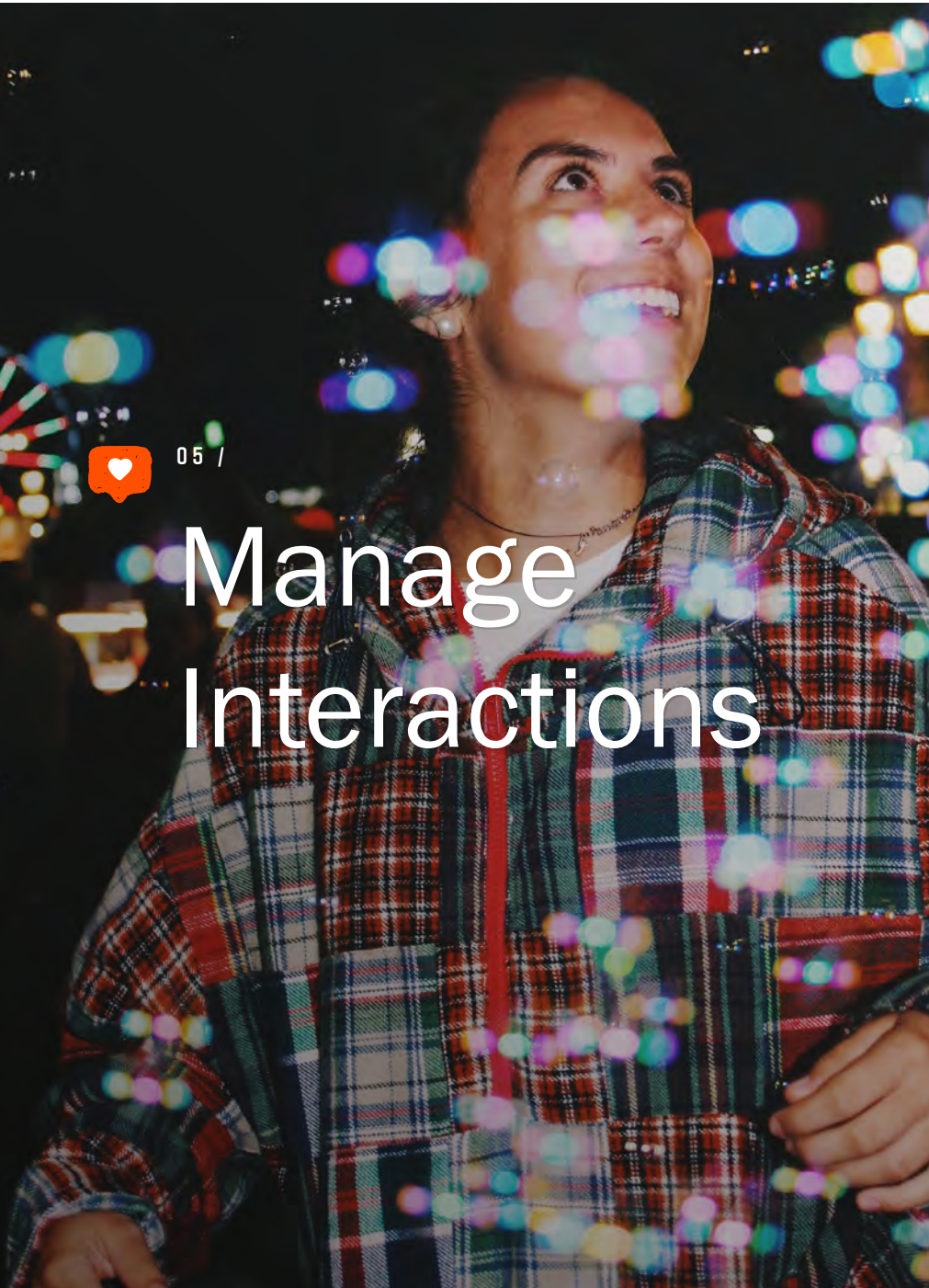




ReachOut's Top Social Media Safety Tips



- **Learn about location sharing.** If your teen adds a location tag to their post, their followers will be able to see it, which can be a safety risk. It's recommended that teens don't tag the location on their posts or add any location-related hashtags.
- **Reset passwords regularly.** Suggest your teen reset their password every 6-8 weeks to increase security.
- **Keep an eye on accounts.** If your teen thinks someone has been using their accounts without their permission, encourage them to change all their passwords. Remind them not to share their passwords and to keep their software and apps up to date to help keep their data secure.
- **Make a list of information that is okay to share.** Have a conversation about what they would share with friends (e.g. name, location, age), publicly (e.g. name but not location or age) and what should be kept off social media completely (e.g. full date of birth, home address).
- **Talk about making friends online.** If your teen has trouble making friends, online spaces like social media can help them find the support and mateship they need. Chat about what qualities they are looking for in friends and what information they share with them. You can also discuss how they can spot people who might bully online.



Manage Interactions

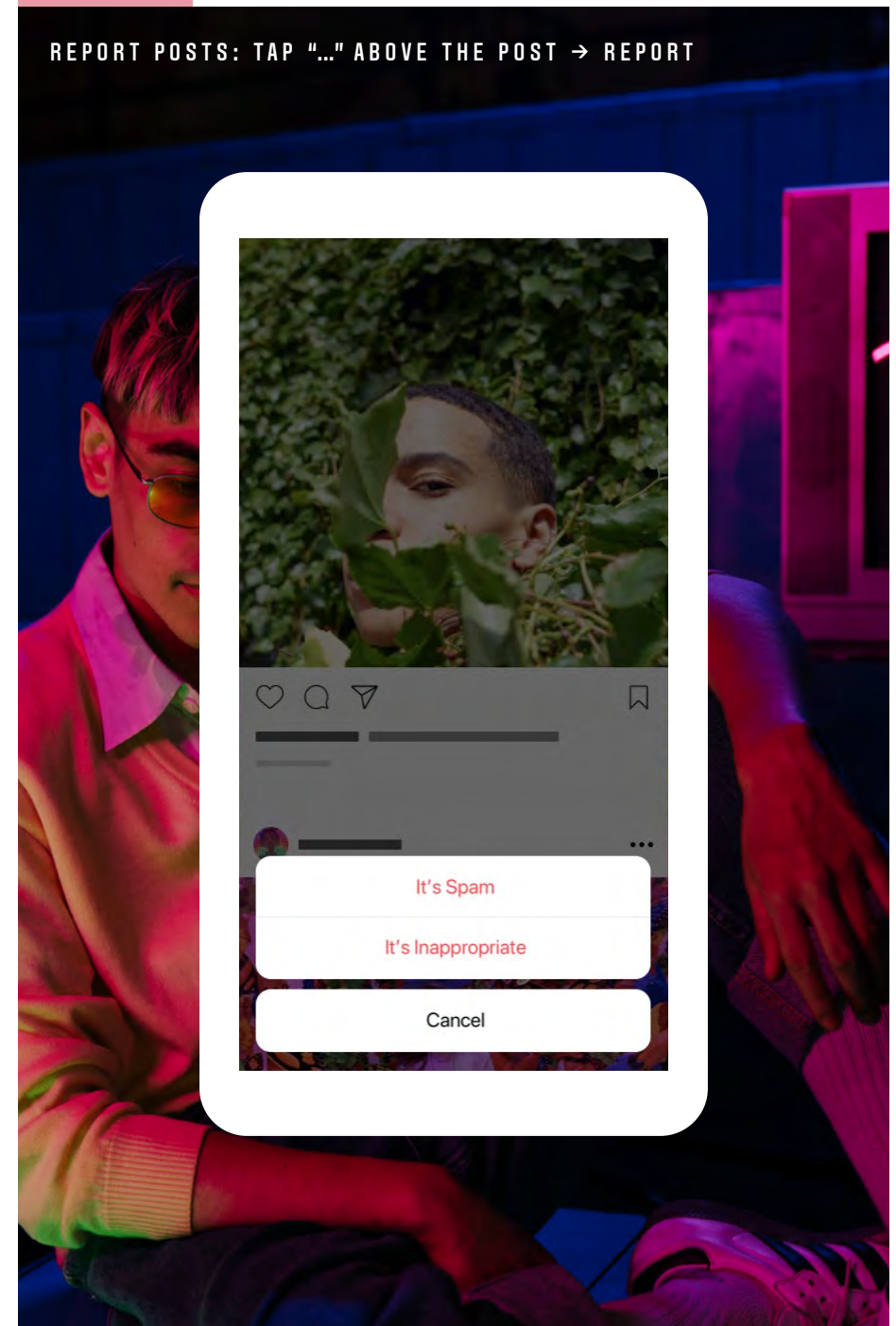
There is [no place for bullying](#) of any kind on Instagram. It's against our policies to create an account or post photos or comments for the purpose of bullying or harassing someone else.

Let your teen know that if they see an account, post, comment, or message that is intended to bully or harass someone, they can report it within the app.

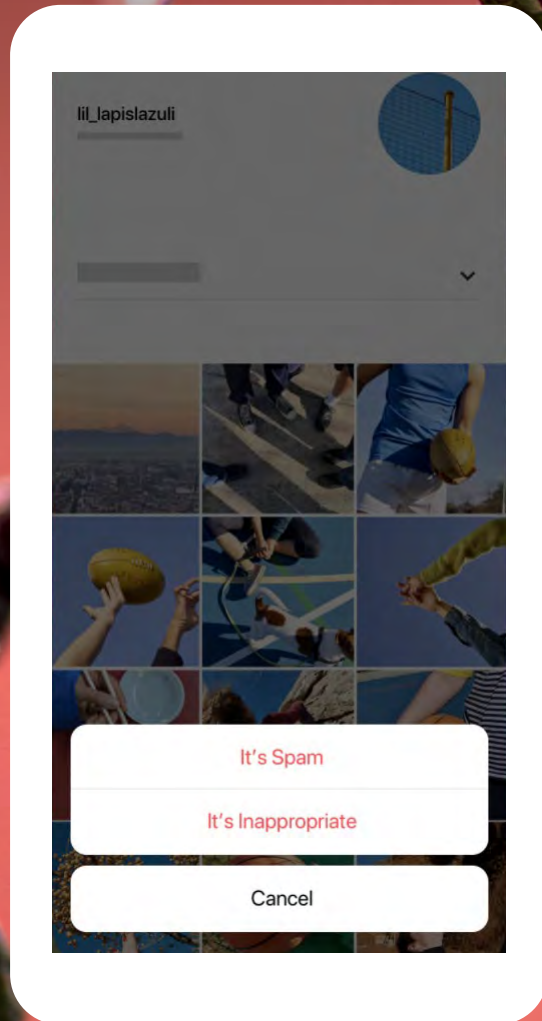
Reporting is totally anonymous. We never share your teen's information with the person they reported.

Report

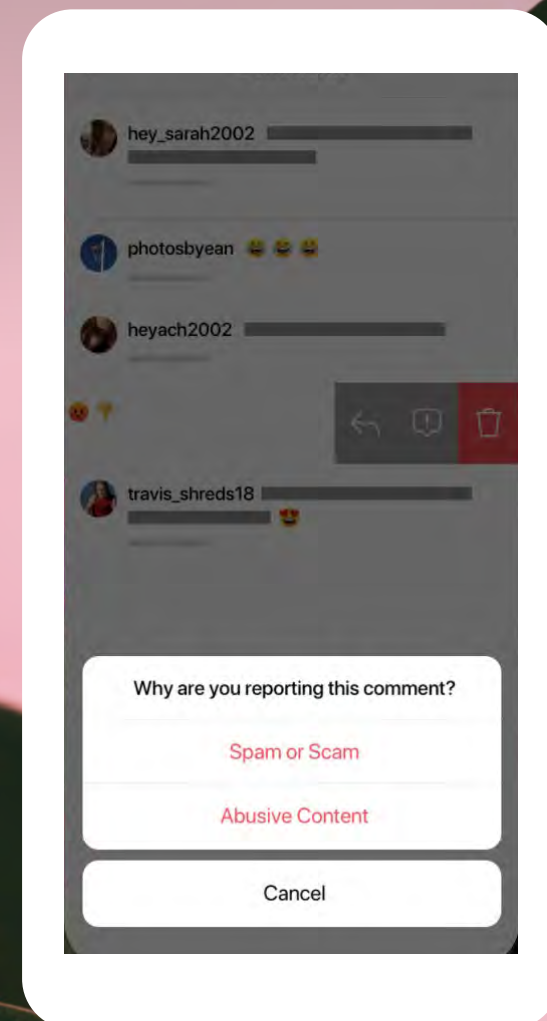
Anyone can report content on Instagram, from profiles/accounts to posts, comments, DMs, Lives, Stories, IGTV and Reels.



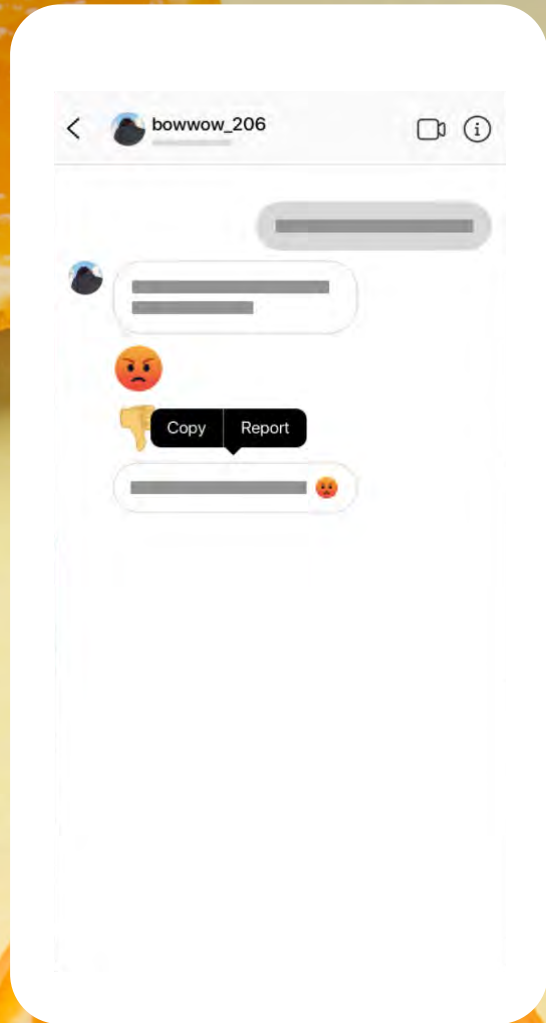
REPORT ACCOUNTS: TAP "..." IN THE TOP RIGHT OF THE PROFILE
→ REPORT



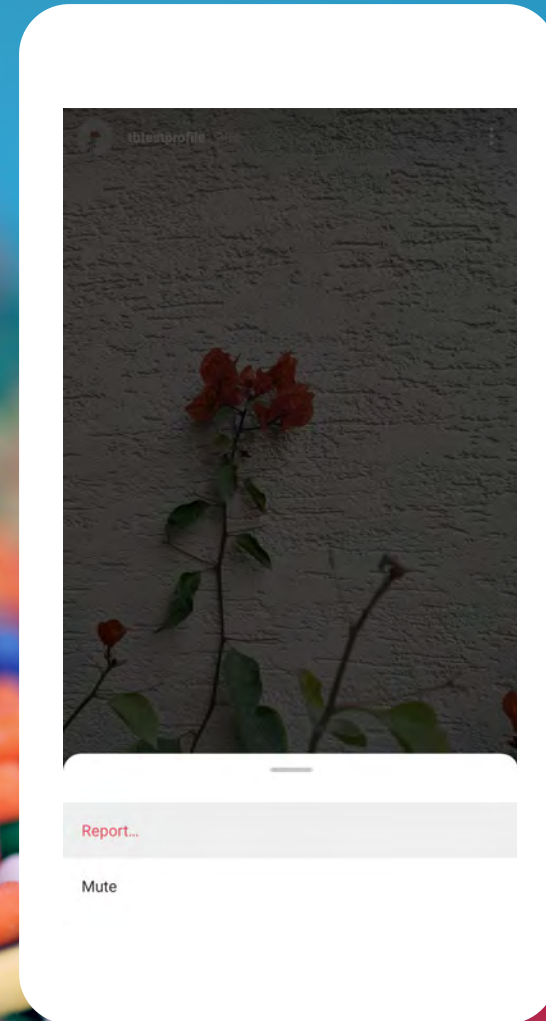
REPORT COMMENTS: SWIPE LEFT OVER THE COMMENT → TAP "!"
→ TAP "REPORT THIS COMMENT"



REPORT DMS: TAP AND HOLD THE MESSAGE YOU'D LIKE TO REPORT → TAP "REPORT"



REPORT STORY: TAP "... ON THE TOP RIGHT SIDE OF THE STORY → TAP "REPORT"

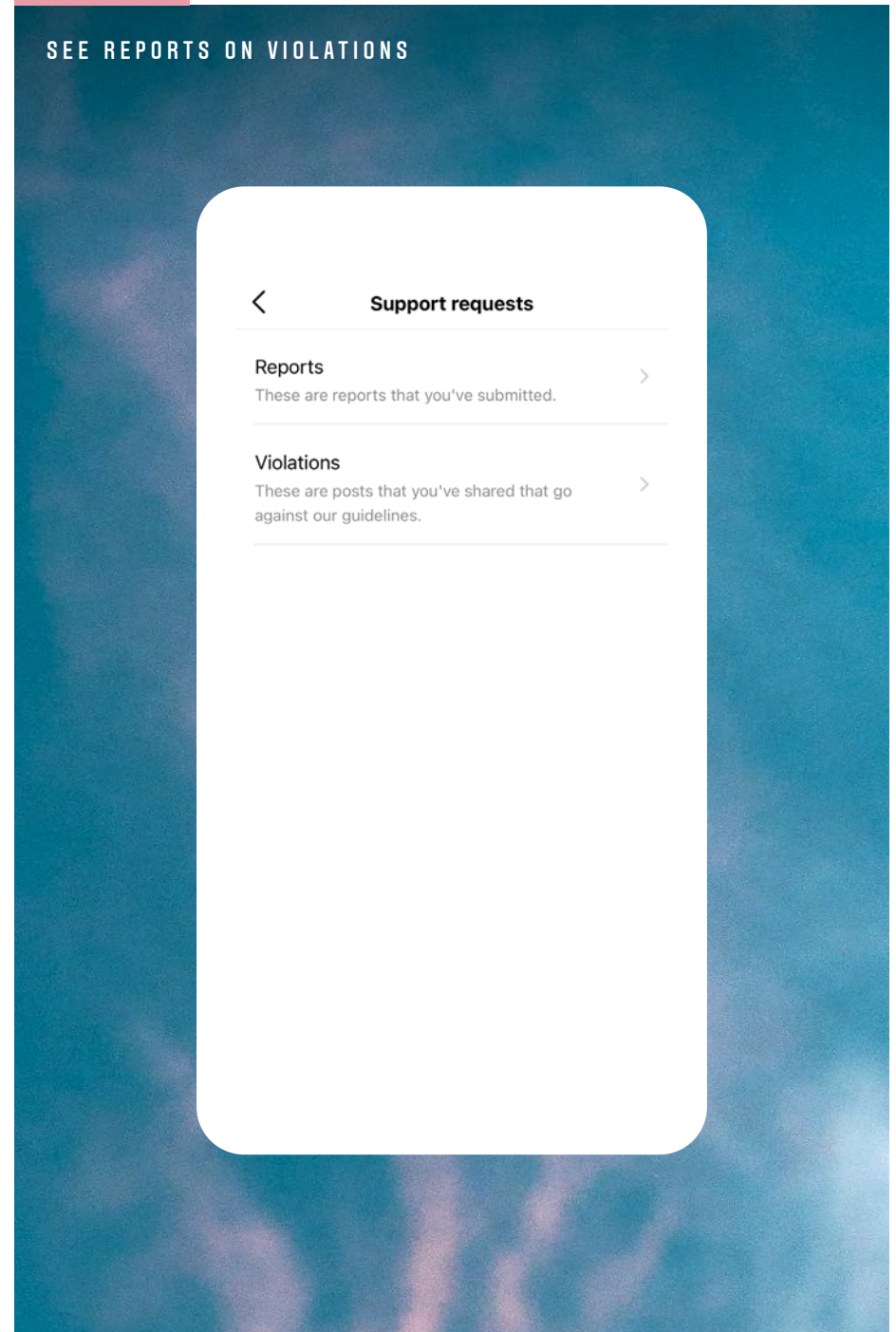
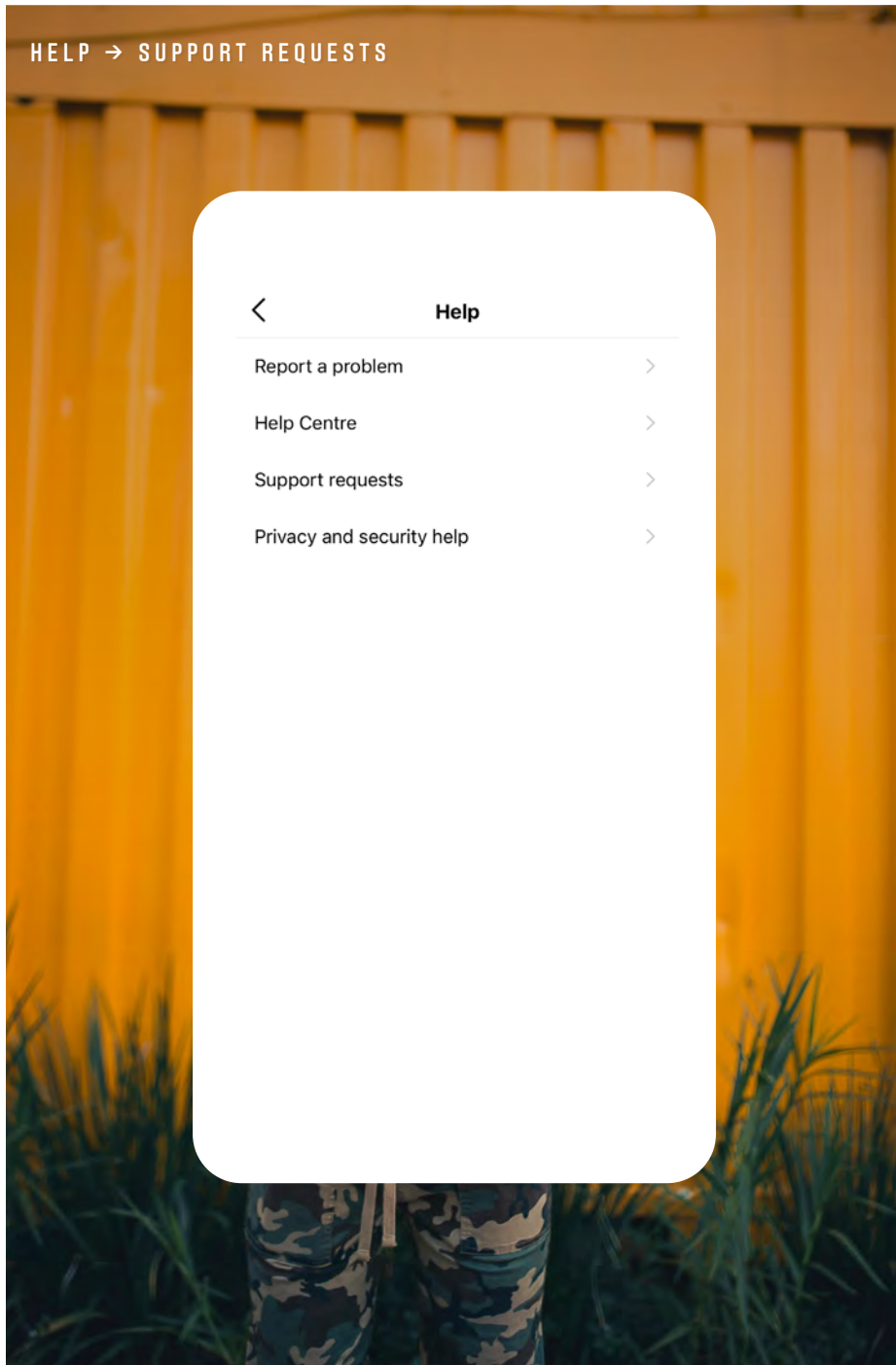


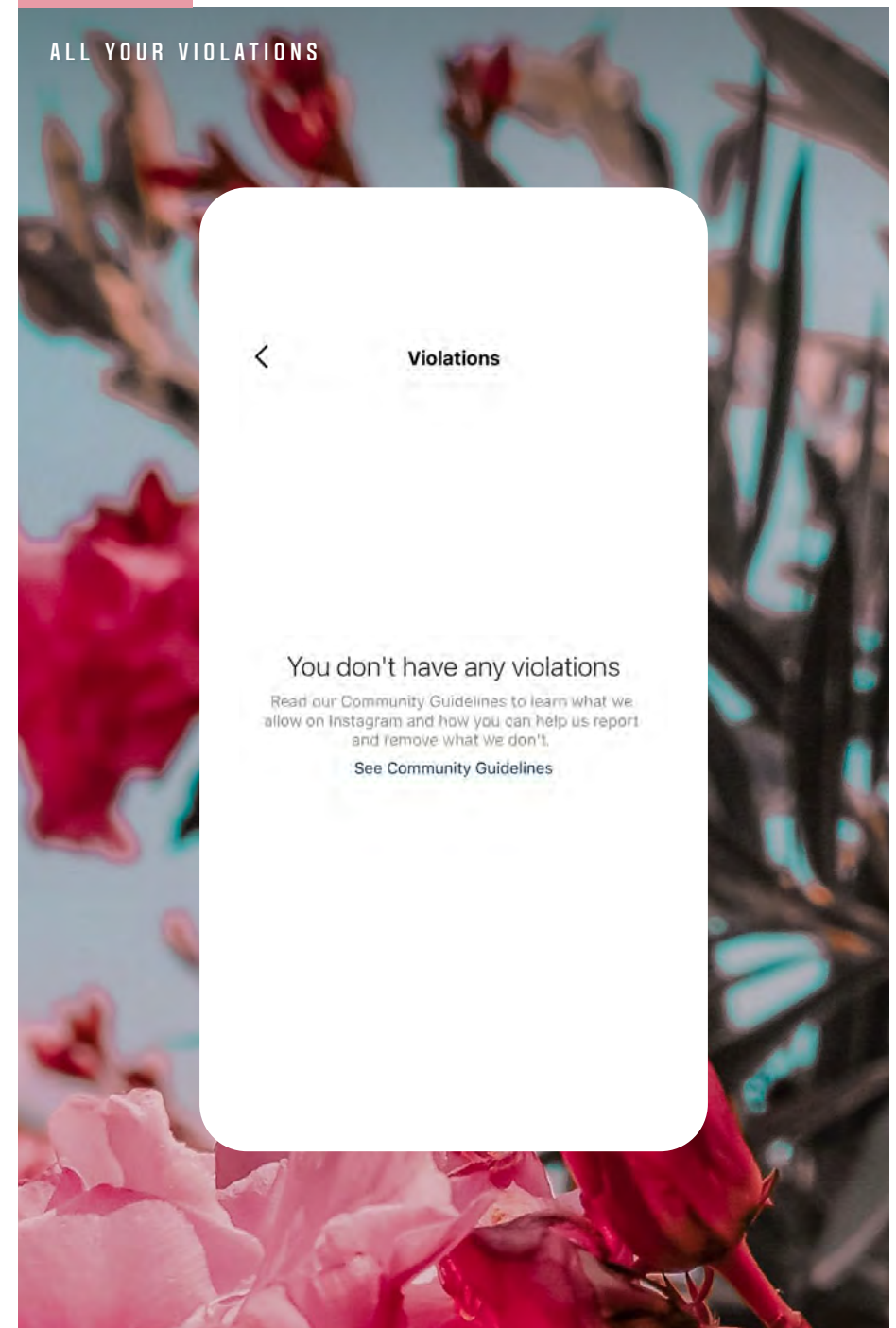
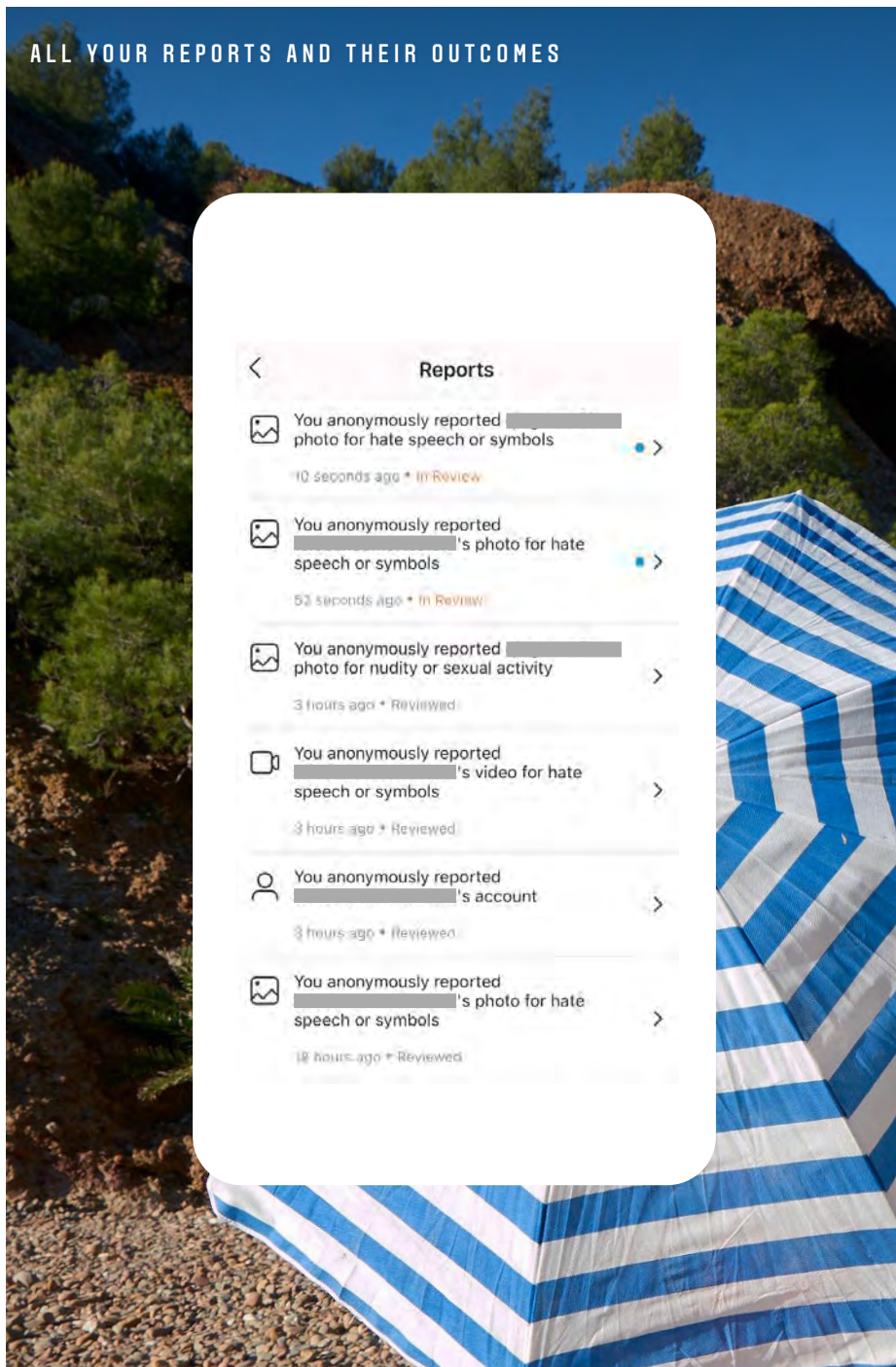
Support Requests

Our community now has access to Support Requests – a place where you and your teen can follow updates to the reports filed and any violations by your teen's account.

This is aimed at increasing transparency into our processes by ensuring that everyone can view their reports and violations. In an effort to ensure that our processes are fair, it also provides people with a dedicated place to appeal decisions they disagree with.



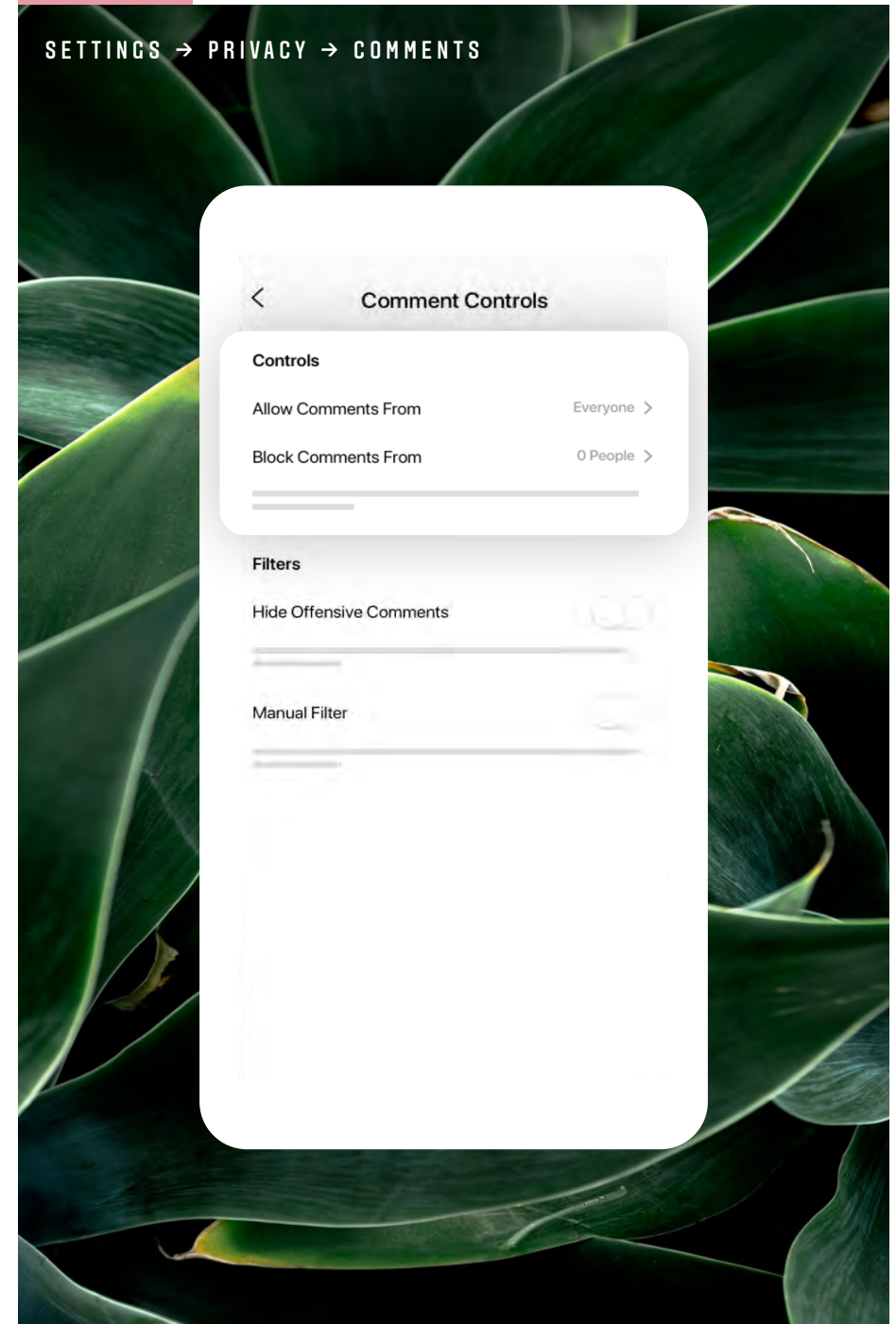




Manage Comments

Your teen is in control of who can comment on their photos and videos. In the 'Comment Controls' section of the app settings, they can choose to allow comments from everyone, people they follow and those people's followers, just the people they follow, or just their followers.

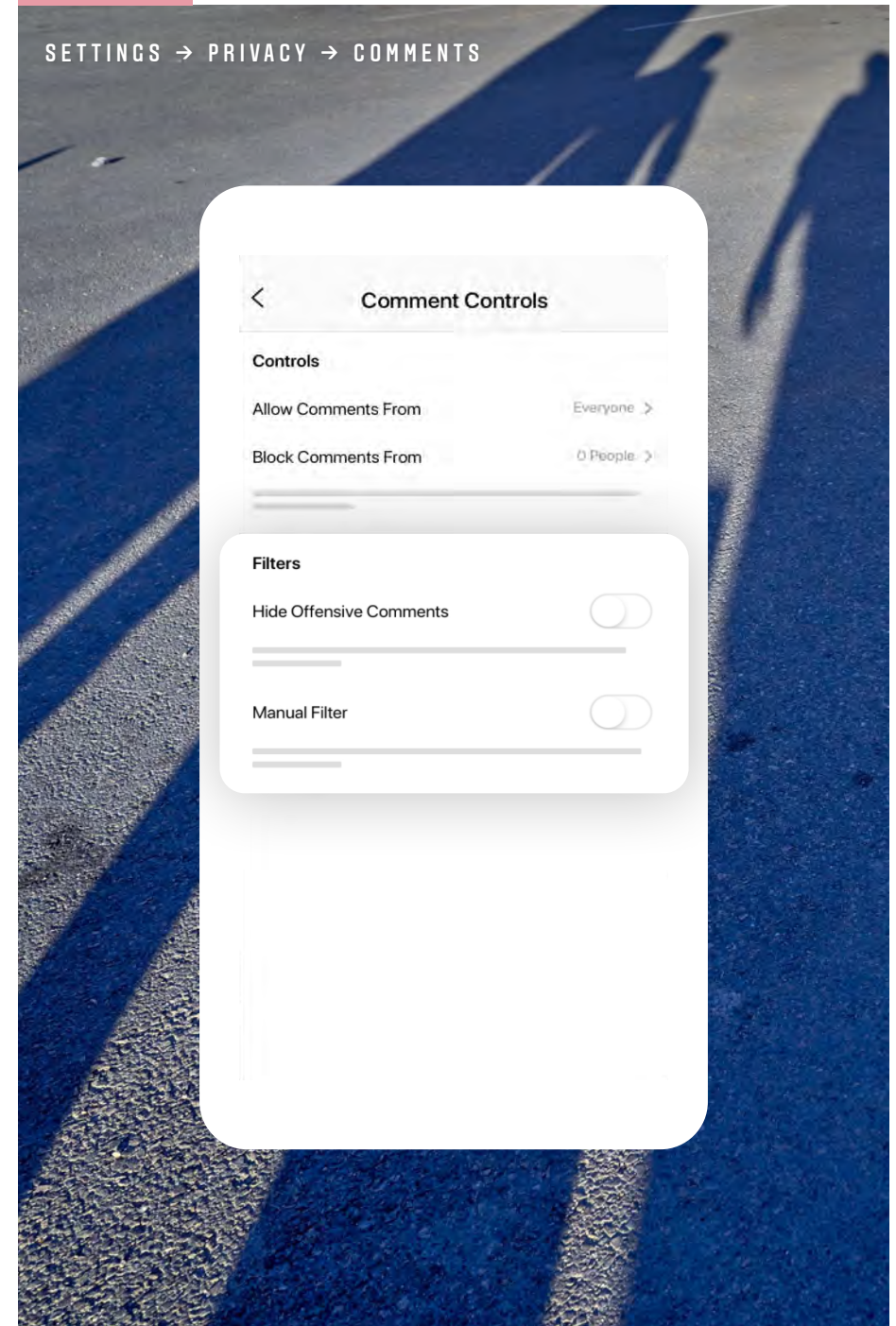
Your teen can also remove comments entirely from their posts.



Filter Out Comments

We have controls that help teens manage the content they see and determine when comments are offensive or intended to bully or harass.

We've built filters that automatically remove offensive words and phrases and bullying comments. Your teen can also create their own list of words or emojis they don't want to have appear in the comments section when they post, by going to 'Filters' in the 'Comment Controls' section.

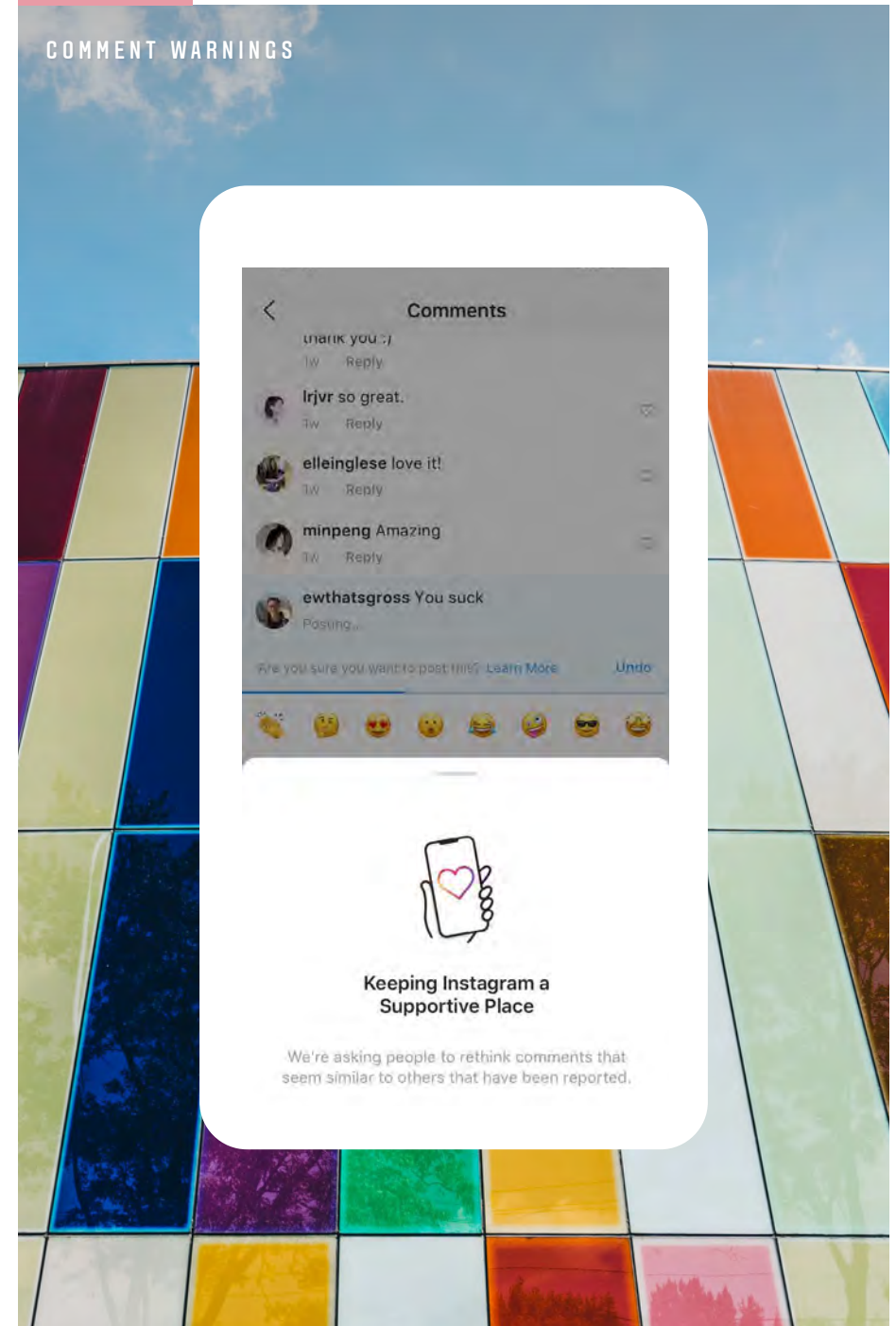
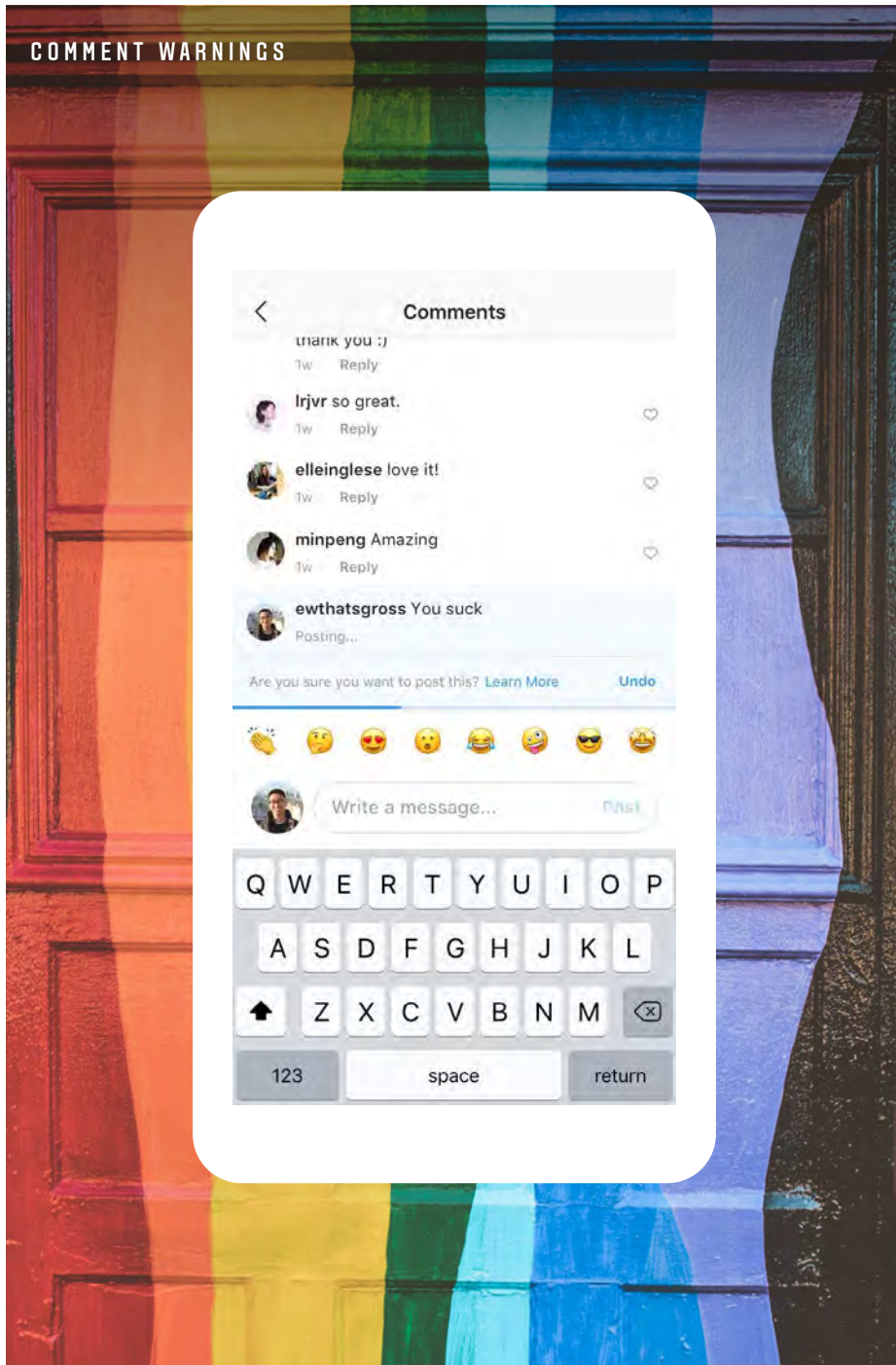


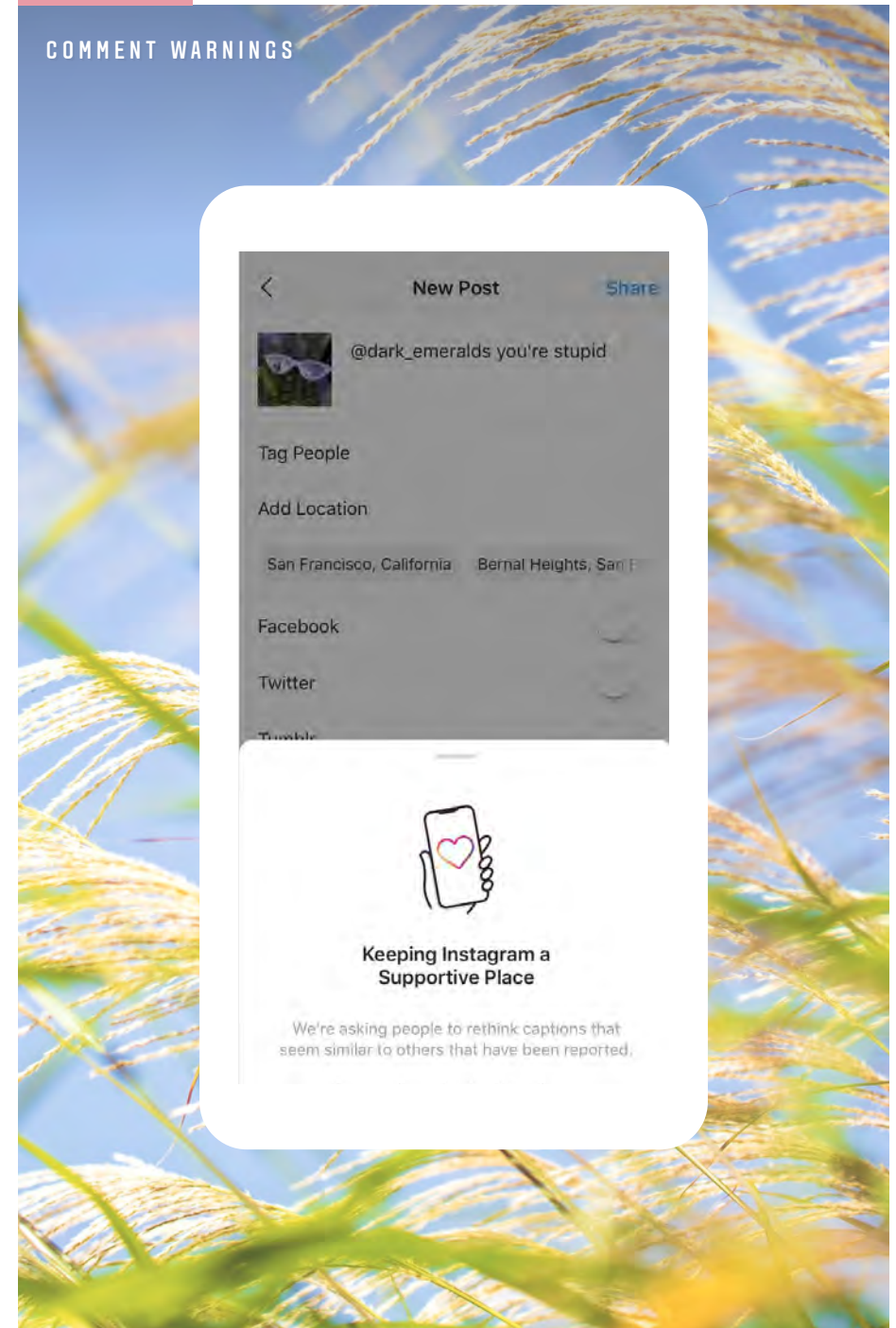
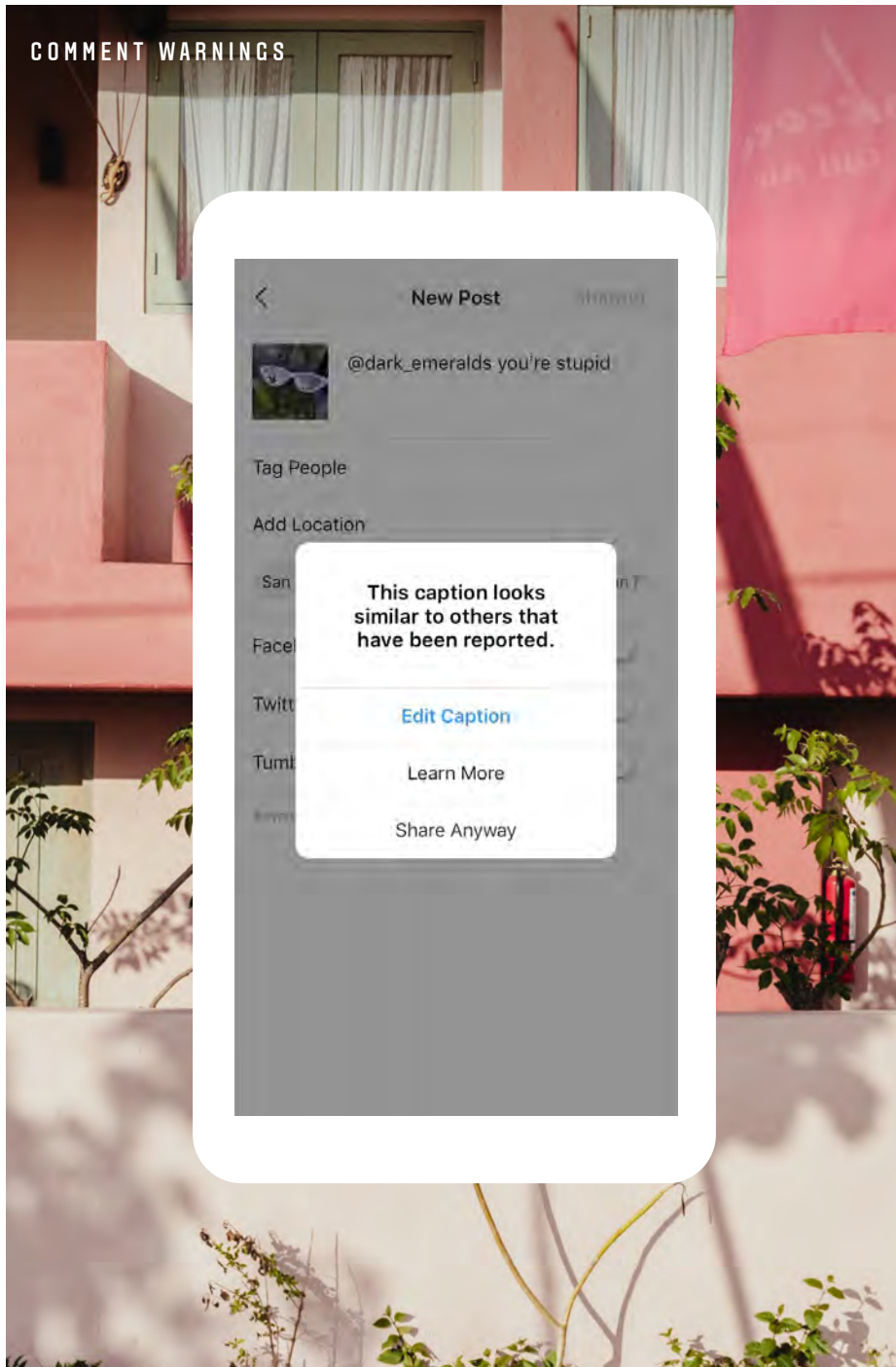
! Comment and Caption Warnings

We automatically identify when a comment or a caption in a post is likely to be hurtful or offensive, and we notify the person making the comment or posting the caption before it's posted. This gives them a chance to pause and undo their comment or caption.

We also use the opportunity to show them what is and isn't allowed on Instagram. The intervention prevents the recipient from potentially having a harmful interaction.







Bulk Comment Management

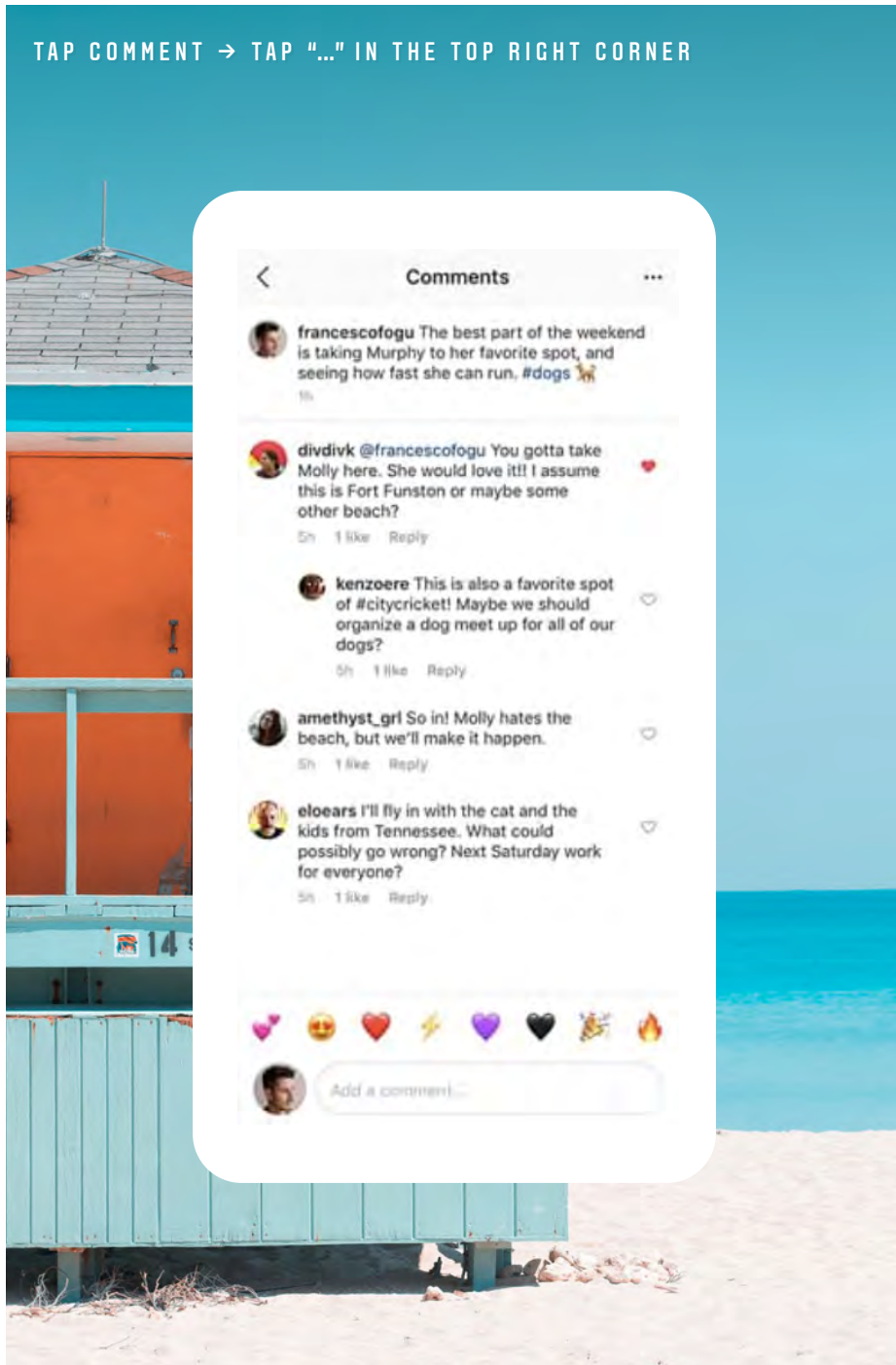
We know it can feel overwhelming for teens to have to manage a rush of comments, so we've introduced features to delete comments in bulk, as well as to block or restrict multiple accounts that post negative comments.

To enable this feature on iOS, your teen can tap on a comment and then on the dotted icon in the top right corner. They can then select 'Manage Comments' and choose up to 25 comments to delete at once. Tap 'More Options' to block or restrict accounts in bulk.

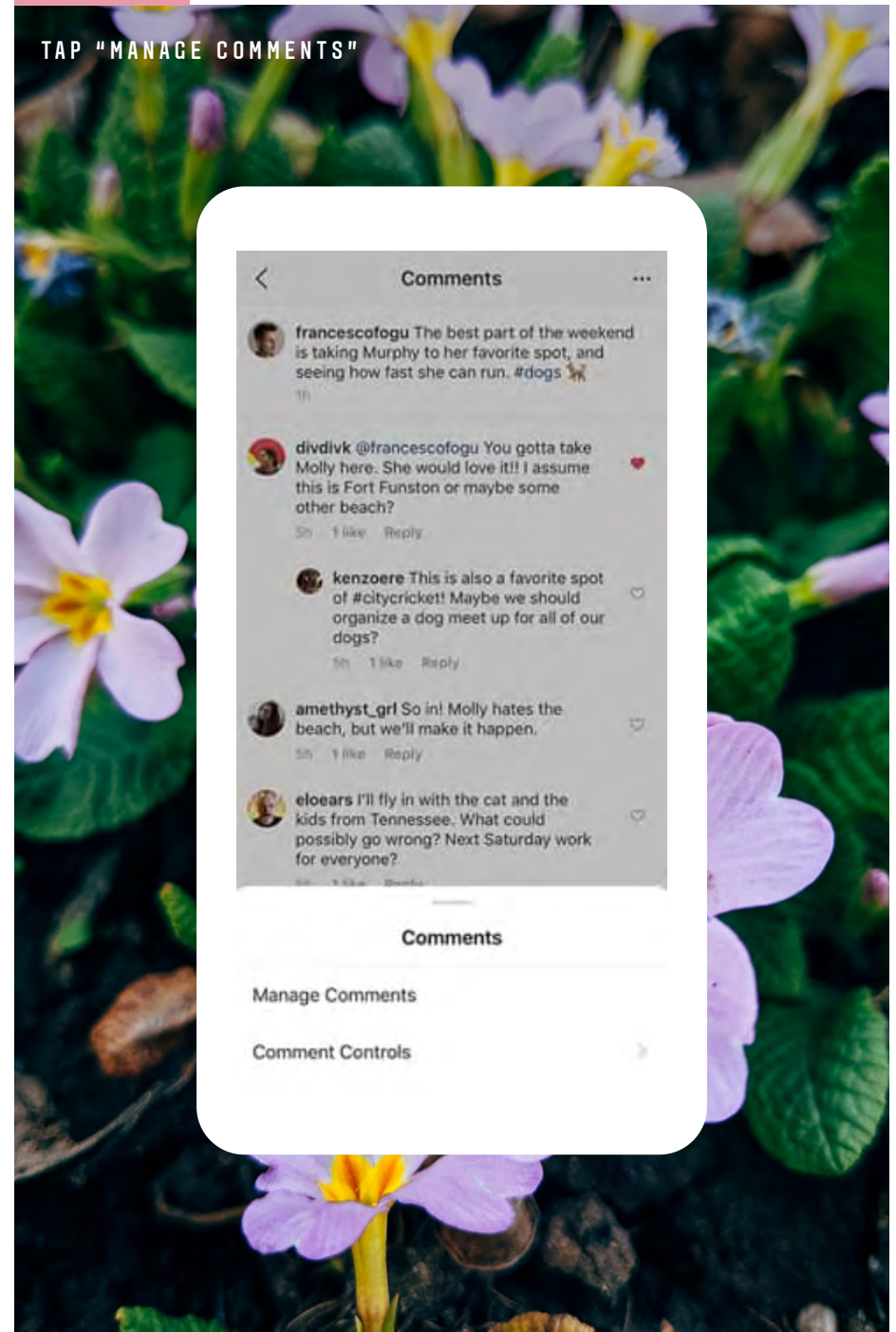
On Android, press and hold on a comment, tap the dotted icon, and choose which comments or accounts to block or restrict.

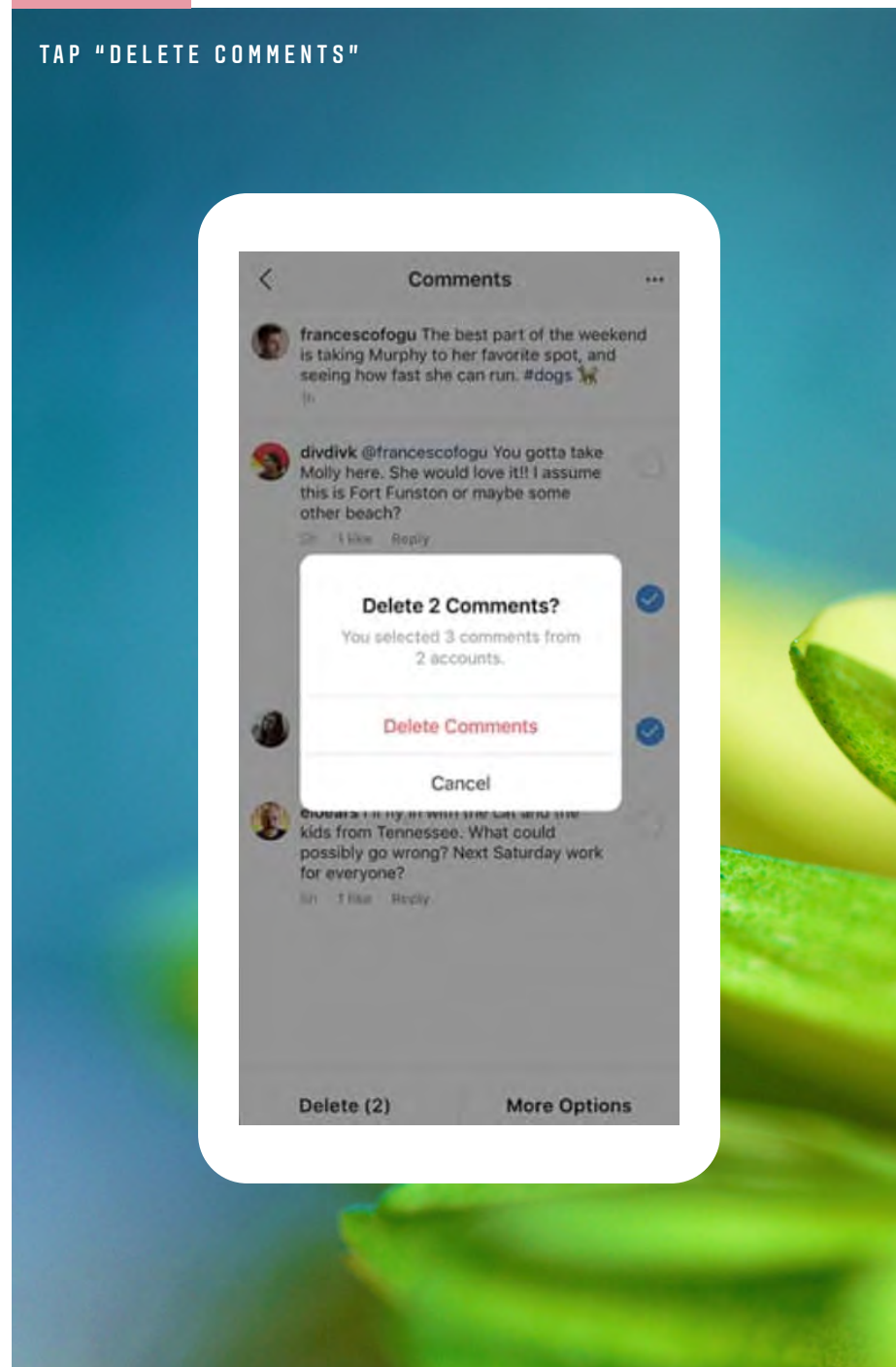
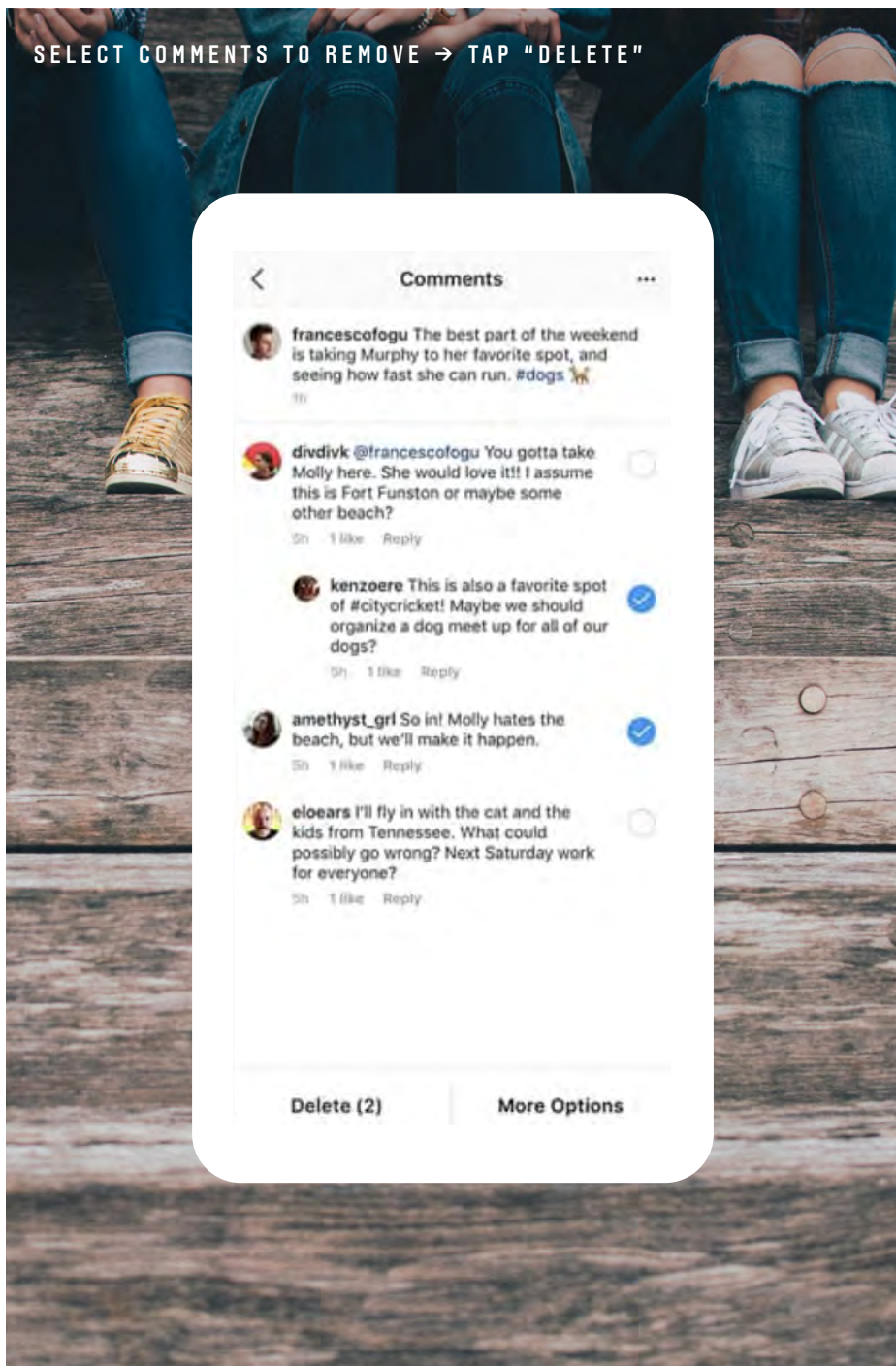


TAP COMMENT → TAP "..." IN THE TOP RIGHT CORNER



TAP "MANAGE COMMENTS"

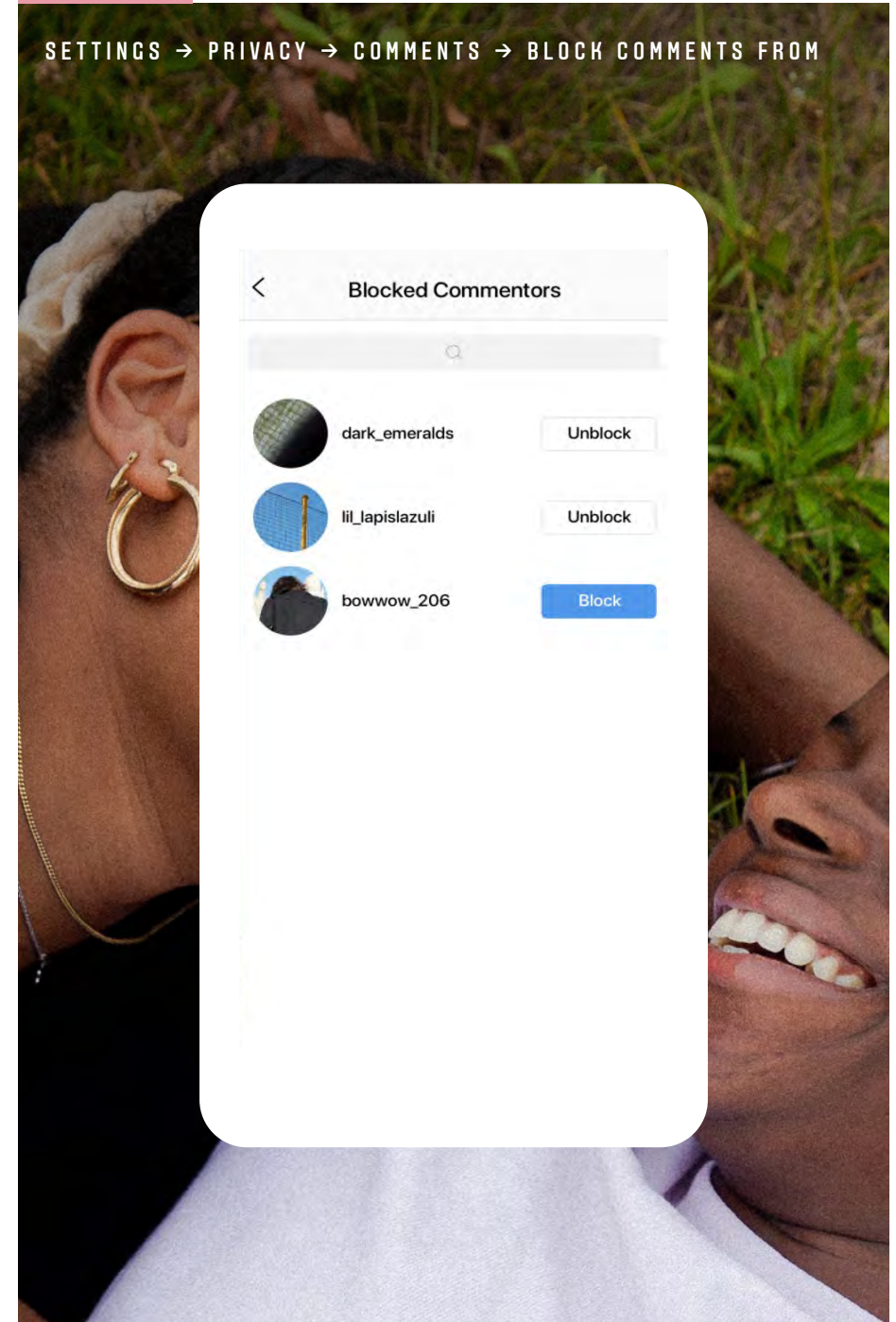




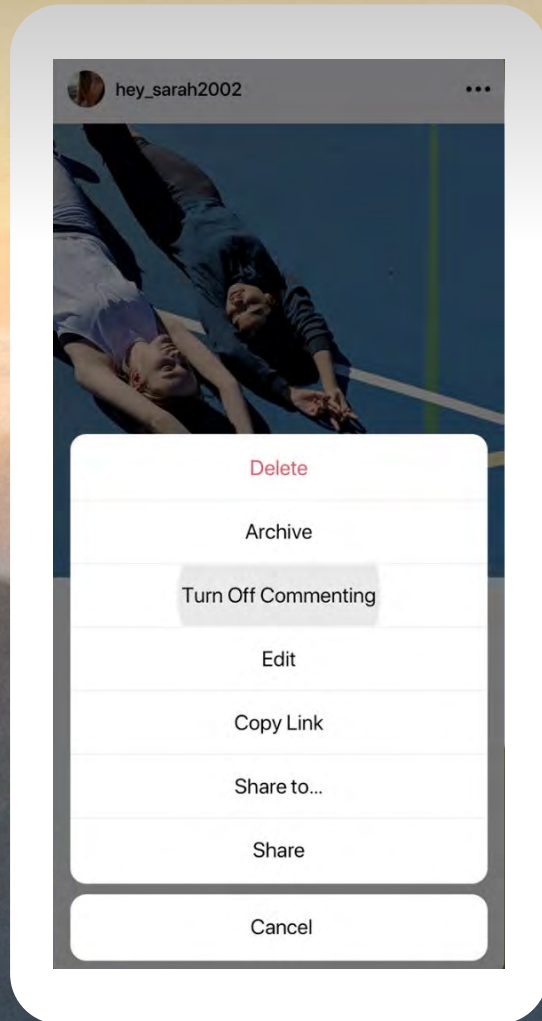
Block Comments

Your teen can block accounts they don't want to interact with. Comments will no longer appear from a blocked account.

Your teen can also turn off comments from all posts or just from individual posts.



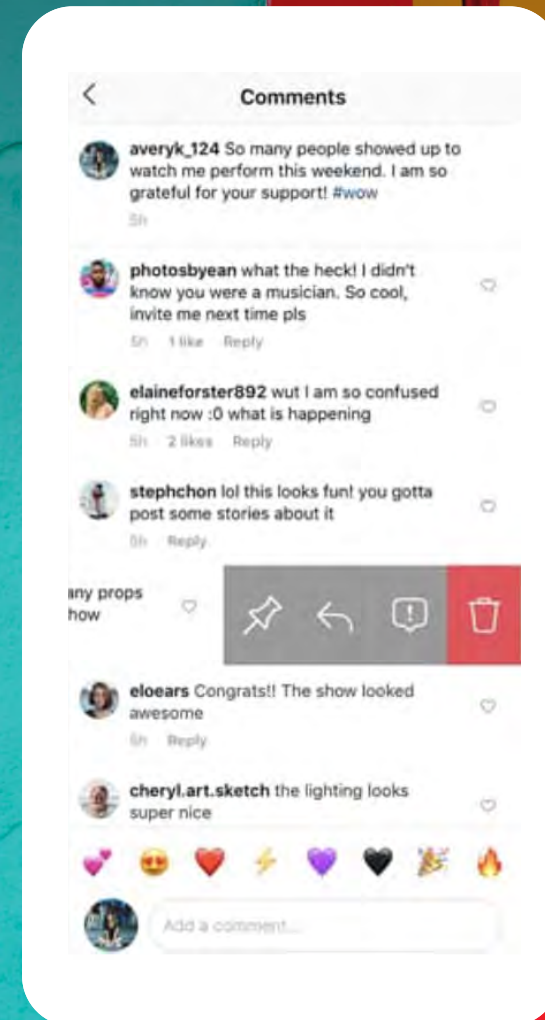
TAP "... " IN CORNER OF POST → TURN OFF COMMENTING



Pinning Positive Comments

In addition to removing negative comments, we want to give people an easy way to amplify and encourage positive interactions. Pinned Comments gives your teen a way to set the tone for their account and engage with their community by pinning a select number of comments to the top of their comments thread.

SWIPE LEFT ON THE COMMENT → TAP THE THUMB TACK ICON



TAP "PIN COMMENT"

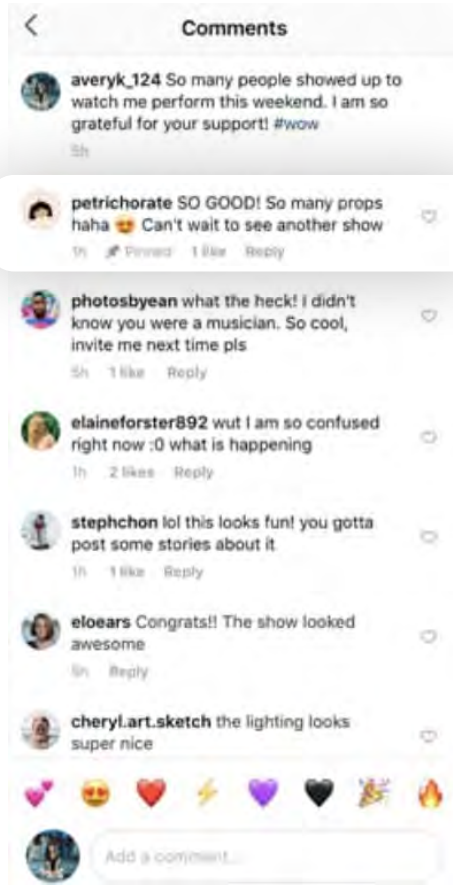


Pin Your Favorite Comments

Pin up to 3 comments to show them at the top of your post and highlight positivity. When you pin a comment, we'll notify the person who wrote it.

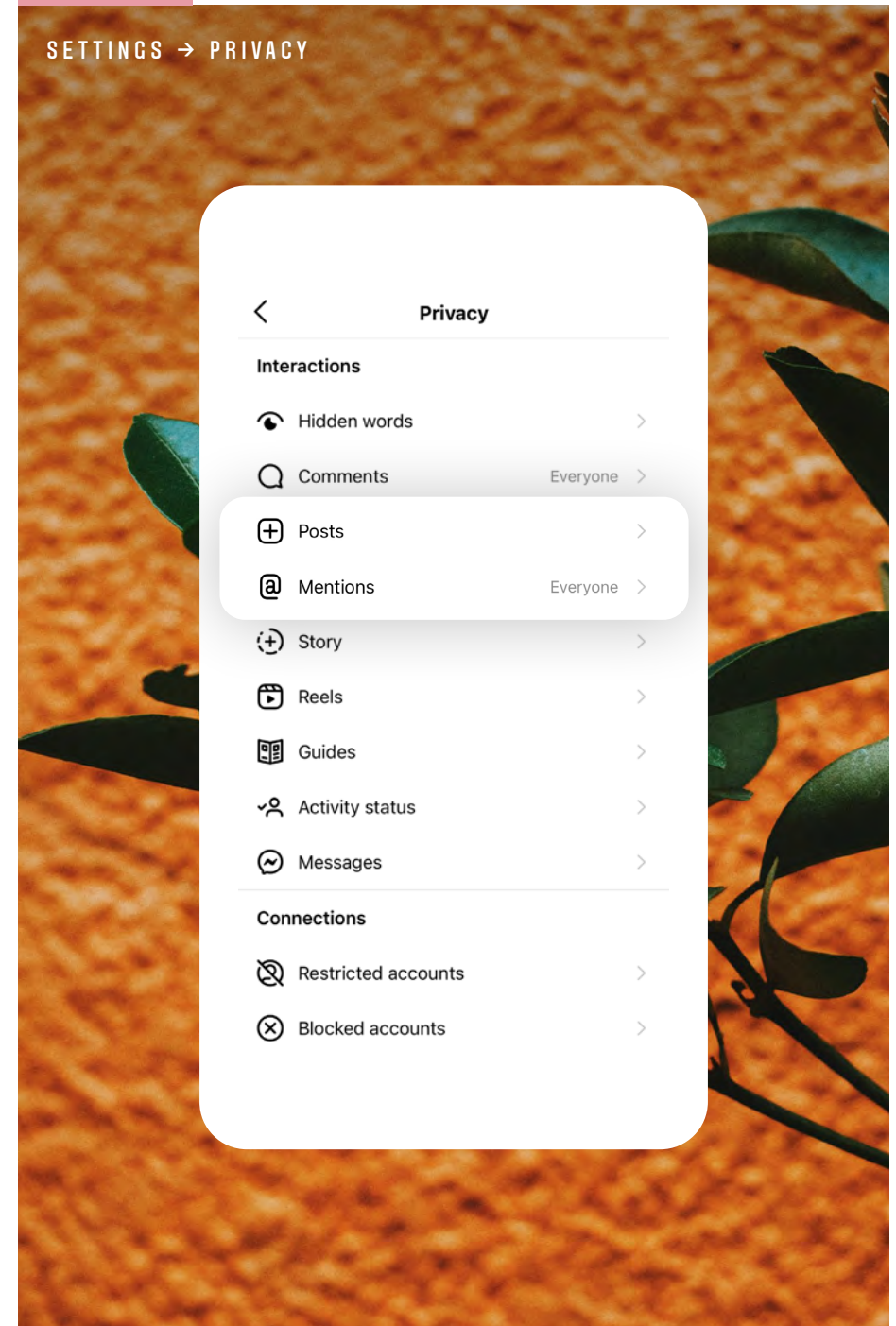
[Pin Comment](#)

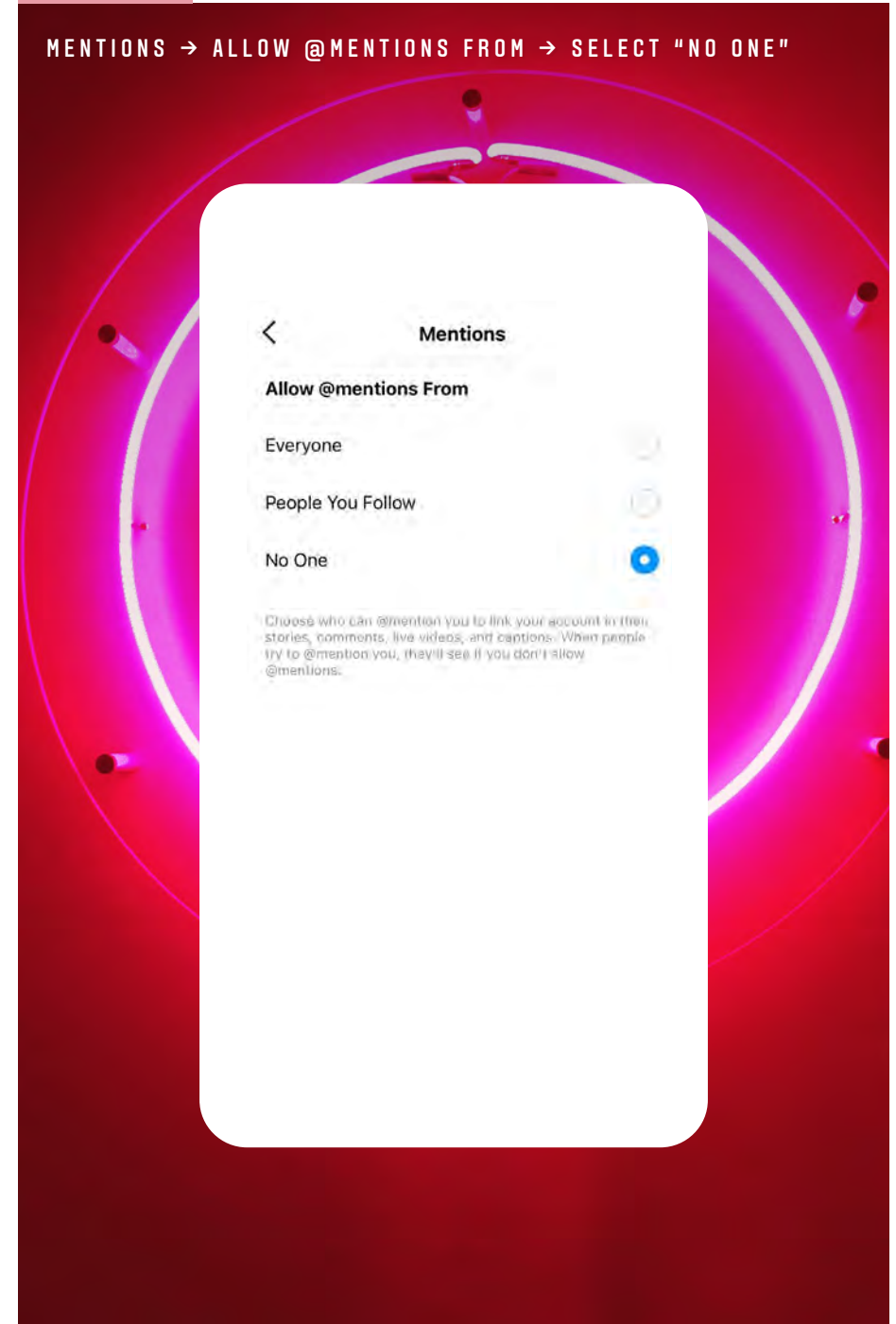
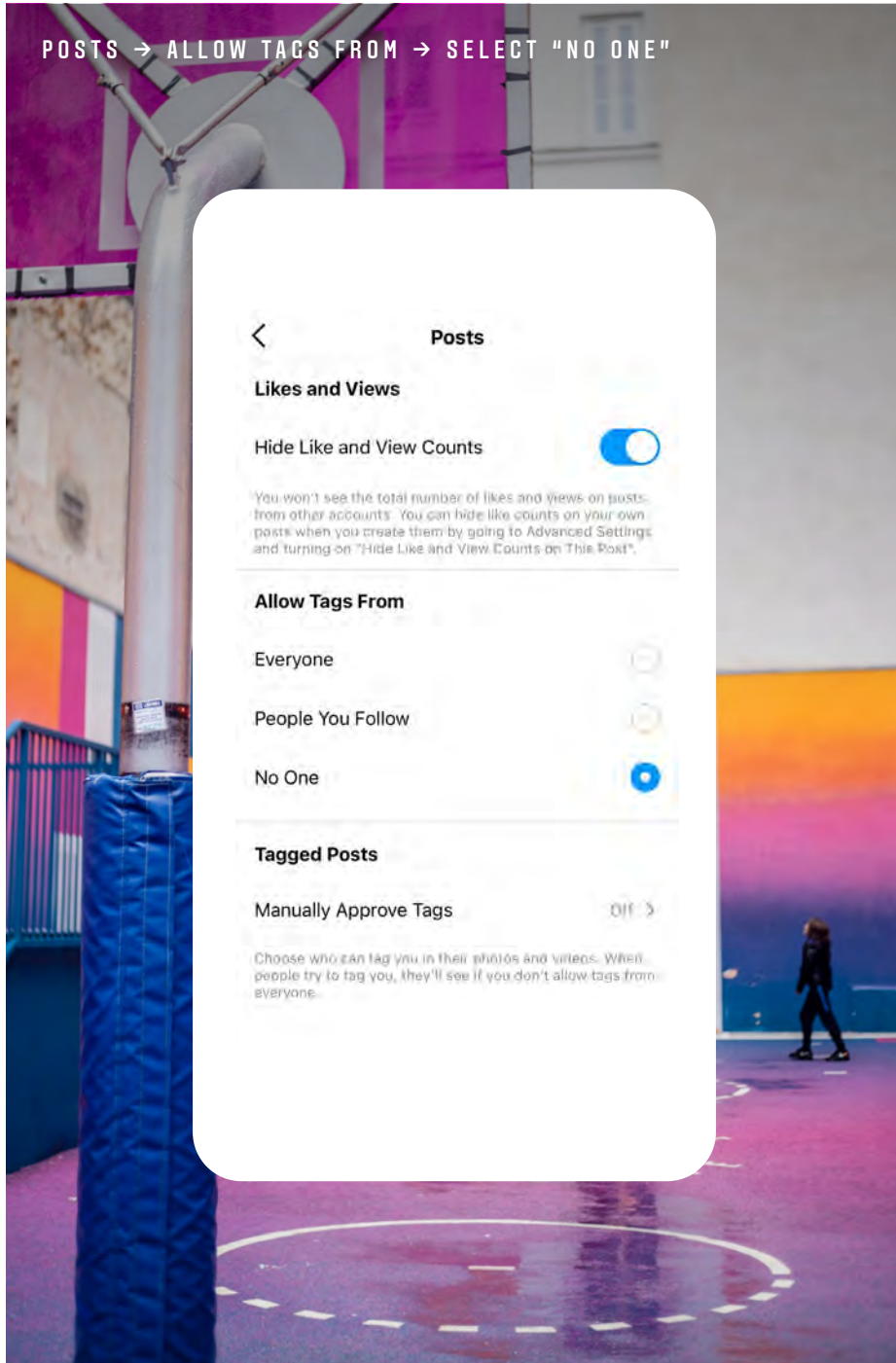
PINNED COMMENTS APPEAR AT THE TOP OF COMMENTS THREAD



Control Tags and Mentions

We've created new controls that allow people to manage who can tag or mention them on Instagram. Your teen can choose whether they want everyone, only people they follow, or no one to be able to tag or mention them in a comment, caption or Story.

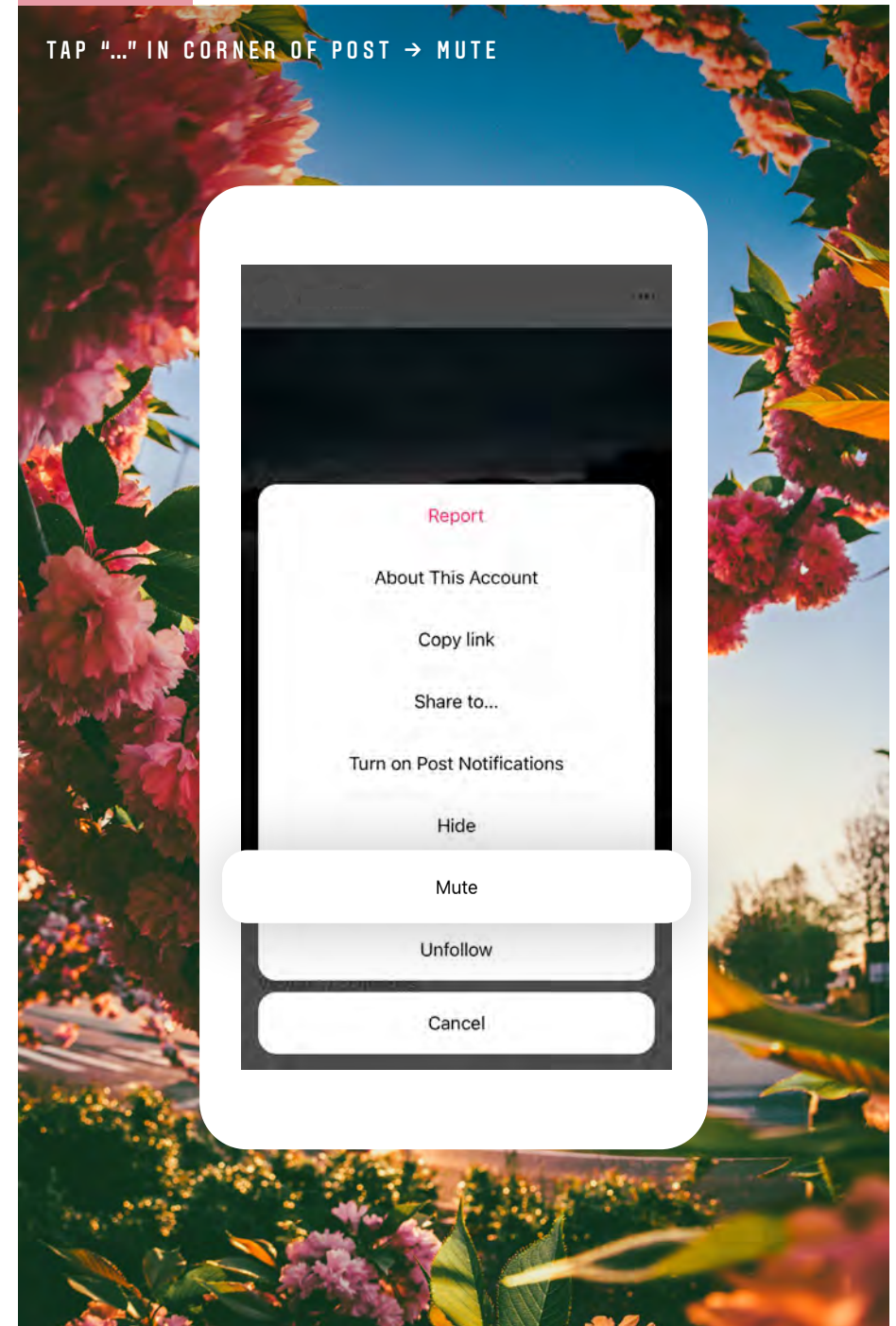




Mute An Account

There may be accounts that your teen isn't interested in interacting with, but is hesitant to unfollow. Muting will keep posts or Stories from those accounts from showing up in your teen's feed.

The other person won't know they've been muted, and your teen can unmute them at any time.



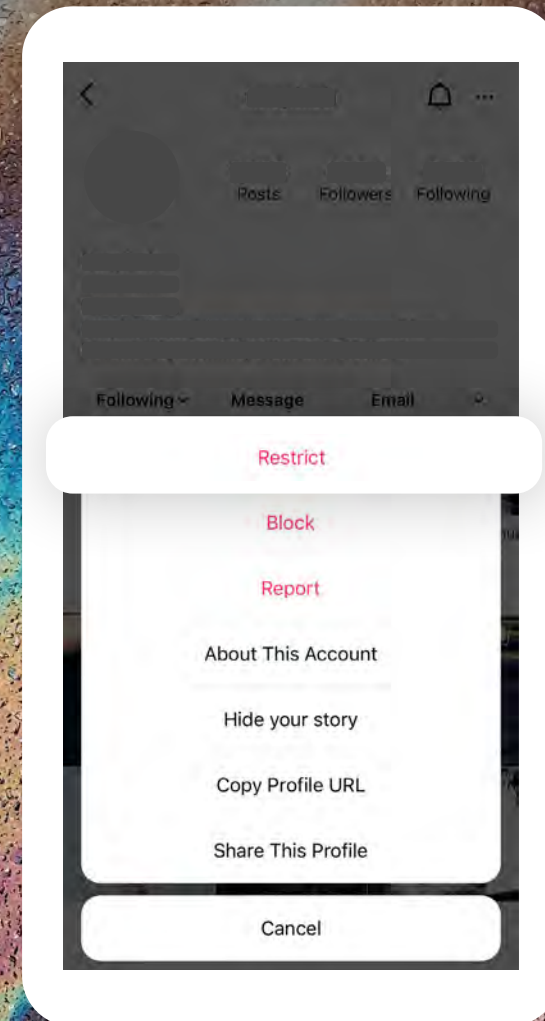
Restrict

Restrict mode allows your teen to protect their account and keep an eye on someone who may be bullying them without making that person aware.

Once they Restrict someone, comments from that person will only be visible to that person. Restricted people aren't able to see when you're active on Instagram or when you've read their direct messages.

Your teen can remove someone from Restrict at any time.

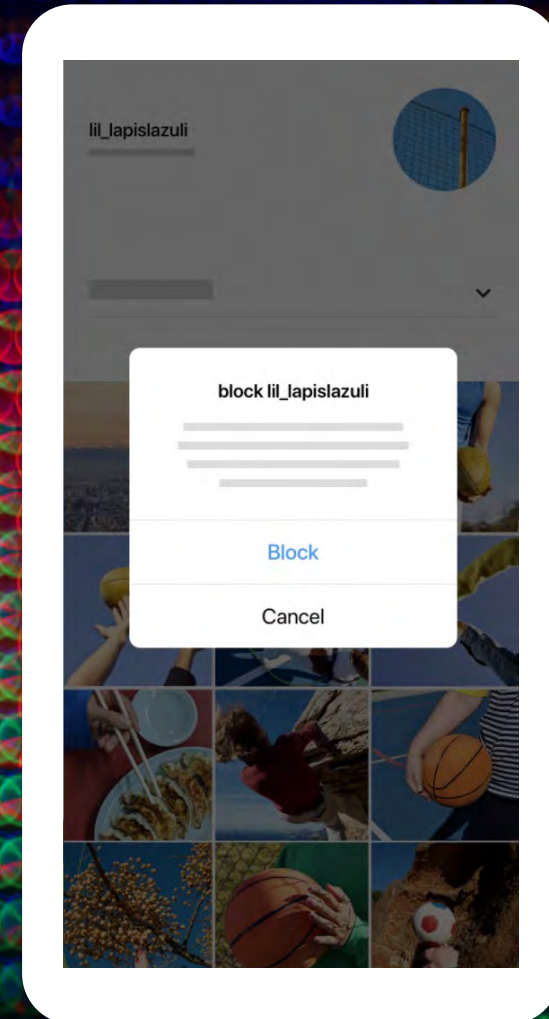
GO TO PROFILE OF THE ACCOUNT YOU WANT TO RESTRICT
→ TAP "..." IN THE TOP RIGHT → SELECT "RESTRICT"



Block Unwanted Interactions

Your teen can block accounts they don't want to interact with, and block any new accounts these users may create. This will block people from seeing and commenting on their posts, Stories, Reels and Live broadcasts. When your teen blocks an account, that person isn't notified. Your teen can unblock an account at any time.

GO TO PROFILE OF THE PERSON YOU'D LIKE TO BLOCK
→ TAP "..." IN THE TOP RIGHT → SELECT "BLOCK"





Five Tips from ReachOut for Helping Your Teen Foster a Positive Digital Presence

- 1** **Remind them to be kind.** Teach your teen not to do or say anything online that could hurt or humiliate anyone. Suggest that they ask themselves 'How would I feel if this happened to me?'
- 2** **Think about the future.** Remind your teen that social media posts are forever. Help them reflect on how they want to be seen in the world - not just now, but in the future.
- 3** **Make sure they know that it's okay to delete something.** Tell your teen that if they share something that they later regret, it's okay to delete the post. If they post something offensive or that could be perceived as bullying, encourage them to apologise as well.
- 4** **Talk about the content they post.** It's helpful for your teen to have a clear idea about how much they will share about themselves on social media. For example, will their posts be about hobbies and friends or more about their thoughts and feelings? Ask them to consider how they will feel after sharing this information, and who they would want to see it.
- 5** **Avoid online negativity.** Remind your teen that how they use social media, outside of posting content, is just as important. Suggest they avoid engaging with negative posts and accounts, and anything that makes them feel bad.



When it comes to spending time on Instagram, it's important to chat with your teen about, and to agree on, what is an appropriate amount of time they should spend on the platform each day or each week.

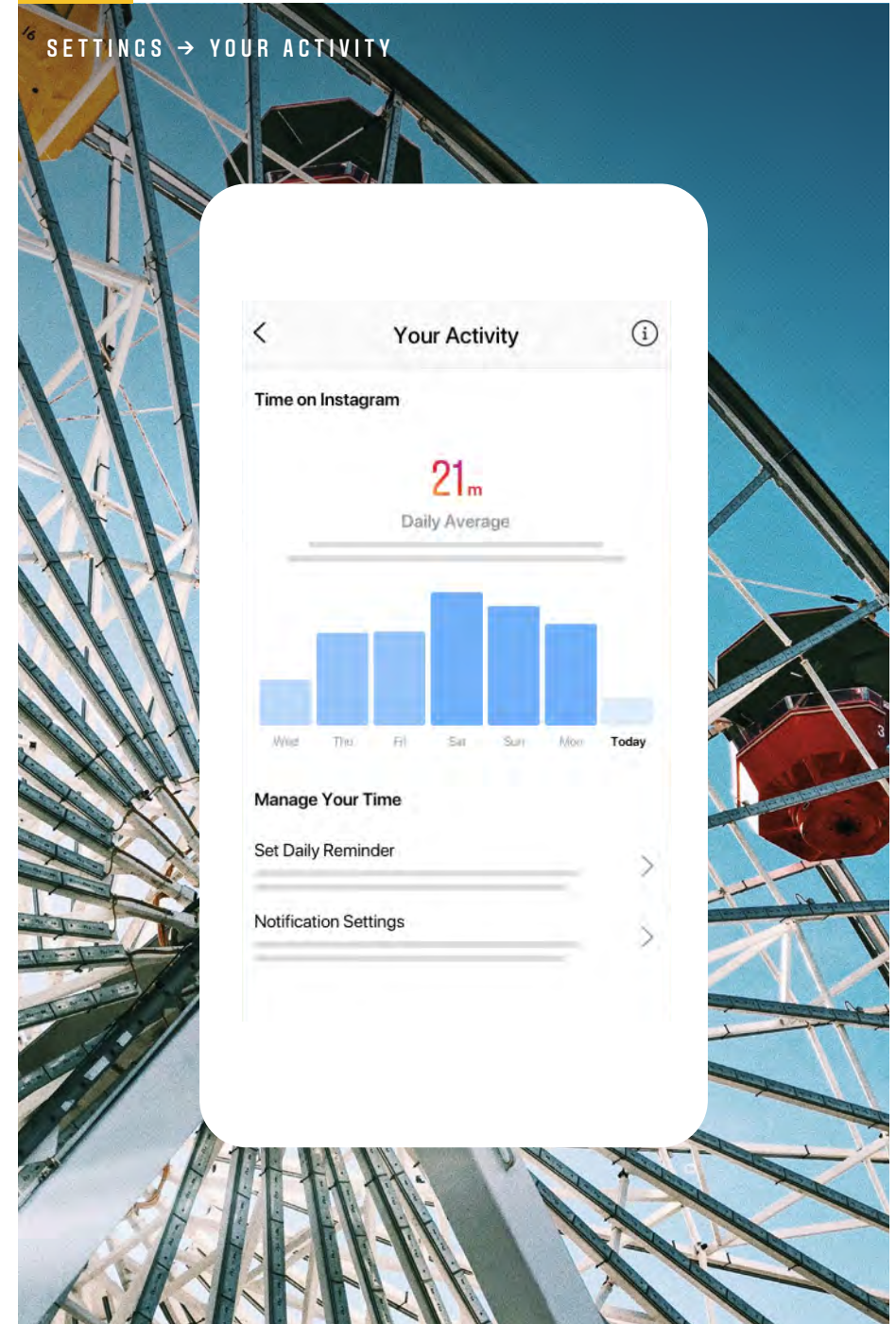
Taking regular breaks is also important, especially during stressful times. There are a number of tools to help you and your family understand and take control of the time your teen is spending on the app. You can work together to [decide what the right balance is for your family](#). After a week of trialling something new, check in about how it's going for everyone. You may need to make a few tweaks until you get it right for your family.



View Your Activity

The Activity Dashboard shows your teen how much time they've spent on Instagram for the past day and week, as well as their average time on the app.

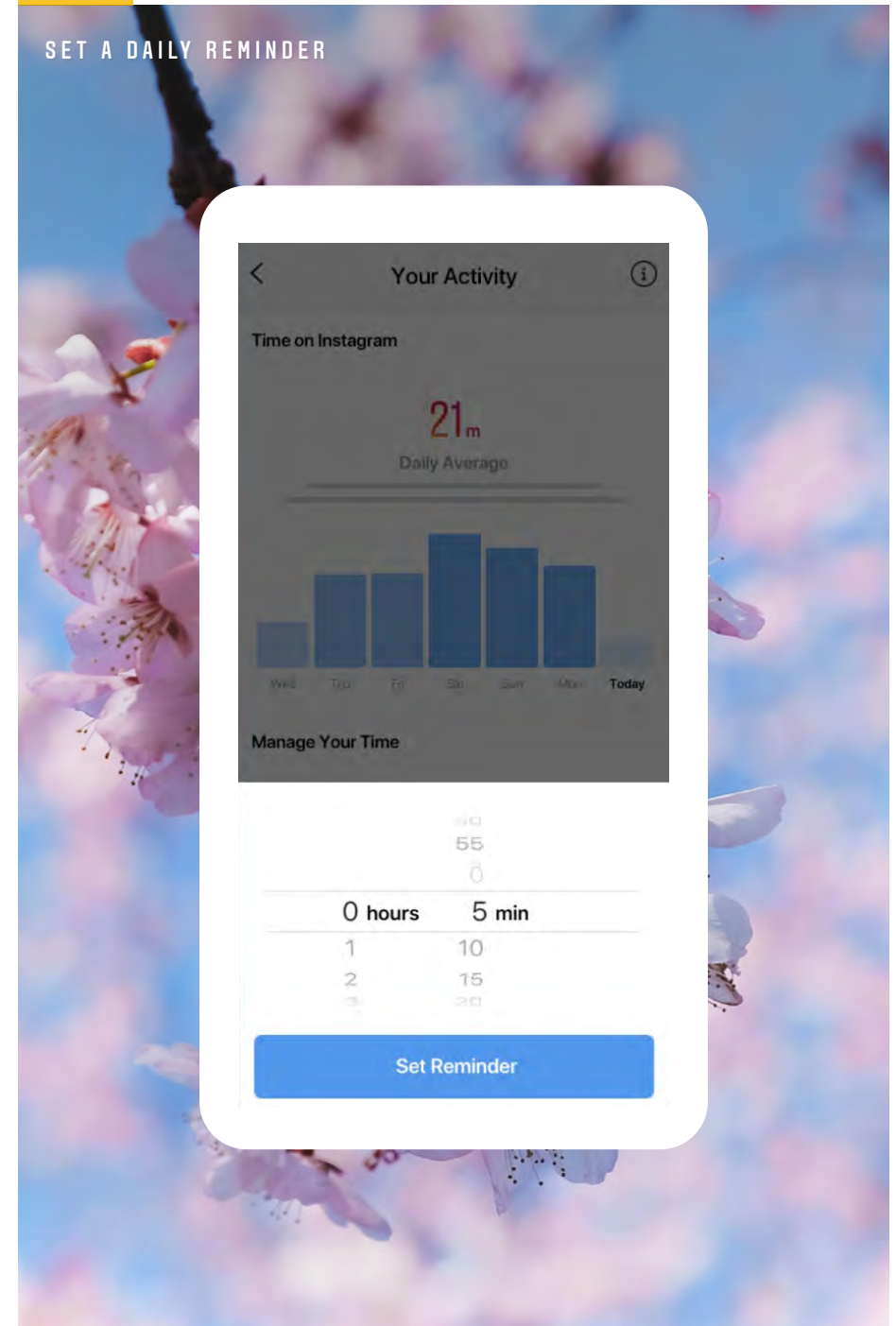
They can tap and hold the blue bars to see how much time they've spent on the app on any particular day.



Set a Daily Reminder

Your teen can use the daily reminder to set a limit on how much time they want to spend on Instagram.

Talk with them about how they feel while using the app. Is there a point when they don't get as much out of it? Setting the daily reminder together can be a good way to talk with your teen about how they are using Instagram throughout the day.

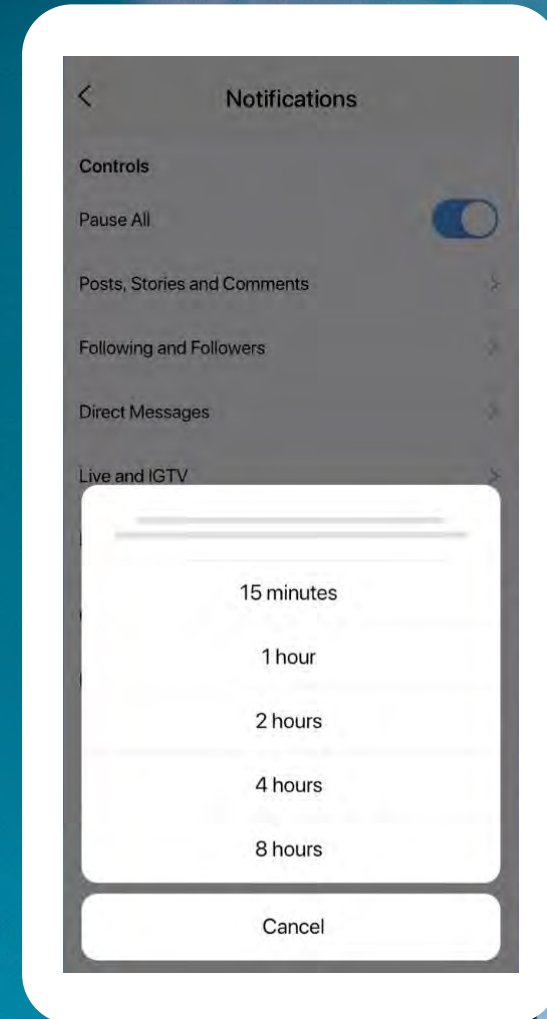


Mute Push Notifications

Your teen can use the 'Mute Push Notifications' feature to silence Instagram notifications for a period of time.

When the preset time is up, notifications will return to their normal settings without having to be reset.

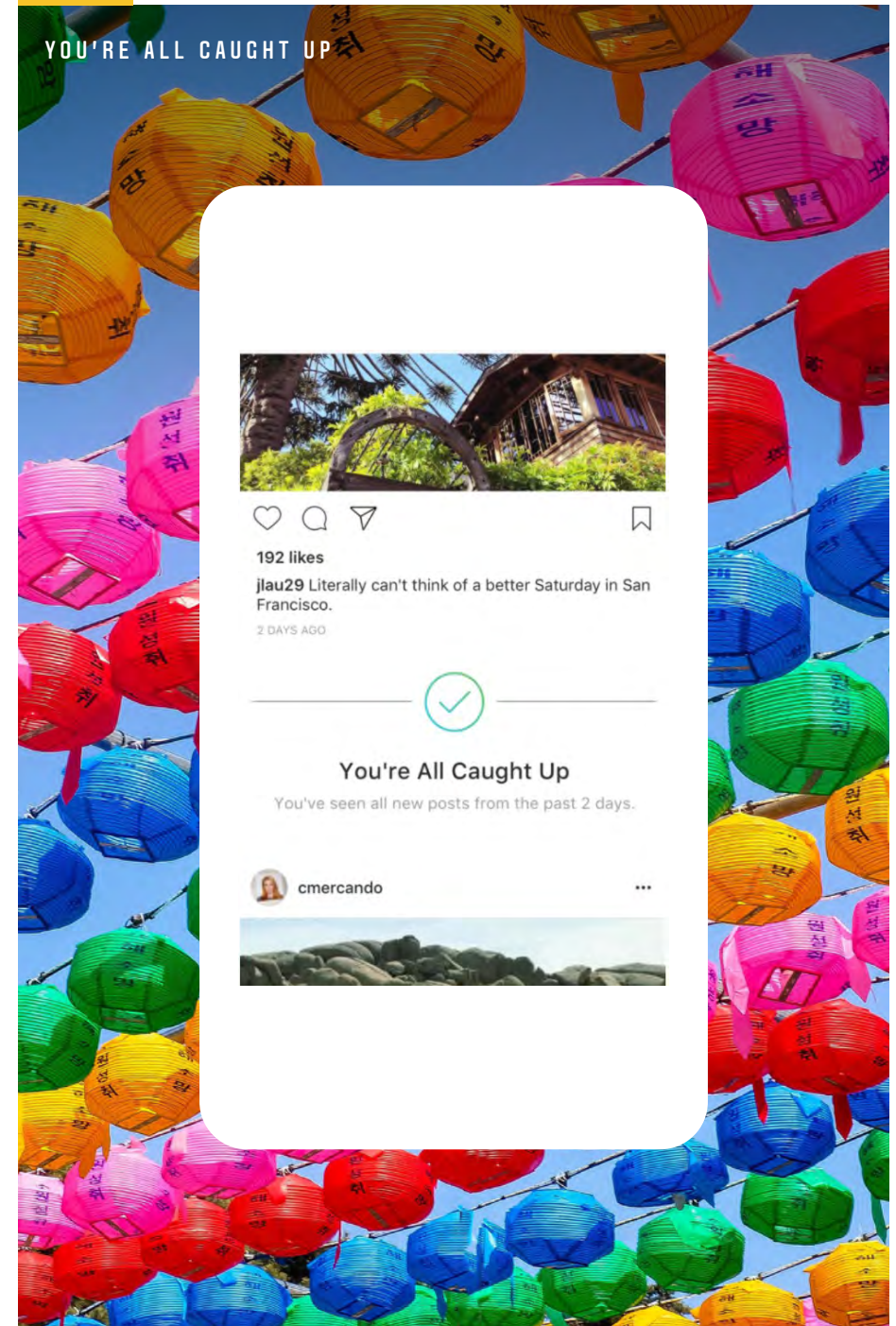
MUTE PUSH NOTIFICATIONS



👋 You're All Caught Up

Young people can feel pressure to see and interact with all their friends' posts. When they scroll through every post on their feed from the past two days, they'll see a message that says 'You're All Caught Up'.

This way, they'll know that they're up to date on everything their friends and communities are up to.





It's important that you and your teen consider security when setting up social media accounts. When your teen signs up to Instagram, they will be asked to provide personal details like their date of birth, name and email address. These details help to verify the identity of the account owner, and this information will not be displayed publicly on a personal Instagram account.

However, you may want to have a chat with your teen about how and where they choose to share this information with friends, followers, and in other public settings.

Don't over-emphasise the bad and scary stuff; just have an honest conversation about how you can manage their security together. Try to give them the information that will help them to use the app responsibly, without scaring them away from being open with you about their online behaviour.

Two Factor Authentication

Keep your teen's account secure and their login private, especially across multiple devices. Two-Factor Authentication is an additional security layer that helps secure an account from unauthorised password usage, and can be enabled from within the app settings.

Logging into an Instagram account will then require a password as well as a secure code that is sent via an authenticator app or a text message.



SETTINGS → SECURITY → TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION



Add Extra Security With Two-Factor Authentication

Two-factor authentication lets you protect your account every time you log in on a phone or computer we don't recognize.

We'll send a text message with a login code, or you can use a security app of your choice.

[Learn More](#)

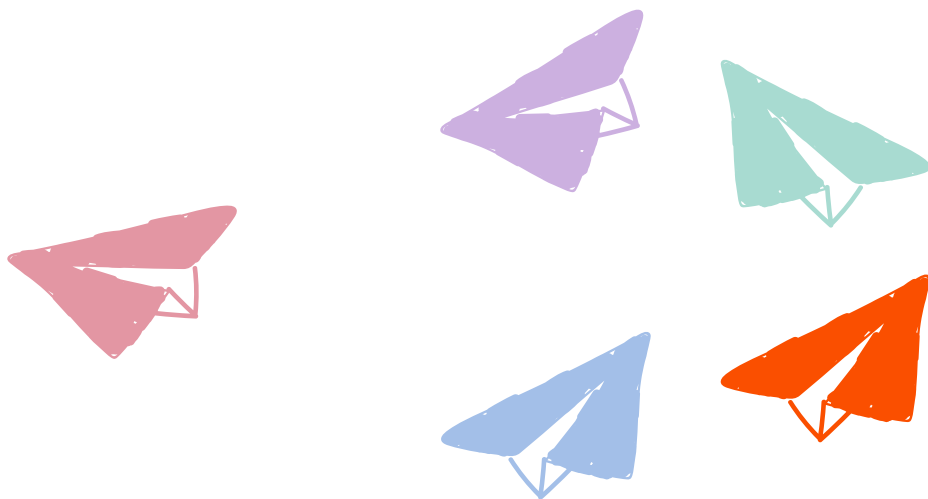
[Get Started](#)



Emails From Instagram

Ensure that your teen does not miss important emails from Instagram regarding your their account. If you are unsure whether a communication is legitimately from Instagram, this is a great place to start.





Please note that Instagram will never contact your teen through DMs.



SETTINGS → SECURITY → EMAILS FROM INSTAGRAM





< Security

Login security

-  Password >
-  Login activity >
-  Saved login information >
-  Two-factor authentication >

 Emails from Instagram >

Data and history

-  Access data >
-  Download data >
-  Apps and websites >
-  Clear search history >

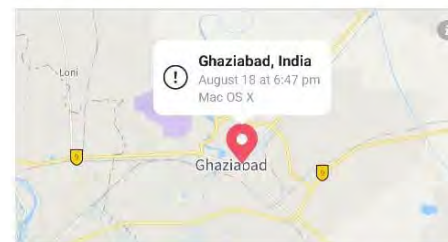
Login Activity

You can only be logged into a single Instagram account at a time, but your device can store login information for multiple Instagram accounts.

You can add or remove login information from your Instagram app settings.

SETTINGS → SECURITY → LOGIN ACTIVITY

Was This You?



This Was Me

This Wasn't Me

Where You're Logged In

- Delhi, India
Active now • This Pixel 3
- Delhi, India
3 days ago • Mac OS X
- Ghaziabad, India
4 days ago • Mac OS X
- Menlo Park, California
January 9 • Mac OS X

Recovery Codes

Once Two-Factor Authentication is set up, you'll have access to Recovery Codes, which enables you to log in if you're not able to receive your Two-Factor Authentication code via an authenticator app or a text message.

SETTINGS → SECURITY → TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION
→ ADDITIONAL METHODS → RECOVERY CODES

Recovery Codes

If you lose your phone or can't receive a code via text message or an authentication app, you can use these codes to get back into your account. Save them in a safe place.

Each code can only be used once. You can also get new codes if you're worried this set has been stolen, or if you've already used most of them.

3658 1209

1268 7053

0219 6543

7805 4926

3752 9610

[Screenshot](#) · [Get New Codes](#)

Done



Young people use social media to connect with others and share their experiences. It's possible that your teen may come across people on Instagram who are sharing things that make your teen worried about their wellbeing.

It may never happen, but it's important for young people to know how to act if they are concerned for someone else's emotional wellbeing and safety on Instagram. You may already have had discussions about mental health with your teen.

If not, try ReachOut's tips below around helping others with kindness and without judgement. Instagram also provides a number of tools for reporting concerning behaviour, which are explained on the following pages.



In an emergency, contact emergency services

If someone is in immediate physical danger, please call 000 for help.

Know the warning signs of suicide in others

ReachOut suggests looking out for the following behaviours:

- They're not acting like themselves.
- They're talking as if they don't have a future.
- They're saying they are worthless or a burden to others.
- They're talking more about death, or about not wanting to live.
- They're taking more risks than usual.
- They're talking about feeling hopeless.
- They're taking drugs or drinking in a way that's unusual for them.
- They're harming themselves.
- They don't feel like hanging out as much.

If someone is exhibiting any of the above behaviours, we suggest seeking support as soon as possible.

Providing support to others

Young people can call Lifeline (13 11 14), Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800) or Suicide Call Back Service (1300 659 467) to chat about their concerns for someone else. A trained counsellor can give them tips on how to talk about their concerns and what their next steps could be.

If your teen is comfortable doing so, they can also reach out directly to a friend they're concerned about. Helping someone can be as simple as sending them a quick DM or text to let them know that they're not alone and that you care about them. Try a casual check-in like, 'I've noticed you're posting a lot of sad memes lately. How are you going?'

Asking questions like, 'Have you talked to anyone else about this?' can be a way to see if they have support in the other parts of their life. Check out ReachOut's resource on [how to ask a friend if they're okay](#) with your teen if they need some more support.

Reporting to Instagram

Along with seeking immediate support, we encourage young people who are worried that someone may be thinking about suicide or self-harm to let us know, so that we can help connect them to information and resources. There are teams all over the world working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to review these reports. The poster won't know who made the report, but they'll get help the next time they open the app.



- 1 Help them curate their feed.** Support your teen to think through who they follow and how those accounts make them feel. Encourage them to make their feed a positive space.
- 2 Keep them safe.** Make sure they know that it's never a good idea to share personal details with someone they have met online.
- 3 Role model with your own behaviour.** If you want your teen to limit their screen time or curate their feed, then make sure you're doing it, too. This will demonstrate to your teen how important you think it is and open up conversations.
- 4 Get to know Instagram.** The best way to understand your teen's experience on social media is to check it out yourself. If you're unsure, you could ask your teen to show you, so you can see it through their eyes.
- 5 Stay non-judgemental.** Social media is likely a huge part of your teen's life, so get to know how and why they use platforms like Instagram, and be open to learning.



Glossary of Instagram Terms

BLOCK

Block is a tool your teen can use if someone is bothering them on Instagram. When your teen blocks someone, the other person isn't notified, but they'll no longer be able to interact with your teen in any way.

COMMENT

A comment is a reaction to the content someone posts on Instagram. Comments appear below posts on your teen's feed, and can use words or emojis.

COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

We want to foster a positive, diverse community. Everyone who uses Instagram must adhere to our Community Guidelines which are designed to create a safe and open environment for everyone. This includes things like no nudity or hate speech. Not following these guidelines may result in deleted content, disabled accounts or other restrictions.

DIRECT OR DM

Instagram Direct is where young people can message each other individually or in groups. They can also share photos and videos with just the people they're messaging.

EXPLORE

Explore is where young people will see photos and videos from accounts and hashtags they might be interested in. Explore is different for everyone – the content changes depending on accounts and hashtags your teen follows.

FEED

Feed is where young people can see posts from the accounts they follow. Young people generally see feed posts as being more celebratory or special. Feed posts can be photos or videos.

IGTV

IGTV is a place to share video content up to one hour in length. Your teen can find videos from their favourite creators, and make their own longer content.

LIVE AND VIDEO CHAT

Your teen can go live to share with their followers in real time. When live, they can invite friends to join them, co-host a live session, or leave comments and send hearts. They can also video chat in Direct with up to four people.

POST

A post is the media your teen is putting on their feed or on Stories. This can be photos or videos.

PROFILE

Your teen's Instagram profile is where their friends and followers will find their posts and can access their stories. It also includes a short biography. If your teen's profile is private, only their main profile picture and biography is visible.

REELS

Reels allows people to record and edit short videos of up to 30 seconds in the Instagram Camera. You can add effects and music to your reel, or use your own original audio.

REPORT

Reporting is a way your teen can let Instagram know that something they have seen is inappropriate. Your teen can report anything on Instagram that they believe violates our community guidelines.

RESTRICT

Restrict is a tool that allows your teen to protect their account from unwanted interactions without making the restricted person aware. Once they restrict someone, comments from that person will only be visible to that person. Restricted people aren't able to see when your teen is active on Instagram or when they have read their direct messages.

STORIES

Stories disappear from the app after 24 hours, unless your teen has enabled archiving, which makes their expired stories available only to them. Your teen can subsequently share these in their Stories Highlights. Anyone who can view your teen's stories can screenshot them.



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Resources

For more tools and resources to help you navigate healthy social media habits with your teen, visit:

Parents.Instagram.com

ReachOut.com/ParentsGuidetoInsta

