

Australia's Teen Social Media Ban Marks a New Step Toward Digital Control

Australia has officially banned children under 16 from using major social media platforms, a move hailed by some as a necessary safeguard for young people but recognized by others as another milestone on the road toward government-controlled digital identity systems. While social media and smartphones undeniably affect teens in harmful ways, they influence adults as well. What unfolds in Australia may serve as a preview of growing digital oversight worldwide.

The ban is sweeping and the first of its kind, as reported by the BBC, which notes that under-16s are now blocked from using TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat and other major platforms. New accounts cannot be created and existing accounts are already being shut down.

Why Australia Says It Is Banning Teens from Social Media

The government argues that the ban is necessary to reduce exposure to dangerous content and addictive digital design. Officials say it is intended to combat what they call:

1. Exposure to Harmful Content

According to the BBC article, a government study found that seven out of 10 children aged 10 to 15 had encountered harmful material such as:

- Misogynistic content
- Violent content
- Posts promoting eating disorders
- Suicide related content

2. Grooming Behavior and Online Predators

One in seven reported experiencing grooming-type behavior from adults or older minors.

3. Cyberbullying

More than half said they had been victims of cyberbullying.

4. Addictive Design of Social Media Platforms

Officials claim social platforms use “design features that encourage [young people] to spend more time on screens” while harming their wellbeing.

These are real issues, and no reasonable observer denies that social media can have destructive effects on young minds. But they are not unique to youth. Adults are equally shaped, manipulated and monitored by these systems, a point rarely emphasized by policymakers.

Which Platforms Are Banned

The ban currently covers 10 platforms:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Threads
- TikTok
- X
- YouTube
- Reddit
- Kick
- Twitch

Platforms were evaluated on criteria such as whether they enable online interactions, whether users can interact publicly and whether users can post content. YouTube Kids, Google Classroom and WhatsApp were excluded because they do not meet these criteria.



Order Jonathan Cahn's Newest Book, "The Avatar" on !

How the Ban Will Be Enforced

Responsibility falls on tech companies, not parents or children. The BBC reports that companies face fines of up to A\$49.5 million for violations. Enforcement will rely on advanced age-verification methods, including:

1. Government ID uploads
2. Facial recognition
3. Voice recognition
4. Age inference tools, which analyze behavior to estimate age

The government insists platforms cannot rely on self-reported ages or parental approval.

This should concern anyone paying attention. These verification systems are the building blocks of a centralized digital ID framework. Once required for one portion of online life, they inevitably spread to others. The path from protecting children to regulating adult access is historically short.

Will the Ban Work

Even critics within Australia doubt that these systems can reliably distinguish between adults and teens. The BBC notes that the government's own findings show that "facial assessment technology is least reliable for teenagers." Critics also argue the ban is limited in scope because it excludes dating sites, gaming platforms and AI chatbots, all of which have produced troubling interactions with minors.

Teens have already told reporters they plan to sidestep the

ban using fake profiles, shared accounts or VPNs.

The Larger Concern: Government Replacing the Role of Parents

While officials claim they are protecting children, this approach sidelines families' role. Parents, not governments, are responsible for determining what their children can access. When the state assumes this role, even under the banner of safety, it establishes precedent for deeper involvement in digital life and personal choices.

And when age-verification systems require biometric data, the risk increases even further.

Australia has already suffered major data breaches. Now the nation is collecting the most sensitive data imaginable, including children's faces, voices and identification records, to enforce a ban that many teens will easily evade. This is not merely about protecting minors. It is about expanding digital infrastructure that centralizes control.

A Global Trend Moving Toward Prophetic Ends

Other nations are already considering similar bans, including Denmark, Norway, France and Spain. The United States is not far behind, with multiple states pursuing similar legislation.

We can expect to see measures like this appearing soon in America. These policies are not isolated decisions. They are part of a global migration toward comprehensive digital identity systems, the technological scaffolding of what prophecy identifies as the coming Beast system.

What begins with children rarely ends with children. The world is watching Australia take a step that reveals the direction of the digital age: increased control, increased surveillance

and increased governmental oversight of what people can access and how they access it. The prophetic trajectory is unfolding exactly as the Word of God tells us, and more developments of this nature are sure to follow.

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a background in journalism from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man's Commentary* and a contributor to *Charisma magazine*.