

Statement on Social Media, Smartphones and Young People

Monday 15th June 2026

Today the Government announced a ban on some social media platforms for young people under the age of 16 years. Youth Talk welcomes the growing national conversation about the impact of smartphones and social media on young people's mental health and wellbeing. Through our work, we see both the benefits and risks of digital technology.

Social media can provide connection, creativity and support, but we are also increasingly hearing from young people about the impact of harmful content, online pressures, poor sleep, anxiety and the challenge of switching off.

While restrictions may have a role to play, lasting change is more likely to come from a balanced approach than prohibition alone. Banning something does not necessarily address the underlying issues. Progress is more likely to come from a combination of stronger regulation and accountability of technology companies, better safeguards against harmful content, greater support for parents and schools, and a continued focus on helping young people develop the skills and resilience to navigate the digital world safely.

Most importantly, young people themselves must be part of this conversation. Decisions that affect their lives should be informed by their experiences, perspectives and ideas.

At Youth Talk, our priority will always be the mental health and wellbeing of young people. We are not a campaigning organisation, but we do believe we have a responsibility to speak up on issues that affect the young people we support. We will continue to listen to young people, follow the evidence, and share our perspective where it can help inform understanding and improve outcomes for young people.

David Barker
Chief Executive

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