

Telegram: understand the risks

What is Telegram?

Telegram's a social media and messaging platform. It offers end-to-end encryption, which means that information sent on a device can only be read on that device and the device(s) the information was sent to. It's particularly popular in India, Russia and Ukraine, but is available worldwide.

Users can:

- Text chat with other individuals or groups with up to 200,000 members
- Share images, videos and other files
- Host and join voice and video calls with other users
- Host and watch public livestreams
- Post and view 'stories', similar to Instagram or Snapchat

What are the risks?

- Seeing harmful and illegal content, like:
 - Deepfake pornography – when photos of a person's face are digitally combined with pornographic videos to look believable
 - Extremist material, including conspiracy theories which promote hate or violence towards certain groups
 - Child sexual abuse material
- Settings that allow messages to disappear after being read. Users might share things they otherwise wouldn't because they know it will disappear
- Being exposed to strangers through group chats
- Bullying, particularly in group chats

Should my child be using Telegram?

The minimum age for Telegram is 16, but younger people can still download and use it.

If your child does use Telegram, be aware of the risks above that your child might be exposed to.

While Telegram has taken steps to moderate its platform better, it doesn't have any parental controls for you to monitor who your child is talking to and what they're reading or watching on it.

If your child is using Telegram, you can find more [information on its privacy settings](#) on the app's website.

Sources

- › [Bullying and cyberbullying, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/)
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/
- › [Chat apps, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/)
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/
- › [Telegram pushes extremist groups to users - study](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgrvw29x4jo)
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgrvw29x4jo
- › [Telegram apologises for handling of deepfake porn material](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg45kz47dno)
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg45kz47dno