

## How to use social media to engage children and young people

This is a guide to some of the principles of using social media to engage children and young people. Social media platforms are constantly evolving and emerging with instructions for the various tasks and tools specific to each platform made readily available online.

For many young people, social media is simply an extension of their offline and face-to-face interactions. Remember to keep it REAL\*.

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### 1. Consider why and who you want to engage

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### 2. Choose a suitable social media platform/s<sup>^</sup>

- be selective, it is better to use one platform well than many platforms badly
- take the time to understand the platform and leverage its capability
- choose a platform you have the capability and resources to manage well

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### 3. Plan your content

- have a regular presence – daily not weekly
- consider the tone and personality of your online identity and posts
- define your target audience – be highly focused, create imaginary personas
- consider the issues that matter most to your online community

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### 4. Build a genuine community

- nourish relationships; being 'social' requires interaction, two-way communication (not just talking at, but responding to in conversation)
- be authentic, build your community organically on issues they care about for impact
- ask questions
- share interesting and entertaining content – don't take yourself too seriously

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### 5. Choose #hashtags carefully

- select #hashtags that members of your audience are using themselves

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### 6. Play with it

- you can host a poll on most platforms to crowd source insights
- once your platform is established, consider handing it over to young people for the day to share information about what matters most to them.

\*Read *The Field Guide to keep it real when engaging children and young people*.

<sup>^</sup> Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Clubhouse, Tumblr, Pinterest, Snapchat, Twitch, Slack