

Right now a toddler is shouting because he doesn't want to eat his lunch. What are the parents doing? They're filming the scene on a smartphone. Soon after, they're posting the video on social media. A teenage boy is playing a new song on his guitar. His mother is filming him. Two days later, the boy discovers that other people are watching the video online.

Parents in the UK post approximately 1,000 photos of their children online from when they are born until their fifth birthday, a phenomenon called 'sharenting'. Babies and toddlers don't care about this at the time. But a study by the University of Michigan suggests that there is a difference with 10- to 17-year-olds. Teenagers don't always like parents posting some photos. All babies cry, but adolescents don't want people to see old photos of themselves doing this.

Some parents share all sorts of photos of their children, maybe even when they are doing something silly or naughty. They do it with good intentions, for example to share special moments

with grandparents or extended family who live far away. But some middle-aged users of social media don't check their privacy settings and share posts with others by accident.

In some countries, it's illegal to post photos of your own children without their permission. In Italy, a 16-year-old boy is legally forcing his mother either to stop sharing images of him on social media or pay a €10,000 fine! In France, parents pay fines of up to €45,000 and can spend a year in prison when they post photos of their children without their permission.

Parents are usually very sensible about photos of their children. The report from the University of Michigan suggests this is an area where it's important for parents to listen to children over ten. Let *them* say what they are happy to share, and who with. That way the whole family can enjoy looking back at all those special moments!

1

SPEAKING



Discuss the questions.

- 1 What can you see in the photos on this page?
- 2 Imagine that these are old photos of you. Would you like your parents to post these photos on social media and share them online? Why/Why not?

2 Read the article and choose the best title. Explain your choice.

- 1** Parents! Never put photos or videos of your kids online
- 2** Parents! Talk to your kids before you share their images on social media
- 3** Be careful, Mums and Dads! It's now illegal to post photos of your kids on social media

- 1 The examples of the toddler and teenager are similar because they ...
 - a are angry at the moment when their parents are filming them.
 - b have no control over what their parents are doing.
 - c are doing something that people consider is wrong.
- 2 The problem with some parents is that they ...
 - a only share photos of their children doing bad things.
 - b want everybody to see photos of their children.
 - c make an important mistake when they post photos of their children.
- 3 In France ...
 - a parents need to ask their children before they post images of them.
 - b it's impossible for parents to put photos of their children on social media.
 - c the minimum fine for posting any photos of your children is €45,000.
- 4 The last paragraph suggests that posting photos of children as they grow up ...
 - a is a very problematic area.
 - b isn't a problem if parents talk to their children.
 - c is only for parents to decide and control.