Meta is further limiting how advertisers can target teens on Facebook and Instagram

Meta is further restricting how advertisers on its platforms target users under 18, the company announced today.

Starting next month, the company is removing the ability for advertisers to target kids on Facebook and Instagram by gender, though they'll still be able to use age and location. In 2021, Meta rolled back ad targeting based on the interests and activity of teen users, a catch-all term for the trove of data the company collects about your internet activity. With this most recent tightening of rules, advertisers will also no longer be able to target teens based on in-app engagement, like Instagram and Facebook pages they follow and like.

Beginning in March, teens will also have more tools available to (somewhat) control what kind of ads they see. Under Ad Preferences they'll be able to select topics they want to see fewer ads about, though it's worth noting that there doesn't appear to be a way to completely turn off ads about certain products or services. Topics include broad interests like makeup or celebrities as well as more nebulous categories like "self-love" or "adventure" (two of mine, apparently).

How social media companies handle kid and teen users has long been a contentious topic, and often, platforms end up being reactive rather than proactive when problems are brought to light. On TikTok, for example, posts promoting drugs used for weight loss reached teen users, according to a report by *The Pharmaceutical Journal.* Some of the posts flagged to the company were eventually removed.

Meta says the additional advertising restrictions announced today take into account that “teens aren’t necessarily as equipped as adults to make decisions about how their online data is used for advertising.” But Meta isn’t suspending advertising to kids: the company says age and location targeting is necessary for serving up age-appropriate and location-specific ads.

https://www.theverge.com/2023/1/10/23548202/facebook-ads-instagram-meta-targeting-teens-gender-age-location