



Kids Code Coalition

PRIORITIZING THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE ONLINE

Kids Code Legislation

The movement for kids' online safety is growing across the country.

Five states — California, Maryland, Nebraska, South Carolina, and Vermont — have passed landmark Kids Code laws requiring major online platforms to provide common sense privacy-by-default and safety-by-design protections to kids. The California law based on the Age-Appropriate Design Code (AADC) was recently upheld as constitutional and allowed to go into effect by the Ninth Circuit. The AADC approach was originally developed in the UK, where companies have enacted [hundreds](#) of design changes since September 2021.

Kids Code bills have now been introduced in over a dozen more states including Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin.

At a time when parents and families are struggling with the impossible challenge of protecting their kids online, state

lawmakers can lead on making online platforms safer for kids and hold Big Tech companies accountable for harm to kids and teens by introducing and passing the Kids Code in their state.

The Problem

Today's internet wasn't built with children in mind. Platforms collect vast amounts of kids' data and design their products to maximize engagement—often at the expense of young users' privacy, mental health, and safety. Nearly half of U.S. teens say they're online "almost constantly" according to [Pew Research Center](#). The [American Psychological Association](#) has found strong links between heavy social media use and rising anxiety, depression, and body dissatisfaction among teens.

Today's online platforms are intentionally designed to maximize engagement and profit, often at the expense of young users' safety and well-being. Online platforms:

- Use addictive features like infinite scroll, autoplay, and notifications to hook and hold attention.
- Deploy dark patterns to encourage oversharing and in-app purchases.
- Collect, sell, and profit from children's personal data.



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- Allow adults to contact minors without safeguards.
- Offer confusing and inaccessible safety policies, leaving families with little recourse when something goes wrong.

Legislative Solution

As youth mental health continues to decline — and rates of screen time, social media addiction, and manipulative online experiences skyrocket — the Kids Code uses a design-focused approach to make digital spaces safer and healthier by design by requiring that online platforms:

- Require the highest level of default privacy settings for minors.
- Restrict or remove addictive features.
- Ban manipulative design tactics targeting minors.
- Enforce strict data minimization and privacy practices.
- Prevent unconnected adults from directly messaging children.
- Publish clear, accessible policies for users to understand their rights and options.

These requirements must be automatically applied to account holders whom online platforms know are under 18.

How We Can Support You

The Kids Code Coalition brings together a wide cross-section of organizations from across the country to advance state legislation to protect kids online. Our coalition includes young people, parents, educators, medical professionals, technologists, policy experts, and elected officials — forming the coalition necessary to pass legislation in states. We can help mobilize grassroots support for legislation and identify advocates for storytelling, press and media, and witness testimony in legislative committees.

Who's in the Kids Code Coalition?

The Kids Code Coalition includes national organizations like the Center for Humane Tech, Common Sense Media, Design It For Us, Ekō, Fairplay for Kids, Issue One, ParentsTogether, MAMA, The Anxious Generation, and The Tech Oversight Project alongside state and local groups to advocate for kids' online safety.

For More Information

You can check out the Kids Code Coalition at KidsCodeCoalition.org. Please reach out to contact@kidscodecoalition.org with any questions or to schedule a meeting.