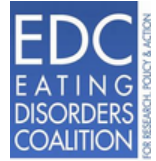


Kids Online Safety Act S.1409/H.R.7891



Leads: Sens. Blumenthal (D-CT) and Blackburn (R-TN) & Reps. Bilirakis (R-FL), Castor (D-FL), Houchin (R-IN), Schrier (D-WA), and Bucshon (R-IN)

The Problem: Social media algorithms knowingly promote harmful mental health content to youth in return for boosted engagement and profits

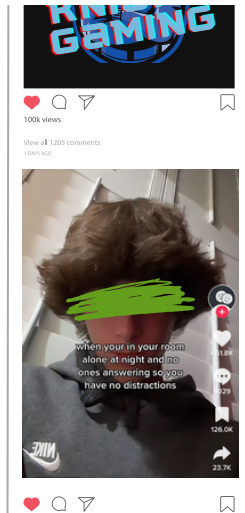
Social media platform algorithms place

extreme pro-eating disorder, suicide, & depression content

next to

youth-targeted advertising

and serve this content to youth to maximize engagement & spending¹



Instagram has 90k pro-eating disorder content creators reaching 20 million followers²



& earns more than \$230M/yr from pro-ED content



On TikTok, harmful content is served every:

2.6 mins for suicide
8 mins for eating disorders³



Nearly half of U.S. teens report experiencing cyberbullying, which increases suicide risk⁴

The Impact: Social media-fueled rise in youth psychiatric conditions



U.S. DOJ, FBI actively investigating Snapchat for fentanyl & other drug sales on platform⁵



Algorithm boosts certain content without disclosure to users⁶



“Actively encouraged girls into body dysmorphia” with plastic surgery filter promotion

Designed products to exploit teen brains’ dopamine sensitivity and their “insatiable appetite for novelty”

According to State Attorneys General Court Filings⁷

The Solution: Hold Big Tech* accountable through a safety by design approach for users under 17



Duty of care to protect minors from mental health harms, sexual exploitation, narcotics, and more

- Independent external audits to assess compliance and risk
- Enforced via FTC’s Unfair and Deceptive Practices Act authority



Enhanced youth and parental controls



National Academy of Sciences authority to study and report on social media impact on youth

* House bill defines Big Tech as “high impact online companies” indicated by annual revenue or monthly users

Interested in cosponsoring?

Senate: Email [Collin Anderson@blumenthal.senate.gov](mailto:Collin.Anderson@blumenthal.senate.gov) or [Jamie Susskind@blackburn.senate.gov](mailto:Jamie.Susskind@blackburn.senate.gov)
House: Email [Chris Jones@mail.house.gov](mailto:Chris.Jones@mail.house.gov) (Bilirakis) or [Capreece Kelsaw@mail.house.gov](mailto:Capreece.Kelsaw@mail.house.gov) (Castor)

Kids Online Safety Act S.1409/H.R.7891



Leads: Sens. Blumenthal (D-CT) and Blackburn (R-TN) & Reps. Bilirakis (R-FL), Castor (D-FL), Houchin (R-IN), Schrier (D-WA), and Bucshon (R-IN)

Sources

1 Byrne, et. Al. (2023). Nike, Cinnabon and “got milk”: Brands help tiktok monetize videos of hospitalized anorexic girls. Raw Story - Celebrating 20 Years of Independent Journalism. <https://www.rawstory.com/tiktok-eating-disorders/>;

Zhang, et. Al. (2021). The Relationship Between SNS Usage and Disordered Eating Behaviors: A Meta-Analysis. *Front. Psychol.* 12:641919. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.641919;

Frison & Eggermont. (2017). Browsing, Posting, and Liking on Instagram: The Reciprocal Relationships between Different Types of Instagram Use and Adolescents’ Depressed Mood. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 20, 603-609;

Fardouly & Vartanian. (2015). Negative comparisons about one's appearance mediate the relationship between Facebook usage and body image concerns, *Body Image*, Volume 12. Pages 82-88. ISSN 1740-1445. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2014.10.004>.

2 Fairplay. (2022). Designing for Disorder: Instagram’s Pro-Eating Disorder Bubble. Retrieved from https://fairplayforkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/designing_for_disorder.pdf

3 Center for Countering Digital Hate. (December 2022). Deadly By Design. Retrieved from https://counterhate.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CCDH-Deadly-by-Design_120922.pdf

4 Vogels E. (December 15, 2022). Teens and Cyberbullying 2022. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2022/12/15/teens-and-cyberbullying-2022/>;

van Geel M, Vedder P, Tanilon J. Relationship Between Peer Victimization, Cyberbullying, and Suicide in Children and Adolescents: A Meta-analysis. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2014;168(5):435–442. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2013.4143

5 Carville, O., Leopold, J., Curi, M. (2023) FBI Examines Snapchat’s Role in Fentanyl Poisoning Deaths. *Bloomberg.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-01-25/fbi-questions-snapchat-s-role-in-fentanyl-poisoning-deaths>

6 Baker-White, E. (2023). TikTok’s Secret “Heating” Button Can Make Anyone Go Viral. *Forbes.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/emilybaker-white/2023/01/20/tiktoks-secret-heating-button-can-make-anyone-go-viral/?sh=498ac7706bfd>

7 Complaint for Injunctive and Other Relief, Bonta v. Meta Platforms, Inc., No. 4:23-cv-05448 (Dist. Cir. Ct. Northern CA).

Interested in cosponsoring?

Senate: Email [Collin Anderson@blumenthal.senate.gov](mailto:Collin.Anderson@blumenthal.senate.gov) or [Jamie Susskind@blackburn.senate.gov](mailto:Jamie.Susskind@blackburn.senate.gov)
House: Email [Chris Jones@mail.house.gov](mailto:Chris.Jones@mail.house.gov) (Bilirakis) or [Capreece Kelsaw@mail.house.gov](mailto:Capreece.Kelsaw@mail.house.gov) (Castor)