
CENTER FOR DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

Center for Digital Democracy
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Statement Regarding the U.S. Senate Vote to Advance the Kids Online Safety and Privacy Act (S. 2073).

The following statement can be attributed to **Katharina Kopp, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Center for Digital Democracy:**

Today is a milestone in the decades long effort to protect America's young people from the harmful impacts caused by the out-of-control and unregulated social and digital media business model. The Kids Online Safety and Privacy Act (KOSPA), if passed by the House and enacted into law, will safeguard children and teens from digital marketers who manipulate and employ unfair data-driven marketing tactics to closely surveil, profile, and target young people. These include an array of ever-expanding tactics that are discriminatory and unfair. The new law would protect children and teens being exposed to addictive algorithms and other harmful practices across online platforms, protecting the mental health and well-being of youth and their families.

Building on the foundation of the 25-year-old Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), KOSPA will provide protections to teens under 17. It will prohibit targeted advertising to children and teens, impose data minimization requirements, and compel companies to acknowledge the presence of young online users on their platforms and apps. The safety by design provisions will necessitate the disabling of addictive product features and the option for users to opt out of addictive algorithmic recommender systems. Companies will be obliged to prevent and mitigate harms to children, such as bullying and violence, promotion of suicide, eating disorders, and sexual exploitation.

Crucially, most of these safeguards will be automatically implemented, relieving children, teens, and their families of the burden to take further action. The responsibility to rectify the worst aspects of their data-driven business model will lie squarely with Big Tech, as it should have all along.

We express our gratitude for the leadership and support of Majority Leader Schumer, Chairwoman Cantwell, Ranking Member Cruz, and Senators Blumenthal, Blackburn, Markey, Cassidy, along with their staff, for making this historic moment possible in safeguarding children and teens online. Above all, we are thankful to all the parents and families who have tirelessly advocated for common-sense safeguards.

We now urge the House of Representatives to act upon their return from the August recess. The time for hesitation is over.

About the Center for Digital Democracy (CDD)

The Center for Digital Democracy is a public interest research and advocacy organization, established in 2001, which works on behalf of citizens, consumers, communities, and youth to protect and expand privacy, digital rights, and data justice. CDD's predecessor, the Center for Media Education, led the campaign for the passage of COPPA over 25 years ago, in 1998.