

# MINNESOTA KIDS CODE

Every day, children use a digital world designed by and for adults, where they are nudged to give up their privacy, offered harmful material, and exposed to risky contacts and behaviors. The legislature should pass the Minnesota Age Appropriate Design Code (AADC) to protect Minnesota children's privacy and safety online and make the digital world safe for them. Data protection regulation can change how digital products are designed and minimize harm to children before they are put in risky situations online. Minnesota has the opportunity to lead the way.

## Protecting Minnesota's Youth from the Dangers of the Internet

Minnesota teens spend a significant amount of time in front of a screen. Data-driven services are ubiquitous today, making modern life much easier in many ways. However, those "free" online products are not free but are designed to gather and share consumers' personal data. This personal data is shared in ways that create profit for the business but can negatively impact the safety and well-being of children.

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**81%**

of 14 to 22-year-olds say they used social media either "daily" or "almost constantly."

According to Children's Minnesota, teenagers, on average, spend up to nine hours per day on screens.

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**1 in 3**

Of the top 100 free apps for kids in Google Play,

have banner ads, including ads for adult content.

Current online features also "nudge" children into risky behaviors, expose them to predators, use dark patterns to recommend harmful material, encourage compulsive behavior, and enable, facilitate, or promote excessive information sharing, bullying, self-harm, eating disorders, sexual or substance abuse, and other potential harms.

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**75%**

of the top social media platforms use AI to recommend children's profiles to strangers.

These features are routinely built into a system designed by adults for use by adults, leaving children struggling to cope online. Depression, suicidal ideation, and other mental health issues are already high among Minnesota teens. Their time spent online has the potential to increase these issues.

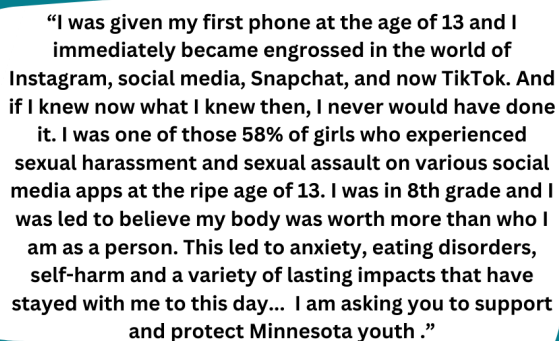
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## Creating the Internet Minnesota's Youth Deserve

The Minnesota Age Appropriate Design Code flips the script by placing the responsibilities on tech companies instead of parents and teens. We know parents and teens are doing their best when it comes to social media. The harms that occur are not due to their irresponsibility but rather are the result of intentional design features and the use of personal data. As a result, the Minnesota Age Appropriate Design Code does not simply provide additional parental controls or tools for users. Instead, it acknowledges that these companies' profit models incentivize designs that are harmful to children and teens and requires them to assess and revise their products and services under a new duty of care model.


To accomplish this, the Minnesota Age Appropriate Design Code is comprised of age-appropriate design standards that would apply to all digital products and services that are reasonably likely to be accessed by children and teens. These core standards provide privacy and safety by design by restricting data collection, sharing, profiling, and the use of data in ways that are detrimental to children and teens; requiring high privacy settings be turned on by default; and requiring companies to take a risk-based approach to mitigating or eliminating the risk of harm stemming from their online services and products.

## Support for the Minnesota Age Appropriate Design Code



"I was given my first phone at the age of 13 and I immediately became engrossed in the world of Instagram, social media, Snapchat, and now TikTok. And if I knew now what I knew then, I never would have done it. I was one of those 58% of girls who experienced sexual harassment and sexual assault on various social media apps at the ripe age of 13. I was in 8th grade and I was led to believe my body was worth more than who I am as a person. This led to anxiety, eating disorders, self-harm and a variety of lasting impacts that have stayed with me to this day... I am asking you to support and protect Minnesota youth."

Ella, Minnesota resident and youth advocate



"It's critical [state lawmakers] pass the Age Appropriate Design Code. Based on a proven legal framework that's already protecting kids in other nations and states, it creates 'seat belts' for kids on the internet - turning off features like location tracking and prohibiting the sale of kids' personal data. A recent poll of teens exposed how the design of social media and online platforms is actively harmful - adding further evidence for why design reforms outlined in the Age Appropriate Design Code are desperately needed to protect kids online."

Frances Haugen, Facebook Whistleblower and advocate for accountability and transparency in social media

## Get Caught Up in the Press:

- [The Minnesota Legislature can protect kids from internet surveillance and advertising](#), op-ed by Casey Mock
- [Children's welfare is on the line - online](#), op-ed by Nathan T. Chomilo

## For More Information:

- See our website: <https://minnesotakidscode.com/>
- Coalition Contact: Gloria Totten - [gloria.totten@gmail.com](mailto:gloria.totten@gmail.com)