

PTA URGES CONGRESS TO PROMOTE THE DIGITAL SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH ONLINE

WHO WE ARE

PTA is a network of millions of families, students, teachers, administrators and business and community leaders devoted to the well-being and educational success of all children. We are the oldest and largest child advocacy association in America, with a presence in every state and 18,000 PTA units across the country and abroad.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR

Research shows that children and youth in the U.S. are increasingly online, with the vast majority (96%) of teenagers now accessing the internet daily. While the internet can be a space fostering learning, creativity and community, it also presents unique risks for young users without safeguards in place. Today, most Americans (78%) believe it's difficult for parents to keep children safe when they are online. It is critical that national leaders in Congress do their part to protect our children online and promote their safety and well-being on the internet.

PTA Urges Congress to Pass a Digital Safety Package That Includes COPPA 2.0 (S.1418) and Other Key Protections for Youth

- The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have held numerous hearings on the topic of data privacy and protection and the impact of social media on children's health and well-being. ***It is time for action.*** It is time for Congress to pass a federal data privacy and security law that establishes strong safeguards to protect children and teens when they use the internet.
- As parents and guardians, we believe any digital safety package that receives consideration by the 118th Congress ***must at a minimum include the Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA 2.0)***. This legislation provides a desperately needed update of federal law to better protect the personal information of children online. Internet companies would be prevented from collecting any personal data from children under the age of 16 without consent, and parents would be given the opportunity to erase personal information about their children online. The bill would also ban targeted advertising to children and teens and create an office within the Federal Trade Commission focused on enforcing youth privacy and marketing laws. COPPA 2.0 was approved on a bipartisan basis in 2023 by the Senate Commerce Committee and now awaits consideration by the full U.S. Senate, after which it would receive consideration in the U.S. House. Check if your members of Congress are co-sponsoring this bill: [S.1418](#).

- Another piece of legislation that has received much discussion is **the Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA, [S.1409](#))**. PTA supports a comprehensive digital safety and data privacy package passing first through the U.S. Senate and then receiving swift consideration and passage by the U.S. House. While we are unable to endorse KOSA as a standalone bill at this time, we encourage lawmakers to include the following provisions from KOSA in any final package:
- Strengthened privacy protections for children and youth on social media and online, including by requiring their accounts be set to the highest privacy and protections by default.
 - Protections for children and youth that prevent them from accessing dangerous content, including establishing intentional and explicit processes to report predatory, discriminatory or dangerous behavior online.
 - Address excessive social media use and encourage healthy screen time by requiring social media companies to offer and maintain features that allow parents and guardians to manage their children’s screen time.
 - Encourage online platforms to develop more transparent privacy policies that use plain language that is understandable and accessible to families.
 - Investments in efforts to increase awareness of the impact of technology, including research on the benefits and harms of social media on children, youth and families.

Questions? Email National PTA Director of Government Affairs Kate Clabaugh (kclabaugh@PTA.org).