

September 15, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson Speaker of the House 568 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries House Minority Leader 2433 Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer Senate Majority Leader 322 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Senate Minority Leader 317 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressmen Johnson and Jeffries and Senators Schumer and McConnell,

Echoing the recent call by 42 attorneys general ([social-warning-label-letter.pdf \(ny.gov\)](#)), we, the undersigned medical professionals, content experts, teachers, academic researchers, attorneys and concerned parents write to ask that you act on the Surgeon General's recommendation for warning labels on social media products. We speak independent of the commercial industry bias. We bring no financial incentives or ulterior motives to this request.

Those in your position have a duty of care to ensure that caregivers and children know how harmful — even fatal — these products are.

Please create, move and enact legislation to require warning labels on all social media platforms. These products harm and kill children as indiscriminately as landmines. This action does not need to wait until after the election. Children encounter harm every day when they use social media products. The public deserves to know what medical professionals know.

The weight of the evidence, *independent of commercial industry influence*, shows an undeniable association between exposure to these products and poor health in our youth.

Just as tobacco, sugar, and alcohol take lives, destroy families, and cost billions in healthcare every year, social media influences our society in seismic ways. Companies that make health-harming products, such as social media, will influence and compromise the integrity of science and the recommendations of trusted professionals in an effort to protect their products.¹ The tension is between commercial industry profits versus what is healthy for our youth. Please look beyond this commercial industry influence to independent research.²

¹ ([Current Partners \(aap.org\)](#), [Corporate partners: Google, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, AT&T, Foundation partners | Common Sense Media](#), [Foundation partners: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Bezos Family Foundation, Gates Ventures](#) [Our Supporters - The Digital Wellness Lab](#)) Supporters: Discord, Meta, Roblox, Snap Inc, Pinterest, TikTok, AmazonKids

² [Science for Sale - Boston Review](#) By Dr David Michaels, By Using a Variety of Ploys to Manufacture Doubt, A Whole Industry of Science for Hire Experts Help Corporations Put Profits over Public Health and Safety

We have the data and the evidence. We must protect children now.

In the public health model, no single intervention alone will work 100%. We must utilize multiple congruent policy levers that amplify and support each other to effect change.

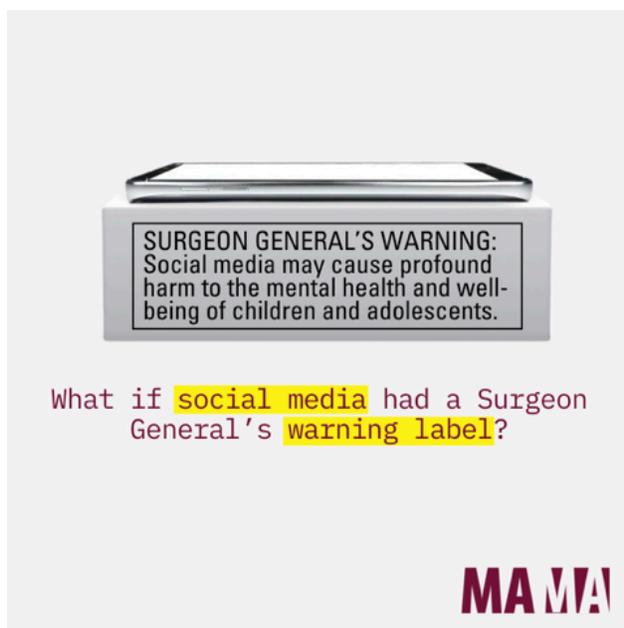
These include, warning labels to alert caregivers and the public, the Kids Online Safety Act, the phone-free school mandates, legislation to prevent child sex abuse material and Fentanyl access online, and renewed focus on real opportunities for all children to connect in-person and develop agency. These are **all** needed simultaneously to save lives, improve youth mental health, and decrease the number of children and youth going to emergency rooms for suicide-related visits.

Tech industry representatives make false claims that social media is needed for youth to connect, especially marginalized youth. There are other ways to give children the support they need without simultaneously exposing them to serious risks.

Parents and kids are in the dark. They don't know how harmful these products are. A warning label will help to highlight the risks of harm due to product exposure.

Warning labels work.

We look forward to supporting you to draft this legislation as soon as possible.



Sincerely,

Name, Title, profession, affiliation

Representative Angela Arsenault, Williston, Vermont (Chittenden-2)

Representative Ela Chapin, East Montpelier, Vermont (Washington-5)

Representative Monique Priestley, Bradford, Vermont (Orange-2)

Jonathan Haidt, Ph.D

Professor, New York University

Amanda Grothouse, LCSW, Licensed School Social Worker, Jasper Elementary School,
Jasper, Indiana

Dr. Rebecca Yukica

Community Pediatrician, FAAP

Upper Valley Pediatrics, Bradford & East Thetford, VT

Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dartmouth, Geisel School of Medicine

Dr. Adriana U. Stacey,

Board Certified Psychiatrist and mother of 4

Medical Advisor, ScreenStrong, Phone Free Schools Movement, Wait Until 8th.

Ruth Uphold, MD, Physician

Robin Cogan, MEd, RN, NCSN, FNASN, FAAN

New Jersey School Nurse

Janet Heinrich, DrPH, RN, FAAN

Research Professor

Health Policy and Management

Milken Institute School of Public Health

George Washington University

Brett P. Kennedy, Psy.D.,

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Richard Freed, PhD,

psychologist and author

Adam Pletter, Psy.D.

Clinical Psychologist, Founder, iParent101.com

Keena McAvoy,

Physical Therapist, co-founder DMV Unplugged, Member Screen Time Action Network Screens in School workgroup, Phone Free Schools Movement Ambassador

Laura Derrrenderinger BSN RN MIA

Public Health Nurse

Cris Rowan, BScOT, BScBi, SIPT

Pediatric Occupational Therapist

CEO Reconnect Webinars, Zone'in Programs Inc. and Sunshine Coast Occupational Therapy Inc.

Denise Champney, MS CCC/SLP

Speech and Language Pathologist, Rhode Island

Susan Linn, Ed.D.

Author, *Who's Raising the Kids: BigTech, Big Business and the Lives of Children*

Nina Logan Jenner, LCPC, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

Lisa Cline

Founder, Safe Tech Workshop

Co-Founder, The Student Data Privacy Project, Member, Fairplay Screen Time Action Network

Kim Whitman, Phone-Free Schools Movement Co-Founder

Mileva K. Repasky, MS

Co-founder Phone-Free Schools Movement

Screen Time Action Network member

Meg Leta Jones, J.D., Ph.D.

Provost's Distinguished Associate Professor, Georgetown University

Laura Marquez-Garrett, Attorney

The Social Media Victims Law Center (SMVLC)

Gaia Bernstein, Law Professor and author of "Unwired: Gaining Control over Addictive Technologies", Seton Hall University School of Law.

Mark A. Morenz-Harbinger, Attorney, MS Ed.

Executive Director, Hug Morenz Foundation For Media Literacy

Lauren Paer, Programs Manager, Fairplay's Screen Time Action Network

Randal Freiman - Massena High School Science Teacher, Massena Federation of Teachers Union President

Liza Schalch,

High school teacher, co-founder DMV Unplugged, Screen Time Action Network Screens in School workgroup, Phone Free Schools Movement Ambassador, Mother of three

Marla Benoist, Special Education Teacher, Burlington School District, Vermont

Katie Talarico, MEd, teacher, certified digital wellness educator, workgroup member- Screen Time Action Network at Fairplay

Sonya Detwiler, MSLIS, MEd., Founder of former advocacy group: Kids Before Screens

Emily Cherkin, MEd.

The Screentime Consultant, author

Co-Founder, The Student Data Privacy Project, Member, Fairplay Screen Time Action Network

Sarah Martay, Teacher and Parent

Barbara Glasgow, retired teacher

Deb Mann Schmill

Founder and President, Becca Schmill Foundation

Maurine Molak

Co-founder David's Legacy Foundation

Kristin Bride

Parent Survivor to Carson- Forever 16

Social Media Reform Advocate

Avery and Lori Schott, Parents for Safe Online Spaces, www.parentssos.org

Andrea Davis

Founder of Better Screen Time, Author of Creating a Tech-Healthy Family

Brooke Shannon, Founder and Executive Director of Wait Until 8th

Gretchen Shanahan, Digitally Wise Consultant, Screen Strong Ambassador, Wait Until 8th Ambassador

Dazia Wallerson, Katty Lau, Sebastian Steinbach

Co-Founders, Heed the Children

Kathleen Barlow

Mother of 6, grandmother of 3, middle and high school French teacher
Smartphone Free Childhood - Member, Screen Time Action Network - Member, Phone Free
Schools Movement - Ambassador

Jennifer Henderson

Mother of 10-year-old, Phone Free Schools Movement Ambassador, ScreenStrong Ambassador,
Smartphone Free Childhood US Organizer, Screen Time Action Network

Matt Pulley

Father of 2, Chair of Screentime Action Network's Screens in Schools Work Group
Founder, [Four Norms](#)

Desiree Garcia, PhD,

Professor, Film and Media Studies, Dartmouth College

Sarit Werner, Parent, Plymouth Cheese, Vermont

Kathryn Tippett, Parent

Alexa Adam, Parent

Erin Loechner, Founder & Author of [The Opt-Out Family](#)

Gabriela Nguyen, President of APPstinent, student organization of the Harvard Graduate
School of Education