

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 75

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Sponsored by:

Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO

District 40 (Bergen, Essex and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Urges Congress and President of US to enact “Kids Online Safety Act.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



SR75 CORRADO

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1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** respectfully urging Congress and the
2 President of the United States to enact the “Kids Online Safety
3 Act.”
4
5 **WHEREAS**, Social media use is associated with poor mental health
6 outcomes for minors; and
7 **WHEREAS**, By design, social media platforms create addictive
8 behavior patterns through likes, shares, and comments, which
9 trigger the brain’s reward center and elevate dopamine levels in
10 users; and
11 **WHEREAS**, As a result, over the past decade, the frequency of social
12 media use has risen among tweens (children between the ages of 8
13 and 12 years old) and teenagers (children between the ages of 13
14 and 17 years old); and
15 **WHEREAS**, The nonprofit research organization Common Sense Media
16 found that overall screen use among tweens increased by 17 percent
17 from 2019 to 2021, with 38 percent having used social media and
18 18 percent reportedly using social media every day; and
19 **WHEREAS**, The Pew Research Center noted even stronger trends
20 among teenagers, reporting that 95 percent use social media and
21 that 35 percent self-identify as frequent users; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Simultaneously, the prevalence of mental illness among
23 these populations has grown at an alarming rate; and
24 **WHEREAS**, According to the Centers for Disease Control and
25 Prevention, 36.7 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 report feeling
26 sad or hopeless, 18.8 percent have seriously considered attempting
27 suicide, and 15.7 percent have developed a suicide plan; and
28 **WHEREAS**, A seminal 2020 psychological study found strong
29 associations between increased social media use and higher rates of
30 mental illness among minors, especially adolescent girls; and
31 **WHEREAS**, Since then, several studies have published findings to
32 support the negative impact of social media on depression, anxiety,
33 and body dysmorphia disorders among children and adolescents;
34 and
35 **WHEREAS**, Despite this concerning research, social media companies
36 have yet to meaningfully address the mental health side effects of
37 social media use among children and adolescents; and
38 **WHEREAS**, The “Kids Online Safety Act” was introduced by United
39 States Senator Richard Blumenthal and various cosponsors and
40 would promote data safety, prevent and mitigate patterns of use that
41 indicate or encourage addictive behaviors, expand parental control
42 features, and require social media platforms to prevent promotion
43 of harmful material for minors; and
44 **WHEREAS**, By enacting the “Kids Online Safety Act,” Congress and
45 the President of the United States can address the growing mental
46 health crisis associated with social media use among children and
47 adolescents; now, therefore,

SR75 CORRADO

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1 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

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3 1. This House respectfully urges Congress and the President of
4 the United States to enact the “Kids Online Safety Act.”

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6 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
7 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President
8 of the United States, the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the
9 United States House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority
10 Leaders of the United States Senate, and each member of Congress
11 elected from this State.

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STATEMENT

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16 This resolution urges Congress and the President of the United
17 States to enact the “Kids Online Safety Act.”

18 Social media use is associated with poor mental health outcomes
19 for minors. Social media platforms are designed to promote
20 addictive behavior patterns, encouraging its users to engage with
21 social media more frequently and for a greater length of time. As a
22 result, over the past decade, the rate of social media use has risen
23 significantly among both tween (children between the ages of 8 and
24 12 years old) and teenage (children between the ages of 13 and 17
25 years old) populations. Simultaneously, the prevalence of mental
26 illness among children and adolescents has grown at an alarming
27 rate. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
28 36.7 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 report feeling sad or
29 hopeless, 18.8 percent have seriously considered attempting suicide,
30 and 15.7 percent have developed a suicide plan. A seminal 2020
31 psychological study found strong associations between increased
32 social media use and higher rates of mental illness among minors,
33 especially adolescent girls. Since then, several studies have
34 published findings to support the negative impact of social media
35 on depression, anxiety, and body dysmorphia among children and
36 adolescents.

37 Despite this growing wealth of research, the social media sector
38 has yet to meaningfully address the mental health impact of its
39 technology on minors. The “Kids Online Safety Act” was
40 introduced by United States Senator Richard Blumenthal and
41 various cosponsors and would promote data safety, prevent and
42 mitigate patterns of use that indicate or encourage addictive
43 behaviors, expand parental control features, and require social
44 media platforms to prevent promotion of harmful material for
45 minors. By enacting the “Kids Online Safety Act,” Congress and
46 the President of the United States can address the growing mental
47 health crisis associated with social media use among children and
48 adolescents.