

# Kids Online Safety Act

*Legislation to impose responsibility on online platforms and equip children and parents with tools*

[S 3663](#), co-authored by Sens. Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Blackburn (R-Tenn.)

## What does the Kids Online Safety Act do?

KOSA requires social media platforms to put the interests of minors under 16 years old first, and it provides children and parents with more safeguards and tools to protect children's health and well-being online.

## How does KOSA impose responsibility on platforms?

The bill imposes a duty on covered platforms to act in the best interests of minors who use that platform's products or services. This requires covered platforms to prevent or mitigate the heightened risks of harm to minors posed by the platform.

## What online harms does KOSA require platforms to prevent or mitigate?

- Promotion of self-harm, suicide, eating disorders, substance abuse, and other matters that pose a risk to a minor's physical and mental health
- Patterns of use that indicate addiction-like behavior
- Physical harm, online bullying, and harassment of a minor
- Sexual exploitation, including enticement, grooming, sex trafficking, and sexual abuse of minors and trafficking of online child sexual abuse material
- Promotion and marketing of products or services that are unlawful for minors, such as illegal drugs, tobacco, or alcohol
- Predatory, unfair, or deceptive marketing practices

## What safeguards and controls does KOSA give children and parents?

Controls default to the strongest option to best protect minors. Minors could easily control their experience and personal data on the platform, including by limiting the ability of other individuals to contact or find them—particularly by adults with no relationship to them, preventing others from viewing their personal data collected by or shared on the platform, and opting out of algorithmic recommendation systems. Parental controls include being able to control a minor's privacy and account settings, restrict purchases and financial transactions by a minor, and track the time spent on a platform.

## How does KOSA promote transparency?

KOSA requires platforms to issue annual independent audits that identify the risks of harm to minors. It would also support access to data for experts and academic researchers to conduct independent research.

## Why is this legislation necessary?

The U.S. has traditionally put the onus on parents to supervise their children's experience online. However, this does not get to the root problem of how companies design platforms to maximize engagement, often at the cost of a child's mental health and well-being. KOSA would finally impose responsibility on platforms to prevent or mitigate the risks of harm posed by their platform and give minors and parents more meaningful controls.