

# The Vermont Kids Code: Overview

The Vermont Kids Code, an Age Appropriate Design Code, creates a better online world for kids by requiring tech companies institute common-sense consumer protections and data privacy reforms that ensure digital products, just like physical ones, are designed safely and in an age appropriate manner.

Big Tech exploits consumers by extracting copious amounts of data from its users and selling it or using it to inform products and marketing. Simply put, more data means more profit - incentivizing companies to utilize addictive design features and other measures to keep children glued to their products. Time and again, advocates and whistleblowers have shown that Big Tech prioritizes profit over the well-being of the most vulnerable consumers in the market: children.

Recent lawsuits against Meta, by a bipartisan coalition of Attorney Generals, have revealed that Meta used the latest in brain science to ensure their products are stickier and riskier for our kids instead of using that knowledge to design safer products. The Vermont Kids Code would instead require companies to provide children high privacy settings by default and to mitigate reasonably foreseeable harms to kids from the use of their products. And unlike other approaches to keeping kids safe online, the Vermont Kids Code doesn't put the onus on parents to police every app, and it doesn't require companies to moderate content or prevent children and teens from searching for content they want to see.

Specifically, the Vermont Kids Code regulates large online products, services and features that are reasonably likely to be accessed by children by changing how those platforms can collect and use with kid's data. This framework ensures the Kids Code protects kids where they are online, and isn't overly burdensome for platforms that significant numbers of youth don't visit. The Kids Code accomplishes these changes in two ways:

- **Data Privacy Impact Assessments:** require companies to assess how their digital products use kids' personal data and to what extent these practices create risks for children. Companies must then mitigate those risks by modifying data use and the design of their products.
  - This results in companies assessing their use of algorithms, use of features that increase, sustain, or extend use of the product (including automatic playing of media, notifications, and rewards for time spent using the product), impact of targeted advertising systems, and whether design of the product may lead to children experiencing harmful contacts, among other considerations.
- **Privacy and Data Protection Mandates:** require companies to limit the collection, use, storage, and disclosure of kids' personal information, including geolocation data, to that which is necessary to provide the service the child requested. These mandates are critical because once harvested, children's data can be used in ways that would impact their lives - such as automated prediction algorithms that directly impact future opportunities.

## For Further Information or To Get Involved

- Website: [VermontKidsCode.com](https://VermontKidsCode.com)