# Children's Well-Being Online

The introduction of new technologies continuously shifts our culture and the way we parent our children– presenting its own set of challenges for families. The internet industry fundamentally believes that online platforms should provide positive experiences for users at any age. The industry continually innovates and invests in technologies to make online platforms safer and promotes the development of healthy online habits, particularly among young internet users.

## Internet companies strive to make the internet a safer place for children & teens

Because parents and other adult caregivers are in the best position to know what's appropriate for their kids, internet companies take a variety of steps to help them make informed choices when it comes to what their kids are doing and seeing online. IA member companies host safety centers, offer monitoring tools, and develop child-friendly applications that feature human-reviewed, age-appropriate content to empower adults as they foster their children's online health.

## For Young Children:

Just like movies, music, and even conversations, there are some websites that are not appropriate for children under 13. In fact, for legal reasons, many sites specifically prohibit users under certain ages. But there are online services specifically designed for kids. These sites may offer:

- **Parental Controls:**
  - Tools that help parents monitor and control what their kids have access to online.

  - Device-level controls that allow parents to set screen time limits and otherwise supervise their children's activity online.

- **Age Appropriate Content:**
  - Internet companies curate age-appropriate content such as child friendly playlists with filtered content, educational content, games, and movies and shows.

- **Privacy Settings:**
  - Kid-directed services comply with COPPA requirements by obtaining parental consent and offering parents access and control over their children's information.

  - Leading kid-directed services do not use a child's personal information for advertising, and have strict rules for what can be advertised to children.

- **Safety Resources for Parents:**
  - In addition to parental control tools, sites often have educational resources to help parents learn about how to keep their child safe online and how to teach kids safety basics.

# For Teens:

Internet companies know that being a teen can be tough, and they have partnered with experts to develop rules, tools, and resources that are designed to help teens who may be struggling with bullying, harassment, self-harm, or mental health challenges. These include:

- **Bullying Prevention:**
  - Internet companies have partnered with prominent organizations like the National Parent Teachers Association and the Family Online Safety Institute to provide resources to parents and children on how to combat online abuse.

  - Some companies have created "bully filters" that use artificial intelligence to review how words are used online and sort them into categories like bullying, racism, and sexual harassment.

  - Leading IA members take part in National Bullying Prevention Month to educate users on how to identify and prevent bullying online.

- **Mental Health:**
  - The internet provides expanded opportunities for social support– such as allowing LGBTQ+ teens access to online resources that may be lacking in their local communities.

  - Maintain policies against all types of self-harm content.

  - Provide information about crisis assistance resources in response to online searches for terms that indicate a person may be at risk of harming themselves.

  - Facilitating outreach to individuals whose online interactions suggest that they may be in crisis, and helping to connect them with mental health resources and support.

- **Companies provide content for parents, teens, and educators on healthy online interactions and developing healthy online habits.**
  - Topics range from digital wellness to media literacy.