

Dear Virginians,

As a parent, I know the internet can be a powerful tool for learning, opportunity, and connection. But I also know that when left unchecked, these same tools can cause profound and lasting harm to Virginia's children and families. Social media platforms, unsafe AI tools, and online predators are putting our kids at risk every single day, driving up depression and anxiety rates among young people, and even increasing the risk of suicide for young people.¹ Making matters worse, recent reporting demonstrates that massive companies are intentionally preying on our children and making a profit in the process.² This is unacceptable, and we must take immediate steps to keep our children safe.

As Attorney General, I will stand up to Donald Trump and his Big Tech allies to make Virginia a national leader in online child safety. I'll use every tool at my disposal to hold unscrupulous tech companies accountable, protect kids from online exploitation, and always put Virginia families first.

AS ATTORNEY GENERAL, I WILL:

- **Create a Child Safety Unit** within the Attorney General's Office to hold Big Tech accountable when they violate children's online safety and privacy.
- **Rigorously enforce state privacy laws**, targeting companies that improperly collect or misuse minors' data or fail to shield young users from harmful content.
- **Demand comprehensive and strict safeguards from digital platforms**, and pursue legal action when they prioritize profit over children's safety and well-being.
- **Crack down on addictive, manipulative social media design** that fuels depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem among kids and teens.
- **Crack down on AI chatbots and other tech products that may be violating the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)**, the Virginia Consumer Data Protection Act (VCDPA), or other laws designed to protect kids online.
- **Coordinate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)**, and other related federal agencies to combat the online marketplaces and platforms that allow predators and drug dealers to target kids, oftentimes leading to devastating offline consequences.
- **Partner with state agencies, school divisions, mental health professionals**, and local community leaders and organizations to deliver research-backed resources for parents, schools, and law enforcement to combat cyberbullying, trafficking, and other forms of online exploitation.
- **Advocate for new laws like the Age-Appropriate Design Code and Social Media Warning Labels** to force tech companies to prioritize children's safety.

Citations: 1. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/social-media-and-mental-health-in-children-and-teens>;
2. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/facebook-instagram-tiktok-snapchat-children-advertising-2022-harvard-study/>