



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

HOLLY T. SHIKADA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

For Immediate Release
April 1, 2022

News Release 2022-12

Attorney General Shikada Joins Bipartisan Coalition of 44 Attorneys General Urging TikTok and Snapchat to Give Parents More Control

HONOLULU - Attorney General Holly T. Shikada and a bipartisan coalition of 44 attorneys general, led by Attorneys General Lynn Fitch (MS) and Josh Stein (NC), wrote TikTok and Snapchat this week to urge them to give parents the ability to monitor their children's social media usage and protect their children from online threats using parental control apps.

"It is important for parents to be able to meaningfully supervise their children's activities when using social media," Attorney General Shikada said. "I urge TikTok and Snapchat to collaborate with parental control app providers and implement stronger parental controls and content moderation within their apps to allow parents to keep their kids safe."

Research increasingly demonstrates the negative impact that social media can have on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children and teenagers. These impacts range from decreased self-esteem and greater body-image dissatisfaction to increased exposure to cyberbullying and sexual predation. One app reported that in 2021, it had analyzed more than 3.4 billion messages and found:

- 43.09% of tweens and 74.61% of teens were involved in a self-harm/suicidal situation,
- 68.97% of tweens and 90.73% of teens encountered nudity or content of a sexual nature,
- 75.35% of tweens and 93.31% of teens engaged in conversations surrounding drugs/alcohol,
- 80.82% of tweens and 94.50% of teens expressed or experienced violent subject matter/thoughts, and
- 72.09% of tweens and 85.00% of teens experienced bullying as a bully, victim, or witness.

As the attorneys general note in their letter, "Parental control apps can alert parents or schools to messages and posts on your platforms that have the potential to be harmful

and dangerous. Apps can also alert parents if their child manifests a desire for self-harm or suicide. On other platforms where these apps are allowed to operate appropriately parents have received notifications of millions of instances of severe bullying and hundreds of thousands of self-harm situations, showing that these apps have the potential to save lives and prevent harm to our youth.”

Social media platforms already engage in some content moderation and operate under some community guidelines, but these are not always sufficient to protect children and teenagers who are particularly vulnerable to online threats, especially with regard to direct messaging. Parental control apps empower parents to be full partners with the platforms to maintain a safe space online for their children.

AG Shikada was joined by the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

#

For more information, contact:
Gary H. Yamashiroya
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
Email: ATG.PIO@hawaii.gov
Web: <http://ag.hawaii.gov>
Twitter: @ATGHlgov