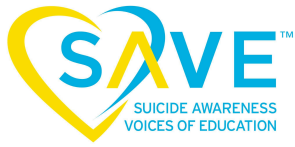




Parents Together
ACTION



Dear Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie,

We, the undersigned organizations, strongly support two urgently needed bills to protect New York children and teens online: the **Warning Labels for Addictive Social Media Platforms Act (S4505/A5346)** and the **Social Media 72-Hour Search Warrant Bill (S8217/A8022)**.

Across New York, children and teens are facing unprecedented mental health challenges, much of it fueled by the rise of addictive social media design features.¹ At the same time, harmful and illegal activities facilitated by these platforms are putting young people in immediate danger. These two bills work to tackle both of these issues by educating New Yorkers about their risk of harm from using these platforms and also aiming to hold accountable those who use these platforms to harm New York's kids and teens.

Social media platforms are often deliberately designed to maximize user engagement, even at the expense of a user's well-being. Features like infinite scrolling, autoplay, and algorithmic feeds encourage more engagement, and all New Yorkers should be reminded of these risks. The **Warning Labels for Addictive Social Media Platforms Act** would require social media platforms that utilize addictive design features to provide clear and easily visible warning labels about the mental health risks of using their platforms. Just as warning labels on tobacco and alcohol products help promote awareness of potential harms associated with those products, this bill is a vital step in giving New Yorkers the tools to understand and manage their online experiences.

In addition, children and teens are being harmed online by illegal activity taking place on - or being facilitated by - social media platforms.² However, these platforms often wait weeks or even months, or completely fail to comply with lawful search warrant requests from law enforcement agencies. This allows bad actors to continue causing harm to minors online, destroy evidence, and evade accountability. The **Social Media 72-Hour Search Warrant Bill** would require social media platforms with over 1 million users to have a process that enables timely communication and data sharing with law enforcement agencies. It doesn't alter any legal standards; it simply requires platforms to comply promptly, protecting New York kids and teens from preventable harm.

We need legislative action now. In 2024, New York passed two major bills on online protections for kids and teens, proving to be a leader in kids' digital safety. The proposals we support build on this leadership. Now, New York lawmakers have the opportunity to take meaningful action at a pivotal time in history, where the online exploitation of children has risen in tandem with the decline of their mental health.

For these reasons, we urge the Legislature to pass and the Governor to support:

- **Warning Labels for Addictive Social Media Platforms Act (S4505/A5346)**
- **Social Media 72-Hour Search Warrant Bill (S8217/A8022)**

¹ <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sg-youth-mental-health-social-media-advisory.pdf>

² <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/inside-snapchat-teenage-opioid-crisis-1235036691/>