

Protecting Children from Predatory AI

A Bipartisan Priority for Families and the Next Generation

An Old Playbook in a New Technology

Artificial intelligence holds remarkable promise for medicine, education, and national competitiveness. America should lead the world in developing it. But the first wave of consumer AI products designed for minors—companion bots, chat “friends,” and emotionally responsive avatars—follows the same engagement-at-all-costs playbook that produced two decades of documented harm on social media.

The mechanics are familiar: design for compulsive use, monetize a child’s attention, deny harm until courts intervene. **A New Mexico jury recently imposed roughly \$375 million in penalties on one of the country’s largest technology companies for misleading consumers about platform dangers to children.** More than **1,600** similar lawsuits are pending nationwide.

What the American People Want

New polling from the Institute for Family Studies (YouGov, May 2026, N=1,000) finds an extraordinary consensus:

- **82%** support pre-deployment safety testing; only 4% oppose — **20 to 1**.
- **87%** want AI evaluated for its effect on children and family wellbeing.
- **90%** of Trump voters and **79%** of Harris voters agree.
- Americans oppose federal preemption of state AI rules by **3 to 1**.

Across red and blue states, and across every generation, the country is asking the same thing: protect our kids.

What Is at Stake for Families

AI companion apps now simulate friendship, romance, and emotional dependence for users as young as adolescence. Documented harms include compulsive use, sexualized chat with minors, and the displacement of healthy family and peer relationships. States red and blue have begun enacting common-sense protections; a federal moratorium would wipe them away.

The family, not the platform, is the first and proper authority over a child’s formation.

Three Common-Sense Reforms

- 1 Real age assurance, with high-risk features off by default.** Verifiable age checks for AI products available to minors; companion simulation, sexualized content, and autonomous “relationship” features off by default for any user who is, or may be, a child.
- 2 Parental rights and meaningful transparency.** Clear disclosure of data collected and how a model is designed to behave, with parental controls that are real, not decorative.
- 3 No blanket immunity, no preemption.** A clear national framework is welcome; a moratorium that voids state child-protection laws is not.

“Get this right, and history will remember this Congress as the generation that ensured progress remained worthy of the children who inherit it.”

— COALITION OF LOCAL LEADERS & PARENTS