



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

## Sen. Gounardes: Instagram's New Youth Privacy Features are an Important—But Insufficient—Step

ANDREW GOUNARDES September 17, 2024

| ISSUE: **SOCIAL MEDIA, INTERNET SAFETY**



*New York State Senator Andrew Gounardes released the following statement today in response to **Meta's announcement of new Instagram features** aimed at addressing privacy and inappropriate online contact for minors:*

“These new Instagram features are an important step toward keeping kids safe online, and they amount to an admission that unfettered social media use has been wreaking havoc on children’s mental health and safety—exactly the reason I passed the **SAFE For Kids Act** and

the [New York Child Data Protection Act](#) earlier this year.

“But Instagram and other social media platforms need to do much more to protect young people from the worst impacts of addictive algorithms, nonstop notifications and predatory data collection. These changes do little to mitigate the harm caused by addictive algorithmic feeds that keep kids scrolling for hours and lead them down harmful rabbit holes. They also do essentially nothing to stop kids’ data from being collected and sold—an oversight that perhaps isn’t totally surprising, given that Big Tech firms [make billions off of ad sales to children](#) every year. Social media companies also need to make much better use of existing tools at their disposal to verify teen users’ ages to ensure any new safety measures actually work.

“A better, safer internet is possible. But the burden of this effort cannot fall on the shoulders of teens and parents alone. Social media companies must take responsibility, and if they continue to prioritize profits over our childrens’ safety, government leaders will hold them accountable.”

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Establishes the Stop Addictive Feeds Exploitation (SAFE) for Kids act prohibiting the provision of addictive feeds to minors

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