

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,

We are a group of young Canadians who are deeply concerned about the effects of social media on youth mental health. We believe it is crucial for the Canadian Federal Government to take steps to create a safer digital environment for youth across our country. Our campaign, "Take Back the Algorithm," aims to improve the social media landscape for Canadian youth through our [Digital Mindfulness Campaign](#) and our [Digital Policy Initiative](#).

Today, 70% of teens say their self-esteem is influenced by social media interactions, 35% of adolescents report feeling unhappy with their bodies after using social media, and 25% of youth who spend more than three hours a day on social media show symptoms of depression and anxiety (US Surgeon General, 2023). These statistics highlight the urgent need for intervention to protect the well-being of our generation.

We propose the following legislative measures to address these pressing issues:

1. **Algorithm Transparency and Controls:** Inspired by the E.U.'s proposed Digital Services Act, we advocate for mandatory disclosure of key algorithm parameters by social media companies, including how they prioritize or recommend content. Users should have the ability to adjust algorithmic preferences to gain greater control over their online experiences.
2. **Restricting the Use of Personal Data in Algorithmic Recommendations for Individuals Under 16:** Social media platforms should be prohibited from using personal data in algorithmic recommendations unless the user is confirmed to be 18 years or older through stringent age verification mechanisms.
3. **Preventing Social Media Access for Children Under Age 13:** Following the example set by the proposed Protecting Kids on Social Media Act in the U.S., we urge the implementation of robust age verification mechanisms to accurately identify and limit access for children under 13.
4. **Limiting Social Media Features that Exploit Human Psychology:** Inspired by the proposed Social Media Addiction Reduction Technology (SMART) Act in the U.S., we advocate for the restriction of features such as infinite scroll, elimination of natural stopping points, and engagement-based badges and awards that promote addictive behaviors.
5. **Incorporate Supportive Prompts for Sensitive Content:** Social media platforms should provide supportive prompts or links to resources when users engage with sensitive content.
6. **Boost Positive and Socially Enriching Content:** Social media algorithms should elevate more positive and socially enriching content alongside controversial or negative content, without limiting critical political or public discourse.
7. **A Bi-Annual Governmental Report on Social Media Harms:** We call for the federal government to commission a report every two years to examine the harms of social media.

We hope to dispel myths that young people are indifferent to the harms of social media. Many of us support sensible restrictions that protect the mental health of children and teenagers and work to prevent tragic outcomes.

Prime Minister Trudeau, we invite you to join us in protecting the mental health of Canadian youth by considering our proposed measures. Together, we can promote and ensure a safer and more supportive digital environment.

Sincerely,

The "Take Back the Algorithm" Campaign Team  
[www.takebackthealgorithm.ca](http://www.takebackthealgorithm.ca)