

Meta input into report on “Existing and Emerging Sexually Exploitative Practices against Children in the Digital Environment”

Thank you for the opportunity to provide inputs for your important report on “Existing and Emerging Sexually Exploitative Practices against Children in the Digital Environment”. Meta takes the issue very seriously and dedicates significant efforts and resources to mitigate the human rights risks associated with online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Our work in this area is rooted in Meta’s [human rights policy](#) and our [best interests of the child framework](#) is informed by the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

Child exploitation is a horrific crime and online predators are determined criminals. We continue to work diligently to fight this abhorrent behavior both on and off our platforms, and to support law enforcement in its efforts to arrest and prosecute the criminals behind it. We have around 40,000 people overall working on safety and security, and we have invested over \$20 billion since 2016. This includes around \$5 billion in the last year alone. We’ve built and shared tools for removing bad content across the internet, and we look at a wide range of signals to detect problematic behavior. We go beyond legal requirements and use sophisticated technology to proactively seek out abusive material, and as a result, we find and report more inappropriate content than anyone else in the industry. As the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) noted recently, Meta goes “above and beyond to make sure that there are no portions of their network where this type of activity occurs.

We want teens to have safe, age appropriate experiences online whilst respecting their digital rights. Online safety for children and youth is an ongoing challenge that requires effort and collaboration across the industry, government and civil society as we seek to balance safety with the exercising of a range of rights - freedom of expression and access to information, amongst others. We’ve spent a decade working on this issue and continue to use a rights based approach for product design and content policy.

We have developed [more than 30 tools, features and resources](#) to support teens and their parents. In 2023 we continued expanding our work around our [parental supervision tools](#) across our products. We conducted [co-design sessions](#) with parents, teens, guardians and experts through [Trust Transparency and Control Labs](#) (TTC Labs) - a cross-industry effort to put people in control of their privacy - and worked with youth advisors to understand teen behaviors to inform product design.

We regularly consult with experts in adolescent development, psychology and mental health to help make our platforms safe and age-appropriate for young people, including improving our understanding of which types of content may be less appropriate for teens. Consultations took place with safety partners, youth groups and advisors from around the world, as well as UNICEF to brief and engage them with our work. Taking into account expert viewpoints, we developed [new protections](#) to give more age-appropriate experiences on our apps, including hiding more types of content on Instagram and Facebook, automatically placing teens into the most restrictive control settings and clearly prompting teens to update their privacy settings on Instagram.

We have made reporting tools for child exploitation easier to find, which led to a 75% increase in reports sent to us by teens in Q1 2023 over Q1 2022 on Messenger and Instagram. We introduced additional ways to proactively find and remove accounts that may violate our child safety policies. For example, we launched proactive technology to send Instagram accounts exhibiting potentially suspicious behavior to our content reviewers and we automatically disable these accounts if they exhibit a certain number of the 60+ signals we monitor. More than 90,000 accounts were identified and automatically removed from August 1 2023 to December 31 2023 as a result of this method.

As the founding member of the [Take It Down Platform](#), a tool designed to proactively prevent young people's intimate images from spreading online, we worked with the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#) to expand it to more languages and encouraged more industry players to join resulting in access for millions more teens.

We are also a founding member of Lantern, [a new program from the Tech Coalition](#) that enables tech companies to share signals about predatory accounts and behaviors across online platforms. Human rights due diligence on Lantern is available here:
<https://www.bsr.org/en/reports/tech-coalition-human-rights-impact-assessment-of-the-lantern-program>

Please find below a series of newsroom posts over the past year or so which will give you a sense of how much of a priority this work is and the range of actions that we have taken and continue to take to respect the rights of children on our platform.

<https://about.fb.com/news/2023/11/launching-the-ebasafeonline-comic-book-in-south-africa-to-help-teens-stay-safe-online/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2023/12/screen-smart-brussels-bringing-together-parents-experts-to-improve-online-experiences-for-young-people/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2023/05/raising-awareness-about-youth-safety-tools-on-instagram/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2024/04/new-tools-to-help-protect-against-sex-tortion-and-intimate-image-abuse/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2024/02/helping-teens-avoid-sex-tortion-scams/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2024/01/teen-protections-age-appropriate-experiences-on-our-apps/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2023/11/lantern-program-protecting-children-online/>

<https://about.fb.com/news/2024/01/introducing-stricter-message-settings-for-teens-on-instagram-and-facebook/>

