Making a Difference

Maryland Coalition Against Pornography (MCAP)

https://www.protect-maryland-kids.com 301-439-8475

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(Open Letter to American School Districts)

Disable YouTube and Gemini AI on School-Issued Devices and Ensure Student Safety

On October 5, 2026, thirteen leading organizations and experts on technology in schools sent an open letter to the 150 largest American school districts, requesting that they disable YouTube and Gemini AI on school-issued devices and investigate student internet use to ensure student safety.

The letter advises school districts of various litigation developments and public reporting that have crystallized the potential safety and legal risks associated with YouTube, Gemini, and student internet access on school-issued devices. The letter also describes the ways in which Google has sought to shift the legal risks of its products to school districts. It is intended to empower and prompt school districts to act quickly to protect their students and the districts themselves.

The 150 school districts receiving the letter are charged with educating and safeguarding over 12 million students. As an open letter, it can be forwarded to any school district in the country.

More than 1,000 school districts have sued YouTube, alleging that YouTube addicts and harms children – and that "compulsive use of YouTube by school children is causing serious problems for students and school districts"

Many of the school districts that have sued YouTube still allow their students to access YouTube on their school-issued devices – a decision that cannot be reconciled with their allegations that YouTube addicts and harms children.

A California jury has now found that YouTube is "dangerous or likely to be dangerous to minors when used in a reasonably foreseeable way," and even awarded punitive damages against YouTube for acting with "malice, oppression, or fraud."



Lawsuits have also been filed against Google for harms to students allegedly caused by school-issued Chromebook laptops and Google's Chrome internet browser.

Google denies that it can be held legally accountable for harms to children allegedly caused by its products, like YouTube, the Chrome internet browser, and the Chromebook. Instead, Google consistently argues that Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act amounts to a legal forcefield that protects Google from legal liability in these cases.

Google consistently tries to shift the legal risks from its products to school districts – and, ultimately, to their taxpayers. Google has even convinced school districts to indemnify Google for a wide variety of legal risks associated with its products.

When students have allegedly been harmed by Google products on school-issued devices, Google has blamed the school districts – even where Google's administrator tools sold to school districts have allegedly failed to work as promised to protect students.

Without asking parents or schools for permission in advance, Google enabled its Gemini AI chatbot for millions of American students on school-issued devices, allowing students to have open-ended conversations with an AI chatbot on their school-issued device.

Common Sense Media has rated Gemini K–12 as "high risk" and found that Gemini K–12 "surfaces inappropriate content, poses mental health risks, and has poor boundaries." Read the full letter here.

The Cornell 7: Rape Culture vs. Love Culture

Commentary by Kate Tsubata, MCAP member

In today's rape culture, fed by rampant porn use, we are assaulted daily by news of acts so vile that they would have spelled the end of someone's career, marriage, or freedom, in the past. Child-rape, bestiality, fetishism, secretive gay hookups (while attacking LGBTQ rights) and of course, rape and adultery--have become normalized under the moral wasteland of this era.



In dismay, I notice that the idea of true love is barely mentioned. Fidelity in marriage, or refusing to be sexually intimate until marriage--is barely whispered. When children are sexual prey--when the family dog is--when a girl gets advertised to a houseful of males as "free (genitalia)" -- then it seems painfully old-fashioned to suggest that none of these things are even remotely healthy.

Despite permissiveness being rampant, however, victims are still getting slut-shamed and body-shamed and stigmatized by those who prey upon them and then pretend that they thought that being drunk or high or unconscious means "consent."

But. sex is not a game. It's not recreational. It's not a right of passage. It's not a "third date" perk, or a "one-night stand."

Sex is actually the merging of two persons--in mind, in heart, in soul, and in body. It's designed to be a component of a fully committed relationship in which each is devoted to the other person, willing to care for and support and help and work together with the other person.

Humans hunger for the deeper self to be seen and heard and understood and valued. This is a universal need. Sex within the context of absolute honor of the other person--becomes a sacred, free and exhilarating act of love. Sex that seeks only orgasm--unrelated to the other person's safety or value or wishes or health--is exploitative and deeply unsatisfying.

Men who master their sexuality, who can put love and commitment and principles before their physical desire--are trustworthy in every area of their lives. They don't cheat in business, in academics, or in sports. They are the gold standard.

Women naturally long for deeper connection, trust, value and constancy. They are drawn to stories of male sacrifice for the love object. Jane Austen's Mr. Darcy is not beloved for his clever conversation or handsome appearance, but for his restraint, his humility, his sacrifice for Lizzie Bennett's family's reputation.

Women seek a trustworthy life partner. Real men do too. These results, however, don't come from participating in the porn-driven salacious quest for available sexual targets. They come from the quiet inner decision that holds sex as a precious and singular gift for a deeply connected lifetime bond.

The problem today isn't merely "negotiating consent." Because that is still based on the idea that there is a formula of getting what you want, without actually committing to the person.

The real purpose of sex is a total mind/body/spirit/life connection. When both partners can trust--can invest--can support--can share the good and the bad and the ugly and the beautiful--then the sex is an ever-productive, ever-joyful, mutually satisfying celebration. In such total appreciation, we celebrate the self and the other. We honor both, in equal measure. We enjoy the physical thrill--without doubt, without shame, without self-betrayal. Sex should never mean surrendering one's value or standards.

Real human sexuality is a whole-person choice. It's not divisible. It's not "wild oats" or "boys being boys." It's the ultimate litmus test of how one will show up in life. No one should get access to another person's body by deceit, force, intoxicants or violence.

A true partner in life is someone who has deliberately chosen to withhold from what doesn't align with purpose. Choosing to be sexually exclusive with someone of equally high standards, to meld your heart and life and finances and work and spirituality--is available to anyone. No one has the right to your body. Each person deserves a partner of equal caliber, who earns trust and who honors one's entire being.

EX-NIH chemist's case shows rise in live-streamed sex abuse of children

(Excerpted from a Washington Post Oct. 12 article)

Carl Hammer, 81, retired from the National Institutes of Health in 2017. An accomplished research chemist, he had published more than 75 papers and managed a mass spectrometry testing facility.

In September, he pleaded guilty to what child exploitation experts said is a rapidly growing crime: Using video live streams to direct impoverished children overseas to produce personalized sexual abuse material.



"It's everywhere. Anywhere you look, you will find it," said John Tanagho, executive director of the Center to End Online Sexual Exploitation of Children at the International Justice Mission.

Investigators built their case on him through phone records, interviews and a live stream recording they found during which Hammer typed directions to a girl, estimated to be 8 to 11 years old, to reposition her camera as she danced naked in a sexualized manner. "U look so grown up," he wrote, according to court filings.

"The cases we know about aren't the tip of the iceberg, they're the tip of the tip of the iceberg," Tanagho said.

Last month in Maryland federal court, William Foster Alger, a 76-year-old mechanic from Hagerstown, was sentenced to 11½ years after admitting he paid a woman in Ecuador to make videos of herself sexually abusing her 7-year-old daughter.

In another federal case in Maryland, former University Park mayor Joel Biermann, who ran on a "Protecting our Children" platform, has been indicted on six counts of producing child pornography. Federal prosecutors have accused him of commissioning sexually explicit images of Filipino boys, including one photo of a child holding a sign that read, "I love Joel," according to court filings.

The onetime federal contractor traveled to the Philippines, where he sexually abused four prepubescent boys in a hotel room and tried to rape them, prosecutors alleged. He also recorded the abuse, they said. Biermann has pleaded not guilty and denies the allegations against him, said his attorney, Peter Fayne.

The case against Hammer began when federal agents from the Homeland Security Investigations division of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement were sorting through digital records of a Philippines-based child sex trafficker.

Under questioning, he admitted to directing children to dance naked on live-stream videos, according to court filings.

On the computer, according to court filings, they found one of the recorded Skype calls that included a small chat window where a man named "Carl" offered written suggestions for camera and lighting angles. Investigators also found more than 100 screenshots from a different video, according to Hammer's plea hearing.

Montgomery prosecutors secured a 12-count indictment related to a single victim and alleged that Hammer had recorded at least one other child. They eventually struck a deal with Hammer for him to plead guilty to one count of soliciting a child to produce child pornography and capped the maximum sentence at four years.

Montgomery County Assistant State's Attorney Debbie Feinstein, who runs the special victims unit that prosecuted Hammer, said that real-time, personalized production of child sexual abuse material is "proliferating exponentially" by offenders who see the videos as a form of control.

"The person is creating, directing and producing it," she said.

The full scope of the crime is unknown. But money flowing from the United States offers one measure of the demand. During a recent 18-month period, Tanagho said, financial institutions flagged $7.3 million in suspicious payments sent from the U.S. to the Philippines and linked to child exploitation. *(Continued, Page 4)*

Offenders see live-streaming as lower risk compared to buying already-produced child sexual abuse material,

because the latter involves large file transfers that tech companies often detect.

For the children being directed in the live streams, the effects can be devastating. The majority are 12 or younger, Tanagho said.

“The child comes to see the abuser as the benefactor, which deepens confusion and self-blame,” Manojlovic said. “They learn their body is a commodity. Many don’t recognize it as abuse.”

And what offenders seek can grow more extreme, experts said. That includes directing adults on exactly how to sexually assault a child, or traveling overseas to do it themselves, they said.

“What we have seen is that this is an escalating crime,” Tanagho said.

(Ed. Note: *MCAP participated in hearings in Annapolis on legislation that finally passed into Maryland criminal law, closing a loophole that previously made it impossible to prosecute cases like this involving the streaming of child sexual abuse material. (CSAM, aka child porn).*

Protect Early Childhood

The tech accountability movement has rightly focused on the harms teens face on social media. But the same business model — maximizing engagement, collecting data, and monetizing attention — is increasingly being applied to babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.



That’s why Fairplay published a brand-new white paper, “Big Tech’s Youngest Targets: A Call to Protect Early Childhood from Exploitative Business Practices.”

Families cannot be expected to counteract billion-dollar industries alone. But working together, we can ensure that young children get the protections they need from the exploitative business practices of Big Tech.

Learn more and get involved at www.bit.ly/youngtechtargets.

From Porn Addiction to Child Protection

Pornography, Social Media, and the Fight for Childhood



Chris McKenna knows the danger of pornography from the inside. Exposed as a child, he carried an addiction into adulthood before finally finding freedom. Years later, while working in youth ministry, he watched smartphones place the same danger, now amplified by social media, algorithms, predators, sextortion, and endless access, directly into children’s pockets.

That experience became **Protect Young Eyes,** one of the leading organizations helping families, schools, and communities create safer digital spaces.

Chris has testified before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, helped shape child protection legislation, spoken internationally about technology and childhood, and spent years teaching parents how to navigate pornography, social media, smartphones, AI, and online exploitation.

This will be an unusually personal and practical conversation about Chris’s own journey, what today’s digital world is exposing children to, what parents often miss, and how we can protect kids without fear, shame, or pretending technology is going away.

Wednesday, October 28, 2026
8:30 PM Eastern, 5:30 PM Pacific
Free Zoom live event:

https://tinyurl.com/Protect-Kids-From-Porn

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(Change Service Requested)

Action Items YOU can do!

1) Join MCAP and Greenridge Baptist Church, Boyds, MD in February to welcome nationally renowned speaker **Chris McKenna**, (Protect Young Eyes), introducing his newly released book, *5 Habits of the Tech Ready Family: Raising Wise Kids in a Wild Digital World*. Details to be shared on our website: https://www.protect-maryland-kids.com/events.

2) Help us **celebrate 40 years** of serving Maryland families advocating for safety and protections from the damage of porn and violence. Email us at mcapinc@mcap1.com and tell us about the impact that MCAP has had on your family and your community.

3) **Reach out** to local schools about the dangers of YouTube and Gemini on school-sponsored devices (*See Page 1)*.

4) Check the website for lists of pending or proposed legislation and **contact** your elected representatives to add your voice to our efforts to ensure that Maryland continues to develop robust legislation that protects children and families. https://www.protect-maryland-kids.com/bills

5) We are planning to create **t-shirts** to help you share your commitment to healthy cyber-safety. More to come!

6) Join our administrative **volunteers** or take on a role to help MCAP's outreach and engagement. Call us at 301-439-8475.

7) We are so grateful to those of you willing to **subscribe** and join MCAP for $15 annually. (PayPal or, with no fee, Zeffy at www.protect-maryland-kids.com/donate are easy ways to do this.) Or checks can be mailed to **MCAP, P.O. Box 2868, Silver Spring, MD 20915-2868.**