

AG Fitch Sues TikTok for Targeting Children with Its “Addiction Machine”



TikTok is conducting a dangerous experiment with our children’s developing minds and our children are suffering for it. TikTok knows it maximizes profit by addicting children to its platform, and it knows that feeding them increasingly extreme and disturbing videos keeps children hooked. Our children need us to stand strong for them now.

Lynn Fitch

(Jackson, Mississippi) Attorney General Lynn Fitch today joined a bipartisan coalition of 14 attorneys general in filing separate enforcement actions against TikTok for violations of state consumer protection laws. Attorney General Fitch’s action alleges that TikTok exploits and harms young users and deceives the public about the social media platform’s dangers.

"TikTok is conducting a dangerous experiment with our children’s developing minds," **said Attorney General Lynn Fitch**, "and our children are suffering for it. TikTok knows it maximizes profit by addicting children to its platform, and it knows that feeding them increasingly extreme and disturbing videos keeps children hooked. All the while, TikTok gives parents the false impression this is safe for their children. I am proud to stand with my colleagues from across the country to support parents. Our children need us to stand strong for them now."

Use of TikTok is pervasive among young people in the United States. In 2023, 63% of all Americans aged 13 to 17 who responded to a Pew Research survey reported using TikTok, and most teenagers in the U.S. were using TikTok daily. In 2022, U.S.-based TikTok users aged 0 to 17 accounted for more than \$2 billion in TikTok’s ad revenue, which is more than one-third of TikTok’s overall advertising revenue that year.

TikTok’s misconduct arises from its underlying business model that focuses on maximizing young users’ time on the TikTok platform to enable the company to boost revenue from selling targeted advertising space.

The complaint explains, "*TikTok intentionally manipulates the release of dopamine in Young Users’ developing brains and causes them to use TikTok in an excessive, compulsive, and addictive manner that harms them both mentally and physically. Defendants have designed and instituted a business model, which relies on keeping Young Users on TikTok for as long as possible, so that TikTok can collect maximum data from these users and expose them to more advertising and marketing. More advertising directed to Young Users means more revenue for Defendants. And so, rather than making their product safe or disclosing the platform’s harms, Defendants mislead the public about the ways TikTok harms children and teens.*"

As of today, 23 attorneys general have filed actions against TikTok for its conduct toward youth, including existing actions filed by the attorneys general

of Utah, Nevada, Indiana, New Hampshire, Nebraska, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, and Texas.

In August, [AG Fitch joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general](#) in asking the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to uphold the national TikTok divest-or-ban legislation passed by Congress earlier this year.

Last month, [AG Fitch urged lawmakers to require a U.S. Surgeon General warning](#) on all algorithm-driven social media platforms.

[Attorney General Fitch filed](#) a similar lawsuit against Meta for the harms to children caused by the addictive design of Facebook and Instagram.

You can learn more about General Fitch's efforts to protect children online at AttorneyGeneralLynnFitch.com/BeAware.

Click [here](#) to read the complaint.

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