

Paper petition instructions

Petition instructions: Paper

Rules:

- The petition must be on standard paper, have no text edits or appendices
- The header highlighting the petition's requests is required on each follow-on page of the petition.
- **Signed papers must be submitted in the original form** (no pictures or faxes of the signed sheets).
- We can print on both sides of the page.
- **Signers must either be Canadian citizens OR residents of Canada.** There is no age restriction for who may sign. Each person must sign for themselves.
- Paper petitions do not require dates or the signer's printed name, so there are only 2 columns to be filled: Signature & address.

Steps:

- Print the PDF sheet.
- Gather signatures
- **Mail them back to Jenny (address below) - must arrive to Jenny by August 27**

Jenny Perez
Suite 1900-1030 West Georgia St
Vancouver, BC V6E 2Y3

PETITION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Whereas:

- Smartphones have become a direct gateway to harmful content for Canadian children, with most owning devices by age 12;
- Algorithm-driven social media platforms designed to maximize engagement are addictive, damaging children's mental and emotional health;
- Canadian youth are facing a growing mental health crisis from social media use, and this is placing increasing strain on our healthcare system and social services;
- Parents face significant challenges in controlling their children's access to social media across multiple devices and platforms; and
- Australia has enacted legislation establishing a minimum age of 16 for social media access, with similar measures being considered by New Zealand, Sweden, and Spain, demonstrating growing international recognition of this issue.

We, the undersigned **citizens and residents of Canada**, ask the **Government of Canada** to:

1. **Raise the social media age to 16** using mandatory age verification, and enforce media company compliance using effective measures;
2. **Secure privacy rights for youth under 18** to prevent social media companies from sharing data collected on kids – including data collected by the age-verification technologies used to deny underage kids access to their platforms.

PRINT SIGNATURES

Instructions for Signers:

- You must be a Canadian citizen OR resident of Canada.
- Provide your address (full address, or city/province, or province/postal code).
- Each person must sign for themselves only. **Do NOT print your name.**

SIGNATURE (Sign your own name)

ADDRESS (City and Province)

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Petition concerning ask for the Canadian Government to (1) **Raise the social media age to 16** using mandatory age verification, and (2) **Secure privacy rights for youth under 18** to prevent social media companies from sharing data collected on kids

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Tactics for getting signatures

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Find people & create groups wanting to sign:

- **Host a 'signing party'** - Invite friends and family over to hang out or watch a show, with the upfront heads up & background shared that you'll ask folks to sign.
- **Tie-into community happenings and routines** - Follow the audience where they are, to make it easy for them to find you - such as "Join me at the park at 3PM on Saturday and sign the petition" - advertise on social media, etc.
- **Knock door-to-door** - We're not asking anyone for money. This request is relatively easy to get folks to agree.
- **Find supportive audiences** - Grandparents and those with preteens/teens are often the most interested. Consider asking parents of local sports teams, teacher/parent groups, or reaching out to local retirement homes.
- **Tap into community groups** - Ask if you can make an announcement at the end of a church event, camp pick-up, or other group gatherings. No pressure, just awareness for those interested.

Hone messages to resonate:

General pitch

- "Social media is designed to maximize attention. Meaning, it's designed to be addictive. Kids brains aren't developed enough to control their impulses. While good things can happen on social media, they need to be ready to handle it. Would you support this petition for 16+ age restrictions to make an account?"

Objection Handling - Talking points

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For Unplugged's social media age restrictions petition.

- It's not feasible to implement.
 - Why not? Dating apps like Tinder and Bumble already enforce age restrictions.
 - Many other countries are looking at this legislation now, including: New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, France, Greece, and Spain.
 - Big tech is smart - if there is a will, there is a way. They've opted not to focus on this because they haven't had to.
- Privacy concerns - (e.g., I don't want to give big tech my info).
 - Yes, this was raised in Australia. This petition addresses this issue through point #2 to secure privacy rights on the data collected.
 - New tech - such as [hand-based verification](#) - means you don't have to share any info to be screened.
 - Know Your Consumer (KYC) and Age Assurance Tech are already established industries. You can verify your age through third-parties applications.
 - Big tech uses this talking point because it scares people into supporting no restrictions or no age checks - not because there aren't solutions.
- Parents need to take responsibility for their kids.
 - Can you control every device or platform your 13 year old finds? We've already tried this approach and it's not working.
 - Would we say this for smoking or drinking?
 - You're assuming parents want kids on these sites?
- Age restrictions don't solve the problem - kids will still find a way.
 - Taking a stance and not condoning this matters. And it will make it harder.
 - Do we give up on age restrictions for drinking because kids still find a way?
- Kids need to learn digital citizenship.
 - Agree - and it needs to be at an age appropriate level.
 - Social media is designed to be addictive. Their brains need to be developed enough to control these impulses better.