



# Vermont Kids Code

## How the Vermont Kids Code Works for LGBTQ+ Youth

### Kids Code Centers Youth Agency

- The coalition supporting this bill includes and centers young people fighting for a pluralistic internet where *everyone* has the right to information, expression, community, and exploration.
- Crucially, the bill's language forbids using any of its provisions to discriminate based on race, sex and/or sexual orientation.
- Instead, the Kids Code offers a design-centered alternative to proposals involving parental control, consent, and/or notification, which can pose serious risks for LGBTQ+ youth.
- By minimizing data collection, the Kids Code would stop platforms from tracking, profiling, targeting, and/or discriminating against LGBTQ+ youth online.

### Kids Code Does Not Restrict Searches or Access to Content

- The Kids Code's provisions would not filter or restrict access to content - something the bill explicitly states.
- Instead, the bill requires tech companies to evaluate the safety of features like algorithms that may use private data to profile young people and then push content they never asked to see.
- Evidence indicates LGBTQ+ youth may experience disproportionate harm from this kind of profiling, including seeing higher rates of content related to self-harm on social media.<sup>1</sup>
- LGBTQ+ youth would still be free to look for information and seek out communities they want and need online; the Kids Code would simply stop tech companies from tracking and monetizing them as they do so.

### Kids Code Strengthens Privacy for LGBTQ+ Youth Online

- The Kids Code's strong privacy protections are especially important for LGBTQ+ youth, who receive more frequent recommendations to 'friend' or 'follow' strangers on social media.<sup>2</sup>
- Research shows that "social media activity should be conceptualized as an ecosystem," where LGBTQ+ "users are able to manage their self-presentation by targeting content to different audiences on different platforms, in addition to the use of privacy controls within one platform."<sup>3</sup>
- Stronger default privacy settings and better data protection fosters an online environment where it's safer for everybody to grow, explore, and express themselves.
- The Kids Code includes explicit anti-discrimination language that expressly prohibits tech companies from making any design choice that discriminates against a child based on race, religion, national origin, disability, sex and/or sexual orientation.

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<sup>1</sup> [Chamaraman et al. 2021](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Accountable Tech and Log Off. 2023](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Devito et al. 2018](#)