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[California Partners Project](#)

**California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, California Partners Project Applaud
Signing of Children’s Online Safety and Privacy Legislation**

AB 2273, the California Age-Appropriate Design Code Act, is a much-needed push for tech companies to consider and account for the user experience, safety, and mental health of children as they engage with their services online

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Age-Appropriate Design Code Act ([AB 2273](#), Wicks) was signed into law by California Governor Gavin Newsom after passing the State Legislature unanimously in late August. The law seeks to offer privacy and safety to Californian children while they are online. California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom cofounded California Partners Project in 2020 in large part to research and raise awareness about the impacts significant time spent online may pose on children’s physical and mental health.

“As a parent, I am terrified of the effects technology addiction and saturation are having on our children and their mental health. While social media and the internet are integral to the way we as a global community connect and communicate, our children still deserve real safeguards like AB 2273 to protect their wellbeing as they grow and develop,” **said Jennifer Siebel Newsom, First Partner of California and co-founder of California Partners Project (CPP), following the signing.** “I am so appreciative of the Governor, Assemblymember Cunningham, and Assemblymember Wicks’ leadership and partnership to ensure tech companies are held accountable for the online spaces they design and the way those spaces affect California’s children.”

“A largely unregulated tech industry has poured fuel on the fire of an already raging youth mental health crisis,” **shared Lisa Ling, CPP Board Member, journalist, television personality, and author.** “Protecting kids online is a universal issue that cuts across the political divide, and kids across the country are stepping up to demand change. I applaud lawmakers for this huge step forward, and hope the momentum continues.”

Raising children in today’s technology-driven world has become a source of stress and concern for many parents and caregivers as they struggle to balance the necessity of technology with the risks for their kids. According to a 2021 report from [Common Sense Media](#), 13 to 18-year-olds use screens for eight and a half hours on average per day. Alongside the rise in screens and social media, [CDC data](#) indicates suicide rates increased almost 60% from 2007 to 2019 for people ages 10 to 23. Recent [research also showed](#) that 72% of teens believe that tech companies manipulate them to spend more time on their devices.

While federal efforts to pass a comprehensive national law governing online privacy have yet to materialize, strong privacy regulations have emerged abroad. AB 2273 is modeled after the Age Appropriate Design Code, which was passed in the U.K. in 2020 and became enforceable in September 2021, thanks to Baroness Beeban Kidron’s leadership.

The California Age-Appropriate Design Code Act, which goes into effect July 1, 2024, notably shifts the definition of child consumer to anyone under 18. The law also requires companies to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment for any online service, product, or feature likely to be accessed by children; to identify whether the design, including algorithms, is harmful to children; and to create a plan to reduce the risk. When children access services, products, and features, businesses will also be required to provide default settings that offer a high level of privacy and will be prohibited from collecting, selling, sharing, or keeping personal information unless absolutely necessary.

First Partner Siebel Newsom has been outspoken about the health and wellbeing of California’s children. She is a champion of the Newsom Administration’s California for ALL Kids initiative, which includes programs such as Farm to School, Outdoor Access for ALL, and the Governor’s Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being. Since co-founding [California Partners Project](#) in 2020, First Partner Siebel Newsom and

CPP have partnered with researchers to elevate the urgency of these issues and bring together experts and advocates to develop best practices related to youth mental health and technology. In light of the 2020 CPP report, [Are the Kids Alright?](#), Siebel Newsom hosted a listening tour with California mothers that resulted in the creation of a set of [Responsive Toolkits](#) for parents to help children maintain healthy digital practices. Connecting with teens across California, Siebel Newsom conducted focus groups to hear firsthand about the impact of social media on the lives of adolescents.

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The California Partners Project, in partnership with the people of California, champions gender equity across the state and ensures our state's media and technology industries are a force for good in children's lives. Learn more at www.calpartnersproject.org.