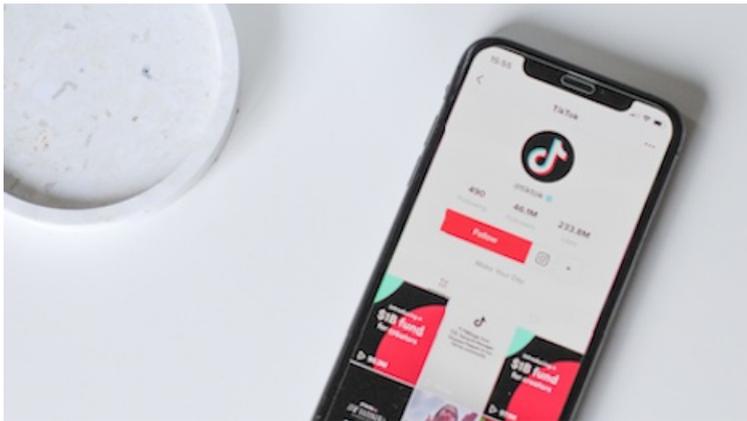


LEGAL AND PRIVACY

TikTok faces investigation over mental health impact

March 3, 2022



A number of states claim the app has adverse effects on young people and is moving to hold it accountable. Image credit: Unsplash

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Short-form video sharing platform TikTok is being accused of having negative effects on the mental health of kids, teens and young adults.

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Leading the investigation is a bipartisan coalition of attorneys general from California, Florida, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, Tennessee and Vermont. According to a statement from the Massachusetts attorney general's office, the investigation will look into the harm TikTok may cause to young people and what the platform knew about this harm.

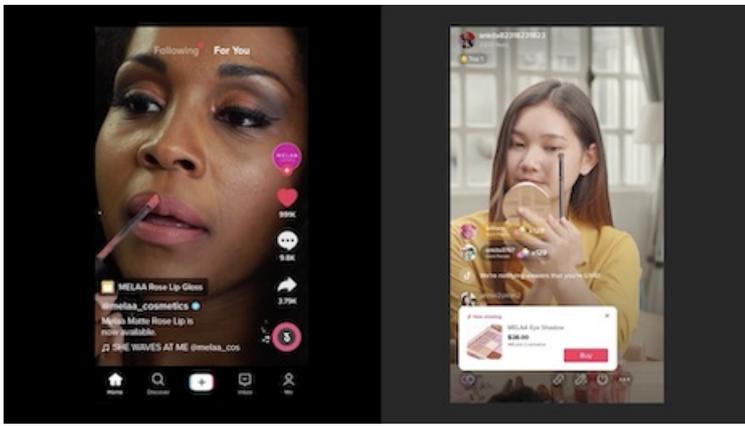
"As children and teens already grapple with issues of anxiety, social pressure and depression, we cannot allow social media to further harm their physical health and mental wellbeing," said Maura Healey, attorney general of Massachusetts, in the statement.

"State attorneys general have an imperative to protect young people and seek more information about how companies like TikTok are influencing their daily lives."

TikTok takedown

The investigation aims to discern whether TikTok is designing, operating and promoting its social media platform to children, teens and young adults in a manner that causes or exacerbates physical and mental health harm.

Across the United States, attorneys general are examining whether the company violated state consumer protection laws and put the public at risk.



TikTok has said in previous statements that it limits certain features by age and designs its policies to keep all of its users safe. Image credit: TikTokImage credit: TikTok

They have expressed concern about the negative impacts of social media platforms on their states' young civilians.

Among other issues, the investigation focuses on the methods and techniques utilized by TikTok to boost user engagement, including increasing the duration of time spent on the platform and frequency of engagement with the platform.

The effect of social media on mental health, especially that of young people, has been a major issue recently.

In November 2021, media group Meta, formerly known as Facebook, faced a joint investigation from 10 states regarding whether the group broke consumer protection laws by trying to attract kids to its platforms.

The investigation explores the tactics Meta used in getting children to join and engage with its platforms as well as possible harmful repercussions from said engagement.

Instagram later announced that it was pausing the development of a version of its app designed for children 13 years old or younger because of safety and privacy concerns ([see story](#)).

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