

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1499
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 12.12.2025

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION IN CHILDREN

1499 #. SMT. MAMATA MOHANTA:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:
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- (a) whether Government has conducted any study or survey to assess social media addiction among children;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether Government proposes to issue specific guidelines to social media platforms to address social media addiction among children; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (e): The policies of the Government are aimed at ensuring an Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable Internet for its users, including children. With the expansion of the Internet and users, accessing the Internet for leveraging immense opportunities, the risk of exposure to inappropriate content and the harmful effects of these activities have also increased.

The Government is cognizant of the immense opportunities offered by these technologies and the harms they may cause.

In order to protect the children from exposure to inappropriate content and the harmful effects of social media, Government has adopted a series of measures.

With regard to inappropriate and unlawful content on the Internet, the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 and the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021), together, have put a stringent framework to deal with unlawful content in the digital space.

IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021:

The IT Rules, 2021 casts due diligence obligations on the intermediaries, including social media intermediaries. Such due diligence obligations includes that the intermediary shall make reasonable efforts by itself to cause its users not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit,

store, update or share, among others, any information which is harmful to child or violates any law.

Intermediaries are also required to remove information, violative of any law for the time being in force, as and when brought to their knowledge either through a Court order or through a notice by Appropriate Government or its Authorised Agency.

Information Security Education & Awareness (ISEA):

This Ministry has launched a program titled ISEA to generate awareness among users while using Internet.

A dedicated website has been created for information security awareness that generates and upgrades relevant awareness material on a regular basis and can be accessed at <https://www.infosecawareness.in>.

Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act):

The DPDP Act has been notified which establishes the legal framework to regulate the processing of digital personal data. The DPDP Act allows Data Fiduciaries to process the personal data of children only with parental consent.

It does not permit processing of personal data which is detrimental to well-being of children or involves tracking, behavioural monitoring or targeted advertising.

Studies conducted by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR):

The NCPCR has conducted a study on “Effects (Physical, Behavioural and Psycho-social) of using Mobile Phones and other Devices with Internet Accessibility by Children” in 2021. The study report is available at:

https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/165650458362bc410794e02_effect1.PDF

Additionally, NCPCR has prepared following guidelines on Cyber Safety and Protection of children:

1. Guideline and standard content for raising awareness among children, parents, educators and general public titled “Being Safe Online” is available at: https://ncpcr.gov.in/public/uploads/16613370496305fdd946c31_being-safe-online.pdf
2. Guidelines on Cyber Safety (for inclusion in) Manual on Safety and Security of Children in Schools are available at: https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/16613369326305fd6444e1b_cyber-safety- guideline.pdf
3. Guidelines for Schools for prevention of bullying and cyber bullying” are available at: https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/1714382687662f675fe278a_preventing-bullying-andcyberbullying-guidelines-for-schools-2024.pdf

The National Council of Educational Research and Training has also released a handbook on “Safe online learning in times of COVID-19”. The handbook is available at https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/announcement/Safetolearn_English.pdf
