



15th April 2026

To: Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP Prime Minister

To: Rt Hon Liz Kendall MP Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology

Subject: A Mandate for Urgent Action to Secure a Safer Digital Childhood

Dear Prime Minister and Secretary of State,

We write to you today on behalf of Bereaved Parents, supported by Lauren Cowell and the Alliance 4 Children. As a coalition of health professionals, academics, educators and bereaved families—supported by a historic cross-party group of Parliamentarians and high-profile public figures we ask you hear our heartfelt call.

The world has reached a turning point. Recent ground-breaking court cases have laid bare what families have known for years: unregulated digital platforms are systematically exploiting children through business models driven by addictive engagement. While other nations take decisive legislative action to protect their citizens, the UK remains in a cycle of consultation that risks being outmanoeuvred by the relentless pace of Big Tech.

We can no longer treat social media as a neutral tool; for children, it has become a form of **"Digital Nicotine,"** engineered to bypass developmental safeguards and leading to profound, documented harms. There is now an overwhelming parliamentary and public consensus for change, evidenced by the decisive amendments recently passed in the House of Lords.

We urge the Government to adopt the following Key Asks:

- **Statutory Age Threshold (16+):** Implementation of a targeted measure ensuring children under 16 cannot access platforms that fail to meet minimum design safety and data transparency conditions.
- **A Total Ban on Addictive Features:** Mandatory "Safe by Design" standards to eliminate features that drive compulsive use, including infinite scrolling, auto-playing, and public affirmation tokens such as "likes" (particularly in regards U16s).
- **Phone-Free Schools:** Moving beyond mere guidance to place "Phone-free by default" policies, ensuring a focused educational environment for all children.
- **Fully Resourced Life Skills Education:** Mandatory curriculum time for digital life skills, including AI and social media literacy, supported by trained and resourced teachers.

Beyond these immediate priorities, we have developed a comprehensive, evidence-based Tiered Framework (Gold, Silver, and Bronze recommendations). These proposals offer a structural roadmap for enforcement—including the creation of a national Online Harm Hub and a call for an independent Online Safety Commissioner. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these detailed recommendations with you.

The cost of further delay is measured in children's lives. We ask you to match the courage of the families standing at your door today and provide the leadership necessary to make the UK the safest place in the world to be online.

Yours sincerely,

J. Paul Wright & Anji Wright CEOs, Alliance 4 Children

Ellen Roome MBE, Founder of Jools' Law

Lauren Cowell - Patron, Alliance 4 Children

Professor Tracy Daszkiewicz, President of the Faculty of Public Health

Lauren Cowell – J. Paul & Anji Wright – Ellen Roome
Contact Details placed here

SUPPORTING SIGNATURES

Bereaved Parents

- Amanda Stephens (Mother of Olly Stephens)
- Anna Ford (Mother of Madelyn)
- Areti Nicolaou (Mother of Christoforos)
- Beth Layton (Mother to Elsa Layton-Jones)
- Charlotte Gabb (Grandmother of Eliza)
- Chris Ford (Father of Madelyn)
- Eliza Gabb (Mother of Sky Gabb)
- Ellen Roome MBE (Mother of Jools Sweeney)
- Esther Ghey (Mother of Brianna Ghey)
- George Nicolaou (Father of Christoforos)
- Hollie Dance (Mother of Archie Battersbee)
- Ian Banyard (Father of Lacey Banyard)
- Lisa Kenevan (Mother of Isaac Kenevan)
- Lorin LaFave (Mother of Breck Bednar)
- Louise Gibson (Mother of Noah)
- Mariano Janin (Father of Mia Janin)
- Mark Kenevan (Father of Isaac Kenevan)
- Matthew Sweeney (Father of Jools Sweeney)
- Michael Absalom (Father of Kady Absalom)
- Michelle Barrett (Mother of Kibi Wade)
- Michelle Gardner (Stepmother of Kibi Wade)
- Penny Banyard (Mother of Lacey Banyard)
- Ruth Moss (Mother to Sophie Moss)
- Steven Gabb (Grandfather of Eliza)
- Stuart Stephens (Father of Olly Stephens)
- Tanya Absalom (Mother of Kady Absalom)
- Terry Layton (Father to Elsa Layton-Jones)

Peers

- Baroness Benjamin, Floella (Peer, Liberal Democrat)
- Baroness Berger, Luciana (Peer, Labour)
- Baroness Finlay, Ilora (Peer, Crossbench)
- Baroness Foster, Arlene (Peer, Independent)
- Lord Hampton, John (Peer, Crossbench)
- Baroness Hughes, Beverley (Peer, Labour)
- Baroness Kidron, Beeban (Peer, Crossbench)
- Lord Polack, Stuart (Peer, Conservative)
- Baroness Ritchie, Margaret (Peer, Labour)
- Lord Russell, Simon (Peer, Crossbench)
- Lord Stevenson, Wilf (Peer, Labour)
- Baroness Watkins, Mary (Peer, Crossbench)
- Lord Watson, Michael (Peer, Labour)
- Lord Weir, Peter (Peer, Democratic Unionist Party)

MPs

- Barker, Paula (MP, Labour)
- Barron, Lee (MP, Labour)
- Beavers, Lorraine (MP, Labour)
- Brash, Jonathan (MP, Labour)
- Burgon, Richard (MP, Labour)
- Byrne, Ian (MP, Labour)
- Chadwick, David (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Collins, Victoria (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Duncan-Jordan, Neil (MP, Labour)
- Easton, Alex (MP, Independent)
- Foy, Mary (MP, Labour)
- George, Andrew (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Harding, Monica (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Hinchcliff, Chris (MP, Labour)
- Johnson, Kim (MP, Labour)
- Khan, Afzal (MP, Labour)
- Layla, Moran (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Maskell, Rachael (MP, Labour)
- McDonnell, John (MP, Labour)
- Mohamed, Iqbal (MP, Independent)
- Naismith, Connor (MP, Labour)
- Olney, Sarah (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Perteghella, Manuela (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Ribeiro-Addy, Bell (MP, Labour)
- Savage, Roz (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Shockat, Adam (MP, Independent)
- Voaden, Caroline (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Webb, Chris (MP, Labour)
- Wilson, Munira (MP, Liberal Democrat)
- Witherden, Steve (MP, Labour)