

What's One of the Most Dangerous Toys for Kids? The Internet.

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We all know how difficult it can be to close our social media apps and walk away from our devices. Just one more scroll, we tell ourselves. Just one more peek at a link. And then, suddenly, we're deep down the rabbit hole of yet another feed.

These apps are addictive by design. We know this. And we know full well who's making a bundle off our weaknesses. (Howdy, Mark Zuckerberg!) But we still can't help ourselves.

So, if we adults are seemingly powerless in the face of such digital temptation, where does that leave our kids?

In the Opinion Video above, children tell us what they know about how the internet works (not much) and how much they use it (a lot).

"I think I want to get off of this thing," one young girl confesses, "but then I'm just, like, 'No! More YouTube! More Instagram! More TikTok!'"

And while kids are experiencing this kind of dopamine rush, tech companies — in a drive to maximize engagement and, thus, profits — are collecting their data without their overt consent while also exposing them to adult content and corrosive peer judgment.

Online privacy regulations in the United States intended to protect young children are either woefully out-of-date or easily circumvented. But [pending legislation introduced in May](#) by Senators Edward J. Markey, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Bill Cassidy, Republican of Louisiana, would update those rules by banning targeted advertising

aimed at children and raising the age of internet users whose data cannot be collected without their consent from 12 to 15, among other measures.

It's time, we argue, for the government to modernize the nation's internet privacy rules, and to do a far better job of safeguarding the internet's youngest explorers from harm.