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Attorney General Sunday Announces Lawsuit Against TikTok for Misrepresentations that Permit Age-13+ Rating in App Stores

*Office of Attorney General lawsuit also alleges TikTok promotes 'endless scrolling,'
which has negative effects on youth mental wellness*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — Tuesday, August 11, 2026

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Dave Sunday announced the filing of a lawsuit against TikTok, Inc., regarding the social media giant's failures to shield children from age-inappropriate material and over-usage of the app, which can be detrimental to youth development.

In a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief filed this week in Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, the Office of Attorney General seeks honesty from TikTok in how its platform appears in app stores, and demands the company take steps to protect child users from becoming addicted to the app.

The complaint alleges that TikTok lies about how often adult-themed material — such as sexual content and nudity, profanity, and drug use — appears on its platform to achieve an age-13+ app rating in App Stores.

"TikTok has built its empire based on a model of addictiveness at all costs, and expanded that empire using deception about what sort of content is viewable for kids," Attorney General Sunday said. "This is not an indictment against modern technology, or a scolding assessment of social media as a whole — rather, this is an action to hold accountable a company that values dollars over mental wellness."

During a public announcement Tuesday of the lawsuit, Attorney General Sunday referenced teenTALK events last school year when he heard from students who feel trapped on TikTok.

The lawsuit alleges that is by design, as TikTok profits from the more time users spend on its platforms scrolling and generating ad revenue for the company. The complaint alleges that TikTok is aware of the addictiveness and barriers that can be implemented to protect kids, but ignores them.

TikTok is one of the most downloaded apps every year over recent years, with nearly 100 millions daily users in the United States, according to Pew Research Center. More than two-thirds of teens (ages 13-17) use the app, and more than 1 in 5 teens report being on it “almost constantly,” according to Pew.

This action is in line with Attorney General Sunday’s prior actions to protect kids from modern technology that is developed and marketed without adequate consideration of the harm it is causing. Late last year, he led a series of [demand letters sent to A.I. companies](#) regarding harmful chatbots; he continues to [collaborate with legislators on laws](#) that will protect Pennsylvanians; and remains engaged in litigation against Meta.

Read the full complaint [HERE](#).

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