

# CHILD ONLINE SAFETY UNIVERSAL DECLARATION



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**Child safety is  
everyone's business!**



**BROADBAND COMMISSION**  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



## PERSPECTIVE

There are more than 2 billion children under the age of 18, with the majority living in the developing countries in Sub Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. Many children have access to and are being impacted by the Internet. They may also be exploited by its use in unthinkable ways, and their rights violated in an unacceptable manner. Despite its many benefits, the Internet has been an enabler of abuse and exploitation all around the globe.

Protection of children online is fundamental to creating a healthy and progressive society, and to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals; in particular goal 16.2 calling for ending all forms of violence against children. It is equally important that government, the private sector, civil society, educators, families, parents and caregivers, all play their part.

The ITU's Child Online Protection (COP) initiative covers most aspects of child online safety and together with other international initiatives provides a blueprint for all of us. Implementation requires proactive engagement by all concerned stakeholders and decision makers who must allocate resources, champion the cause and play an active role in ensuring child online safety.

Several modes of engagement exist to help protect children online. They require developing and enabling partnerships with a focus on keeping children safe online and empowering them for the digital world.

The Child Online Safety Universal Declaration strives to align all relevant stakeholders on the common mission of championing the cause of protection of children online.



\* includes Operators, ISPs, Content Providers, Social Media & Messaging Platforms

## WHY IS COMBATING CHILD ABUSE IMPORTANT?



More than **30%** of all internet users are children and with the expansion of the broadband it will radically increase

**8%** of all **men** and **20%** of all **women** report having been sexually abused as a child.\*

\*<http://plk.co/u3xr> (pdf)



## 1 BILLION CHILDREN

Every year, 1 billion children continue to be exposed to violence and more than 200 million of these children are sexually abused and exploited. This means that close to 50% of all children are victims of violence, yet unfortunately this issue remains a hidden global epidemic.

Increasingly much of this sexual abuse takes place online or is captured and digitally distributed. In this case, the internet is an enabler of abuse and exploitation.

\*World Health Organization (WHO)

## FORMS OF CHILD MALTREATMENT:\*

- **PHYSICAL ABUSE**
- **SEXUAL ABUSE**
- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**
- **NEGLECT**

\*<http://apps.who.int/violence-info/child-maltreatment>

## COMMITMENTS

We will advocate and assist in setting the right policy, strategy, operations, technology solutions and implementation conditions to ensure child online safety. We want to build on the power of digital technologies and leverage on innovative enablers to improve children's online experience: what they are exposed to online; who accesses their information; and how online experience can be made more meaningful for children and their caregivers.

We recognize that successfully implementing any given strategy requires collaboration and cooperation among different actors. A measurable multi-stakeholder engagement is a function of multiple factors and one-size-fits-all approach will not work.

Part of the purpose of this Declaration is to trigger a cultural change and shift in mindsets within a clear legal framework, necessary for addressing child online protection among all the stakeholders from the public and private sectors.

## WAYS OF WORKING

In being able to deliver on the above commitment, the Broadband Commission Working Group and the network of NGOs leading on online child protection like WePROTECT Global Alliance, Child Dignity Alliance, End Violence Global Partnership and others may help support all signatories of this Declaration to monitor progress alongside the Broadband Commission, the government bodies, the private sector, and other stakeholders. All stakeholders should promote the multi-stakeholder approach set out in this Declaration, the ITU COP Guidelines and the Working Group Report.

## PURPOSE OF THIS DECLARATION

This Child Online Safety Universal Declaration is intended to affirm our collective commitment to protect children as they access the Internet, and to work together to ensure that we exercise our responsibility of educating children across all tiers and lifestyles for the digital future ahead of them.

To achieve our goal we should:

### PROACTIVELY

Utilize available and develop new innovative technologies to block child sexual abuse material and prevent networks and services, as well as the internal IT environment from being used by offenders to commit violations against children.

### DESIGN

Age-appropriate digital services that best meet the needs of children while equipping them to protect themselves online.

### WORK

Collectively, across policy, regulatory, the private sector, law enforcement, and national security circles to minimize the risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation of children online.

### PROTECT

Children's privacy, security and safety.

### CHALLENGE

Existing policies, approaches, mindsets, technology tools, and any medium that knowingly or unknowingly hinder the cause of protecting children, building upon internationally recognized legal recommendations.

**THE BROADBAND COMMISSION INVITES ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR ENTITIES, AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS TO SIGN THIS DECLARATION AND DEMONSTRATE THEIR COMMITMENT TO COLLABORATE IN THEIR ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN CAN BE SAFER ONLINE.**

## DECLARATION

Each signatory, based on their respective role and mandate, commits to:

### ENGAGE

Engage the private and public sector entities, academic institutions, civil society, and subject matter experts, as partners in stimulating child online safety that is appropriate for the local context.

### INVESTIGATE

Investigate and arrive at cooperative modes of engagement which are relevant to specific contextual factors affecting child rights. These include awareness campaigns against child labor or child trafficking or other known issues that catalyze exploitation of, or violence against, children.

### PROMOTE

Ensure that we actively promote child online safety, in order to accelerate policy changes and prioritization across public and private sectors. This will demonstrate the priority that private sector is giving to protecting children and supporting their parents, family and caregivers through the duty they face in today's digitally complex society.

### PROACTIVELY UTILIZE

Utilize new innovative technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, data analytics tools and data motifs to prevent networks and services, as well as the internal IT environment from being used by adults and children to collect and distribute child sexual abuse material or commit other violations against children.

### TACKLE

Tackle child online safety with our ability and resourcefulness and exert ourselves to unify stances on the need to ensure a safe online environment for children and to block the proliferation of child abuse content over the Internet, as an integral part of the public good.

In addition to these five core commitments, each signatory will:

- Support child-friendly digital services, and cybersecurity measures to protect systems and platforms used by children.
- Utilize tools and platforms available to ensure that digital innovations support public good.
- Take leadership and proactively promote the cause of child online safety, through innovative approaches for a healthier digital future of society and sanctions to offenders.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders across sectors and industry segments and foster knowledge as well as expertise on addressing the child online safety.
- Support educational campaigns and school courses to train children for online safety.
- Make measurable progress toward the establishment and strengthening of hotlines and helplines to make sure that all children have access to help when they need it (as a victim or with a sexual problem behaviour).

In agreement with this Declaration, after having considered the scope of work, principles, and commitments, based on their organization's role and mandate, the following representatives have affirmed their respective entity's commitment to the cause of child online safety and joined the movement:

NAME:

DESIGNATION:

ENTITY:

PLACE:

DATE: