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Pa Family Support Alliance Launches FREE Family Digital Wellness Hub

The organization will provide a FREE repository of educational resources and guides for families, caregivers, and communities, so they can prevent children from being harmed in virtual environments

Harrisburg, Pa.— Today, [Pa Family Support Alliance \(PFSA\)](#), the state's leader in child abuse prevention launched its Family Digital Wellness Hub, an effort designed to provide parents, caregivers, and communities with the tools and resources they need to keep Pennsylvania's children safe. With schools across the Commonwealth adjourning for summer recess, PFSA is urging parents and caregivers to be proactive and get educated on the dangers that social media and digital devices can pose to their children, given that usage will only increase now that many will have unlimited free time.

A Psychology of Popular Media [survey](#) found nearly 20 percent of parents reported starting a social media account for their child during the 2020 summer months, with TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram being the accounts they created the most.

"We have reached a time when parents and professionals can no longer just focus on limiting screen time or taking the device away in order to keep children safe—that is an outdated scenario," said Angela M. Liddle, President and CEO of PFSA. "Because of the nature of these platforms, how rapidly technology changes, and how adept child predators have become, we need to equip families and communities with the tools and resources they need to manage their children's usage. Digital safety is no longer enough, we must prioritize their digital wellness."

The foundation of our society and economy is now grounded in the digital world, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only accelerated this trend. A March 2022 [survey](#) released by Common Sense Media, found that children and teens are spending more time than ever before on digital devices. This survey found children ages 8 to 12 spend on average five hours and 33 minutes on screens, and teens ages 13 to 18 spend eight and a half hours on screens per day.

Additionally, from 2018 to 2020, the threat of [cybercrime reports](#) involving children more than doubled across the U.S. according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In 2018, the FBI received 1,394 reports of online crimes against children and in 2020 it jumped to 3,202.

The use of screen time, social media, and digital devices among children should alarm all of us, given the increasing threats and dangers they are faced with when interacting in a virtual environment. That is why PFSA designed its Family Digital Wellness Hub, a free resource that provides educational information for parents, caregivers, and communities to help them foster a safe and healthy relationship between their children and digital technologies.

As part of the organization's Hub, PFSA is providing a **FREE** practical guide for parents, caregivers, and communities that contains easily digestible information on social media, digital use, and how to prevent children from being harmed in virtual environments. The guide also includes a detailed FAQ section, tips,

interactive quizzes, fact sheets, and action steps that can be tailored by families, as they become more proactive in reducing digital threats and preventing the potential abuse of children.

Finally, PFSA recommends that parents, caregivers, and communities focus on being digitally diligent and adhere to the 5 P's:

- **Pause** to become aware of the current digital dangers that threaten children and families;
- **Prioritize** your family's most urgent needs related to digital threats and safety;
- **Protect** against current digital threats to your family by implementing a family digital safety plan;
- **Prevent** the risk and harm of future digital threats to your family by practicing digital safety routinely; and
- **Practice** healthy interactions with digital technologies through transparent behavior and role modeling.

PFSA's Family Digital Wellness Hub will be regularly updated with free resources and materials, so parents, caregivers, and communities can have access to the latest information and safety tips.

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About Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance

[Pa Family Support Alliance](https://www.pafsa.org) prevents child abuse and protects children from harm by helping parents learn positive parenting techniques, educating professionals and volunteers who work with children to recognize and report child abuse, and helping community members learn how they can play a positive role in keeping children safe. To learn more about our programs, schedule a training, or donate, please visit [pafsa.org](https://www.pafsa.org), or call 800-448-4906.