

Bill #3
The Child-Friendly Operating Systems Act
Moved by: Minister of Human Resources

WHEREAS The use of mobile devices and the internet by children has increased rapidly in the past decade;¹ and

WHEREAS; 80% of children in 25 countries report feeling in danger of sexual abuse or exploitation online;² and

WHEREAS 96% of Canadians agree parents are responsible for teaching their children smart cellphone habits.³

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Youth Parliament of Manitoba, enacts as follows:

Purpose

1 The purpose of this Act is to

- (a) establish **PACT** with the mandate set out in section 4;
- (b) mandate all phone companies including popular manufacturers of devices like iPhones (iOS), Android-based smartphones and Blackberry phones to provide a child-friendly version of their operating system;
- (c) ensure that the Child-Friendly Operating Systems can be installed on any iPhone, Android-based smartphones or Blackberry phones produced in the last five years and all upcoming releases;
- (d) certify that parents and/or guardians of children aged 13 and under are required to enable the Child-Friendly Operating System on their devices;
- (e) penalize parents, guardians or phone manufacturers who do not comply with the mandate set out in section 4.

¹ Nguyen, Toan, Aditi Roy, and Nasir Memon. “Kid on the Phone! Toward Automatic Detection of Children on Mobile Devices.” Essay. In *Computers & Security* 84, 84:334–38. New York, New York: New York University, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cose.2019.04.001>.

² United Nations. “Child and Youth Safety Online”.

³ Casaletto, Lucas. “Majority of Ontario Parents Say Kids Should Have a Cell Phone by Age 13.” CityNews Toronto, August 11, 2021. <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2021/08/11/ontario-survey-cell-phone-children/>.

Definitions

2 The following definitions apply in this Act.

- (a) **Operating System (OS):** the software program after being initially downloaded into a device that manages all of the other applications in the device.
- (b) **Child-friendly:** content suitable for younger users.
- (c) **Age-appropriate:** content suitable for people of a particular age, specifically younger users.
- (d) **Adult:** A person 18 years and older.
- (e) **Parent portal:** The online system that allows parents to manage their children's online activities.

Establishing PACT

3 The Protecting All Children's Technology agency [**PACT**] is hereby established.

Mandate and powers of PACT

4 The mandate of **PACT** is to:

- (a) confirm that all Canadian phone companies and manufacturers introduce a child-friendly version of their operating system and create a "Parent Portal" accessible via their websites set out in section 8;
- (b) establish a strong alliance with schools and childcare providers to ensure weekly monitoring procedures are conducted and all violations or issues are immediately reported;
- (c) provide a 24/7 service to all adults who phone for technical support and/or general inquiries;
- (d) grant incentives to all phone companies who abide this act set out in section 10;
- (e) penalize parents, guardians or phone manufacturers set out in section 11.

5 The **PACT** agency will include:

- (a) Social Workers.
- (b) Information Technology Professionals.
- (c) Call Centre Representatives.

6 Features of the Child-Friendly Operating System

- (a) Upon turning on the device, children are prompted to select their profile to use their account.
- (b) Children will have limited access to apps, as the OS comes with pre-downloaded apps including but not limited to:
 - (i) Age-appropriate games.
 - (ii) School-related apps.
 - (iii) Creativity apps.

- (iv) A music access app that streams non-explicit songs.
- (c) Children will not be able to access the App/Play store, therefore children cannot download other apps including but not limited to:
 - (i) Games.
 - (ii) Social media.
 - (iii) Dating apps.
- (d) Parents can control and monitor their children's screen time and phone activity via their Parent Portal set out in section 8.

7 Child-appropriate Safety Guidelines

- (a) Apps should not include offensive and insensitive content for younger users including but not limited to:
 - (i) Discrimination against a race, religion, sexual orientation or other targeted groups.
 - (ii) Realistic portraits of people or animals being tortured, abused or killed.
 - (iii) Content that encourages violent and illegal weapons or dangerous firearms.
 - (iv) Any sexual or pornographic content.
- (b) Apps cannot include third-party analytics or third-party advertising,
 - (i) To ensure no personal data is collected.
- (c) Apps must not require a child's personal information including name & address,
 - (i) With the exception of a full birthdate or age, for the sole purpose of verifying the user's age.
- (d) Apps are obligated to have simple, concise and easy to read instructions that include pictures and symbols.

8 Accessing the Parent Portal

- (a) Apple, Android and Blackberry are obligated to create a "Parent Portal" accessible via their websites.
- (b) Parents and/or guardians must create a Parent Portal account to enable the child-friendly operating system on their child's smartphone device.
- (c) Each Parent Portal account can control up to five child accounts.
- (d) Through their Parent Portal, parents and/or guardians can manage their child's phone activity including but not limited to:
 - (i) Text messages.
 - (ii) Contacts.
 - (iii) Phone Calls.
 - (iv) Mobile Applications.

9 Activation and Transition Period

- (a) To enable the Child-Friendly Operating System, parents must log into their Parent Portal account and select their child's iPhone (iOS), Android device or Blackberry phone.
- (b) Once activated, there is a mandatory transition period of 6 months during which the Child-Friendly OS cannot be switched back to the regular version and vice versa.
- (c) When more than one child is using the same device, there is a mandatory prompt to select each child's account before utilizing it.

10 Ongoing Updates and Company Incentives

- (a) Apple (iOS), Android phone manufacturers and Blackberry are expected to provide regular updates and support for the Child-Friendly Operating Systems to ensure continued online safety and functionality.
- (b) Phone Companies who comply this Act will receive the following incentives:
 - (i) Compliant companies will be given priority in government contracts related to technology and education.
 - (ii) Compliance will be publicly recognized through an award and certification.

11 Penalties and Fines

- (a) 1st strike: A reminder to comply with the Act will be communicated either through a verbal warning during a phone call or a written warning sent by mail.
- (b) 2nd strike: \$600 CAD fine, notified through a written letter.
 - (i) Parents/guardians have 15 days to settle the fine.
 - (ii) Late payments attract an additional charge of \$5 per day.
- (c) 3rd strike: A third violation requires parents/guardians to complete 2 months of community service, as assigned by **PACT**.
 - (i) Failure to complete the community service results in a \$1,200 CAD fine
 - (ii) Parents/guardians have 25 days for payment.
 - (iii) Late payments incur an extra \$10 per day.
- (d) Phone companies who fail to comply with this Act will not receive the incentives listed on Section 10 for one year, after which they will be reevaluated.
- (e) Non-compliance will lead to monetary fines, escalating with subsequent violations.
- (f) Persistent non-compliance may result in restrictions on selling their products within Canada.