

KENYA

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



CTRL + SPEAK



A Human Rights Magazine for Human Rights-Friendly Schools

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Introduction:

“Human rights are not things that are put on the table for people to enjoy. These are things you fight for and then you protect.”- Wangari Mathai.

CTRL+Speak is an output of the Technology and Human Rights team at Amnesty International Kenya. It is a magazine designed to empower children and young people to speak about human rights in the digital space- Why they matter and why everyone should care about human rights. We believe in youth-led collective power and action that challenge existing inequalities and strengthen our common human need for safeguarding human rights even in the digital space.

Why are Human Rights important?

Going to school, finding a decent job, voting in elections: these are all examples of human rights in everyday life. Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings. They are universal and are inherent to us all, regardless of age, nationality, gender, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, disability, or any other status. Human rights range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to education, work, and food. Human rights reflect the minimum standards necessary for people to live with dignity. Human rights give people the freedom to choose how they live, how they express themselves, and what kind of government they want to support, among many other things. Human rights also guarantee people the means necessary to satisfy their basic needs, such as food, housing, and education, so they can take full advantage of all opportunities. Finally, by guaranteeing life, liberty, equality, and security, human rights protect people against abuse by those who are more powerful.

We hope that through this magazine, you will get to read, enjoy and reflect upon inspiring stories of Digital Rights champions, youth activists, students and other digital rights advocates through these pages! May they inspire you to know, own your digital rights and fiercely safeguard them.

Foreword by Victor Ndede- Technology & Human Rights Manager, Amnesty Kenya



In today's digital age, children are exposed to an overwhelming amount of data and technology from a very young age—72 million pieces of data are collected for each child before they even turn 13. This digital world, while offering endless possibilities, is also rife with risks: from cyberstalking and online harassment to exposure to harmful content. The need for concerted, multistakeholder efforts to reshape the narrative is more urgent than ever. At Amnesty International, we envision a future where online platforms and digital technologies are not just tools for connectivity but safe, supportive spaces where children and young people can thrive, enjoy their health and well-being, and fully realize their human rights.

This is why we are proud to introduce CTRL + Speak, a new magazine designed to give children and young people a platform to assert their rights in the digital world. In these pages, they will find space to voice their concerns about the impact of technology on their lives and share their ideas on how digital spaces can be reshaped to respect human rights.

The voices of young people are critical in holding technology companies accountable and in urging governments to ensure the protection of children's rights in the digital realm. As we launch this magazine on International Children's Day, we invite you to engage with the powerful essays and reflections shared by students from our Human Rights Friendly Schools—each offering their unique perspectives on the intersection of technology and human rights.

DIGITAL RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!



Imagine the internet as a giant public square. Here, technology can be a bullhorn for your rights. It lets you speak up, learn about your rights, and connect with others who care about the same things. This applies to all kinds of rights, from free speech to education. But that same square can be misused too. Bullies can spread lies, and powerful people can shut down conversations. This can especially hurt people who are already treated unfairly. The key is to make sure this online space is a fair and open place for everyone. As our world unfolds increasingly in the digital space, the need for our rights to be respected both online and offline becomes even greater, which is why all of us should be Digital Rights advocates.

So What are Digital Rights?

Digital Rights are Human Rights that allow people to use the internet safely and without any interference or challenges. They include the right to access information, the freedom of expression, and the right to privacy, as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya. Digital rights are important because the internet is more important to our daily lives and as young people who use the internet on an almost-daily basis, we must understand what rights we have, to be protected.

How do we do this?



So, the internet is this powerful tool, but how do you use it for good as a high school student? Let's say you and your friends are being cyberbullied, and this has taken a toll on your mental health. You could use social media to start a campaign! You could create a catchy hashtag and share interesting articles about why online harassment is bad and how, as a young person, you can report the abuse. Before you know it, you might have the local radio station highlighting your campaign and more people rallying behind you!

This is just one example. Advocacy can be about anything you care about. Advocacy is about using your voice, online and off, to make the world a little better for yourself and the people you care about. A Human Rights Based Approach to online safety is like making sure everyone has fun and feels secure. Here's how it works:

1. **Figure out what's missing:** Maybe someone keeps spreading rumors about you online or has been harassing you. These are the "shortfalls" that prevent you from enjoying your digital rights safely.
2. **Who can help?** Perhaps social media platforms need better reporting systems for bullying. These are the people whose actions (or lack thereof) affect your online safety.
3. **Speak Up!** You have the right to feel safe online, and your voice matters! Talk to your friends about online safety, and if you see something wrong, report it.
4. **Team Up!** Just like fighting cyberbullies, online safety is a team effort. Talk to classmates about healthy online habits, and get your teachers involved to spread awareness.
5. **Learn & Lead!** Knowing your digital rights, like privacy or protection from cyberbullying, is your superpower! Research online safety tips and share them with others.

This approach is all about making the online world a fair and safe space for everyone. It's about YOU having a say and working together to make the internet a playground everyone enjoys!

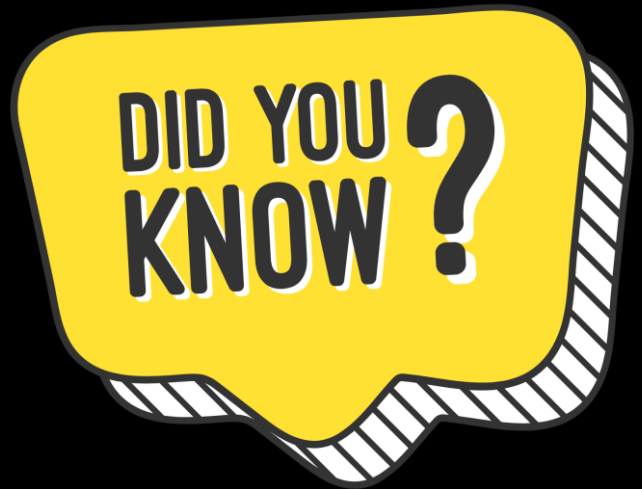
What happens if I face barriers or obstacles in exercising my human rights?

Young people often face barriers or obstacles in exercising their human rights because of their age. However, age is one characteristic that can intersect with, add to and multiply discrimination based on other grounds.

Advocating for Human Rights in the digital space:

Before you jump in and fight for what's right online, here are one quick thing to consider:

Is it an emergency? If someone is threatening you online or you feel unsafe, don't hesitate to reach out for help! Talk to a teacher, parent, or even the police. There are also organizations that specialize in protecting children and young people online. Remember, there are tools you can use to stay safe online, so do some research and learn how to protect yourself!



- ✦ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the most translated document in the world.
- ✦ While the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948, the concept of human rights is much older. Cyrus the Great, who ruled Persia from 559 to 530 BCE, is considered by some to be the first person to establish human rights.
- ✦ The United Nations declared internet access a basic human right in 2011.
- ✦ It's a Two-Way Street: Rights and Responsibilities Human rights are awesome, but there's another side to the coin: responsibility! While we all have rights, we also have a responsibility to respect the rights of others. This means using your freedom of speech in a way that doesn't infringe on someone else's right to privacy or enjoying your right to peaceful assembly without disrupting someone else's right to work. By understanding both rights and responsibilities, we can create a more just and equitable world for everyone.

Our Call after the Youth Summit on Digital Rights: William and Janet's Perspectives from Buenos Aires, Argentina



In April this year, Amnesty International held its first Global Youth Summit on Digital Rights in Buenos Aires, Argentina that brought together child and youth human rights activists and their allies to envision a world that respects the digital rights, health and well-being of children and young people.

The purpose of the Summit was to:

- 💡 Build a Global Community committed to advancing the rights of children and young people in the digital world.
- 💡 Harness the reach and power of the internet to ensure voices of children and young people are heard and respected.
- 💡 Call on governments to guarantee a safe, rights-respecting digital environment and ensure equal access to the internet, recognizing the diversity of the world's child and youth population.
- 💡 Recognize the role children and young people play in finding solutions to the problems facing the world, such as climate justice, racial justice, ending gun violence, sexual and reproductive health rights, and now the fight for a rights-respecting digital world.

We had the privilege of having 2 Digital Rights Champions from Kenya and A Human Rights Club Patron, alongside Amnesty Kenya staff, attend that attended this summit and document their perspectives. Below are the perspectives of Celine, William, and Janet on this summit:

Janet- Human Rights Club Patron, Kabianga School



I expected to interact with digital rights champions from all over the world and get to hear their side of the story matters digital rights. I was so keen on "Uplifting Power Online" which showed youth's actions in the online spaces that contribute to change and a rights respected internet. I particularly participated in two sessions: Our health and rights in the digital age and data protection and digital security in the digital age.

Further, I met inspiring people. The team of digital rights champions across the globe with interest and expertise in digital rights. I also met Ursula Jasper from Fondation Botnar and had conversations with her, regarding the human rights I have been doing at Kabianga school and acknowledged Williams's participation in the summit.

What surprised me was the fact that on the first day of the summit, the room was filled with young people ready to learn and share ideas on matters of digital rights. That proved how determined the young people were. The only challenge faced was the culture shock in terms of their cuisine but I eventually adjusted. The summit enlarged my perspective on digital rights in the sense that I was able to learn about tackling climate disinformation, interacting with young protestors, cyberfeminism, intelligent activism (AI), and more. I was able to dream by having fun, strengthening my bond with other digital activists, and finally exploring how I could transform the digital world I am in. Finally, I participated in a session on our health and rights in the digital age. I got equipped with skills in verifying health data, finding accurate sources online, and knowing that my health data is vulnerable too. I plan to promote digital rights in Kenya by discussing the current state of social media with my students and other young people and getting strategies that can help them use social media to their advantage. I would also wish to build a community for digital rights which covers all human rights-friendly schools in Kenya, not forgetting the promotion of inclusive activism which covers all communities beyond. Young people in Kenya can fight for digital rights by being equipped with specific governance acts that will help them in community building and advocacy for digital rights and being in a

position to spread their voices about digital rights.

As I end ...I loved the quote "today's youth, today's leaders!"

William- Student, Kabianga School, and Digital Rights Champion:

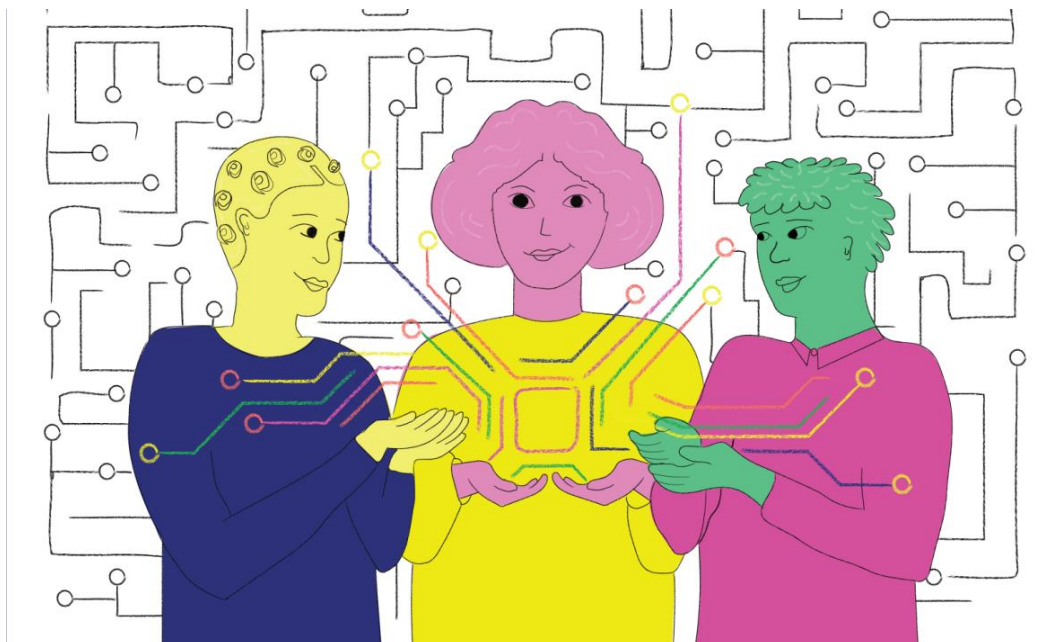


I expected it to be an opportunity for activists of digital rights from different fields to come together and share ideas and borrow inspiration on how to improve our own local activism. I also expected that being a Global Youth summit, the youth would have a prominent place in promoting digital rights and taking the lead in global affairs. I took a particular interest in our health and rights in the digital age. Even as we continue to advance the digital rights agenda, we should also pause to consider the effect it has on our mental health and cohesion as a society. I also participated in a session focusing

on Youths as leaders in our Society. I liked the session because it highlighted that even though we are young, we can still hold positions in society.

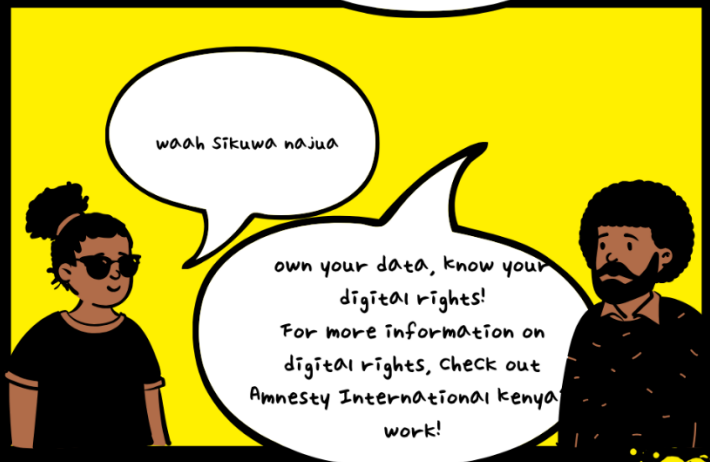
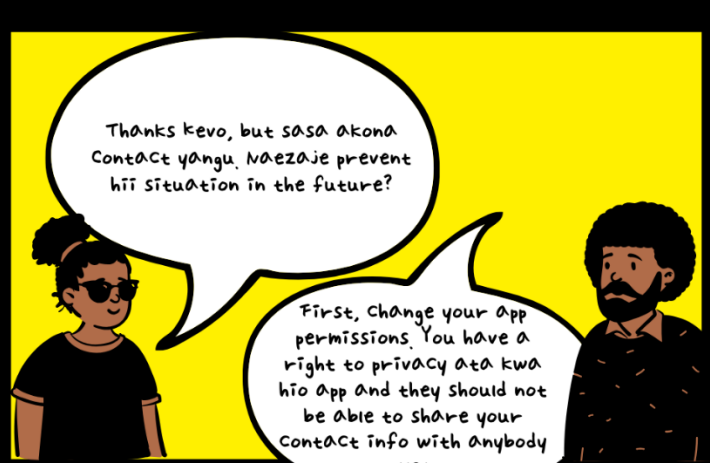
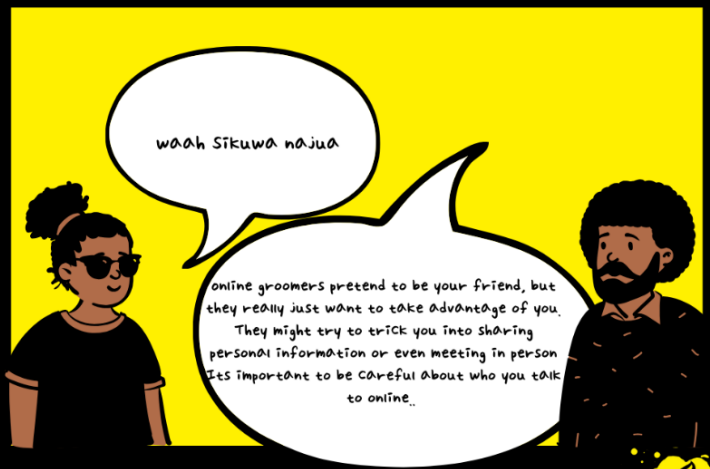
I remember meeting Bie, a fellow digital rights champion from Thailand who was highlighting the right of children to peaceful assembly. In her activism, she was accused of "lese majesty," the crime of speaking ill of the monarch and government of Thailand, but despite this, she continued to provide a voice against an oppressive regime.

I thought the summit was going to be attended by Amnesty International Staff only but I was pleasantly surprised to meet a large crowd of partner organizations who were committed to campaigning for digital rights. This summit helped me to understand that digital rights are also fundamental rights, just like the right to education, water, food, or any other right, and therefore, they ought not to be disregarded by popular governments or trivialized as something that can be withdrawn. I came to learn that activism, unlike humanitarian aid, should have elements of practicality. The best way to ensure progress in activism is to educate the people on their rights and empower them to defend these rights. Lastly, young people from the Global Majority must be digital rights activists. The best way to involve young people would be to enable them to participate in spaces where policies that could have implications on our digital rights are made.



MBOGI YETU

A Comic by Amnesty International Kenya



Safer Internet Day Essay Competition: Reimagining a Safer Digital World for Children and Young People



In an era where digital connectivity prevails, children's rights extend beyond physical spaces to encompass the digital realm. As they navigate online platforms for education, communication, and entertainment, their digital rights, including privacy, are increasingly under threat. From data breaches to surveillance to cyberbullying, online grooming, and exposure to inappropriate content, the challenges to protecting children's digital privacy are numerous and complex.

What is Safer Internet Day?

Safer Internet Day, an annual celebration, dedicates itself to ensuring a secure and enhanced online experience, particularly for children and young people. The Safer Internet Day slogan, "Together for a Better Internet," encourages widespread participation to harness the Internet's potential for fostering unity and connection. On Safer Internet Day in February this year, Amnesty Kenya invited young people in high schools to explore these challenges and envision solutions under the theme, "Reimagining a Safer Digital World for Children." Participants were encouraged to explore the multifaceted dimensions of digital rights violations, their impact on victims, and potential solutions to mitigate their prevalence. Essays delved into

personal experiences, societal implications, and the role of legislation in combating these violations. We believe that young people, as digital natives, hold a unique perspective on the issues that affect them most in the digital world. Their insights and experiences are crucial for shaping a safer and more equitable online experience for all children.

This year, we received over 200 essays from 22 schools! Each essay was brilliant, with deep insights on how to make the internet a safer place for everyone. Needless to say, we are truly grateful to the students who took their time to write these essays and to the patrons for guiding your students till submission. During the evaluation, essays were assessed based on various criteria, such as clarity, originality, argumentation, and adherence to the questions set. Once the essays were submitted, school patrons evaluated them in the initial round, followed by submission to a regional panel for further assessment. Subsequently, the essays progressing to the final stage underwent review by both Amnesty International Kenya's staff and qualified human rights experts to select the winning pieces. As we completed the year's second quarter, Amnesty International Kenya held the second annual Digital Rights Festival at Kisumu Day Secondary School. Speaking to over 500 high school students present, Section Director Irungu Houghton reiterated Amnesty Kenya's commitment to ensuring that more young people add their voices to the human rights movement and safeguarding digital rights for all. Special congratulations to Dorcas Nyamwaya of Sironga Girls High School and Dekel Baraka Okelo of Gendia High School, who emerged as the Essay Competition winners! As promised, in the next few pages, you'll get to read the 3 most outstanding essays that our judge bench came across!

Empowering Learners Through Human Rights Education: The Journey of Human Rights Friendly Schools in Kenya



I'm Joshua Odhiambo Akumu, a teacher by profession and a registered member of the Amnesty movement since 2016, and the patron of the Amnesty Club at St. Gregory Koru Girls in Kisumu County. I also serve as the National Coordinator of Human Rights Friendly Schools (HRFS), which is operational in several counties across Kenya, including Kisumu, Nairobi, Kisii, Nyamira, Homabay, Kericho, Kirinyaga, Kitui, and Siaya. Human Rights Friendly Schools (HRFS) are educational institutions (both junior and senior schools) that are part of a human rights network, supported by Amnesty International Kenya. Within this network, students are educated on human rights and freedoms.

Our mission at HRFS is to foster respect for human rights and integrity. We are working towards creating peaceful coexistence in schools, society, our nation, and beyond. Our goal is to succeed in human rights advocacy at the school level and expand these efforts further.

Human rights activities in our schools are facilitated through the formation of Amnesty Clubs, where students discuss human rights issues with the support of Amnesty Kenya's 'Do It Yourself Toolkit.' Students also gain practical knowledge through inter-school visits, organized

during the first and second terms of the school year. During these visits, learners from the HRFS network come together to discuss human rights themes, often derived from common challenges schools are facing. This initiative is made possible with the support of Amnesty Kenya.

Additionally, Amnesty Kenya organizes annual essay competitions for schools within the HRFS network. Through these competitions, students are not only given the chance to compete but are also enlightened on digital rights issues, which has proven highly effective.

Beyond formal education, students develop an understanding of human rights by observing violations in their surroundings, within their communities, and in their family settings.

In conclusion, we look forward to expanding the Human Rights Friendly Schools initiative to more schools across the country and reaching more learners. On behalf of the HRFS patrons across Kenya, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Amnesty Kenya for partnering with us to promote safe and conducive spaces for learners to engage with human rights issues.



**THANK YOU TO THE 23 SCHOOLS THAT JOINED THE SAFER INTERNET ESSAY
COMPETITION!**

- ✊ Kisumu Day High School
- ✊ Sironga Girls High School
- ✊ Kisii School
- ✊ St. Peters Suneka Girls
- ✊ Bishop Okumu Magare
Girls Secondary School
- ✊ Sinyolo Girls
- ✊ Gendia High School
- ✊ Lake JSS-Grade 8
- ✊ Lions High School
- ✊ Mawego Girls Secondary
School
- ✊ Alara Girls Secondary
School
- ✊ Geta Junior Secondary
school
- ✊ Rwambiti Secondary
School
- ✊ God Ber Secondary
School
- ✊ Kabianga High School
- ✊ St. Gregory Koru Girls
- ✊ Danis Obara Secondary
School
- ✊ Homabay High School
- ✊ Kericho High School
- ✊ Nyaura Secondary
- ✊ Oridi Girls School

- ✊ Ober School
- ✊ Kaplong Girls School

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE
FINAL JUDGE PANEL:**

Lillian Kariuki- Executive
Director, Watoto Watch
Network **Chief Judge**

Illan Acher- Human Rights
Education Manager-
Amnesty International,
Switzerland

Celine Chiveli- Digital
Rights Champion, Amnesty
International

James Kimila- Human
Rights Education &
Activism, Amnesty Kenya

Sharlene Muthuri-
Technology and Human
Rights program, Amnesty
Kenya

And all the Human Rights
Club Patrons that aided in
the assessment process!

SAY CHEESE! 📷

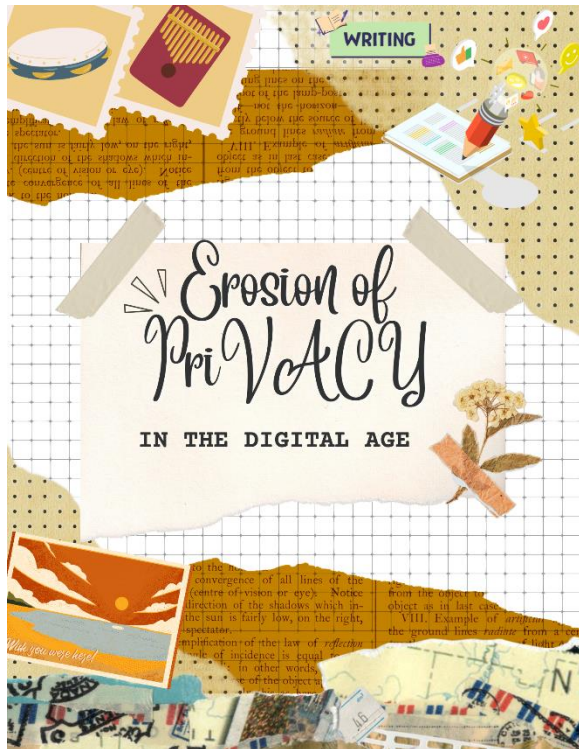




**Championing Digital Rights: Must-
Read Essays on
Human Rights in
the Digital Age**

The Erosion of Privacy in the Digital Age: A Child's Perspective-

Dorcas Nyamwaya, Sironga Girls High School



Before the advent of the internet, when society operated in an analogue world, privacy was largely protected. The people who could access your personal information were few, often limited to those in your immediate circle. However, as we entered the new millennium and technology became a central part of life, the reach of private information expanded dramatically. Consequently, the right to privacy has been breached from all directions—right, left, and centre.

I don't entirely blame my parents, but why were they so eager to share details about me even before I was born? In Kenya today, a child's existence can be predicted even before birth through technological imaging and scans. Yes, my right to

privacy was violated by my excited, well-meaning, but technology-naïve parents. They posted about me on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, sharing my information with the world. My unborn self made rounds on social media. My millennial parents invited friends, relatives, and even acquaintances to celebrate a life yet to come. Oh yes, they sang, "karibu ntobwate baby shower." Aki, mum!

When I was born, dad stood beside mum in the delivery room and recorded a video of my arrival. Why did my parents do that? Perhaps it was due to a lack of awareness. My photos went viral, shared by friends and family without my consent.

As I grew older and reached school age, my parents took me to kindergarten. They took pictures of me at the school gate and announced it to the world on social media. Now, you who are reading this—don't you think that if I were to be kidnapped, my parents would have given the kidnappers the information they needed? Social media has both good and bad people, and by sharing my every milestone, my parents may have violated my right to privacy.

Apparently, my parents didn't stop there. They continued to post photos and videos of me step-by-step on Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp—without considering the consequences.

Now that I'm older, I have access to the internet using my parents' phones. I can see all the comments their friends and even strangers left on my photos. I feel sorry for myself. There's one comment I'll never forget: "kabumbum." To this day, I still don't understand its meaning, along with many other similar comments. I also witness myself being bullied on social media through my mum's Facebook account. This experience has left a lasting impact on me.

By the time I reached Class Eight, my mum decided to open Instagram and Facebook accounts for me. She even bought me a phone, giving me free access to the internet without having to ask for hers. (Dad would never give me his phone.) I felt isolated at

home because everyone around me was glued to their screens. As a teenager, I didn't receive the parental guidance, closeness, or warmth I needed. I learned most of life's lessons online—from menstruation to friendships, and even about self-gratification. In fact, "dunia inanifundisha"—the world is teaching me.

Occasionally, I use my phone for schoolwork, but I genuinely believe my parents should be present when I'm online to guide me on proper digital etiquette. I'm scared to admit this, but I have no choice. One day, I received a friend request from one of my dad's acquaintances on Facebook. He wasn't too old, but he wasn't young either. He started flirting with me on Facebook and asked for my phone number. Since he was a friend of my dad's, I gave it to him freely. He then sent me photos of myself from a family friend's wedding, which he had attended. That's how I got entangled in a romantic relationship, sharing inappropriate content and even receiving pornographic material. I feel trapped. Oh no, I need redemption. But why did my parents post my photos online without my consent? They sold my identity, and now I've become prey to predators.

I'm often recognized by strangers who call me by name as I walk down the street. At my age, I need someone close to me—someone who can listen, guide, and correct me when I make mistakes. But no one is there. My parents, especially my mum, are too busy with their careers to engage with me, even when I'm home on holiday.

If this essay gets published, mum—I dedicate it to you. Please read it carefully and understand that I'm deeply depressed. I've been taking tablets that a friend I met online introduced me to. My online friends and I meet at a local club when you're away on business. Yes, we engage in the unthinkable and the unimaginable. Mum, it's social media. You introduced me to it. You were even referred to as *mama (my name)*—why not by your official name? You didn't respect my right to privacy. I'm sorry, but I'm ready and willing to change.

In conclusion, I urge the government to implement digital surveillance mechanisms to ensure that

children's content is not shared carelessly on social media—unless, of course, the child is a public figure like a celebrity or actor. Parents must be educated about the dangers of oversharing children's information online. Digital platforms should also restrict access to sensitive sites for children. Furthermore, human rights clubs in Kenyan schools should be empowered to extend their reach beyond school grounds to educate the public on privacy rights and human rights in general.

Re-Imagining A Safer Digital World for Children

By Dekel Baraka Okello, Gendia High School



Introduction

Reimagining means forming new ideas about how something should be. This essay explores how we can rethink and redesign online spaces to make them safer for younger generations—a digital world free from violations of their rights. It has become increasingly disturbing for young people when they realize that their rights are being infringed upon in these spaces. I urge my fellow teenagers and young people to stand firm in awakening the world—our continent, countries, communities, and society—to the dangers and challenges we face in the digital realm. These challenges are numerous and pressing. While the digital world offers new opportunities for children to exercise their digital rights, it also exposes them to significant risks and violations. These include exposure to sexual and inappropriate content, promotion of suicide and self-harm, discrimination, racism, recruitment into

criminal networks, child trafficking, fraud, hate speech, harassment, and online sexual exploitation.

Online grooming, for example, occurs when an adult builds a friendship with a child with the intention of forming a sexual relationship. Teenagers are particularly vulnerable to predators as they browse various websites. Many have been "catfished" by these predators, leading to dangerous situations where they agree to meet in person at prearranged locations.

Teenagers have also been lured into purchasing harmful and illegal products, such as shisha pens, vapes, and nicotine patches (like Velo). Social media has become the main marketplace for these goods, and the youth are the primary targets. With no real restrictions in place, teens can easily use their pocket money from family or friends to buy whatever they want. These violations, among others, have become overwhelming and difficult to control, despite ongoing efforts to address them.

In Kenya, monitoring children's privacy on digital platforms has proven to be challenging, especially with the growing population. Many parents treat exposing their children on social media as routine. For instance, parents often record and post daily family activities on different platforms. This opens the door for predators to track their children, and before long, some children go missing after being lured away. Such exposure erodes our privacy and contributes to the threat of kidnapping. Whether aware or not, parents and guardians must understand that even small actions can have serious consequences.

There is an urgent need to enhance the safety of children on digital platforms. This requires state institutions and those involved in protecting digital rights to ensure that appropriate awareness and training initiatives are established to tackle these challenges. I believe that integrating children's online platforms with protections within the National Child Protection Policy is crucial to maintaining their privacy. This may involve using biometric analysis systems and aligning national legislation with international human rights standards. Furthermore, businesses and service

providers must meet their responsibilities by safeguarding children's digital privacy rights through preventive measures, supporting victims of online crimes, and seeking justice on their behalf.

The government, tech companies, educators, and we—the young people—each have a role to play in safeguarding child digital privacy rights. Key challenges must be addressed through every available means. This includes the Kenya Human Rights Commission and children's rights organizations taking strong action to combat all forms of online violence and crimes against children. Implementing terms of service that adhere to the highest standards of privacy and safety for children is essential. There should also be regular assessments of products and services, and age verification mechanisms should be a standard preventive measure. Service providers in the cyberspace must also develop technological solutions to prevent exploitation and abuse. They should work constructively to identify and implement effective detection, removal, and blocking measures swiftly.

Finally, finding solutions to safeguard children's digital privacy rights means involving children as part of the solution, since they are the most affected. We should be given opportunities to report violations and be heard. Challenges in seeking justice in the digital space often stem from a lack of legislation that imposes sanctions on child rights violations. The state must take the investigation of online crimes against children seriously and ensure remedies and holistic support for victims who have been denied human dignity in the online world.

Outstanding Essays from Homabay, Kisumu, Kisii and Rift Valley Regions

Kisumu Region:

David Calvins Owigo- Kisumu Day High School

Every step and action taken by or about a child, especially those concerning confidentiality and personal life, falls under the protection of their privacy. When unauthorized individuals take actions that infringe upon this, it presents serious challenges to the child's right to privacy. For instance, children's digital privacy is compromised both online and offline.

There are several instances where children's privacy is violated online. Take, for example, online surveillance, where government agencies monitor someone's entire online and computer activities. While surveillance can have its advantages, it often poses a threat to children's privacy both online and offline. This is especially true when it comes to personal data and information being exposed.

Additionally, the use of biometric data and the risks of online stalking, harassment, and exposure to inappropriate content further hinder children's digital privacy. These threats can transform a child's private behavior, potentially leading to harmful consequences.

One of the most effective ways to balance the need for security while protecting children's privacy rights is through education. Both formal and informal education should be used to teach children about their privacy rights and raise public awareness.

The most significant barrier to solving this issue is the lack of knowledge about the problem. Not all children are aware of their privacy rights. So how can they address challenges they don't even understand? In fact, many children do not even know what privacy rights are. This highlights the need for relevant authorities to mobilize education on children's digital privacy rights. Doing so can

pave the way for more effective solutions. Similarly, members of the public are often misinformed. While people tend to act based on what they believe is right, not all assumptions are correct. Relying on guesses can be dangerous. This is why authorities must educate the public on children's digital privacy rights to prevent confusion and missteps.

The government, tech companies, educators, and young people all have critical roles in safeguarding children's digital privacy rights. Together, they form the cornerstone of efforts to protect children in the digital world.

The government must mobilize state agencies to recognize and enforce the rights and freedoms of children. They should take proactive steps to prevent the exploitation of children's privacy rights and hold those who violate these rights accountable. Moreover, the government should strengthen laws that protect children's privacy rights within the constitution, creating a safer environment for children to thrive.

Tech companies play a vital role in monitoring the online space. They have the power to filter content, ensuring that children are not exposed to inappropriate material. These companies must also prevent online bullying by enforcing strict terms and conditions. Meanwhile, educators are responsible for imparting knowledge to both children and the public about digital privacy rights. As they say, if God is the best creator of minds, education is the best keeper of them.

Young people also have a significant role in protecting children's digital privacy. They should actively participate in seminars and conferences that promote awareness of children's privacy rights. This involvement makes them more knowledgeable, allowing them to recognize and report violations of these rights. By becoming more informed, young people help ease the process of protection and shield children from harm. After

all, information is power, and the more informed people are, the better.

Innovative solutions are needed to effectively safeguard children's privacy online. Stopping children from accessing the internet altogether would be problematic, but leaving them unchecked also poses risks. One potential solution is to develop privacy detectors for children's online privacy, alongside automatic internet sensors that flag inappropriate content.

Privacy detectors could identify attempts to hack into children's accounts or invade their privacy, sending signals to tech companies so they can take immediate action. For example, if someone sends an abusive message or inappropriate content to a child's platform, the system would alert the company to intervene. This technology would help ensure that children's privacy is respected and protected online.

Furthermore, automatic internet sensors could evaluate online posts to determine whether they are appropriate for children, adults, or general audiences. These sensors would relay information to tech companies through wireless communication systems such as Global System Mobile (GSM) or Long Range (LoRa) technology. By doing so, the system would not only protect children's privacy but also ensure they benefit from the internet while minimizing potential harm.

Children's digital privacy rights face challenges both online and offline. These challenges can be gradually overcome if education is prioritized, both for children and the public. The government, tech companies, educators, and young people all play crucial roles in protecting children's digital privacy. Innovative solutions will further enhance children's online experience, empowering them in the digital age. Remember, a child today is a parent tomorrow. By shaping a child now, we shape the future generation. What a remarkable responsibility that is.

Homabay Region:

Brenda Akinyi Otieno- Bishop Okumu Magare Secondary School

The internet is a forest of information and experiences. It is a world on its own. It can be a wonderful playing field full of fun for children. However, internet access also comes with its own set of challenges. With the rapid industrialization and growth in the digital space in Kenya and globally, children are able to access the internet through desktops, laptops, smart phones, smart TVs, etc. The digital age has significantly altered the way in which children exercise and realize their rights. Children can communicate, share, play and learn in previously unimaginable ways as a result of the increase in access to the internet and other digital technologies. Digital technology and connectivity are fundamentally becoming part of the day-to-day lives of children informing their interactions and education. This has generated both unprecedented opportunities and challenges. Some of the risks facing these young people include; child trafficking, prostitution, child pornography, early age exposure to alcohol and advertising, cyber bullying and crimes like identity theft etc. In this essay, I am going to explore some of the opportunities and challenges in the preservation of child rights and safety in the digital age through the data protection lens.

Children face various challenges in the digital space some of which are very severe. The social media stores massive personal data which are vulnerable to hacking and other forms of data breaches. Some of the challenges include; identity theft-where someone uses another's personal information like their name, picture or even videos downloaded online without their permission to commit fraud or other crimes. Recently there has been hacking of Facebook or WhatsApp accounts of unsuspecting individuals. The hackers then go ahead and fraudulently seek financial assistance from the contacts of the hacked account. This is demoralizing to the young people children included. Besides, it leads to reputational damage where

people may not trust you after the occurrence of that fraud using your personal information and even label you a con artist.

Tracking and surveillance is another challenge faced by children in the digital space. A child can unknowingly use a device when the location setting is on. A person with improper intentions can easily track the child using the location from where the device is being used. This can lead to child trafficking. The trafficked children have always faced unprecedented consequences some of which include child pornography, prostitution, forced labour and even early exposure to alcohol. All these lead to emotional damage in children as well as negative behavioral changes due to the stigma which comes about due to the fact that others know what happened.

In as much as social media platforms such as Facebook have put in place a number of privacy settings to control who one interacts with, who can see your posts like pictures and videos, who can send you a message among other settings, there are still privacy setting loopholes. For example, one can restrict who sees their posts in the platform but still your contacts in the platforms who can see the posts can still share your posts with their contacts. This means that the data can land into hands of individuals who can use the information for unintended purpose. This has led to cyberbullying and other related digital crimes which have a negative impact on children's digital experiences. Therefore, even with privacy settings in place, the social media accounts may not be as private as we may think and therefore should be navigated with utmost caution.

There is also personal space intrusion as one of the challenges faced by children in the digital space. A child's social media account can be hacked, and damaging content such pornographic sites and videos posted on their timelines. Also, false information which may be damaging to another person can be passed through the account after intrusion. This causes erosion of one's social ethics in the face of his/her contacts but in real sense it is not their making.

Technology advancement has also led to spying and snooping of high levels in the digital platforms. Hackers, have developed spying tools and viruses which they introduce into one's system and use for data mining among other malicious motives. Spam and misleading adverts can also be shared through these viruses. All these still work against a person's reputation which is soiled in the long run.

There is need to ensure safety and security with the protection of children's privacy rights as a result of these challenges faced by them in the digital space. Children spend reasonable time online a good percentage of which they do accessing inappropriate content such as pornography, sexting and even grooming. The first line of ensuring protection of digital rights of the children is to educate them on the potential risks and the dangers online as discussed above under the challenges. There is also need for supervision of the sites and contents consumed by the children online to ensure their safety. This can be achieved by spending time with them online and in the process guiding them on safety measures while online.

The children also need to be told to keep the digital tools such as the webcams covered and microphones off when not in use. This will ensure that the risk of hackers stealing their pictures and voices is greatly reduced. Tools such as parental controls like safe search should be activated in the gadgets used by the children to access online information. In addition, parents and all other stakeholders such as educators should encourage open communication in order to be aware of the kind of interactions the children are engaging in while in the digital space. Again, there are laws enacted to protect children in the real world, on the same note, there is also need to enact laws that protect children in the digital world too. It therefore requires the concerned authorities to modify the existing laws governing digital privacy rights to meet the need for children rights complete with very stringent consequences on the offenders.

Governments, technology companies, educators and the young people themselves have roles to play in safeguarding children's digital privacy. To begin

with, governments need to enact laws that govern children digital interaction, provide a framework for their safety and privacy and educate the law enforcement agencies on the same. This will ensure real time digital safety and privacy for the children. The technology companies equally have a role in ensuring children's digital safety and privacy starting with adhering to set laws governing children internet access. They also need to develop strict and easy to navigate privacy setting where the current loopholes are taken into consideration, with a view of minimizing the loopholes or eliminating them completely.

The educators on the other hand have a number of roles to play some of which include, educating the children on the need of safety and privacy in the digital space, supervising the children's online activities during online learning processes, spending time with them online in order to be aware of their online footprints and correct whenever they gear off what is required of them online. The educators are also expected to activate parental control in the gadgets used by children during online activities as well as combing the sites to ensure that there are no misleading adverts such as those involving alcohol consumption or sexually explicit adverts before the sites are accessed by the children.

Kisii Region:

By Hunney Wright- Kisii School

In Kenya's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the privacy and security of children have become increasingly critical concerns. As technology becomes more deeply integrated into daily life, it is essential to address the key challenges that threaten children's digital privacy and explore innovative solutions to create a safer, more private, and empowering online environment.

One of the primary challenges to children's digital privacy in Kenya is the lack of comprehensive data protection laws and regulations. While Kenya has made progress in developing a data protection framework, stronger enforcement and clearer guidelines are necessary to safeguard children's personal information. Technology companies and

service providers must be held accountable for the responsible collection, storage, and use of children's data. Additionally, the rise of social media and digital devices has exposed children to significant privacy risks, including cyberbullying, online predation, and the unintended sharing of personal information. Parents and educators play a crucial role in teaching children about digital safety and responsible online behavior, empowering them to make informed decisions about their digital footprint. The widespread use of internet-enabled devices and online platforms has also increased children's exposure to potential risks, such as online grooming and harmful content. Addressing these concerns requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders.

To effectively balance children's safety with their privacy rights, a multifaceted approach is essential. Governments and organizations should work together to develop comprehensive policies that address the unique challenges posed by the digital landscape, prioritizing both the protection of children from online risks and the preservation of their privacy. Parents need to educate themselves about the potential dangers and teach their children responsible digital citizenship. Open communication and trust between parents and children are vital for empowering them to navigate the digital world safely while respecting their privacy.

By bringing together policymakers, educators, parents, technology companies, and children's advocacy groups, Kenya can develop holistic strategies that strike a balance between safety, security, and children's privacy rights. Governments have a responsibility to enact and enforce laws that protect children's digital privacy, ensuring that technology companies implement robust data protection measures. Technology companies, on their part, must prioritize user privacy through strong encryption methods and transparent data practices, and they should offer tools that allow parents to monitor their children's online activities without infringing on their privacy. Educators should integrate digital citizenship lessons into their curriculum and promote open communication

between parents and children about online activities.

Young people also have a responsibility to protect their own digital privacy. They should be mindful of the information they share online and use strong passwords to secure their accounts. They can also advocate for digital privacy by supporting organizations that promote internet safety and by reporting instances of online harassment or cybercrime.

In today's digital age, children are growing up immersed in technology. While the internet provides vast opportunities for learning and exploration, it also poses risks that must be addressed to ensure a safer online experience. Several innovative solutions can be implemented. First, robust privacy settings on online platforms are crucial. Parents and educators should teach children how to use these settings effectively and guide them in understanding the risks of sharing personal information online. Second, incorporating age-appropriate content filters can help protect children from harmful material. Third, fostering digital literacy skills among children is essential. By teaching them critical thinking and how to evaluate online information, children can navigate the digital world more confidently. Lastly, promoting positive online behavior—encouraging kindness and respect in online interactions—can create a more inclusive and supportive online community for children.

Creating a more private, enriching, and empowering online experience for children requires a multifaceted approach. This includes implementing robust privacy settings, age-appropriate content filters, and digital literacy programs. With responsible parental guidance and support from educators and policymakers, we can ensure that children have safe spaces to thrive in the digital world.

Rift Valley Region

Nature Yegon- Kericho High School

Across the globe, nations face significant challenges in this domain, from regulatory gaps to evolving technological landscapes. Addressing these complexities necessitates a nuanced approach that balances the imperative of safety and security with the preservation of children's privacy rights.

One of the primary obstacles and challenges to children's digital privacy globally is the absence of comprehensive regulatory frameworks specifically tailored to protect minors online. While many countries have laws governing data protection and privacy, they often lack specificity concerning children's digital activities. This regulatory gap leaves children vulnerable to various risks, including data breaches, online exploitation, and exposure to inappropriate content. Establishing robust legislation tailored to safeguard children's digital privacy is crucial to effectively mitigate these risks on a global scale.

Moreover, the lack of awareness among parents, educators, and children themselves exacerbates the problem. Many parents may not fully understand the risks associated with their children's online interactions or how to implement adequate safeguards. Similarly, educators may lack the necessary knowledge to educate children about best practices for digital privacy. Addressing this challenge requires comprehensive educational initiatives aimed at raising awareness among stakeholders about the importance of digital privacy and strategies for its protection.

The rapid evolution of technology poses another significant challenge to children's digital privacy worldwide. With the emergence of new digital platforms and devices, new threats and vulnerabilities arise. Children, often early adopters of technology, may unknowingly expose themselves to risks such as online grooming, cyberbullying, and identity theft. Keeping pace with technological advancements requires continuous adaptation of protective measures and collaboration between governments, tech companies, educators, and young people themselves.

Balancing the need for safety and security with the protection of children's privacy rights demands a

collaborative effort involving various stakeholders on a global scale. Governments worldwide play a pivotal role in enacting and enforcing legislation that safeguards children's digital privacy while ensuring it does not unduly restrict their online experiences. Additionally, governments can invest in cybersecurity infrastructure and promote international cooperation to combat cross-border threats to children's digital privacy effectively.

Tech companies also bear significant responsibility for protecting children's digital privacy globally. They must design and implement robust privacy settings and parental controls across their platforms and devices. Furthermore, companies should prioritize user privacy by adhering to ethical data collection and processing practices, particularly concerning children's personal information. Collaboration with governments and civil society organizations can assist tech companies in developing and implementing effective privacy-enhancing technologies.

Educators worldwide play a vital role in empowering children with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the digital realm safely. Integrating digital literacy and privacy education into school curricula can equip children with the tools to safeguard their privacy online effectively. Additionally, educators can foster open communication with students, encouraging them to seek assistance when encountering online threats or privacy breaches.

Young people themselves are active participants in safeguarding their digital privacy on a global scale. Empowering them to make informed decisions about their online activities and privacy settings is essential. Peer-to-peer education initiatives and youth-led advocacy campaigns can amplify young people's voices and raise awareness about digital privacy rights and risks globally.

Innovative solutions are crucial for creating a more private, enriching, and empowering online experience for children worldwide. Technologies such as block chain and encryption can enhance data security and privacy protection. Moreover,

leveraging artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms can aid in identifying and mitigating online threats in real-time. Collaborative efforts between

governments, tech companies, educators, and young people can drive the development and implementation of these innovative solutions.

In conclusion, safeguarding children's digital privacy globally demands concerted efforts from diverse stakeholders. By addressing key challenges such as regulatory gaps, awareness deficits, and technological advancements, we can strike a balance between safety, security, and privacy rights on a global scale. Governments, tech companies, educators, and young people all have indispensable roles to play in ensuring that children can enjoy a private, enriching, and empowering online experience. Through collaboration and innovation, we can forge a safer and more privacy-respecting digital environment for children worldwide.

Jakes Silvanos- Kabianga High School

Technology itself can be leveraged to enhance online safety for children. Innovations such as parental control software, content filters and age appropriate platforms can help parents and guardians manage and monitor their children's online activities more effectively. These tools allow caregivers to set limits on screen time, block inappropriate content, and track their children's online behaviors, providing an additional layer of protection against potential dangers.

In addition, education plays a fundamental role in safeguarding children online. Parents, educators and caregivers must equip children with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. This includes teaching them about online privacy, the importance of setting boundaries and how to recognize, and respond to potential threats. By empowering children with the tools they need to protect themselves online, we can help reduce their vulnerability to online risks and empower them to

make informed decisions about their digital interactions.

Furthermore, to education and technology, collaboration among stakeholders is essential in creating a safer digital world for children. Governments, tech companies, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders must work together to develop and implement policies and initiatives that proactively prioritize the safety and well-being of young users, this includes enforcing regulations to protect children's online privacy, combating cyberbullying of her bullying and harassment and holding perpetrators online abuse accountable for their actions.

Moreover, fostering promoting a culture of digital citizenship is crucial in promoting a safer online environment of empathy, respect and responsibility in young users. We can cultivate more inclusive and supportive online community. Teaching children to treat others with kindness and compassion, both online and offline can help reduce the instances of cyberbullying and promote positive digital interactions.

However, creating safer digital world for children requires more than just addressing immediate threats and challenges. It also requires addressing broader systematic issues such as digital inequality and access disparities. In many parts of the world, children from marginalized communities face barriers to accessing the internet particularly here in Kenya limiting their opportunities for learning and socializing online. Closing the digital divide and ensuring access to digital resources and opportunities is ensuring equitable inclusive and safer online environment for all children.

Moreover, as technology continues to evolve, so too must our efforts to safeguard children online This requires ongoing research, innovation and adaptation to address emerging threats and challenges effectively. It also necessitates a commitment to continuous learning and improvement as we strive to stay ahead of evolving risks and protect children in an increasingly complex digital landscape.

Creating a safer digital world for children is multi-faceted and endeavor that ongoing endeavor among that requires collective action and collaboration among stakeholders. By prioritizing education leveraging technology, addressing systemic inequalities and embracing innovation, we can imagine and strive towards exploring learn and thrive online to also other place in the world in a safe and secure environment. Ultimately, safeguarding children is not just a responsibility; it is an imperative that requires an unwavering commitment and dedication to ensuring the well-being and future success of the next generation.

DISCLAIMER

The essays presented here are fictional and written as part of an educational exercise. They are meant to reflect children's perspectives on digital privacy and safety, but the content is not based on actual experiences or statements by real individuals.

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