

Statement from the Breck Foundation

The Breck Foundation has consistently been clear that a complete social media ban is not the solution to keeping children safe online. While we recognise the Government's shared commitment to strengthening protections for children, this approach risks narrowing a complex conversation.

We remain concerned about unintended consequences. Online harms are not caused by individual platforms or devices in isolation. Children do not stop being social, curious, or vulnerable because of prohibition, and there is a risk that such measures may push them towards less regulated and more harmful online spaces where safeguarding tools, reporting mechanisms, and oversight are limited.

Our position remains that accountability must sit with social media platforms to ensure safe environments, alongside universal education and support that equips families and children to understand risk, build resilience, and navigate the online world safely.

We do, however, welcome the Government's increased focus on gaming platforms, which the Breck Foundation has long argued are often overlooked in wider online safety and safeguarding policy.

It is now critical that children's voices are not only heard, but embedded in planning and implementation.

Creating positive online spaces requires a balance of strong platform responsibility, meaningful engagement with young people, and a clear focus on preventing harm at the design stage rather than reacting after it occurs.