

NDP Caucus News

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NDP Supports Motion to Ban Social Media for Youth Under 16

NL NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre), along with MHA Sheilagh O'Leary (St. John's East-Quidi Vidi), supported the private members motion yesterday in the House of Assembly calling for a ban on social media for youth under 16, stating that this is ultimately about the safety and protection of youth in our province.

Banning social media use for youth under 16 is a conversation happening around the world, and one that was brought to the forefront in Canada by Manitoba's NDP Premier Wab Kinew. Dinn says following Manitoba's lead here in the province is a step in the right direction.

"We know social media plays a major role in all of our lives, but especially in the lives of young people. We continue to see growing concerns around cyberbullying, harmful impacts on body image and self-esteem, links to eating disorders, exposure to violence, and the aggressive targeting of youth through advertising and algorithms," said Dinn. "At the same time, serious concerns remain around privacy, data collection, and the safety of children online. This resolution is about putting the wellbeing and safety of young people first."

However, Dinn highlights that the work is needed to match the intent of the motion if we want it to truly be successful.

"It's a first step, but legislation alone will not be enough. For this initiative to succeed, it must be backed by strong education, clear regulation, and meaningful accountability," Dinn says. "Parents, teachers, and communities need the proper tools and resources to help young people navigate these changes, while governments must ensure social media companies cannot exploit loopholes or undermine the intent of the legislation. Protecting children online requires a proactive approach that puts safety ahead of corporate interests."

"It will be a learning curve, but as we have seen with the cell phone ban in schools, change doesn't have to be a bad thing. In fact, it's needed to match the times we are living in. Banning social media for youth under 16 has the potential to decrease violence, reduce harm, and allow the youth in our province to truly thrive."

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For further information, contact Stephanie Curran, Media and Communications Officer, NDP Caucus at 330-0328 (o), or stephaniecurran@assembly.nl.ca