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Hearing on Big Tech and the Online Child Sexual Exploitation Crisis

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Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Graham, and esteemed members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss X's work to protect the safety of minors online.

X has zero tolerance for Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), and we are determined to make X inhospitable for actors who seek to exploit minors. In 2023, we made clear that our top priority was tackling CSE online.

As an entirely new company, X has strengthened its policies and enforcement to tackle CSE. We are taking aggressive action against users that distribute CSE and the networks of users who engage with this horrible content.

While X is not the platform of choice for children and minors – users between 13-17 account for less than 1% of our U.S daily users – we have made it more difficult for bad actors to share or engage with CSE material on X, while simultaneously making it easier for our users to report CSE content.

We are improving our detection mechanisms to find more reportable content on the platform to report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). In addition, we are building a Trust and Safety center of excellence in Austin, Texas, to hire more in-house agents so we can continue to accelerate our impact.

The following is a comprehensive update on our progress and our continued investment in this critical area.

CSE Actions

In 2023, as a result of our investment in additional tools and technology to combat CSE, X suspended 12.4 million accounts for violating our CSE policies. This is up from 2.3 million accounts in 2022.

Along with taking action under our rules, we also work closely with NCMEC. In 2023, X sent 850,000 reports to NCMEC, including our first ever fully-automated report. This is over eight times more than Twitter sent in 2022.

Not only are we detecting more bad actors faster, we are also building new defenses that proactively reduce the discoverability of posts that contain this type of content.

Advanced technology and proactive monitoring

We are investing in products and people to bolster our ability to detect and action more content and accounts, and are actively evaluating advanced technologies from third-party developers that can enhance our capabilities. Some highlights include:

- Automated NCMEC reporting: In February 2023, we sent our first ever fully-automated NCMEC CyberTipline report. Historically, every NCMEC report was manually reviewed and created by an agent. Through our media hash matching with Thorn, we now automatically suspend, deactivate, and



report to NCMEC in minutes without human involvement. This has allowed us to submit over 50,000 automated NCMEC reports in the past year.

- Expanded Hash Matching to Videos and GIFs: For the first time ever, we are evaluating all videos and GIFs posted on X for CSAM. Since launching this new approach in July 2023, we have matched over 70,000 pieces of media.
- Launched Search Intervention for CSE Keywords: CSAM impressions occur more on search than on any other product surface. In December 2022, we launched the ability to entirely block search results for certain terms. We have since added more than 2,500 CSE keywords and phrases to this list to prevent users from searching for common CSE terms.

Stronger partnerships, global cooperation

We are closely working with trusted organizations that are aligned with our mission to combat online CSE.

Foundational to our work is our multidimensional partnership with NCMEC, which manages the CyberTipline program, regularly convenes global stakeholders and facilitates actionable feedback from law enforcement that makes us better. Other instrumental partners are the Tech Coalition and WeProtect, alliances that push our innovation and provide critical information sharing on emerging threats and behaviors.

In December 2022, we launched a new product partnership that allows us to take down more CSAM than before. Built by Thorn, Safer allows tech platforms to identify, remove, and report child sexual abuse material at scale.

The Internet Watch Foundation, where we have been a member since 2014, provides technical signals, trend and threat analysis and member collaboration opportunities that directly impact our ability to remediate CSAM content. International hotline operators like Point de Contact flag alleged illicit content on the basis of reports and their own monitoring. We are an active participant in the Child Protection Lab of the Paris Peace Forum answering the international call to stand up for children's rights in the digital environment.

Ongoing improvements and regular review

At X, we are more vigilant and aggressive than ever in our enforcement. Our team regularly reviews and implements improvements to the measures we take to combat online child sexual exploitation to ensure their ongoing efficacy and performance. Our increased investment in this area throughout the year has yielded significant, measurable results.

Since April, we have increased training for content moderators on the tools and policies for NCMEC reporting. In turn, this has led to a 10x increase in the volume of manually-submitted NCMEC reports, from an average of 6,300 reports per month to an average of 64,000 reports per month from June through November 2023.



Working with law enforcement

Ultimately, it is critical that the bad actors be brought to justice and that law enforcement has the tools and resources they need to prosecute these heinous crimes. X cooperates with law enforcement around the world and provides an online portal to submit removal requests, information requests, preservation requests, and emergency requests.

Looking forward

Our work to stop child sexual exploitation will never stop.

In 2024, we will continue our strong investment in this critical area and expand our efforts to educate our users about the importance of helping us to combat child sexual exploitation online. We are committed to making X a place where freedom of expression and users' safety are not compromised in the public conversation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policies

We have a zero-tolerance child sexual exploitation policy on X.

X has **zero tolerance towards any material that features or promotes child sexual exploitation**, one of the most serious violations of [Our Rules](#). This may include media, text, illustrated, or computer-generated images. Regardless of the intent, viewing, sharing, or linking to child sexual exploitation material contributes to the re-victimization of the depicted children. This also applies to content that may further contribute to victimization of children through the promotion or glorification of child sexual exploitation. For the purposes of this policy, a minor is any person under the age of 18.

What is in violation of this policy?

Any content that depicts or promotes child sexual exploitation including, but not limited to:

- visual depictions of a child engaging in sexually explicit or sexually suggestive acts;
- illustrated, computer-generated or other forms of realistic depictions of a human child in a sexually explicit context, or engaging in sexually explicit acts;
- sexualized commentaries about or directed at a known or unknown minor; and
- links to third-party sites that host child sexual exploitation material.

The following behaviors are also not permitted:

- sharing fantasies about or promoting engagement in child sexual exploitation;
- expressing a desire to obtain materials that feature child sexual exploitation;
- recruiting, advertising or expressing an interest in a commercial sex act involving a child, or in harboring and/or transporting a child for sexual purposes;
- sending sexually explicit media to a child;



- engaging or trying to engage a child in a sexually explicit conversation;
- trying to obtain sexually explicit media from a child or trying to engage a child in sexual activity through blackmail or other incentives;
- identifying alleged victims of childhood sexual exploitation by name or image; and
- promoting or normalizing sexual attraction to minors as a form of identity or sexual orientation.

Who can report violations of this policy?

Anyone can report potential violations of this policy, whether they have an X account or not.

In addition to reporting Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), you have the option to report any issues related to Child Safety including Child Sexual Exploitation, grooming (of a minor), and Physical Child Abuse in the X app. Find detailed instructions on how to report on our Help Center.

What happens if you violate this policy?

In the majority of cases, the consequence for violating our child sexual exploitation policy is **immediate and permanent suspension**. In addition, violators will be prohibited from creating any new accounts in the future. Note: when we're made aware of content depicting or promoting child sexual exploitation, including links to third party sites where this content can be accessed, they will be removed without further notice and reported to the **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)**.

In a limited number of situations, where we haven't identified any malicious intent, we will require you to remove this content. We will also temporarily lock you out of your account before you can Post again. Further violations will lead to your account being permanently suspended. If you believe that your account was suspended in error, you can [submit an appeal](#).

Non-Consensual Nudity Policy

You may not post or share intimate photos or videos of someone that were produced or distributed without their consent.

Sharing explicit sexual images or videos of someone online without their consent is a severe violation of their privacy and the [X Rules](#). Sometimes referred to as revenge porn, this content poses serious safety and security risks for people affected and can lead to physical, emotional, and financial hardship.

What is a violation of this policy?

Under this policy, you can't post or share explicit images or videos that were taken, appear to have been taken or that were shared without the consent of the people involved.



Examples of the types of content that violate this policy include, but are not limited to:

- hidden camera content featuring nudity, partial nudity, and/or sexual acts;
- creepshots or upskirts - images or videos taken of people's buttocks, up an individual's skirt/dress or other clothes that allows people to see the person's genitals, buttocks, or breasts;
- images or videos that superimpose or otherwise digitally manipulate an individual's face onto another person's nude body;
- images or videos that are taken in an intimate setting and not intended for public distribution; and
- offering a bounty or financial reward in exchange for intimate images or videos.

What happens if you violate this policy?

We will **immediately and permanently suspend any account that we identify as the original poster of intimate media** that was created or shared without consent. We will do the same with any account that posts only this type of content, e.g., accounts dedicated to sharing upskirt images.

In other cases, we may not suspend an account immediately. This is because some people share this content inadvertently, to express shock, disbelief or to denounce this practice. In these cases, we will require you to remove this content. We will also temporarily lock you out of your account before you can post again. If you violate this policy again after your first warning, your account will be permanently suspended. If you believe that your account was suspended in error, you can [submit an appeal](#).