

# Parents Want Guardrails in the Age of AI

## Parents support innovation, but not without protections

Families understand that artificial intelligence and digital tools are transforming education. Parents want their children prepared for the future, but they are clear that innovation must come with strong safety and accountability standards.

Recent national polling of parents shows overwhelming support for guardrails to protect children in digital environments:

### Parental Support for Regulation

- 87% believe social media platforms should be legally required to restrict minors from harmful content (violence, self-harm, drug promotion).
- 86% support giving parents direct control over their child's account settings and limiting exposure to risky features like autoplay and algorithm-driven content.
- 76% support age verification requirements for account creation.
- 65% think more needs to be done to protect the privacy of students' personal data

### Minimum Age Requirements

- 87% support establishing a minimum age for social media accounts (most favor ages 13–16).

### Accountability for Harm

- 51% believe families should have the right to sue platforms if their child is harmed by dangerous content.
- 86% support laws requiring platforms to actively mitigate harms to minors — a central provision of the Kids Online Safety Act.

## What this means for AI in education

As AI tools are integrated into classrooms:

1. **Parents expect transparency.** Families want to know what tools are being used, how student data is collected, and how it is protected.
2. **Parents want meaningful control.** AI systems should not override parental authority or expose students to unfiltered algorithmic content.
3. **Parents demand accountability.** If AI tools cause harm — academically, emotionally, or through misuse of data — families expect enforceable safeguards.
4. **Safety must come before scale.** Innovation cannot move faster than child protections.

**Parents are not anti-technology. They are pro-child. As lawmakers consider how to prepare students for an AI-driven economy, families are sending a clear message: Build the future, but build it responsibly. Put guardrails in place, and protect kids first.**

Polling numbers are from Echelon Insights, published with the National Parents Union in February 2026 and December 2024