

Thursday 24th April 2025 – Anonymous 15

To: Committee and Panel Officer

Subject: Panel review submission: What protection do children in Jersey have from online harms

I am writing to give a brief perspective to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel review on **What protection do children in Jersey have from online harms**

[Redacted introduction]

I work with families as a mental health practitioner.

The families I work with seek support for difficult or conflictual relationships with their children. For most of these families, unregulated social media / online access significantly compounds their problems, particularly if their children are neuro-diverse.

The lack of meaningful regulation of social media, and access to online content and games means the whole responsibility for managing and mediating their child's access to the internet has to be managed by parents. Typical protections offered on devices are easy for children to work around.

Most of these parents are trying their best to put in place positive, reasonable boundaries around their child's use of devices and access to content. They work hard to find the balance between limiting access and allowing some use to ensure their child or young person can 'play' and socialise online and not be excluded from social networking with friends. This is crucial, as much physical outdoor social activity is planned via online networks.

We expect parents, who are often not digital natives, to have the knowledge and skill to take on the might of the digital / social media / gaming industry to protect their children. It's neither feasible nor fair. It creates significant conflict and stress, and further down the line, contributes to mental health issues and family dysfunction.

Please see a way to proposing meaningful, robust regulation that supports the Jersey's Children First approach, and supports our families, and the next generation.

Best wishes

[redacted]