



**The Tech  
Oversight  
Project.**

# **YouTUBE: Addiction Inc.**

**MDL DOCKET ANALYSIS: YOUTUBE**

MARCH 2026

# Executive Summary

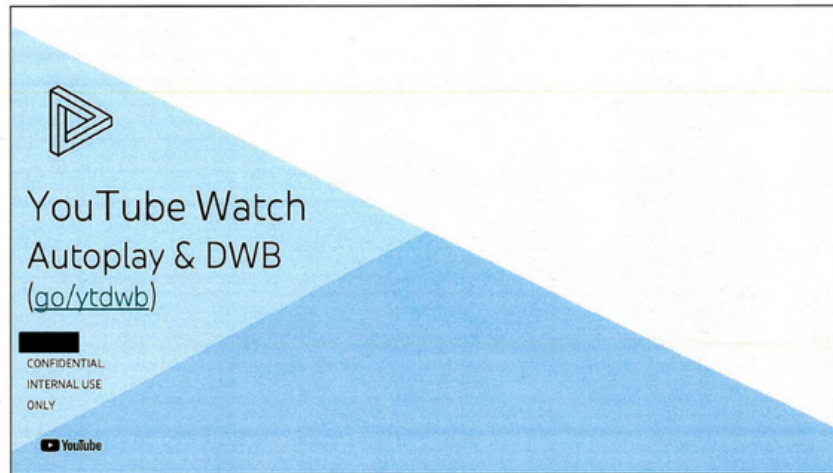
## KEY FINDINGS OVERVIEW

The evidence spans from 2012 to 2025 and reveals a consistent pattern: Google possessed granular, quantified internal knowledge that its products cause psychological and physical harm to minors — including sleep deprivation, compulsive use, and social displacement — yet systematically prioritized engagement metrics and advertising revenue over safety. When confronted by regulators or advocacy groups, the company suppressed internal warnings, manipulated third-party advocacy organizations, killed safety features on ROI grounds, and auto-deleted internal communications to minimize its discoverable footprint.

## TOP FINDINGS

- Sleep Safety Features Killed Due to Low ROI
- Infinite Feed Identified as Direct Cause of Teen Sleep Displacement
- Digital Wellbeing 'Not Well Aligned' with Daily Usage Goals
- YouTube 'Falls Behind Most Popular Social Media Platforms'
- Paid PTA 'Editorial' with Manipulated Safety Language
- Responsibility Team Kept Chat 'History Off' — Evidence Spoliation
- Internal Tracking: 32 Million Young Users in 'Habitual Heavy Use'
- Platform Designed with 'Tricks' for Dopamine 'Quick Fix'
- 'Goal Is Not Viewership, It's Viewer Addiction'
- YouTube Admitted Internally It Is a Social Media Platform
- Engineering a 'New Domain' to Bypass 70% of School Firewalls for 42 Billion Views
- Parental Controls Known to Be Defective — 'Working As Intended'
- Privacy and Algorithmic Bias Classified as Mere 'PR Risks'
- Keeps a Kid/Teen for Life
- Algorithms Pushing Inappropriate Content in Classrooms

# Sleep Safety Features Killed Due to Low ROI



It was something we looked into (it would fall likely under the empower or protect pillars) but it generally just wasn't as high a ROI compared to some of the other projects. However, we do intend to work on bringing bedtime reminders to platforms other than mobile (as covered in the DWB on Desktop section)

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*"It was something we looked into [helping users fall asleep/late night use]... but it generally just wasn't as high a ROI compared to some of the other projects."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

YouTube Product Manager

## **SOURCE**

Source: Exhibit 1061 — Digital Wellbeing H2 2021 Roadmap (Sept 2021)

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

Directly contradicts VP Leslie Miller's Oct 2021 sworn Senate testimony: 'Some speculate that we hesitate to address problematic content or ignore the well-being of youth online because it benefits our business; this is simply not true.'

## **TAKEAWAY**

A trillion-dollar company decided protecting children's sleep wasn't profitable enough. Internal teams rejected a safety feature designed to prevent adolescent sleep deprivation because its 'Return on Investment' was too low — one month before an executive told the Senate that business interests never override child safety.

# Infinite Feed Identified as Direct Cause of Teen Sleep Displacement

However, we still have work to do on the two biggest challenges<sup>[E9]</sup> for teen wellbeing on YouTube:  
(1) low quality content recommendations that can convey & normalize unhealthy beliefs or behaviors  
(2) prolonged unintentional use displacing valuable activities like time with friends or sleep.  
These concerns are loudest on short form content (more popular with teens) due to its lack of depth and infinite feed experience.<sup>[E18]</sup>

*"Prolonged unintentional use displacing valuable activities ... These concerns are loudest on short form content (more popular with teens) due to its lack of depth and infinite feed experience."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

Product Management Team for Youth

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 732 — Teen (Unsupervised) Viewer Wellbeing and Safety (Aug 2024)

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

Destroys the Section 230 defense. Google argues in MDL 3047 that harms stem from third-party content, not platform design. This document admits the product's format — the infinite feed — is itself the vector for harm.

## **TAKEAWAY**

YouTube's own product managers admit that the infinite scroll feed — not the content itself — is what drives teens into prolonged, unintentional use that steals their sleep and social lives. This dismantles Google's core legal defense that the platform is merely a neutral conduit.

# Digital Wellbeing 'Not Well Aligned' with Daily Usage Goals

6. Driving more frequent daily usage is not well aligned with our efforts to improve digital wellbeing

*"Driving more frequent daily usage is not well aligned with our efforts to improve digital wellbeing... Watch Next and comments compete directly for user attention in their current, adjacent configuration on mobile. This produces a zero-sum trade-off for user attention."*

## PERSPECTIVE

YouTube Search & Discovery, Ads, and Emerging Experiences Teams

## SOURCE

Exhibit 772 — 2019 Strategy Offsite Two Pagers

## PUBLIC CONTRADICTION

Contradicts Google Director Maggie Stanphill's 2019 Senate testimony under oath: 'Google does not use persuasive technology' and 'Google's Digital Wellbeing Initiative is a top company goal.'

## TAKEAWAY

In the same year Google told the Senate that 'digital wellbeing is a top company goal,' internal strategy documents admitted that driving daily usage is fundamentally incompatible with digital wellbeing — and chose usage over health.

# YouTube 'Falls Behind Most Popular Social Media Platforms'

### Current Interventions and gaps

Our current interventions for U18 are fragmented across interfaces and apps today. YT built an initial set of wellbeing features like [break-](#) and [bedtime-](#)reminders which are Default ON for all U18 users. We have early success<sup>5</sup> with the latest refresh of the Take-a-break (TAB) reminder which focused on increasing the friction, and are continuing to bring similar updates to the Bedtime reminder Q4 2024. It will be augmented with new interventions to address very late night usage (post 12am) as experts<sup>6</sup> and teens highlight the importance of sleep in Q1, 2025.

The reminder approach is not unique to YouTube and we fall behind popular Social Media Platforms in [app level time limits](#), [DWB education](#), and [watch behavior insights](#). YouTube is a multi interface experience having fragmented wellbeing features: Break and bedtime reminder exist only within the mobile apps while teen YTT on Living Room shows highest growth<sup>7</sup>. MFK Shorts viewers receive a unique [10m break reminder and creator lead break reminders](#). Families using Android get a more [intuitive OS level screen time limit](#) as YouTube and Android can both be managed from Family Link.

*"The reminder approach is not unique to YouTube and we fall behind most popular Social Media Platforms in app level time limits, DND education, and watch behavior insights."*

## PERSPECTIVE

James Beser, Erin Turner, Jyoti Ramnath — YouTube Youth Product Management

## SOURCE

Exhibit 732, p.10 — Teen (Unsupervised) Viewer Wellbeing and Safety (DRAFT)

## PUBLIC CONTRADICTION

YouTube CEO Neal Mohan publicly positions YouTube as a leader in youth digital wellbeing, launching a 'Youth Digital Wellbeing Pact' and accepting TIME's 2025 CEO of the Year award. Internally, the company's own teen safety team admits they lag behind competitors on basic protections.

## TAKEAWAY

While YouTube's CEO collects awards for youth safety leadership, the company's own internal teen wellbeing team admits YouTube 'falls behind most popular Social Media Platforms' on the most basic protections — app-level time limits and watch behavior insights.

# Paid PTA 'Editorial' with Manipulated Safety Language

- PTA Editorial Article: [ HYPERLINK "https://docs.google.com/..." ]
- Topic: YouTube [ HYPERLINK "https://blog.youtube/inside-youtube/youtubes-principled-approach-children-teenagers/" ] → Content sourced directly from [ HYPERLINK "https://blog.youtube/inside-youtube/youtubes-principled-approach-children-teenagers/" ]
  - Length: 414 (max cap: 400 words)
  - Example posts: [ HYPERLINK "https://ptaourchildren.org/get-resources-and-healthy-habits-from-lysol/" ], [ HYPERLINK "https://ptaourchildren.org/working-together-to-support-healthy-habits/" ], [ HYPERLINK "https://ptaourchildren.org/keeping-student-athletes-safe-on-the-playing-field/" ] (student athlete safety)
  - YouTube byline – James Beser

"How YouTube's Youth Principles help build a healthy online experience for children and teens"

By James Beser, Senior Director of Product Management, YouTube Kids & Youth

Children and teenagers today can access a world of possibilities online. Whether it's exploring important topics around the world or looking up a video to help with algebra homework, they've never known a reality without this world at their fingertips. And, as they've grown up, so has the internet.

Today, conversations are taking place around dinner tables and at the highest levels of governments about how to help young people to thrive and be safer online. Parents [deserve meaningful support as they step up](#) to this challenge.

Here's a refresher on how parents can rely on YouTube resources & tools to keep young users safe:

- YouTube's policies and services protect the YouTube community and [ HYPERLINK "https://blog.youtube/inside-youtube/on-youtubes-recommendation-system/" ], from combating the promotion of [ HYPERLINK "https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802245?hl=en" ] to guarding against [ HYPERLINK "https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2801984" ].

Commented [1]: [redacted] Marketing is placing this "editorial" article in the National PTA newsletter (a paid partnership), to support the recent Youth Moment announcements.

\*Per PR, we need your approval of the proposed byline (James Beser). A byline is required by PTA.\* Please reply with a LGTM if you approve.

This is approved by [redacted] (PR) and [redacted] (KOF). Copy is pulled directly from YT blog on Youth Principles: <https://blog.youtube/inside-youtube/youtubes-principled-approach-children-teenagers/>. Assigned to [redacted]

Commented [2]: Thanks, [redacted] I don't see a byline, but this generally LGTM with my comments.

Commented [3]: Thanks Matt – your comments are addressed through [redacted]'s edits.

Byline is James Beser.

[redacted] how do you advise we ask/updates

Commented [4]: I would email him and ask him to let you guys know if you have any concerns. Please cc his EBP [redacted] who can make sure he sees this one.

Commented [5]: [redacted] This confirm you are fine with this title. It matches the Youth Principles YT blog

Commented [6]: Can we adjust it so that it's not a copy and paste from the title of the blog post? Sorry if it's already adjusted (don't have the blog post in front of me at the moment)

Commented [7]: Updated. Keeping "principled" bc I think it helps explain the body of the copy. Safer helps couch it in terms PTA readers care about.

Commented [8]: made a suggestion

Commented [9]: This is a nit, but ldk if keeping "principled" but adding safer makes sense? Since "principled" = "safer" + "high-quality". How about something like:

Commented [10]: great – update to your recco. I like it.

Commented [11]: [redacted] Can you pls share more about this change? What was the concern? I'd like to try not to change -- if doable.

Commented [12]: Yes, this was PTA's feedback: "I don't love this phrasing for a PTA piece.

Could you live with something like,

Commented [13]: [redacted] See edit. I consolidated and made the sentence about Parent support – which will stand out more clearly to readers and hopefully meet PTA's editorial requirements. Cal

*"Updated. Keeping 'principled' bo think it helps explain the body of the copy. Safer helps couch it in terms PTA readers care about... Marketing is placing this 'editorial' article in the National PTA newsletter (a paid partnership), to support the recent Youth Moment announcements."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

James Beser, Sr. Director, YouTube Kids & Youth, with internal PR/Marketing

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 761 — Draft PTA Newsletter Article (March 2024)

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

YouTube publicly presents partnerships with the PTA as organic, independent, expert-led collaboration. Internally, they paid for editorial placement and strategically adjusted language to manipulate parents.

## **TAKEAWAY**

When parents open their PTA newsletter and read about YouTube's safety 'principles,' they trust it as independent guidance. Internal documents reveal it's paid corporate PR, with executives debating which words best 'couch' the messaging to pacify concerned parents.

# **Responsibility Team Kept Chat 'History Off' — Evidence Spoliation**

13                    Q.            All right. So for the youth  
14                    team, you told me it was best practice to  
15                    kind of keep history off in the chats. For  
16                    this responsibility team, it seems it's also  
17                    a practice to keep history off in the chat  
18                    rooms. Do you agree?

19                    MS. WADHWANI: Objection to  
20                    form, foundation, mischaracterizes  
21                    prior testimony.

22                    THE WITNESS: Again, this  
23                    wasn't my team. I don't know what  
24                    team norms they had.

1 Q. But at least in this instance,  
2 they are by default keeping history off in  
3 their chat rooms?

4 MS. WADHWANI: Objection to  
5 form.

6 THE WITNESS: That's what the  
7 document says.

8 BY MR. DRAPER:

9 Q. All right. Have you talked  
10 with people on other teams outside the youth  
11 team and either told them or been told by  
12 them to keep history off in the chats?

13 A. I don't recall.

14 Q. Would it surprise you that  
15 other teams also at YouTube also have a  
16 practice of keeping history off in their  
17 chats?

20 THE WITNESS: Well, I can only  
21 speak for my team, which was it led to  
22 a lot of confusion for junior folks  
23 who would go back in time and take  
24 things out of context. And so it  
25 wouldn't surprise me if other teams

1 did similar.

*"I can only speak for my team, which was it led to a lot of confusion for junior folks who would go back in time and take things out of context. And so it wouldn't surprise me if other teams did similar [keeping history off]."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

James Beser, Sr. Director of Product Management, YouTube Kids & Youth

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 702 — James Beser Deposition (April 2, 2025)

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

A senior executive responsible for child safety admits the team charged with 'Responsibility' routinely auto-deleted its internal communications, shielding safety debates from future legal discovery.

## **TAKEAWAY**

The executive in charge of YouTube's child safety products testified under oath that the team responsible for platform 'Responsibility' defaulted to auto-deleting their chat histories. When asked why, he said it prevented people from 'taking things out of context.' The question is: what context were they hiding?

# **Internal Tracking: 32 Million Young Users in 'Habitual Heavy Use'**

- *Habitual heavy use:* ~10% (32MM) of 13-24 year olds on YouTube habitually<sup>2</sup> watch > 2 hours / day (excluding music).<sup>3</sup> ~13% (36MM) of 18-24 year olds reported "I regret how long I stayed on YouTube" in the past week.
- *Late night use:* ~7% of teens on YT watch past midnight on school nights. Teen "night owls" were 88% more likely to have emotional & behavioral problems ([ [HYPERLINK "https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-adolescents-sleep/teen-night-owls-more-prone-to-emotional-and-behavioral-problems-idUSKCN1IH2QO" \h \]](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-adolescents-sleep/teen-night-owls-more-prone-to-emotional-and-behavioral-problems-idUSKCN1IH2QO) ], [ [HYPERLINK "https://www.sleep-journal.com/article/S1389-9457\(18\)30109-6/fulltext" \h \]](https://www.sleep-journal.com/article/S1389-9457(18)30109-6/fulltext) ). 30% of users 18-24 say YouTube has cut into sleep.
- *Unintentional use:* Among users 18-24 years old, 23% report "losing track of time on YouTube,"<sup>4</sup> 20% report "procrastinating on YouTube," and 20% report YouTube "interfered with work, school, or homework."

*Habitual heavy use: ~10% (32MM) of 13-24 year olds on YouTube habitually watch > 2 hours / day... Late night use: ~7% of teens on YT watch past midnight on school nights. Teen 'night owls' were 88% more likely to have emotional & behavioral problems."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

Brian Marquardt & Reid Watson, YouTube Digital Wellbeing

## SOURCE

Exhibit 1058 — Screen Time & Tech Addiction Strategy (2018)

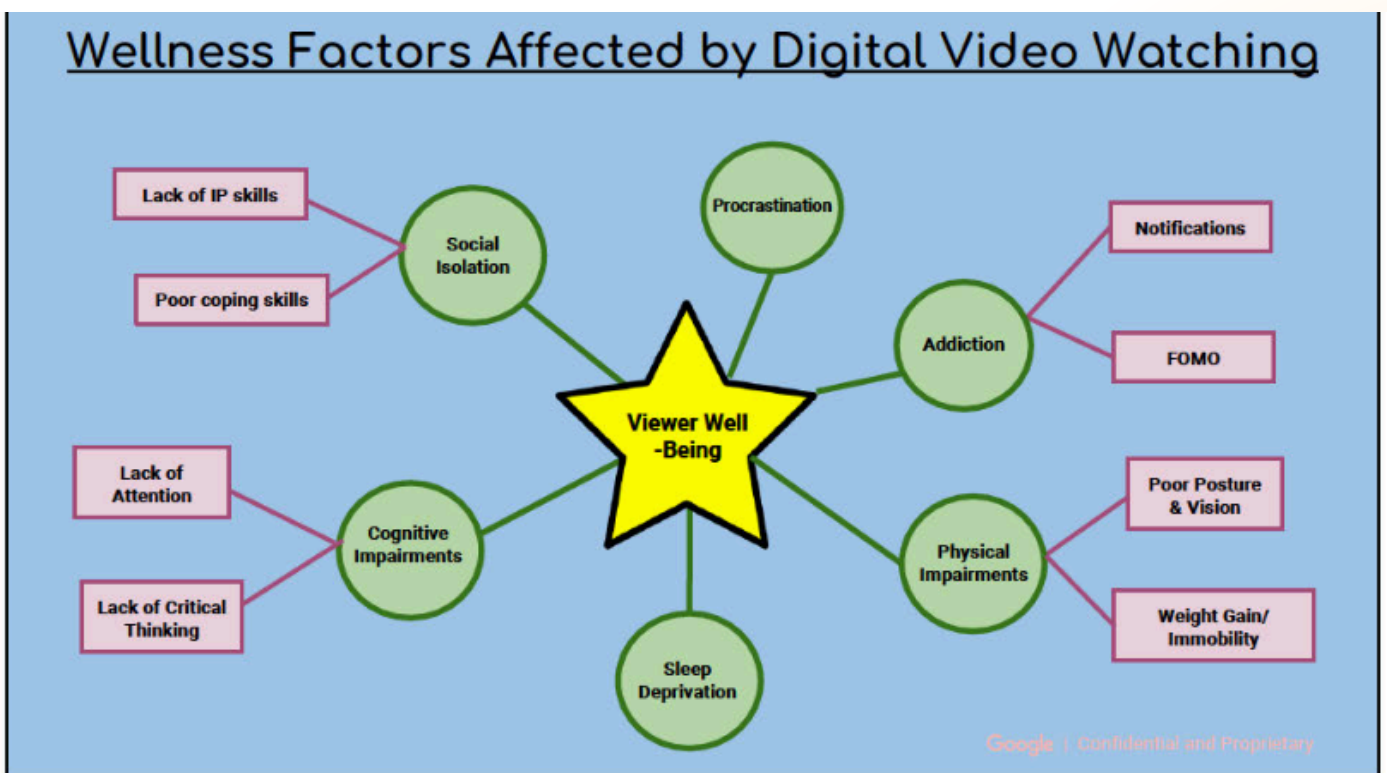
## PUBLIC CONTRADICTION

Google claims to prioritize youth wellbeing and to lack knowledge of specific usage-driven harms. This document shows exact quantification of millions of minors trapped in harmful usage patterns.

## TAKEAWAY

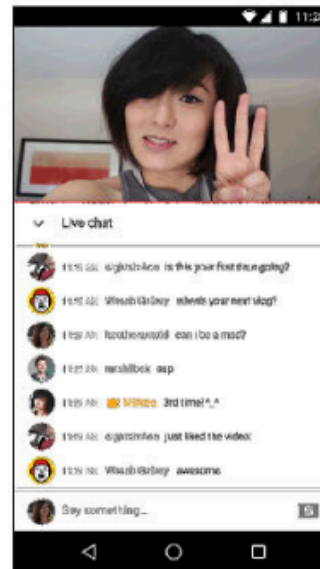
YouTube possessed exact internal data showing 32 million young users were trapped in habitual heavy use and that teens watching past midnight were 88% more likely to develop emotional and behavioral problems — and kept optimizing for engagement anyway.

# Platform Designed with 'Tricks' for Dopamine 'Quick Fix'



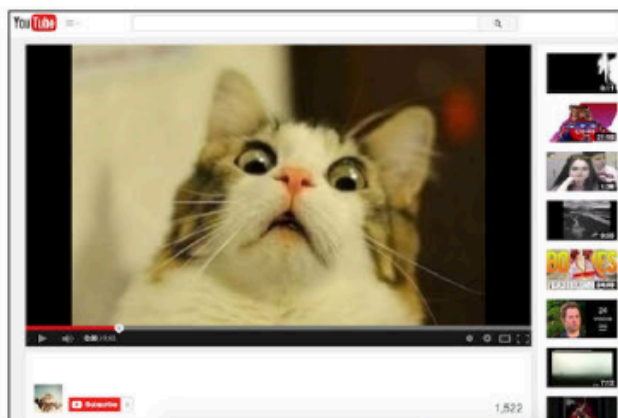
## YouTube “stickiness” is caused by the interactive nature of our platform

- YouTube allows for users to watch videos, but also to interact with creators and other viewers.
- Users receive notifications when someone makes a post or comment on a video.
  - Interactive behavior gratifies user needs
  - Causes users to feel that they *must* be aware of what is happening on the platform
  - Keeps users on the platform longer



(Chiang & Hsiao, 2015)

## Videos are *initially* used for quick mood management, but result in excessive viewing



- Survey research suggests that **video watching is a common technique for mood management.**
- Respondents reported watching **cat videos to be in a more positive mood more quickly.**
- After one video is over, it is difficult to stop watching the videos.
- Ultimately, viewers **experience feelings of guilt** for spending so much time doing non-meaningful tasks.

(Myrick, 2015)

## Excessive video watching is related to addiction

- **Watching short videos results in a “quick fix” of dopamine**
  - Dopamine is related to feelings of reward
  - Similar to feelings of reward when using drugs or other addictive substances
- **Researchers feel that YT is built with the intention of being addictive**
  - Designed with tricks to encourage binge-watching (i.e. autoplay, recommendations, etc).
  - These “tricks” have become routine
  - Technology & well-being need to meet



(Howard, 2012; Gunantillake, 2017)

*"Designed with tricks to encourage binge-watching (i.e. autoplay, recommendations, etc). These 'tricks' have become routine... Watching short videos results in a 'quick fix' of dopamine... Similar to feelings of reward when using drugs or other addictive substances."*

### PERSPECTIVE

YouTube UX Research

### SOURCE

Exhibit 775 — Effects of Watching Digital Videos on Viewer Well-Being (April 2018)

### PUBLIC CONTRADICTION

Google VP Cristos Goodrow testified in the 2026 trial that YouTube is 'not designed to maximize time' and is not intended to addict anyone.

### TAKEAWAY

YouTube's own UX researchers mapped out an internal 'Addiction Cycle,' explicitly comparing the platform's autoplay and recommendation features to drug addiction — calling them 'tricks' that deliver a dopamine 'quick fix.'

# 'Goal Is Not Viewership, It's Viewer Addiction'

24 Q. All right. And the last item for Value  
25 prop is, "Goal is not viewership, it's viewer

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A Veritext Division

www.veritext.com

Case 4:22-md-03047-YGR Document 2754-24 Filed 02/20/26 Page 40 of 97

1 addiction."  
2 Do you see that?  
3 A. I do.

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*"Goal is not viewership, it's viewer addiction."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

Google Employee (internal product review notes)

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 1003 — Internal Email / iOS Creator App Review Notes (June 7, 2012)

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

Directly contradicts 2026 trial testimony by VP Cristos Goodrow: 'YouTube is not designed to maximize time... We don't want anybody to be addicted to anything.'

## **TAKEAWAY**

Fourteen years before telling a jury that YouTube doesn't want anyone addicted, Google employees wrote the quiet part out loud in an internal email: the 'goal is not viewership, it's viewer addiction.'

# YouTube Admitted Internally It Is a Social Media Platform

24 Q. Okay. Fair enough. So you  
25 indicated that YouTube does not or did not

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Golkow Technologies,  
A Veritext Division

www.veritext.com

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1 consider themself a social media platform.

2 Correct?

3 A. That's correct.

4 Q. And so in this document here, it  
5 says what, "YouTube" what?

6 A. "YouTube no longer SMP if we remove  
7 social features."

*"YouTube no longer SMP if we remove social features."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

YouTube Strategy (via Deposition)

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 1002 — Internal YouTube Strategy Document

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

In the 2026 LA trial, Google's lead attorney told the jury: 'It's not social media addiction when it's not social media... YouTube is a streaming service.' Internal documents operate on the explicit premise that YouTube IS a social media platform.

## **TAKEAWAY**

While Google's lawyers tell juries that YouTube is just a 'streaming service' like Netflix, internal strategy documents acknowledge that YouTube is a social media platform — and would only stop being one if they removed the social features they rely on to keep users hooked.

# Engineering a 'New Domain' to Bypass 70% of School Firewalls for 42 Billion Views

Problems we're trying to solve

Challenge	Impact	Ideal Solution	Other options
More than 70% of schools in the US block YouTube	Perception & Watch Time	New Domain	YouTube for Schools
Adoption of YouTube for Schools is 4% across 14000 school districts	Perception & Watch Time	New Domain	Work with proxy companies
YouTube for Schools can be bypassed using https	Erosion of YT4S - -> Perception & Watch Time	New Domain	nossI redirect
Site is moving to https for logged in users	Erosion of YT4S - -> Perception & Watch Time	New Domain	Redirect to logged out experience for students
Khan Academy and MIT use YouTube for hosting, but are blocked as embeds	Threat of moving off YouTube	New Domain	New domain for streaming embeds, rest of site stays as is

Google Confidential and Proprietary

Google | YouTube

*"More than 70% of schools in the US block YouTube... On average: 8300/day per school district, 14000 districts ==> 42B views / year in US alone! And this is all from schools that they are blocked!!! Ideal Solution: New Domain."*

## PERSPECTIVE

YouTube EDU Team

## SOURCE

Exhibit 751 — YouTube EDU Domain Knowledge (June 2012)

## PUBLIC CONTRADICTION

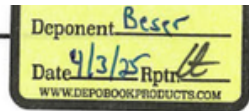
Google markets itself as a responsible partner in education. Internally, engineers schemed to build new domains specifically to circumvent the safety firewalls that schools erected to protect students.

## TAKEAWAY

When schools blocked YouTube to protect students, Google didn't take the hint. Instead, they calculated that 42 billion blocked views represented untapped demand — and engineered technical workarounds to defeat every school's firewall.

# Parental Controls Known to Be Defective — 'Working As Intended'

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 3/3/2021 8:58:30 PM  
To: [REDACTED]  
CC: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Re: Issue with Bedtime and Bonus Time



As [REDACTED] mentioned, while this is technically WAI, we've gotten this feedback before ([b/173805377](#)) and other similar confusion around how bonus time works exactly, though I can't find the links to those past discussion threads.

So as you can see the 'perfect' behavior is a bit fuzzy and we compromised with the current solution of only allowing bonus time 30 minutes in advance, and having the behavior be "add a strict amount of time during which the device will absolutely be unlocked, after which it will absolutely be locked" to make it perform consistently throughout, though we understand this doesn't fit all user use cases well, as in your cases.

On Wed, Mar 3, 2021 at 12:34 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

I have this same problem: bedtime configured from 6:30pm to 4pm, so when homework is done and I want to open things up 30 minutes early, I have to poke at the Bonus Time button all the way to 3 hours, 5 minutes at a time. (And then when dinner is late and I want to let them stay online until 7:00, I have to poke the Bonus Time button back down to 30 minutes. I spend a lot of time tapping that button one direction or the other.)

*"This is technically WAI. I don't remember off the top of my head why we had made that decision... the 'perfect' behavior is a bit fuzzy and we compromised with the current solution... I spend a lot of time tapping that button one direction or the other."*

## PERSPECTIVE

Internal Google Employees (Family Link testers)

## SOURCE

Exhibit 764 — Unicorn Dogfood Discussion Group (March 2021)

## PUBLIC CONTRADICTION

Google routinely points to Family Link parental controls as evidence that parents are already empowered to protect their children, arguing against federal regulation. Internally, testers found the tools broken, confusing, and burdensome — but classified the failures as 'Working As Intended.'

## TAKEAWAY

When lawmakers push for child safety regulation, Google points to its parental control tools as proof that parents are already empowered. Internally, their own employees found the tools barely functional — and engineering classified the broken experience as 'Working As Intended.'

# Privacy and Algorithmic Bias Classified as Mere 'PR Risks'

## The ML / Analytics Opportunity

Educators are sitting on a growing goldmine of data, but lack the resources and capacity to organize and make sense of it. We will design ways for schools to easily organize, use and gain insights from student data, ultimately setting the stage for us to reinvent the education system through data.

### Strengths

- Strong leadership / reputation in ML and data analytics
- Large installed base

### Weaknesses

- Product usage metrics do not indicate learning outcomes; lack of research to establish correlation
- As a tech co, we have little limited credibility in determining usefulness

### Opportunities

- Leverage predictive analytics to provide better outcomes for students and more value for orgs.
- Cement Google as ML leader in EDU
- [Redacted]

### Threats

- [Redacted]
- Perception of privacy issues stops us taking thought leader position
- Ethical issues with student data and bias in algorithms

recommended

## The Video Opportunity

Learners value video as an engaging medium but cannot find safe, educational content easily. While schools spend 38% of their budget on curriculum/content, Youtube is not seen as a safe platform and blocked by 42% of our G Suite for Edu users.

### Strengths

- Youtube is most popular video platform with significant EDU usage
- Cloud Video, Hangouts also strong video capabilities
- Content created for other EdTech orgs often hosted on YT already
- Large installed base of G Suite, Chrome, and (consumer) YT users

### Weaknesses

- 42% of GSuite for EDU users block YT
- Difficult to get YT to prioritize EDU product; Current YT monetization doesn't work for ad-free EDU accounts
- Depreciated video editing tool leaves hole in offering

### Opportunities

- Video as a medium is increasing thanks to tutoring and flipped classroom. 83% of schools are incorporating video.
- Schools spend 38% of budget on curriculum / content

### Threats

- PR Risk - influence of video on kids content
- [Redacted]

"Threats: Perception of privacy issues stops us taking thought leader position. Ethical issues with student data and bias in algorithms... PR Risk - influence of video on kids content."

**PERSPECTIVE**

Google for Education Cross-Functional Team

**SOURCE**

Exhibit 1135 — Google for Education Strategy Presentation (2018)

**PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

Google publicly champions student privacy and responsible AI. Internally, algorithmic bias, student data ethics, and the psychological influence of video on children are classified solely as threats to market position and 'PR Risks.'

**TAKEAWAY**

When Google's education team assessed the risks of deploying AI and algorithmic video into classrooms, they didn't worry about whether children would be harmed. They worried about whether the public would find out.

# Keeps a Kid/Teen for Life

**EcSystem**  
**Onboarding kids into Google's Ecosystem leads to brand trust and loyalty over their lifetime**

- Investing in schools helps onboard kids into Google's ecosystem
- School laptop brand influences future purchase patterns
- If you get someone on your operating system early, then you get that loyalty early, and potentially for life
- Brand Trust -> Loyalty - 80% of consumers will continue to buy brand they trust; 76% will advocate on behalf of the brand
- It cuts both ways though - iPhones are tremendously sticky - "iPhone users are 24x more likely to stick with their brand than Android"

**Google's rise in ed-tech services**

Operating System	Chromebook	Windows	MacBook
Chromebook	47%	31%	18%
Windows	57%	70%	30%
MacBook	29%	32%	66%

**And if it ain't broke, then why switch?**

Source: <https://www.chromebook.com>

Slide 1

3

same title note

more broadly, I'm wondering if there is other ecosystem data we can pull in here? Even use case study of Apple?

So essentially making the case that it's not just schools, but it's also a compelling "cool" product that keeps a kid/teen for life.

1/9/2021 6:05:30 PM

*"So essentially making the case that it's not just schools, but it's also a compelling 'cool' product that keeps a kid/teen for life...we still have work to do on the two biggest challenges for teen wellbeing on YouTube: (1) low quality content recommendations that can convey & normalize unhealthy beliefs or behaviors (2) prolonged unintentional use displacing valuable activities like time with friends or sleep."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

Internal commenter / YouTube Youth Product Management

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 741 (Jan 2021) & Exhibit 732, p.2

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

Google's published Youth Principles present youth wellbeing as a 'top priority.' Internal documents reveal schools are customer acquisition funnels and that recommendations 'normalize unhealthy beliefs.'

## **TAKEAWAY**

An internal comment reveals the real goal behind school partnerships: building a product that 'keeps a kid/teen for life.' Meanwhile, YouTube's own teen safety team admitted the recommendation system 'normalizes unhealthy beliefs or behaviors' for teens — the exact allegation at the heart of the litigation.

# **Algorithms Pushing Inappropriate Content in Classrooms**

**[REDACTED]** - additional input for Japan)

Now that I'm hearing some real feedback from teachers from the Cloud Next event, i thought I'd share some feedback/wishlist from them I got today.

**1) Google Classroom integration is not perfect:** Especially on apps where we link off of the app and to main YT app. How can we keep students engaged on classroom app?

Also, I got pointed to the fact that Classroom embed player shows related videos. This should be turned off so that Classroom can be a safe environment for students.

**2) Concern on Bandwidth:** Bandwidth not enough to support all the students watching a video at the same time. Can we cache the video somewhere?

**3) Content discoverability:** This is even true for non English countries. They want to show videos to student (like scientific detailed video) but cannot find a good one. One solution we came up here was to search in English which worked well. What is the best way to showcase the contents on YT esp non English.

## **APAC**

### **JAPAN:**

- usage (high, low)

middle

Use case really differ school by school. Some schools actively using YouTube in classroom and encourage students to use YouTube video for the pre-work and homework. On the other hand, some school completely prohibits YouTube access. The main concern for the latter use case is non-educational / not appropriate content students might be surfaced due to the variety of content offering on YouTube.

- powerful anecdotes of positive usage

Teacher create playlist for recommended video, and share it with students

School participating in YouTube video creation workshop through [ [HYPERLINK](https://www.google.co.jp/events/webrangers/)

"<https://www.google.co.jp/events/webrangers/>" \h ].

- powerful anecdotes of frustration

Inappropriate content suggested by algorithm in classroom

- any major MOE relationships

YouTube creator Kan & Aki and MOE collaborated on awareness raising for programming education which will become mandatory subject in 2020. The series of 4 videos have generated 5M views.

- any major XFN relationships (e.g. Google EDU, GR, etc)

Kicked off first-ever cross-functional "Kids Edu JP" team in collaboration with Google for Education, Trust & Safety, CS Eng, GR, Consumer Marketing and Google Earth Education to

*"Inappropriate content suggested by algorithm in classroom... I got pointed to the fact that Classroom embed player shows related videos. This should be turned off so that Classroom can be a safe environment for students."*

## **PERSPECTIVE**

Internal Regional Lead / 'Kids Edu JP' Team

## **SOURCE**

Exhibit 1174 — YouTube in Schools APAC Situation Report (c. 2018-2020)

## **PUBLIC CONTRADICTION**

Google publicly argued before the Supreme Court in Gonzalez v. Google that its recommendation algorithms are neutral, passive tools. Internally, staff acknowledged the algorithms actively override safety intent in K-12 settings.

## **TAKEAWAY**

Google employees in the field reported that YouTube's algorithm was autonomously pushing inappropriate content to students during class — and that the default state of Google Classroom was fundamentally unsafe until the recommendation engine was manually disabled.



**The Tech  
Oversight  
Project.**