

The internet was not designed for children and adolescents.

Until now.

With the ECA Digital, Brazil now requires protection by default and that digital products are set up by default to protect those under 18 years of age

In effect since March 17, 2026, Federal Law No. 15,211/2025 (known as the ECA Digital) inaugurates a pioneering chapter in Latin America. Guided by the grammar of care, the law establishes that no technology effectively accessed by children remains without protection rules

To whom/which products does the law apply?

- **SOCIAL NETWORKS**
- **ELECTRONIC GAMES**
- **ENTERTAINMENT OR educational applications**
- **STREAMING platforms**
- **MOBILE PHONE** and tablet operating systems
- **MESSAGING** applications
- **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** chatbots
- **INTERNET-CONNECTED** objects and toys



Security integrated from the design stage

WHAT DID BRAZIL SAY BEFORE THE LAW?*



Brazilians state that social network companies do less than they should to protect children and adolescents online.

HOW WAS IT BEFORE?

Although laws already existed (such as the Brazilian Data Protection Law - LGPD, the Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet, and the Child and Adolescent Statute), in addition to specific frameworks (such as Resolution No. 245 of the National Council for the Rights of the Child and the Adolescent - CONANDA, and the guidelines of the UN General Comment No. 25) to protect children and adolescents in the digital environment, the responsibility often fell on families, who needed to configure privacy controls, monitor usage, and report violations without access to adequate information or tools.

WHAT CHANGES WITH THE LAW?

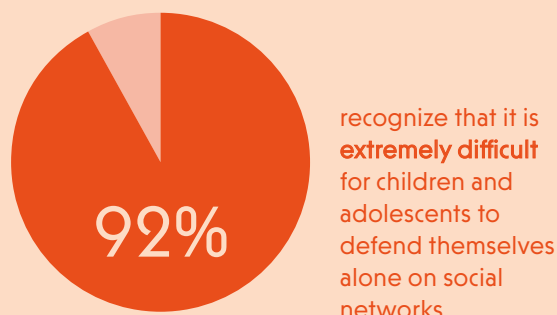
In addition to being able to trigger the State and the justice system, society has now mechanisms that PREVENT HARMFUL SITUATIONS rather than just reacting to them, with the following tools:

- **SECURE SETTINGS** by default.
- **AUTOMATIC BLOCKING** of harmful content.
- **LIMITS** on time of use.
- **SECURITY FILTERS** activated from the start.

Oversight is now carried out by the ANPD.

Improper and harmful content

WHAT DID BRAZIL SAY BEFORE THE LAW?*



HOW WAS IT BEFORE?

The use of digital environments by children and adolescents, combined with moderation failures, automated recommendation algorithms, and harmful design practices, contributed to violations such as early eroticization and adultification; hate speech and bullying; hyperviolent, sexualized, and self-harming content; and the promotion of online betting and casinos/games of chance.

WHAT CHANGES WITH THE LAW?

COMPANIES MUST:

- **MANAGE** risks of exposure to illegal, pornographic, or inadequate content and abusive advertising.
- **ENSURE** that content is compatible with the indicative age rating.
- **IMMEDIATELY DETECT** and remove abusive content.
- **NOTIFY** authorities and preserve digital evidence in cases of exploitation, abuse, harassment, violence, kidnapping, and grooming, for example.
- **MANDATORILY** maintain reporting channels so that these cases can be rapidly reported.
- **PROHIBIT** all forms of monetization or boosting of eroticized or sexually suggestive images of children and adolescents.

Responsible design and the end of abusive advertising

WHAT DID BRAZIL SAY BEFORE THE LAW?*



of Brazilians stated that children and adolescents are **becoming addicted** to social networks.

HOW WAS IT BEFORE?

The business model based on attention capture and engagement maximization dictated the design of digital environments, with mechanisms inducing addiction and encouraging compulsive use, such as:

- **INFINITE** scrolling.
- **AUTOMATIC MEDIA** playback.
- **CONSTANT** notifications.
- **REWARDS** for time of use.

WHAT CHANGES WITH THE LAW?

Digital platforms must adopt an ethical design from the design stage and prevent compulsive use and risks associated with how features are presented to children and adolescents. **IT IS PROHIBITED:**

- **TO COLLECT** data for directing advertising (profiling).
- **ADVERTISING** of illegal, inadequate, or harmful products, such as betting, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco products.
- **LOOT BOXES** (random reward boxes that simulate games of chance).

In addition to reducing consumerist pressure, this means fewer economic incentives for constant digital surveillance.

Age verification: end of self-declaration



WHAT DID BRAZIL SAY BEFORE THE LAW?*



de las familias sabe controlar el acceso a **contenidos adecuados** a la edad del niño o niña usando el control parental.

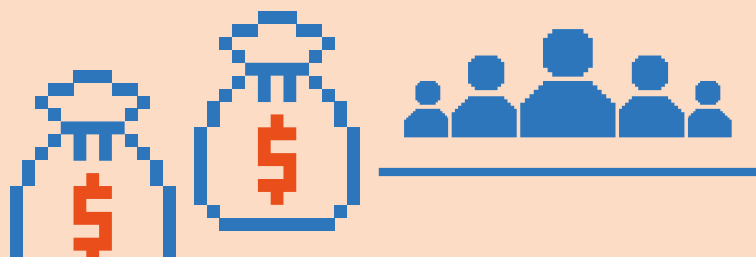
HOW WAS IT BEFORE?

Age verification mechanisms were based on self-declaration, such as checking a box stating they are of legal age or entering a date of birth. This facilitated the access of children and adolescents to content, products or services that are improper, inadequate, or prohibited by law..

WHAT CHANGES WITH THE LAW?

FAMILIES are no longer alone in mediating their children's relationship with digital environments. Platforms must adopt:

- **MECHANISMS** that prevent children and adolescents from accessing harmful content.
- **CLEARLY INFORM** when they are inadequate or improper and restrict content that attracts such demographic.
- **ADOPT** effective measures, including age verification, to prevent the access of children and adolescents to improper, inadequate, or prohibited content and services.
- **ON SOCIAL NETWORKS**, adolescents under 16 years of age must have their profiles linked to their legal guardians, allowing greater supervision of time of use, restriction of contacts, and the management of personalized recommendation systems, including the possibility of disabling them.



Transparency: public information and promotion of research

WHAT DID BRAZIL SAY BEFORE THE LAW?*



Brazilians believe that social network companies do not properly support families.

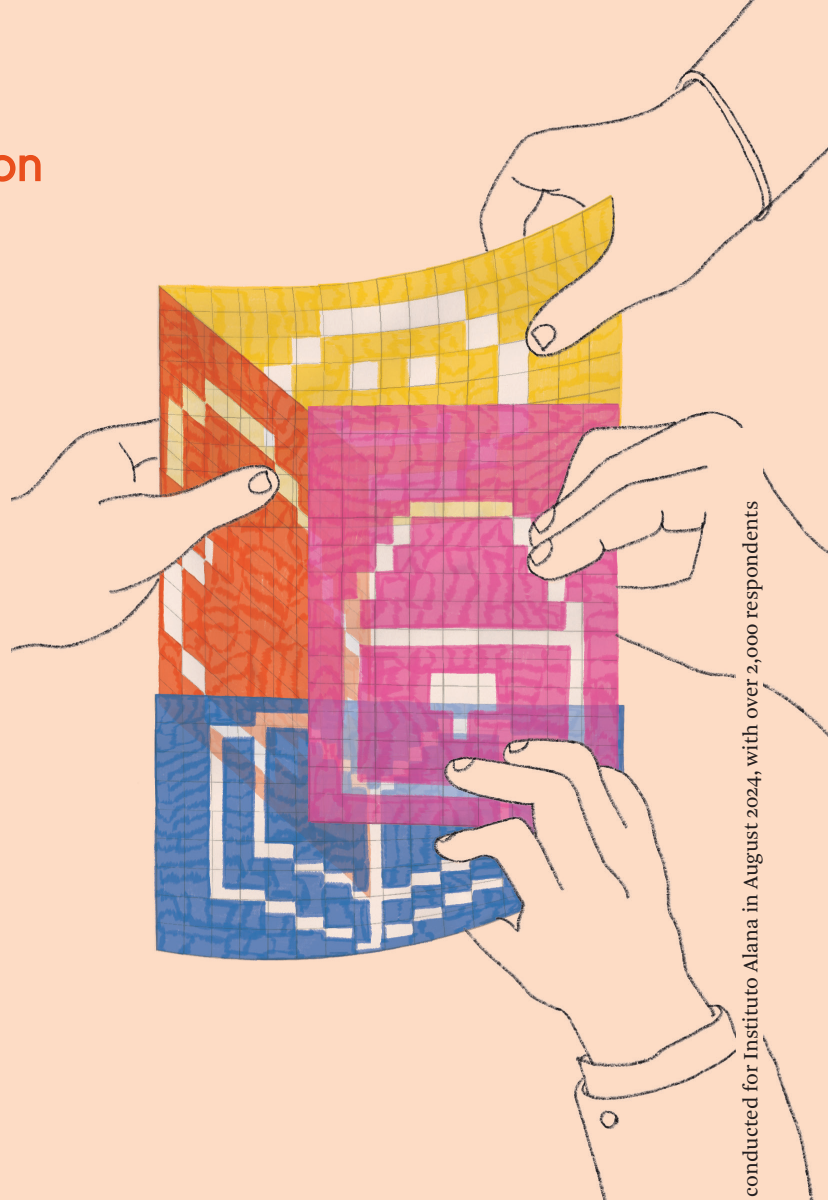
HOW WAS IT BEFORE?

Accountability regarding the risks and impacts of their services on the health, safety, and development of children and adolescents was left to the discretion of the companies themselves, who decided what information to disclose. Data collection, the use of algorithms, and content moderation occurred without clear requirements for transparency and accountability.

WHAT CHANGES WITH THE LAW?

In addition to the LGPD, which determines only the collection of information essential for the operation of the service and its use for the shortest time possible, platforms are now required to:

- **PUBLICLY** demonstrate how they protect the data of children and adolescents.
- **PUBLISH** reports that inform, for example, complaints and content moderation practices, if they reach 1 million registered users or more under 18 years of age.
- **BE TRANSPARENT** regarding risks, such as improper exposure, discrimination, or permanent violations of privacy.
- **ENSURE ACCESS** to data so that independent researchers can investigate how digital environments impact the rights and development of children and adolescents.



Illustrations by Julia Zemella
* Data from the Datafolha national survey conducted for Instituto Alana in August 2024, with over 2,000 respondents



Behind the scenes of the law that changed the game

In a country marked by extreme polarization, the ECA Digital produced a rare consensus: children and adolescents first. From public pressure to negotiations in Congress, from the data that shocked the country to the articulations that almost sank the bill, the book organized by Alana Institute tells the story of the law that changed the logic of the internet.

Download the publication via the QR Code:



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