

Parents visiting Washington this week to share their unthinkable stories.



JULIANNA  
ARNOLD  
NEW YORK

*Julianna's daughter, Coco, died at 17 years old of fentanyl poisoning after buying laced drugs she purchased from a dealer on Instagram. While the police had access to the direct messages between Coco and the dealer, there were no arrests in connection to the transaction. The dealer's profile, which included guns, drugs, alcohol, and sexual content, remained on Instagram for a few months before it was finally taken down.*



JOANN  
BOGARD  
INDIANA

*Joann's son Mason died at age 15 after he participated in a challenge he'd seen on YouTube called "the Choking Game." He was rushed to the hospital but his parents had to make the heart-wrenching decision to take him off life support and donate his organs.*



KRISTIN  
BRIDE  
OREGON

*Kristin's son, Carson, was 15 years old when he died by suicide. When she and her husband looked through Carson's phone after his death, they found out he'd been viciously cyberbullied by "friends" from school on Snapchat via plug-ins, like LMK and YOLO, that help bullies stay anonymous.*



JENNIE  
DESARIO  
ARKANSAS

*Jennie lost Mason, forever 16, on November 14th, 2022 to suicide. She got to him before he passed and performed CPR but was unable to save him, he died in his mothers arms. Mason had developed an addiction to social media and his girlfriend picked a fight with him and cheated with his best friend. While searching TikTok for "positive affirmations" and "inspirational quotes" he ended up receiving videos promoting, glorifying and even romanticizing suicide to "prove your love for your soulmate." Unaware of the algorithm change from November 1st to November 14th, his mother inadvertently created a mental health crisis when attempting to limit phone usage overnight, not knowing the adverse effect it would create and pushed Mason to what she describes as a mental breakdown akin to taking heroin away from a heroin addict.*



LAQUANTA  
HERNANDEZ  
TEXAS

*LaQuanta's 13-year-old daughter Jazmine was cyberbullied for months via TikTok and Instagram. The bullies sent her racist comments and photos, and photoshopped her face onto images of people being lynched by the KKK.*



MAURINE  
MOLAK  
TEXAS

*Maurine's son David died by suicide at the age of 16 after months of being cyberbullied by a group of students over Instagram, text, video, and GroupMe. The cyberbullying left him feeling hopeless and helpless because neither he nor his parents could make it stop.*



TONEY & BRANDY  
ROBERTS  
LOUISIANA

*Toney and Brandy's 14-year-old daughter, Englyn Maydisyn Roberts, died by suicide. They found her lifeless body in her bedroom at 3:30 a.m. on August 29, 2020. After multiple conversations with doctors, her parents had to make the most difficult decision of their lives. Englyn was taken off of life support on September 7, 2020. After searching for answers, her father discovered that Englyn mimicked a video she had seen on Instagram. Englyn enjoyed spending time with family, dancing, and traveling.*



MARY  
RODEE  
NEW YORK

*Mary's son, Riley, died by suicide at 15 years old. He was sextorted on Facebook by an adult who pretended to be a teenage girl and then threatened to release compromising images of Riley unless he gave them thousands of dollars. Riley, ashamed and frightened, died just six hours after the contact began. Facebook never responded when Mary and Riley's father reported the incident.*

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DEB  
SCHMILL  
MASSACHUSETTS

*Deb's daughter, Becca, died at 18 years old of fentanyl poisoning from drugs she and a friend purchased from a dealer they used Facebook to find. Becca was sexually assaulted at 15 by a boy she'd met on social media and, shortly after the assault, her peers started cyberbullying her on various apps. Becca turned to drugs to help ease the pain and was unaware the drugs she bought online contained fentanyl.*



THE  
STEEPER  
FAMILY  
VIRGINIA

*Katie, Danny and Kirsten's daughter, is a smart, young woman who enjoys playing soccer and basketball, spending time at the beach, watching sports, and enjoying episodes of the Gilmore Girls. At the young age of 12, she seemed to be a well-adjusted, happy middle schooler. A day after Katie's 13th birthday party, she was hospitalized for medical stabilization due to an eating disorder. After reading an investigative article by The Wall Street Journal regarding the hidden harms of TikTok, Katie's mother learned about the "For You Page" of TikTok. Upon accessing this feature, Katie's mother was shocked to learn that Katie's feed was saturated with content encouraging unhealthy and deadly behaviors related to nutrition and exercise. Katie is learning how to manage the disease and is steadily returning to typical life activities. Her life and the life of her family have been forever changed.*



MEG  
STUHMER  
SOUTH CAROLINA

*On June 17, 2021, after being quarantined for 15 months, Karli and her two friends decided to go speeding. All three families did not know that the girls had been inundated by Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok with reels and ads glorifying speeds of 130 to 200 mph. Snapchat's popular Speed Filter actively encouraged young users to film themselves while speeding. Although frightened, Karli felt like she needed to "take her turn." My Hyundai reached 116 mph before slamming into an oak tree. Karli's 14-year-old friend died instantly, while Karli and her other friend sustained life-threatening injuries. The light in Karli's eyes was replaced with empty self-loathing; hours earlier, Karli had earned straight "A's" for the first time in her academic career.. These platforms continue targeting her with unsolicited dangers to this day.*