

Teens Challenge Australia's Social Media Ban in Court



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Two Australian teenagers have launched a High Court challenge against the country's new social media ban for children under 16, calling the law unconstitutional and a violation of their right to free communication.

From 10 December, platforms including Meta, TikTok, and YouTube will be required to block account creation for Australians under 16. The government and campaigners argue the law is

essential to protect children from harmful online content and algorithms.

Fifteen-year-olds Noah Jones and Macy Neyland, supported by the Digital Freedom Project (DFP), argue that the ban silences young people and disproportionately affects vulnerable groups, including First Nations youth, teenagers with disabilities, rural children, and LGBTIQ+ youth.

“We shouldn’t be silenced. It feels like Orwell’s 1984, and that scares me,” said Neyland. Jones added, “We are the true digital natives and want to remain educated and savvy online. Safeguards should protect kids, not silence them.”

DFP says the challenge will focus on the law’s impact on political communication and whether it is proportionate to its aims, urging alternatives such as digital literacy programs, age-appropriate platform features, and privacy-conscious age verification methods.

Communications Minister Anika Wells emphasized that the government will not be swayed by legal threats, promising to “stand firm on behalf of Australian parents.”

The case has drawn global attention as debates continue over protecting children online while respecting their digital rights. Google, owner of YouTube, is also reportedly considering a constitutional challenge.