

HOPE (Healthy Online Platforms for Everyone) Coalition Principles

Young people are inundated daily on social media with messages advertising, normalizing, and even glamorizing substances — as are social media users of all ages. While these kinds of messages have pervaded our offline world, they are concentrated on our social media feeds, and even customized for us.

There is a proven relationship between exposure to social media and substance use.

Compared to youth who are not on social media, youth who are on social media daily are:

3 times as likely to use alcohol

5 times as likely to use tobacco (including by vaping)

2 times as likely to use marijuana

We know that the messages we see, including advertising and sponsored posts, influence our understanding of the world around us. Given that our feeds, including ads, are customized to us, many of us are targeted by messaging around alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and more. Seeing these messages makes us more likely to use those substances when presented with the chance, as they normalize and even promote substance use. HOPE seeks to change that.

Healthy Online Platforms for Everyone (HOPE) is a coalition organizing to hold Facebook, and the larger online community, accountable for the advertising that we all receive. By reducing access to substances, as well as by supporting healthy messaging, norms and policies that act as protective factors, we create communities that invest in youth and hold everyone accountable — communities that thrive. We call this work environmental prevention.

While the advertisement of substances is a problem across social media platforms, the Coalition is focusing on Facebook because of its strategic position. For Facebook to address this issue would not only have an impact that all of the platforms under the Facebook umbrella (like Instagram), it would also influence other social media companies to look into their own policies.

With a focus on changing the targeting of these messages, we are creating HOPE to:

- To hold Facebook and other online platforms accountable for the advertising users receive, as well as the protections that exist for young users (under 21)
- Promote healthy messages on online platforms
- To understand and educate the community on the relationship between advertisements on social media and consumption of alcohol and other substances

We hope you will join us in elevating this conversation by becoming a part of HOPE, either as a member of our Coalition, or within your community. Complete this [form](#) to show your solidarity and support for this issue, by sharing your experiences with targeted advertisement using #weallneedhealthymedia, and by sharing resources with your community.

Although young people are often disproportionately targeted by these ads and messages, improving the health of our online communities benefits us all offline. As we are increasingly reliant upon social media for connectivity and information, we are all impacted. Healthy online platforms are for everyone.

HOPE is facilitated by the Youth Leadership Institute. YLI has worked on health equity for over 27 years in the Bay Area, Central Valley, and recently in Southern California. Through various local and statewide wins, we have been successful in leading prevention efforts that increase positive health outcomes for communities. Our efforts aim to engage youth in the health equity conversations in their communities, specifically how messages, access, policies, and social norms around alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs affect their environment.

To show support for HOPE, you can endorse us at <https://forms.gle/K24mdaTENn4iFZv88>.