EXHIBIT 142

Mark Zuckerberg says there's 'no causal connection' between social media and teen mental health

Despite this, he says Meta is ready to comply with child safety laws.

by **Emma Roth**

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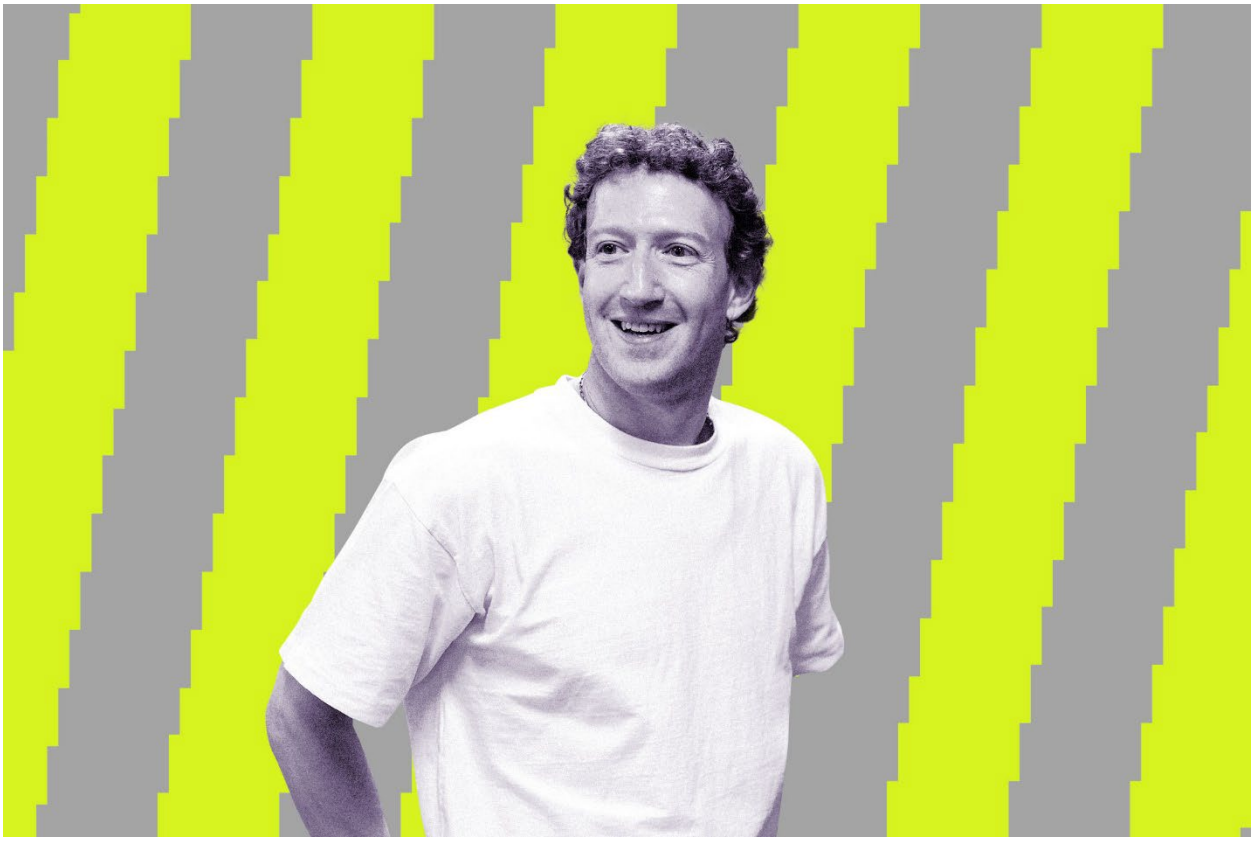


Image: Cath Virginia / The Verge; Getty Images



Emma Roth

is a news writer who covers the streaming wars, consumer tech, crypto, social media, and much more. Previously, she was a writer and editor at MUO.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg is pushing back on the idea that social media directly harms teen mental health. During an interview with *The Verge*'s Alex Heath, Zuckerberg said that "the majority of the high-quality research out there suggests that there's no causal connection at a broad scale between these things."

This echoes the statement Zuckerberg gave in front of Congress in January during a hearing about child safety, where he argued that existing research hasn't shown a causal link between social media and poor teen mental health. As my colleague Adi Robertson pointed out at the time, it's difficult to prove causal links, and research shows social media could cause both negative and positive impacts on an adolescent's mental health.

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"The academic research shows something that I think, to me, fits more with what I've seen of how the platforms operate," Zuckerberg told *The Verge*. "But it's counter to what a lot of people think, and I think that's going to be a reckoning that we'll have to have." Zuckerberg argues that giving parents the tools they need to limit their child's social media use is the right approach for the company:

You can play a role in trying to make something better even if the thing wasn't caused by you in the first place… I think that we can play a role in giving people parental controls over the apps. I think that parental controls are also really important because parents have different ways that they want to raise their kids.

Earlier this month, Instagram announced that it's going to move every teen on the platform into a more private account with restricted DMs and a "Sleep Mode" feature to limit notifications at night. Meta also launched a new suite of parental controls for Instagram and Messenger last year that gives parents more insight into what their kids are doing on both platforms.

Concerns surrounding the impact of social media on teen mental health heightened following the release of the Facebook Papers in 2021, which revealed internal documents suggesting Meta was aware of the negative impact Instagram had on some teens. US lawmakers have since ramped up efforts to age-gate social media platforms, with many backing the surgeon general's proposal of putting a tobacco-like warning label on the networks.

Zuckerberg once again reiterated that he believes app store owners like Google and Apple should handle age verification, not individual platforms. He adds that it's "not very

excusable" for them to avoid taking responsibility for the measure because "every time you go do a payment on your phone, there already is basically child age verification."

Despite Zuckerberg's skepticism about direct ties to social media and mental health, he told *The Verge* that the company will "follow the government's direction and the laws" on child safety if they're passed. "I would say that the ability to get push notifications and get distracted, from my perspective, seems like a much greater contributor to mental health issues than a lot of the specific apps."

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