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The Responsible Kidfluence Code

Building a Framework for Ethical Family Content

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The Responsible Kidfluence Code

Hello, We're Pepper.

We help brands become influencers, with holistic, consistent and measurable social media marketing strategies that truly align with their business goals.





Beckii Flint
Co-Founder & Director, Pepper



Scott Guthrie
IIMTB Director General & Co-Founder, EIMA



Gregor Poynton MP
Chair of the APPG on Children's Online Safety

We believe in the power of people.

In July 2025, we hosted an in-person panel on the Responsible Kidfluence Code, bringing together voices from across the industry - policymakers, brand leaders, creators, parents, and child advocates.

This whitepaper captures their insights and shared commitment to protecting children in the evolving world of influencer marketing.



Matthew & Ryan
Content Creators & Prospective Parents



Jemma Foster
Head of Brand, The Week Junior



Executive Summary.

Children are increasingly central to influencer marketing, yet remain outside the protections given to child actors and models. The Kidfluence Code sets standards for wellbeing, privacy, fairness, and safety, offering a practical framework shaped by creators, brands, policymakers, and advocates.



What’s Inside?

You’ll find practical guidance, real-world reflections, and clear recommendations designed to help agencies, brands, creators, and regulators navigate this fast-changing space.

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Setting the Scene

Why the Kidfluence Code is Needed

Influencer marketing has matured into a powerful industry, but the structures protecting its youngest participants haven't kept pace. Unlike traditional entertainment, where hours, pay, and welfare are safeguarded, social media often operates without clear rules or accountability.

Children are building audiences, shaping culture, and even driving commercial success before they fully understand what it means to live publicly online. At the same time, parents, brands, and agencies are left making decisions without a shared standard to guide them.

The Kidfluence Code is designed to change this: a proactive, industry-led benchmark that recognises both the **realities of digital content** and the **rights of children within it**.

“

“Young influencers don't enjoy the same protections as their child model or actor counterparts... that's absent in this space.”

Scott Guthrie



What we're talking about today is children as creators. And that piece isn't really being picked up. It sits between multiple departments.

Gregor Poynton MP

Gaps in Law and Policy

Policymakers are aware of the risks children face online, but the **frameworks haven't kept pace with reality**. Responsibility is spread across multiple government departments, leaving **no clear owner** for child creator protection.

Some countries have acted. France now requires 15% of a child influencer's earnings to be held in trust, and Illinois mandates 30%, but the UK has no equivalent safeguards.

Children featured in content at home remain outside the reach of performance licences and labour laws, despite generating commercial value.

Even when regulation arrives, digital culture is evolving faster than law. AI tools, emerging platforms, and new content styles open fresh risks, often before policymakers can respond.

That's why the Kidfluence Code is designed as a **practical, industry-led response** that can evolve with the ecosystem.



Industry at a Turning Point

The inclusion of children in digital campaigns has grown rapidly, but the absence of universal standards is now a reputational risk. Audiences are calling for greater accountability, brands are worried about inconsistency, and platforms have yet to build in universal protections.

This moment represents a choice for the industry: continue relying on ad-hoc discretion, or establish a shared benchmark. Without it, missteps, from unclear contracts to unsafe amplification, can erode trust with audiences and damage long-term brand value.

The Kidfluence Code is designed as that benchmark: a proactive, industry-led framework that sets expectations before regulation catches up. It signals a commitment to do more than the minimum, and to put child welfare at the heart of influencer marketing practice.

Right now, turning off the comments on content generally is a user-to-user choice... that means children are not having a universal experience.

Beckii Flint



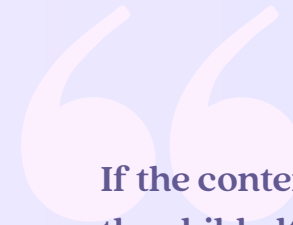
Lived Experiences & Current Challenges ✨

Consequences for Child Creators

Children in influencer marketing often face pressures that their peers in regulated industries are shielded from. Without safeguards, they may experience anxiety, burnout, or blurred identities from being constantly “on” for an audience.

| *“I had to grow that thick skin at a very early age.” - Beckii Flint on growing up as a child creator on YouTube*

Some families also become financially dependent on content featuring their children, which can lead to pressure to keep filming even when a child resists.



If the content is doing really well, the child ultimately becomes the breadwinner... and that's a huge amount of pressure.

Beckii Flint



Brands and Creators Navigating Ambiguity

For brands, the absence of clear standards creates uncertainty: what is acceptable, what crosses a line, and who decides? Even well-intentioned campaigns may expose children to risks if safeguards are left to personal discretion.

For creators, the ambiguity is personal. Many are becoming parents themselves, weighing the desire to share family life with the need to protect their children.

It's just something we need to navigate... there are so many people that seem like they've done it right, and of course we've seen lots of people that maybe haven't.

Matthew & Ryan

Sometimes you have to go back and say, can you just cut that bit out... you just know you're going to get unpleasant feedback.

Jemma Foster



Defining the Landscape

Children appear in digital content in multiple ways - as primary creators, featured talent, background presence, or actors in brand-led campaigns. Each scenario carries different levels of visibility and risk.

| *“When you’re working with a parenting influencer... their children are also most likely going to be featured in that.” Beckii Flint*

This diversity of involvement makes it harder for brands, agencies, and policymakers to apply consistent protections. What works in one context may not apply in another, highlighting the need for a flexible but universal framework.

Unclear Contracts, Unclear Boundaries

Most contracts in influencer marketing are designed for adults, with little or no reference to children. This leaves grey areas around rights, pay, and protections when children appear in content.

“Who are you contracting? Are you contracting the parent or are you contracting the whole family?” - Beckii Flint

The absence of clear agreements raises critical questions about consent, accountability, and whether children will have fair access to the income their work helps generate.

Authenticity vs. Performance

Audiences value authenticity, but children can be pushed, consciously or unconsciously, into performing. Scripted lines, repeat takes, or subtle labels (“the cheeky one,” “the smart one”) risk turning natural moments into roles.

“You can really tell when a child has been given some kind of, you know, motto copy... it doesn’t feel authentic.” - Jemma Foster

Balancing storytelling with child-led participation is vital to protect wellbeing, preserve trust, and ensure content remains reflective of genuine family life.

The Kidfluence Framework ✨

The Four Pillars of Protection

The Responsible Kidfluence Code is built around four essential pillars. Use the following four pages as a checklist to review your own practices when children are involved in content, ensuring clear standards and safeguards across influencer marketing.



Mental Wellbeing

Children should be treated as children first, with boundaries that protect their emotional, mental, and physical health.



Financial Wellbeing

When children contribute to commercial success, they should have protections and fair access to income generated.



Privacy

A child's identity, routines, and online presence must be protected to avoid long-term risks or unwanted exposure.



Safety

Children must be protected from risks, misuse, and harm, with safeguarding built into every campaign.

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Mental Wellbeing

Is the child emotionally supported, rested, and genuinely happy to be involved in the content you're creating? Are they being treated as a child first, and not a performer?

Have I offered flexibility in timelines and content formats to suit the child's routine?

☐

Have I avoided scripted lines, repeated takes, or perfection-led expectations in the brief?

☐

Have I made it clear that creators can opt out if their child isn't up for filming?

☐

Have I ensured the child is only included when essential to the content, not by default?

☐

Have I planned to moderate comments or supported the creator in doing so?

☐

Have I set clear limits on how long content featuring the child can be used, with no automatic reuse?

☐

Am I avoiding overexposing the same child across multiple campaigns or deliverables?

☐

Have I avoided labelling or stereotyping the child in scripts, captions, or hashtags?

☐

Have I suggested or agreed to a separate fee for the child if they are a key part of the content?

☐

Have I asked if a portion of earnings will be safeguarded for the child's future?

☐

Have I asked if a portion of the earnings can be deposited into an account in the child's name directly?

☐

Does the contract acknowledge the child's presence and usage rights clearly?

☐

Have I avoided vague contract terms that allow indefinite reuse of content featuring the child?

☐

Would I feel confident explaining the financial setup to the child or their guardian in simple, ethical terms?

☐

Financial Wellbeing

If the child is contributing to commercial success, are they benefitting in a fair and future-focused way? Are there clear protections in place for their earnings?

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Privacy

Does or can the child understand what it means to be online, and do parents have boundaries in place to limit what’s shared about their identity, routine, and environment?

Have I avoided requesting or approving content that includes school logos, uniforms, birthdates, real names, or recognisable home/routine details?

☐

Have I offered or encouraged lower-visibility formats such as Stories or time-limited posts?

☐

Does the brief support anonymised or creative framing (e.g. blurred faces, backs of heads, or pseudonyms)?

☐

Have I made it clear that creators won’t be penalised for privacy-conscious choices, like not showing a child’s face?

☐

Have I acknowledged that children cannot give informed consent, and ensured parents feel empowered to set limits or change their mind?

☐

Does the contract or agreement include a clause confirming the right to remove or archive child-inclusive content at any time?

☐

Have I considered whether this content could become problematic, embarrassing, or misused in future?

☐

Have I made sure not to ask for real-time posting or geotagging when children are featured?

☐

Does the brief clearly exclude vulnerable or private moments?

☐

Have I reassured creators they can exclude their child from content without consequence?

☐

Have I encouraged creators to disable duets, stitches, downloads, or comments on child-inclusive content?

☐

Will those same protections be applied to any paid amplification or brand-owned versions of the content?

☐

Do I have a plan to monitor for unauthorised reposts or misuse of the content?

☐

Does the contract acknowledge when a child appears and include a clear time limit on usage?

☐

Have I included a takedown clause allowing the creator to request content removal at any time?

☐

Have I prohibited unauthorised edits, reshares, or repurposing of content featuring children?

☐

Am I prepared to adapt deliverables or timelines to protect a child's emotional safety if needed?

☐

Safety

Are you confident that the child is physically, emotionally, and digitally safe across every brand partnership or piece of content they're involved in?

Pathways Forward

Innovative Ideas & Solutions

A successful strategy connects organic content, paid ads, influencer marketing, and creative production - all working seamlessly to deliver a unified brand message.

By aligning efforts across platforms, brands can amplify engagement, build trust, and drive results.



Enable comment moderation by default

Platforms and brands should activate stronger safeguards to reduce harmful or inappropriate interactions.



Remove assumptions from campaign briefs

Campaigns should state clearly that children aren't required unless essential.



Adopt AI tools for safer content checks

Technology can help scale monitoring and flag risks faster than manual oversight.



Encourage family stories without child focus

Families can share experiences without compromising privacy or consent.

Recommendations & Best Practices

1**Clear Briefs**

Define expectations, avoid implicit pressure on families, and build in child flexibility.

2**Creator Choice**

Treat participation as optional, respect consent, and allow children to opt out at any time.

3**Agency Safeguards**

Add child-specific clauses to contracts, review campaigns, and act as a safeguard.

4**Platform Protection**

Strengthen moderation defaults, reduce risky features, and prioritise child privacy.

5**Policy Reform**

Update labour and savings laws to reflect digital content creation.

How to Get Involved



Next Steps

Turn commitment into action with these steps:



Practice Review

Audit how children currently feature in your campaigns and identify risks or gaps



Team Advocacy

Share this guidance across legal, procurement, creative, and client-facing teams.



Industry Influence

Model ethical practices that raise standards across the sector.



Workflow Update

Refresh briefs, contracts, and templates to align with the Code.



Contract Safeguards

Add opt-out clauses, privacy language, and child-specific protections.



Ongoing Involvement

Stay engaged as the Code evolves with new resources and guidance.



We'd love to hear from you.

Get in Touch.



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