

School Board of Escambia County, Florida, Sues Social Media Companies

Meta, Snap, TikTok, Google, and YouTube allegedly cause harmful addictions that are creating a youth mental health crisis for which schools are bearing costs.

PENSACOLA, FL, UNITED STATES, October 26, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Levin Papantonio Rafferty](#) (LPR) law firm announced it has filed a lawsuit against major social media companies on behalf of The School Board of Escambia County, Florida. According to the [Complaint](#), Defendants' social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, and YouTube, are "harmfully addictive, which in turn causes additional related injuries."



Escambia County, Florida, public schools say the social media platforms cause depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and other harms that demand the schools' attention, requiring funding.

Specifically, the Complaint alleges:

“

Social media companies are profiting by exploiting and addicting the children of Escambia County, creating a youth mental crisis, and forcing schools to pick up the cost.”

*EMMIE PAULOS, ATTORNEY,
LEVIN PAPANTONIO RAFFERTY*

- * The Defendants target children.
- * Children are uniquely vulnerable to injury from the Defendants' social media platforms.
- * The Defendants engineer their products to attract and addict children.
- * Children compulsively use these social media platforms.
- * These products have created a youth mental health crisis.
- * The Defendants could have taken steps to avoid injuring Escambia County schools and their students.

The lawsuit (Case No. 3:23-cv-24611-MCR-ZCB) was filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida Pensacola Division and has

now been transferred to the United States District Court for the Northern District of California and assigned to Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers, who is overseeing similar other civil actions in multidistrict litigation (In re: Social Media Adolescent Addiction/Personal Injury Product Liability Litigation, MDL 3047).

According to the Complaint, the youth mental health crisis has infected all facets of education. Allegedly, by creating record rates of mental health issues like anxiety and depression, the Defendants' products cause drops in students' school performance, increases in student absences, and greater likelihood of engaging in substance abuse. The School Board of Escambia County alleges these consequences directly impact schools' ability to fulfill their educational mission.

"These social media companies are profiting by exploiting and addicting the children of Escambia County, creating a youth mental crisis, and forcing schools to pick up the cost," said Levin Papantonio Rafferty Attorney [Emmie Paulos](#), who filed the social media lawsuit on behalf of The School Board of Escambia County.

The Complaint further refers to the school board's need for funding to develop a "long-term plan to deal with the mental health crisis and address the record rates of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and the other tragic byproducts caused by Defendants."

The School Board of Escambia County is bringing claims for public nuisance and negligence stemming from the Defendants' "unreasonably dangerous" social media products and their failure to warn of such dangers.

"The Defendants created these products to be attractive and addictive to children," Paulos said. "They knew or should have known about the harms these products would cause, but in the interest of profits, these companies failed to provide adequate safeguards against the mental and physical injuries Escambia County schools are observing in their students.

"This can't be a problem for the school district," Paulos continued. "Social media companies must pay, and they must stop targeting our youth in the name of profit."



LPR Attorney Emmie Paulos has been appointed as a member of the Plaintiff Steering Committee in In re: Social Media Adolescent Addiction/Personal Injury Product Liability Litigation, MDL 3047.

About LPR Attorney Emmie Paulos

LPR Attorney Emmie Paulos represents adolescents and young adults that are being exploited by social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snap, and YouTube, causing them physical and emotional harm such as suicide, suicidal ideation, self-harm, and thoughts of self-harm and body dysmorphia resulting in eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia.

Paulos has been appointed as a member of the Plaintiff Steering Committee in In re: Social Media Adolescent Addiction/Personal Injury Product Liability Litigation, MDL 3047.

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