

## **Title:** 2026 Chatbot Safety Laws: Parent & Kids Guide

**Introduction:** AI chatbots are becoming part of everyday life for kids. While useful, they can pose risks like exposure to inappropriate content, self-harm triggers, and emotional manipulation. California's 2026 laws (SB 243) aim to protect children. This guide provides clear, actionable information for parents and kids.

**1. What Are the 2026 Chatbot Safety Laws?** - Law Name: SB 243 - Effective Date: January 1, 2026 - Purpose: Protect children from harm caused by AI companion chatbots. - Who It Applies To: Companion chatbots that build emotional bonds, not customer service bots or games.

**2. Safety Rules for Chatbots** - AI Disclosure: Bots must clearly inform users they are AI. - Self-Harm Protocols: Bots must detect suicidal talk and refer kids to crisis hotlines. - Content Blocks: Explicit sexual or unsafe content must be blocked. - Annual Reporting: Companies report safety measures and crisis referrals. - Penalties: Families can take legal action for violations, with fines up to \$1,000 per incident.

**3. Tips for Parents** - Monitor chatbot usage and apps children use. - Discuss AI limitations and safe online behavior. - Use parental controls and time limits. - Encourage offline activities and open conversations.

**4. Tips for Kids** - Know that chatbots are AI, not real people. - Avoid sharing sensitive information. - Tell a parent or trusted adult if a chatbot makes you feel unsafe. - Use crisis resources if needed.

**5. Helpful Resources** - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) - California Office of Suicide Prevention: [Website Link] - Tips for safe AI use: [Link to reliable AI safety information]

**Conclusion:** This guide helps parents and kids understand chatbot safety and California laws protecting minors. Staying informed and proactive ensures a safer digital environment for children.