



## Law Enforcement Against Perpetrators of Child Exploitation Through Tiktok Social Media For Economic Gain

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### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Law enforcement, Perpetrators, Exploitation, Children

*Received :* 27 December 2024

*Revised :* 14 January 2025

*Accepted:* 18 February 2025

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### ABSTRACT

The issue of child exploitation on social media, particularly TikTok, is getting worse. Without considering the detrimental effects, children are exploited for selfish purposes. The purpose of this study is to learn about legal actions taken by law enforcement against those who exploit children and initiatives to shield kids from being exploited on social media in line with the Child Protection Law. Using a normative juridical approach and a qualitative methodology, legal document analysis and literature review are employed. The study's findings demonstrate that, in spite of numerous regulations, the community's inconsistent knowledge of the law, a lack of agency cooperation, and a lack of funding continue to impede compliance.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia is one of the nations that is greatly impacted by technological advancements worldwide. This influence is felt in practically every area of our day-to-day activity. Social media, whether it be Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, Tik Tok, or another platform, is an integral part of our everyday life. We can access these items by using technology-based electronic media. A coin with two sides is analogous to technical advancements, meaning that they have both positive and negative effects (Kompas.com, 2021).

The ability to create long-distance connection between individuals in different regions of the world, facilitate information sharing, ease the transaction system, and serve as a place to earn a living are some of the good effects. In addition to its benefits, technology advancements like social media can also have drawbacks, such as creating numerous issues if improperly utilized. Social media, including the tik tok app, is frequently used by individuals and groups to engage in exploitative activity against children. This is only one of the several issues. According to Helga Adeliya (2021), Users of the social media platform TikTok can make short videos up to three minutes long by utilizing music, filters, and other creative tools.

Children are the mandate and gift of God Almighty, which in each child is inherent dignity and dignity as a whole human being. As a mandate from and the gift of God Almighty, children must be cared for and protected because Since they will be the next generation, children are also a nation's and state's assets. Article 1 number 1 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning kid Protection affirms that a kid is defined as any individual who is not yet eighteen (18) years of age, including unborn children. The age definition makes clear that a person is still considered a child until they become eighteen (18). The law demonstrates that a child's rights must be acknowledged even before the child is born by classifying a child who is still in the womb as a child.

Thus, it can be said that the rights of children are human rights that have been inherent since birth in the world and that are still in the womb as contained in the child protection law and applicable laws and regulations such as human rights that regulate the rights of children in the growth and development of physical, mental and social according to Nanda Dwi Rizki et al. (2024), as well as the right to be protected from mistreatment and discrimination by anybody who uses the law as a guarantee in order to benefit the nation, religion, and family in the future.

Based on the explanation of article 13 paragraph (1) letter b of Law Number 23 of 2002, it is explained that exploitation treatment is an act of utilizing, utilizing or extorting children to obtain personal, family or other people's benefits. Child exploitation is an act of using a child to do something without caring about the child's health, education, and mental (Moh. Adam Rizki et al, 2024). Child trafficking, forced labor, sexual assault, and other types of maltreatment are all considered instances of child exploitation. This kind of exploitation can happen on social media when content about minors is used without sufficient safeguards or the child's agreement.

In Indonesia, child exploitation is a crime that frequently takes place both offline and online. Criminals can now more easily access the internet and take advantage of children who are at risk thanks to technological advancements (Ahmad Hafiz Muharram Sk and Faisal Riza, 2024). Examples of how this exploitation takes place on social media, particularly TikTok, include using children in videos without their consent, using them to sell during TikTok live, or creating a video that persuades live viewers to give money or gifts to the exploitation perpetrators – in this case, orphanages. This is certainly contrary to Article 13 paragraph (1) point 2 of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection which emphasizes that every child while in the care of parents, guardians or any other party who is responsible for upbringing, is entitled to protection from exploitation, both economic and sexual.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The researcher will employ primary, secondary, and tertiary legal documents as data sources because this study is designed to be a literature research study. Primary legal resources are legally binding documents that have a direct connection to the issue under study. Laws and regulations that are specifically relevant to child protection make up this legal content, namely Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection and Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Supporting legal materials from primary legal materials are known as secondary legal materials. Secondary legal materials in this study are those that are relevant to the topics covered in the study, including textbooks, print and electronic media, journals, the internet, articles, research findings, and other written works. Therefore, legal material is required in order to finish this research. A scientific goal that aims to gather reliable facts and solve a problem topic is the object of study. The writer will find it easier to decide what to address if they choose the appropriate topic (Untung Yasiyono, 2024). Therefore, the researcher has developed the topics that will be discussed based on the formulation of the problems contained in this study, namely law enforcement against child exploitation perpetrators in accordance with laws and regulations and to find out efforts to protect children from social media exploitation based on the Child Protection Law, in order to make the topics that will be discussed in this study more clear and systematic.

Primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials are the data sources that the researcher will employ in this study because it is a literary research study. Primary legal resources are legally binding documents that have a direct connection to the issue under study. Laws and regulations that are specifically relevant to child protection make up this legal content, namely Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection and Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Secondary legal materials are supporting legal materials from primary legal materials. Secondary legal materials in this study are those that are relevant to the topics covered in the study, including textbooks, print and electronic media, journals, the internet, articles, research findings, and other written works. Then, tertiary legal materials, including legal dictionaries, are required to finish the legal materials for this study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study of conducting legal research in a methodical manner is known as legal research methodology (Muhaimin, 2010). The researcher employed a normative juridical research approach, conducting a literature law study by looking for regulations pertaining to the issue under discussion and using secondary data or literature materials as foundational materials (Soerjono Soekanto, 2006). In normative legal research, data is gathered by looking at legal norms and legal principles in the law's provisions. The research's specifications are more centered on secondary data found in libraries, which explains the term "literature review." Examining positive legal norms, legal principles, and how a law or regulation fits into a specific legal issue are the primary objectives of the study (Jaholden Manik, 2021).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **a. Law Enforcement Of Child Exploitation Perpetrators According To Laws and Regulations.**

The State of Indonesia is a state of law as stated in article 1 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (1945 Constitution). This means that everything about interests, both rights and obligations, there is a law that regulates them, including children's rights. The rights of children are regulated in Law Number 23 of 2002 in conjunction with Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection has emphasized that exploitation treatment is an act of empowering, utilizing or extorting children to obtain personal, family or other people's benefits. Child exploitation is an act that exploits children for certain advantages, both economically and sexually, by ignoring their rights and welfare. The offenders do this to enrich themselves, their families, and others without considering the problems and experiences the child may have down the road. Children who are exploited suffer emotional and physical consequences as a result of their exploitation.

Child exploitation encompasses a range of child maltreatment practices, such as forced labor, child trafficking, and sexual abuse. People without human feelings frequently utilize children because they are aware of the precarious and unique state of youngsters. Even when they later carry out these commands and instructions with force, children frequently obey all of the instructions given by adults, whether they be their parents or the person caring for them. Additionally, children are routinely made to undertake forced labor without taking into account their developmental stage, age, or ability. Street busking, construction employment, and most tragically adult sex work are a few examples of such occupations. It is important to understand that in order to preserve and fulfill children's rights in line with human rights and those outlined in the Child Protection Law, children must not be subjected to coercion or abuse by those who have malice towards their development.

Children are also frequently asked to perform forced labor without consideration for their age, aptitude, or stage of development. Examples of such jobs include street busking, construction work, and – most tragically – adult sex work. It is important to understand that in order to preserve and fulfill children's

rights in line with human rights and those outlined in the Child Protection Law, children must not be subjected to coercion or abuse by those who have malice towards their development. The proceeds from the coin conversion into cash are then utilized for the offender's own gain, leaving the youngster with nothing, even though according to Article 1 paragraph (26) of Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower it is stated that a child is every person who is 18 (eighteen) years old, in this case it can be understood that a person is said to be a child before the person reaches the age of 18 years and cannot be employed.

The growth and development of children are negatively impacted by acts of exploitation (Andi Irma Ariani et al., 2022). Consequently, to repress law enforcement as equitably as possible against those who commit crimes of exploitation by law enforcement. Organizations or groups known as law enforcement agencies are in charge of carrying out and upholding national laws. They are on the front lines of preserving social fairness, order, and security (Annisa, 2023). The police, prosecutor's office, judiciary, and advocates make up the law enforcement agencies. To safeguard and uphold children's rights throughout their development, the components of these law enforcement organizations must cooperate and come together. The law must be applied as a positive law that is applicable in Indonesia and must be carried out in conformity with and based on current laws and regulations.

According to the applicable legal regulations, the state is required to protect children from employment that jeopardizes their health, education, development, and other rights; child exploitation is still common, particularly in the form of economic exploitation; and law enforcement against those who engage in child exploitation must be taken into consideration, this is clearly mandated in Article 20 and Article 59 paragraph of Law No. 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law No. 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection clearly states that: "The Government, local governments, and other State institutions are obliged and responsible to provide special protection to children", Then it is said that the special protection is given to children who experience exploitation both sexually, economically, and socially, According to this story, the government genuinely wishes to protect children.

There are three types of commercial or economic sexual exploitation of children, according to Abdussalam's book: child prostitution, child pornography, and child trafficking for sex. According to these mappings, the three types of exploitation have been discovered to be extremely widespread and severe; it is predicted that between 40,000 and 70,000 youngsters, or possibly more, are prostituted, accounting for 30% of all prostitution. Adolescent figures are frequently featured on publicly accessible websites, and the signs of child exploitation are predicted to worsen as global information and technology continue to advance (Abdussalam, 2007). According to data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), 431 occurrences of child abuse have occurred in Indonesia alone in the last three years, beginning in 2021 and ending in 2023 (Anggi Muliawati, 2024).

The Tunas Kasih Olayama Raya Orphanage, located in Jl. Pelita IV Number 63, West Sidorame II Village, Medan Perjuangan District, Medan City, North

Sumatra, is an example of the most recent case involving child exploitation, in which the manager is the culprit. The orphanage's 37-year-old male manager is named Zamanueli Zebua. Since 2023, Zamanueli Zebua and his spouse have been managing the orphanage. There are 26 kids in the orphanage, including 4 infants and 22 other kids, some of whom are in elementary school and others of whom are in junior high. When Zamanueli Zebua performs acts of child exploitation, he instructs the orphanage children to sing and clap during the tiktok live performance. This makes the audience feel sorry for the children and encourages them to donate in the form of gifts, which the perpetrator then converts into cash using the DANA application and deposits into an account under his control. Additionally, on September 17, 2023, at approximately 1:00 WIB, the offender recorded a live video in which they were feeding a two-month-old infant while adding a caption or narration "Oh Allah, a 2-month-old baby is fed a lot and given to drink water at 1 night" (Goklas Wisely, 2023). On September 20, 2023, the Medan Police Chief named Zamanueli Zebua a suspect for his activities. Then on September 21, 2023, Zamanueli Zebua was detained by investigators until on January 18, 2024, Zamanueli Zebua was handed over to the Umun Prosecutor after the case file was complete.

Looking at the data above, it can be concluded that the number of child exploitation has reached an alarming number, therefore it is very necessary to be observant and firm law enforcement in following up on this matter. Law enforcement is defined as law enforcement by law enforcement officials and people who have interests in accordance with applicable law. Law enforcement itself is a process to realize the wishes of the law into reality, which is referred to here as the wishes of the law are the thoughts of the law-making body formulated in the legal regulation (Satjipto Raharjo, 2005)

Law enforcement is a process that is carried out as an effort to be able to enforce or function legal norms that apply and have been regulated as a guideline for their behavior in traffic or legal relationships in human life in society and the state (Agus Riyanto, 2018). Therefore, this act of exploitation has also been regulated regarding the punishment that can be applied to the perpetrator of exploitation of the child. This aims to ensure that a law can be applied by having a content of certainty and justice.

Child protection laws contain rules and regulations that control child abuse both offline—such as forced labor and making kids busk on the streets—and online—such as on social media platforms like Facebook and TikTok, namely Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection and Law Number 35 of 2014 Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection. The provisions of the regulations that regulate criminal sanctions against perpetrators of exploitation of children are contained in article 76I juncto Article 88 of Law Number 35 of 2014 Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection where the content of the regulation is that Everyone is prohibited from placed, allow, committed, ordered to do, or participate in the economic and/or sexual exploitation of children and if violated can be punished with a maximum prison sentence of 10 (ten) years and/or a maximum fine of Rp200,000,000.00

(two hundred million rupiah). The elements of criminal acts regulated in article 76I consist of subjective elements and objective elements.

- a. Subjective Elements
  - ❖ Everyone
- b. Objective Elements
  - ❖ Place
  - ❖ Permit
  - ❖ Committing, Ordering to Do, or Participating in Economic and/or Sexual Exploitation of Children

According to Bernadetha Aurelia Oktavira (2020), a person must meet both the subjective and objective requirements of the charges against him in order to be found guilty of an act of exploitation. Before the child to be prosecuted under Article 76I juncto Article 88, it must be demonstrated that the individual placed, permitted, ordered, or engaged in the child's economic and/or sexual exploitation with a maximum threat of imprisonment of 10 (ten) years and/or a maximum fine of Rp200,000,000.00 (two hundred million rupiah).

Regarding the case used as an example of the case above, law enforcement must be enforced for the acts committed by the perpetrators of exploitation of the child. The law enforcement is carried out by the authorized law enforcement agency. The law enforcement agency that has this authority, namely law enforcement, consists of the Police, Prosecutor's Office, Judiciary and Advocates. Because the case occurred in the city of Medan and the perpetrator was also domiciled in the city of Medan, the law enforcers who were authorized to handle the exploitation case were started by the Medan City Resort Police (POLRESTABES Medan) which in this case acted as investigators and investigators. The perpetrator of the exploit was arrested on September 20, 2023 and began to be detained for the investigation process starting on September 21, 2023 on suspicion of violating Article 76I Jo Article 88 of Law Number 35 of 2014, Law Number 35 of 2014 amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection. Then after it is completed at the investigation stage and the case file is complete, the file will be transferred to the Medan District Attorney's Office which in this case acts as the public prosecutor against the perpetrator. Based on the results of the investigation and investigation as well as the existence of evidence related to the criminal act, the Public Prosecutor can submit and raise the case to the court level to be tried and decided by the Panel of Judges of the Medan District Court through various stages in the criminal justice process. In the judicial process, the Public Prosecutor conducted a prosecution based on Article 76I Jo Article 88 of Law Number 35 of 2014, Law Number 35 of 2014 amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection and demanded that the perpetrator be sentenced to imprisonment for 9 years and a fine of Rp. 150,000,000 (One Hundred and Fifty Million Rupiah). Based on the available evidence, the judge in his decision has decided the case and imposed a criminal penalty on the perpetrators of exploitation, namely imprisonment for 5 years and a fine of Rp. 150,000,000 (One Hundred and Fifty Million Rupiah).

**b. Efforts to Protect Children from Social Media Exploitation Based on the Child Protection Law**

Every person has the right to be shielded from all forms of violence, discrimination, and exploitation. According to Endang Prastini (2024), these rights are a component of the human rights that are inalienable to each and every person and that the government and even the community as a whole must uphold and defend. This is not an exception to the rule that children's rights must be protected from exploitation by careless people who do it to enrich themselves, their families, and others. For children's rights to be upheld and for their growth and development to continue, they must be protected. The government and the larger community must work together to implement this protection, and in particular, the parents and guardians who look after the kid must be involved. This is in line with what has been mandated in article 20 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection.

Child protection efforts are all activities that strive in the context of safeguarding, guaranteeing and protecting children and the rights owned by the children so that they can live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with the dignity and dignity of humanity, as well as receive protection from violence and discrimination and exploitation (PARALEGAL ID, 2014). The definition of child protection is also affirmed in article 1 number 2 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, namely that Child Protection is all activities to guarantee and protect Children and their rights so that they can live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with the dignity and dignity of humanity, as well as receive protection from violence and discrimination.

In order to maintain and realize the rights of these children, article 20 of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection has emphasized that those who are responsible and obliged in the implementation of child protection are the state, government, community, family and parents of the child. For children's rights to be realized and fulfilled, these factors must come together to seek their protection (Novita, Endas Trisnawati, and Yeyet Saputra, 2022). To prevent child trafficking from spreading, these factors must support one another. To stop these crimes from continuing, law enforcement must apply the most equitable penalties to those who engage in child exploitation.

Child protection efforts can be carried out in an international and national scope (John Dirk Pasalbessy, 2015). The subject is children from different countries, and the international scope in question includes multiple countries or cross-countries. The United Nations Children's Fund, also known as UNICEF, is responsible for carrying out child protection initiatives on a global scale. In order to preserve children's rights and support their development, international organizations are established. The United Nations, which is devoted to child protection, includes the UNICEF organization. Established on December 11, 1946, UNICEF started operations in Indonesia in 1948. Emergency aid to stop hunger on the island of Lombok was UNICEF Indonesia's inaugural initiative (UNICEF Indonesia, 2013). In a declaration of children's rights adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1959, universal children's rights were established, including the requirement that all children be shielded from all

forms of abuse, exploitation, and neglect (Syarifuddin Hidayat and Ahmad Mahyani, 2017).

on a national level, specifically the creation of the Indonesian Child Protection Commission, or KPAI for short. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) was established on October 20, 2002 based on Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection (Typhoon Yuniarto 2023). KPAI aims to improve and maintain the protection of children's rights so that they can grow and develop optimally.

If we talk about legal protection efforts for children's rights, it can be divided into 2, namely Preventive Efforts and Repressive Efforts (Philipus M. Hadjon, 1987). In preventive efforts or preventive efforts, the emphasis is on eliminating opportunities to commit crimes and repressive efforts or enforcement efforts, namely efforts made when a criminal act or crime has occurred, namely in the form of law enforcement by imposing punishment (Fadhly. 2021)

The efforts taken to prevent child exploitation for financial gain and to give children extra safety Article 66 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection states that every child in emergency situations has the right to receive special protection from the government. This includes protection for children affected by armed conflict, natural disasters, social unrest, and other extraordinary situations. The government is responsible for ensuring the fulfillment of these rights through appropriate policies and programs.:

1. The dissemination and socialization of legal provisions related to the protection of children from economic and/or sexual exploitation are crucial. This effort is necessary due to the lack of awareness among parents and the community regarding the importance of safeguarding children's rights, which are essential for their well-being and optimal development within their environment. The responsibility for this socialization lies with the government, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), and relevant community members with expertise in child protection laws and regulations (Laurensius Arliman S, 2018).
2. Monitoring, Reporting and Sanctioning  
The government, KPAI, law enforcement authorities, and the broader community must actively monitor and report all instances of child exploitation to prevent and reduce its occurrence. Sanctions should be enforced fairly to deter future cases of child exploitation. Additionally, establishing a Cyber Police unit is essential to oversee and track developments related to cyber crimes, ensuring the prevention and eradication of child exploitation in digital spaces (Januri et al., 2022). The involvement of various companies, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, and the community in the elimination of economic and/or sexual exploitation of children.
3. This involvement aims to ensure that companies, labor unions, and non-governmental organizations do not employ or accept children for work before they reach the appropriate legal working age. If children are employed, the work assigned must be suitable for their age and capabilities

while also guaranteeing their safety in the workplace (Monica Ayu Caesar Isabela, 2022).

The implementation of age and content limitations on TikTok social media is another preventive measure that may be taken to end the exploitation of minors on these platforms. Setting age limits is necessary to prevent misuse of TikTok services for unethical and incorrect purposes. According to Sivitas Sorotan Media (2018), the age restriction for users who are permitted to use tiktok social media is 13 years old. If a user is younger than that, their account will be instantly blocked by tiktok management upon registration. This is also required to guarantee that TikTok users are individuals who have a solid understanding of social media usage and to prevent the potential for various types of illegal activity via TikTok social media. Because TikTok is a platform for expressing user creativity and for exchanging information and knowledge through the production of innovative videos that other TikTok users can view, content restrictions must also be established (Kyrie Eleison Wuwungam (et.al), 2021).

The purpose of content controls is to guarantee that videos posted on TikTok social media are educational, do not violate SARA (ethnicity, religion, or race), and do not include violence, discrimination, or exploitation. Before being released to the TikTok home page for all users to view as viewers, TikTok managers must filter the content shared by all users as creator content. Given how simple it is for people from all walks of life to utilize TikTok, certain steps must be taken to reduce child exploitation.

Repressive efforts refer to actions taken after a criminal act has occurred. In the context of protecting children from exploitation, these efforts involve imposing criminal sanctions on perpetrators. The penalties for individuals who exploit children for economic gain are outlined in Article 76I in conjunction with Article 88 of Law Number 35 of 2014 on Child Protection. Offenders may face imprisonment of up to 10 years and/or a maximum fine of Rp200,000,000.00 (two hundred million rupiah). These sanctions are enforced by the relevant law enforcement authorities through the criminal justice system at the local District Court where the crime took place.

There must be a positive relationship between the government, all societal levels, and child guardians or parents in order to promote the goal of ending child exploitation. To preserve the realization of children's rights and guarantee the development and well-being of children, these components must work together to implement and protect children.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- a. Behaviors that negatively affect children's development and growth are considered child exploitation. Without considering children's rights or the effects that will be felt by them, exploiters utilize children to further their own interests. The child's physical and mental health may be at danger as a result of this exploitation treatment. Children may not be able to grow and develop in their surroundings to their full potential as a result of these acts of exploitation. The provisions of the regulations that regulate criminal

sanctions against perpetrators of exploitation of children are contained in article 76I juncto Article 88 of Law Number 35 of 2014 Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection where the content of the regulation is that Every Person is prohibited from placed, allow, committed, ordered to do, or participate in the economic and/or sexual exploitation of children and if violated can shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a maximum of 10 (ten) years and/or a maximum fine of Rp200,000,000.00 (two hundred million rupiah). Law enforcers must also ensure that the law that has been given to the perpetrators of exploitation is the fairest law in order to suppress the growth of exploitation of children, because children must be protected and protected in accordance with the rights of children in the applicable laws and regulations.

- b. The government, law enforcement, and society at large must all outlaw the exploitation of children. To end child exploitation, these factors must come together. This can be done with various efforts such as those contained in article 66 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning child protection which emphasizes efforts that can help eradicate the exploitation of children, namely by strengthening socialization to all parents and levels of society. Then monitor and report if you know that there has been a criminal act of exploitation of children to the authorities so that it is immediately processed according to the applicable legal procedures and by coordinating and having good relations with companies and labor unions so as not to employ children under the age that is suitable for employment. Then because this writing is related to exploitation through social media, namely tiktok, it is necessary to determine the age limit and content limit in the tiktok social media. This aims to ensure that TikTok users are adults and understand how to use social media well and also aim to ensure that the videos and content on TikTok are good, quality content, add to the audience's insight and do not contain discrimination against ethnicity, religion and race (SARA). Furthermore, there is a need for a cyber police (*Cyber Police*) in each Regional Police to monitor every crime that occurs on social media or cyberspace.

### **ADVANCE RESEARCH**

Child exploitation on social media platforms, particularly TikTok, has become a growing concern. Perpetrators take advantage of the platform's monetization features, coercing children into creating content for financial gain. This exploitation can manifest through forced content production, live-streaming that encourages donations, or dangerous challenges. Despite TikTok's policies against child exploitation, enforcement remains inconsistent, making legal intervention crucial. This study explores the role of law enforcement in tackling child exploitation on TikTok, analyzing the effectiveness of existing regulations and law enforcement strategies.

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