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RCMOS - Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal The Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

Year VII, v.1 2026 | Submission: 05/20/2026 | Accepted: 05/23/2026 | Publication: 05/26/2026

Protecting children's and adolescents' privacy in the digital age: limits and challenges of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) in the face of premature adultification.

The protection of children's privacy in the digital age: limits and challenges of the LGPD in the face of early adultization

Child privacy protection in the digital era: limits and challenges of the LGPD before early adultization

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SUMMARY

This article addresses the protection of children's and adolescents' privacy in the digital age and the significant challenges arising from hyperconnectivity and the premature adultification of children and adolescents. The study analyzes the limits and challenges of applying the General Data Protection Law (LGPD) and the Statute of Children and Adolescents (LGPD) in the virtual environment, especially in the protection of the personal data of minors exposed to content and behaviors incompatible with their developmental stage. The research problem seeks to understand to what extent the Digital ECA and the LGPD guarantee effective protection for children and adolescents on digital platforms that encourage premature adultification and online overexposure. The justification is based on the growing vulnerability of children and adolescents in the face of new technologies, considering the increased risks related to abusive profiling, excessive data collection, and premature exposure on social networks. The research will be developed using the deductive method, with a qualitative approach and bibliographic research. The following will be analyzed...
Doctrines, scientific articles, legislation, and legal understandings related to the Statute of Children and Adolescents, digital rights, and the protection of children and adolescents in the virtual environment.
Studies on cybercrime, cyberbullying, and digital security involving minors will also be examined. In conclusion, the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) advances in comprehensive protection, but falls short due to algorithmic opacity and insufficient oversight. Data protection for children requires a proactive regulatory ecosystem, demanding reforms such as data minimization and the mandatory implementation of Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs). For safe digital childhoods.

Keywords: LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law). Digital ECA (Statute of Children and Adolescents). Privacy. Adultification.

ABSTRACT

This article addresses the protection of children's and adolescents' privacy in the digital era and the significant challenges arising from hyperconnectivity and the premature adultization of minors. The study analyzes the limitations and challenges of applying the Brazilian General Data Protection Law (LGPD) and the Child and Adolescent Statute (ECA) in the virtual environment, particularly regarding the protection of minors' personal data when they are exposed to content and behaviors incompatible with their developmental stage. The research problem seeks to understand the extent to which the Digital ECA and the LGPD effectively protect children and adolescents on digital platforms that encourage premature adultization and excessive online exposure. The justification for this study is grounded in the growing vulnerability of children and adolescents in the face of new technologies, considering the increasing risks associated with abusive profiling, excessive data collection, and early exposure on social media platforms. The research will be conducted using a deductive approach and qualitative methods, with

bibliographic research. Legal doctrines, scientific articles, legislation, and legal interpretations related to the Child and Adolescent Statute, digital rights, and child protection in virtual environments will

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be analyzed. Studies concerning cybercrime, cyberbullying, and digital security involving minors will also be examined. In conclusion, the LGPD represents progress toward comprehensive protection; however, it still suffers from algorithmic opacity and insufficient oversight. Data protection during childhood requires a proactive regulatory ecosystem, demanding reforms such as data minimization policies and mandatory Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) to ensure safer digital environments for children and adolescents.

Keywords: LGPD. Digital ECA. Privacy. Adultization.

1 INTRODUCTION

Protecting the privacy of children and adolescents in the digital environment has become one of the major contemporary challenges in the face of hyperconnectivity, the early use of social networks and... The increasing exposure of children and young people to the internet. In this context, premature adultification, driven by due to inappropriate content, recommendation algorithms, and abusive data collection practices, It jeopardizes the healthy development of minors and increases situations of vulnerability.

The overall objective of this study is to analyze the limits and challenges of applying the General Law of Personal Data Protection (LGPD – Law No. 13.709/2018) and the so-called Digital ECA in the protection of Children's and adolescents' privacy in the face of risks arising from online overexposure and influence. digital platforms.

The research questions the extent to which the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) and the ECA Digital (Brazilian Statute of Children and Adolescents Digital) are able to guarantee Effective protection of the personal data of children and adolescents in virtual environments that encourage Behaviors that are incompatible with their stage of development.

The so-called Digital ECA emerges as an interpretative expansion of the Child Statute. and of adolescents to the virtual environment, seeking to ensure fundamental children's and youth rights. also in digital relationships. In this sense, Article 7 of the ECA (Brazilian Statute for Children and Adolescents) stands out, guaranteeing the child and the Adolescents have the right to protection of life and health, which also includes the protection of their Physical, psychological, and moral integrity in digital environments.

In addition, paragraph 1-A reinforces the need to promote secure digital environments. preventive and appropriate measures for child and adolescent development, imposing on the State, the family, and Society and digital platforms have a duty to prevent situations of violence, exploitation, and exposure. Excessive and violation of the personal data of minors. In this way, the Digital ECA consolidates the understanding that comprehensive protection must also extend to virtual spaces, especially in light of due to advances in artificial intelligence, data mining, and profiling mechanisms. algorithmic.

The rationale for the research is based on the increasing vulnerability of children and adolescents are exposed to new technologies, especially due to insufficient oversight of

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digital platforms and the difficulty of practically applying the protective rules foreseen in the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law). Although Article 14 of the LGPD establishes the specific and explicit consent of parents or guardians. For the processing of data from minors, obstacles such as failures in age verification systems, the Lack of algorithmic transparency and low digital awareness compromise effectiveness. of the norm. This scenario favors practices of abusive profiling, targeted advertising, and incentives. premature adultification, directly affecting the psychological and social development of children and teenagers.

Methodologically, the research will be developed using the deductive method, with A qualitative approach was used, employing bibliographic and documentary research. Doctrines and articles were analyzed. scientific, legislative, and institutional reports from the National Data Protection Authority. (ANPD) and UNICEF and jurisprudential understandings related to the Statute of the Child and Adolescent Adolescents, digital rights, and the protection of minors' personal data. This will also be... Studies on cybercrime, cyberbullying, artificial intelligence, and their impacts were examined. The overexposure to digital technology in children's and young people's education.

It can be concluded that the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) represents an important step forward in the comprehensive protection of privacy. Regarding children and adolescents, in accordance with Article 3 of the ECA (Statute of the Child and Adolescent), however, it still presents limitations. significant challenges in light of new digital dynamics. The absence of efficient oversight, the opacity The algorithms and the insufficient accountability of big tech companies highlight the need for a A more rigorous and preventative regulatory ecosystem. Thus, it becomes essential to strengthen the A teleological interpretation of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) in harmony with the ECA Digital (Brazilian Statute of Children and Adolescents) and fundamental rights. promoting mechanisms such as data minimization, Data Protection Impact Assessments Mandatory (RIPDs) and greater accountability of digital platforms, aiming to guarantee childhoods. Safer, healthier digital spaces, free from premature adultification.

2. The fundamental principles of data protection – LGPD

The General Data Protection Law (LGPD), enacted in 2018, represents a A milestone in the regulation of the use of personal data in Brazil, including specific provisions for The protection of the privacy of children and adolescents. Article 14 of the LGPD establishes that... The processing of children's personal data must be carried out with specific consent and in accordance with the law. Emphasis given by at least one of the parents or legal guardian (Brazil, 2018). This measure aims to ensure that the collection and use of personal information are carried out with knowledge and consent. Full responsibility of those in charge, preventing abuses that could affect the child's overall development.

According to Fernandes (2021, p. 35), "the LGPD establishes a legal framework that places the

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Protecting children and adolescents as a priority, requiring companies and institutions to adopt "Clear privacy policies aimed at this audience." However, the author points out that... The effectiveness of the rule depends on the awareness of all actors involved, from family members to... companies that operate digital platforms. In this sense, Costa (2022) argues that the LGPD is "a law of a preventive nature, which seeks to avoid harm to digital childhood before it occurs, instead of "Just punish offenders" (p. 47).

Another significant challenge lies in the practical application of the law, considering the context of hyperconnectivity. Gomes (2023, p. 56) emphasizes that "the complexity of digital interactions and the The speed of technological change makes it difficult to monitor and fully protect rights. "Children and adolescents." For him, protecting children's data requires a continuous effort to update it. regulatory and digital education, for both parents and educational institutions.

Indirectly, Oliveira (2020) reinforces that the LGPD "establishes fundamental principles of Data protection guidelines that must be observed by all entities that handle information. "Personal care for children and adolescents," highlighting that compliance with the law still faces gaps. significant in the private sector. Furthermore, Almeida (2021) argues that the effectiveness of the LGPD It depends on preventive action by society and regulatory authorities, in order to To raise user awareness and implement robust technical protection mechanisms.

According to Souza (2022, p. 68):

> The best interests of the data should guide all decisions regarding data processing. children and young people, constituting an ethical parameter that transcends mere legality. The law should be applied in a way that balances the rights to information and education. digital rights and privacy, without allowing the early exploitation of children.

The National Data Protection Authority (ANPD) plays a key role in oversight and guidance of data protection practices. Barbosa (2025, p. 14) states that "a ANPD should act not only in punishing, but also in guiding digital platforms and ... "responsible parties, ensuring that data collection respects legal and ethical boundaries." The educational role The ANPD's role is essential to reducing the risks of privacy violations and promoting a culture of... digital responsibility.

According to Marques (2023), the LGPD is a tool that needs to be combined with the Digital education and public policies to effectively protect children and young people. Integration between legislation, enforcement, and awareness is fundamental to facing the challenges. from a constantly transforming digital environment.

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Finally, protecting children's and young people's privacy in the digital age requires an approach. multidimensional, which considers not only the law, but also cultural, educational and other factors. technological. Gomes (2023), Costa (2022), Fernandes (2021) and other authors converge on the idea of The LGPD offers an important legal framework, but its effectiveness depends on its implementation. Concrete practices for protection, continuous monitoring, and digital education, focusing on defending what is best. best interests of the child and adolescent.

2.1 Children and adolescents as subjects of rights under the LGPD and the phenomenon of adultification early

The LGPD recognizes children and adolescents as data subjects who require protection. qualified, aligning itself with the doctrine of comprehensive protection of the Statute of Children and Adolescents. (ECA). In this sense, Costa emphasizes that children and adolescents are "subjects of rights." fundamental in the digital environment," which "imposes on the State, the family, and society the duty to provide them to ensure not only access, but also the safe enjoyment of these spaces" (Costa, 2021, p. 45). A The centrality of the "best interests" principle should guide any processing of personal data. involving minors, which includes the collection, storage, sharing and use This data is used for economic purposes or behavioral profiling .

In the context of a hyper-connected society, the boundary between the children's universe and the world... Adulthood becomes progressively more diffuse, which favors early adultification. Fernandes, Korkmaz and Negri point out that hyperconnectivity "subjects children and adolescents to intense flows of information, consumption and exposure, for which they are often not psychologically prepared. "prepared" (Fernandes; Korkmaz; Negri, 2019, p. 289). This intensified exposure includes Sexualized content, unrealistic beauty standards, hate speech, and targeted appeals to consumerism. increasingly segmented and sophisticated form, which contributes to the erosion of stages inherent to the Child and adolescent development.

The LGPD, by providing specific regulations for the processing of data of children and adolescents Article 14 seeks to curb this process, establishing that treatment should occur in the best possible way. interest and, as a rule, with specific and explicit consent from at least one of the parents or legal representatives. For Fernandes, however, interpretative doubts and gaps still persist. regulatory issues regarding the concrete application of these requirements, which may be "detrimental to the best interests of the community." "interest" of minors in a scenario of massive data processing (Fernandes, 2021, p. 3).

Early adultification is also linked to practices of digital overexposure. frequently normalized within families and on platforms. Lima observes that connected childhood

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It is permeated by the normalization of practices of overexposure on social media, in which "images and information about children circulates without adequate reflection on present and future risks" (Lima, 2022, p. 27). When such content is captured by recommendation algorithms and databases Data used for behavioral advertising purposes reinforces a market logic that treats children as victims. as a potential consumer, reducing their status as a subject of rights to a mere data profile.

At the same time, Gomes (2025) draws attention to the role of artificial intelligence in deepening the adultification process, by stating that "filters, avatars, and recommendation systems tend replicating and amplifying stereotypes of gender, sexuality, and consumption, projecting them onto children. typical expectations of the adult world" (Gomes, 2025, p. 62). The legal challenge, in this scenario, is aligning the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) with the perspective of children's rights, requiring platforms to have reinforced duties to... Transparency, purpose limitation, data minimization, and conducting impact assessments.

As Fernandes, Korkmaz, and Negri argue, comprehensive protection demands "an attitude "Proactive" from all agents that handle data from children and adolescents, which includes "designing regulations and technologies that take seriously the specific vulnerability of this public" (Fernandes; Korkmaz; Negri, 2019, p. 301). The LGPD needs to be interpreted in dialogue with the ECA and with the international parameters of children's rights, in order to address premature adultification, not not only as a cultural phenomenon, but also as a data protection and privacy issue. in the digital age.

2.1.1 The Digital ECA and Law No. 14.811/2024

The advancement of digital technologies has significantly increased the need for protection. Legal protection of children and adolescents in the virtual environment, especially in light of increased exposure. on social media, the excessive sharing of personal data, and the commission of crimes. Cybercrimes involving minors. In this context, the so-called Digital ECA emerges as the application of the principles and guarantees of the Statute of Children and Adolescents to the online environment, ensuring Comprehensive protection also applies to digital relationships.

According to Pinheiro (2021), the internet has begun to demand specific protection mechanisms. legal mechanisms capable of guaranteeing privacy, security, and the prevention of targeted abusive practices aimed at children and young people. The author highlights that hyperconnectivity has intensified situations of vulnerability, psychological violence, and overexposure of children and adolescents on platforms digital.

The Statute of Children and Adolescents, established by Law No. 8.069/1990, became interpreted more broadly in light of new forms of social interaction in the digital environment. Article 3 of

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The ECA (Brazilian Statute for Children and Adolescents) establishes that children and adolescents enjoy all fundamental rights inherent to... human beings, ensuring them full protection and absolute priority. Such protection must reach also the virtual environment, especially given the risks arising from early exposure and Improper circulation of personal data.

Article 5 of the ECA (Brazilian Statute for Children and Adolescents) stipulates that no child or adolescent shall be subject to neglect. discrimination, exploitation, violence, cruelty or oppression, also encompassing practices occurrences on the internet, such as cyberbullying, digital exploitation, and online harassment.

In the context of the so-called Digital ECA (Statute of Children and Adolescents), Article 7 of the Statute stands out, guaranteeing the... right to protection of life and health through public policies aimed at physical development, The mental, moral, and social well-being of children and adolescents. This provision has been interpreted in a way... extensive to include the protection of mental and emotional health in the digital environment, especially Given the impacts resulting from continuous exposure to inappropriate content and harmful algorithms. and the practices of premature adultification.

In addition to Article 7:

> Suppliers of targeted information technology products or services
> Children and adolescents, or those likely to have access to them, should, from conception onwards, of its products and services, ensure, by default, the configuration in the most available protective measures regarding privacy and the protection of personal data. considering the autonomy and progressive development of the individual, and justified by the best interests of the child and adolescent. (Brazil, 2025).

§ 1 - The product or service referred to in the *heading* of this article must, by default, operate with the highest degree of... enhanced protection of privacy and personal data, noting that it will be mandatory to providing clear, accessible and appropriate information so that the child or adolescent and their guardians can exercise informed choices regarding the eventual adoption of configurations. less protective. (Brazil, 2025).

According to Lúcia Santaella (2018), digital technologies have profoundly transformed relationships. Human and communicational advancements require new forms of legal regulation and digital education . focused on citizenship, the responsible use of the internet, and the protection of fundamental rights. In this In this sense, public policies on digital security have gained greater relevance, seeking to prevent situations of virtual violence and reduce the negative impacts of the indiscriminate use of Social media by minors.

In this context, Law No. 14.811/2024 stands out, establishing protective measures against violence.

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in schools and criminalizes bullying and cyberbullying. The aforementioned legislation amended the Penal Code and recognized cyberbullying as a practice of systematic intimidation through digital means, strengthening The legal protection of children and adolescents in the virtual environment. The regulation also reinforces the responsibility of digital platforms and educational institutions in preventing practices abusive online.

According to Cunha (2024, p. 56), "the legal recognition of cyberbullying represents a an important step forward in protecting the dignity and psychological integrity of children and adolescents in "digital society".

In this way, the Digital ECA (Statute of Children and Adolescents) is consolidated as an important instrument for the protection of children. fundamental rights of children and adolescents in the face of the challenges posed by the information society and due to the increasing virtualization of social relationships.

Cyberbullying is characterized by the repeated practice of humiliation, threats, and Virtual harassment can cause serious emotional harm to victims. According to Diniz (2022), the Law must keep pace with social and technological transformations, guaranteeing the protection of Human dignity in all forms of social interaction, including in digital environments. Thus, the Legislation seeks to hold perpetrators of online violence accountable and strengthen preventative measures in schools and families .

Another relevant point refers to the so-called Gaming Law, related to legal discussions. Regarding the regulation of electronic games used by children and adolescents. The growth of Online gaming has raised concerns about digital addiction, exposure to violent content, and... Inadequate communication between underage users. Law No. 14.811/2024 itself recognizes this. What cyberbullying practices can occur in video game environments, expanding the Legal protection in these virtual spaces. (Brazil, 2024).

According to Cunha (2024), digital games exert a strong influence on social development. and the emotional well-being of young people, which can generate educational benefits or negative consequences when used without adequate control. The Digital ECA therefore demonstrates the need for updating. constant in the Brazilian legal system in the face of technological transformations in society. contemporary.

2.2 Limits and challenges of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) in relation to digital platforms and the overexposure of children and adolescents

The application of the LGPD to digital platforms that collect and process data from children and adolescents reveal normative and structural limits. Doneda and Santos emphasize that the protection of

Personal data in childhood involves "challenges of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) in relation to digital platforms," since these

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They operate with "business models based on the intensive exploitation of data, many of them from minors" (Doneda; Santos, 2021, p. 19). The central tension lies between economic logic data surveillance and the legal duty to prioritize the best interests of the child in any treatment operation.

One of the most evident problems is the difficulty in obtaining informed and valid consent. in the digital environment. Fernandes points out that the LGPD regulations on parental consent still is marked by "interpretive challenges," especially because "verification of parental authorization or "Accountability is, in practice, often symbolic or nonexistent" (Fernandes, 2021, p. 10). Platforms often limit themselves to generic checkboxes or self-declarations of age, which does not meet the enhanced protection standard required by Article 14 of the law.

Consent, the definition of the legal bases for processing adolescent data in Educational, health, or civic participation contexts raise significant uncertainties. According to Fernandes, it is necessary to "precisely define the hypotheses on which the treatment may be based." in legitimate interest or in the fulfillment of a legal obligation, without this becoming a loophole for "the excessive exploitation of data" (Fernandes, 2021, p. 15). The absence of clear parameters favors extensive interpretations by private controllers , which is especially problematic in Platform environments dominated by large technology companies.

Overexposure to digital technology among children and young people exacerbates the risks associated with these gaps. Lima It emphasizes that "the construction of a connected childhood has been accompanied by a trivialization of "Disclosure of children's personal data, images, and routines on social media," creating "an archive. " permanent that may be reappropriated by third parties in the future" (Lima, 2022, p. 41). This "archive "Permanent" is fueled not only by parents (sharenting), but also by the actions of the children themselves. platforms, which encourage the continuous production of content and constant interaction, often through reward systems, likes, and visibility.

In this environment, premature adultification emerges as a legal and social effect of the combination of exposure, massive data collection, and the use of profiling and recommendation techniques .

> Early interaction with digital environments designed for adults produces a a kind of acceleration of the child's social experience, who then begins to be treated as 'Full user' in systems designed to maximize engagement and profit. (Gomes, 2025, p. 77).

In terms of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law), this implies questioning the appropriateness of practices that subject children to harm. algorithmic experiments without prior impact assessment and without robust mechanisms of

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damage mitigation.

Fernandes argues, at this point, for the centrality of the Data Protection Impact Assessment Report. (RIPD) as an "instrument for the protection of the privacy and data of children and adolescents", emphasizing that its development is essential in high-risk treatment contexts (Fernandes, 2021, p. 18). Such a report should specifically consider aspects such as the possibility of Early adultification, exposure to inappropriate content, excessive data collection, and opacity of recommendation systems.

Doneda and Santos argue that the effectiveness of the LGPD will depend on the ability of to build "an ecosystem for the protection of childhood data," which involves "state regulation, "Responsible self-regulation of platforms and active participation of parents, schools, and civil society" (Doneda; Santos, 2021, p. 32). This means overcoming a merely formal view of conformity. comply with the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) and adopt concrete practices of purpose limitation, data minimization, and design. focused on privacy and prohibiting advertising strategies targeted at children that reinforce Their adultification and vulnerability in the digital environment.

2.3 Accelerated **early adultification driven by artificial intelligence on social media**

Early adultification refers to the exposure of children and adolescents to content and typical adult behaviors, often driven by social media. According to with the Court of Justice of the Federal District and Territories (2025), the adultification of children and Early exposure to adolescents compromises the overall development of these individuals. Sexualized content can lead to low self-esteem, distorted self-image, and anxiety. Depression and mood disorders.

Gomes (2023, p. 45): "The internet and artificial intelligence accelerate the adultification of children, challenging "Laws and rights." Digital platforms, through algorithms, can target content that They encourage behaviors and aesthetic standards that are inappropriate for the age group, which exacerbates the phenomenon. of adultification.

According to Souza (2022, p. 53):

> The aesthetic and behavioral pressure on social media imposes pressure on children and teenagers are setting unrealistic and harmful standards, affecting their mental and emotional health. and highlights that the relentless pursuit of virtual validation contributes to the construction of a distorted and vulnerable identity.

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The ANPD, in its Statement No. 01/2023, highlights that the processing of personal data of
Children and adolescents can be targeted based on the legal provisions of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law), provided that that the best interests of the child prevail. However, the practical application of this guideline faces challenges. challenges, especially given the complexity and speed of digital interactions.

In the words of Marques (2023), the absence of specific regulation for platforms
Digital media aimed at children and young people contributes to premature exploitation and adultification. The author He argues for the need for public policies that establish clear limits on the exposure of children and teenagers are exposed to potentially harmful content.

Costa (2022) emphasizes that digital education is fundamental to empowering children, Adolescents and their guardians need to recognize and avoid content that promotes premature adultification. Implementing educational programs in schools and communities can contribute to... Building a safer and more conscious digital culture.

It is essential that society, educational institutions, and regulatory bodies They should work together to address the challenges posed by premature adultification on social media. Promoting a healthy and safe digital environment for children and adolescents requires action. coordinated and effective measures that take into account the specific needs of the age group and respect rights. fundamental for minors.

2.4 The Role of the ANPD and the Responsibility of Digital Platforms

Digital platforms play a crucial role in protecting privacy.
children and youth. The National Data Protection Authority (ANPD) has been committed to to establish guidelines for the processing of personal data of children and adolescents. In 2022, the ANPD published the Preliminary Study on the Processing of Personal Data of Children and Adolescents, systematizing understandings and guidelines applicable to the topic.

According to Barbosa (2025), the LGPD established, in its article 14, a protective regime. specific to the personal data of minors, highlighting the importance of an approach
Ethical and preventative measures are taken in the handling of this data.

The ANPD, in its Statement No. 01/2023, highlights that the processing of personal data of
Children and adolescents can be targeted based on the legal provisions of the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law), provided that that the best interests of the child prevail. This guideline reinforces the need for action. Cautious and responsible action on the part of digital platforms, aimed at the full protection of minors.

Marques (2023, p. 67) warns that "the absence of specific regulation for platforms Digital media aimed at children and young people contributes to exploitation and premature adultification .

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3. Protection of children and adolescents and overexposure on social media

The development of digital technologies and the widespread diffusion of social networks have altered It profoundly influences how children and adolescents participate in public and private spaces. These changes have created new forms of social interaction, but have also increased the risks of violation of fundamental rights.

According to Fernandes (2021), early adultification, characterized by the eroticization of childhood, influenced by digital consumption and media exposure to child influencers, This has become a growing concern given the vulnerability of children and adolescents in virtual environment. In this sense, Sarlet (2022, p. 56) states that "the integral protection of the child and of The adolescent demands the implementation of mechanisms that limit economic exploitation and guarantee the "Preservation of human dignity in the digital environment."

In the Brazilian context, the General Data Protection Law (Law No. 13.709/2018 - LGPD) This constitutes an important regulatory milestone by establishing specific standards for the treatment of Personal data of children and adolescents. Article 14 of the law establishes that the processing of this information It depends on the specific and explicit consent of the parents or legal guardians.

The practical application of these standards faces difficulties due to the algorithmic structure of... digital platforms that prioritize the massive collection of data for content segmentation purposes. and monetization (Doneda; Santos, 2021). The lack of transparency regarding the use of this information. This increases the vulnerability of minors on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, where Public engagement translates into economic value.

According to Lima (2022), the processing of children's data requires special attention to

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Machine Translated by Google
RCMOS - Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal The Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

Year VII, v.1 2026 | Submission: 05/20/2026 | Accepted: 05/23/2026 | Publication: 05/26/2026

consent as stipulated in the LGPD. This consent must be clear, specific, and granted by one of the legal guardians is removed when the child lacks the capacity to express their rights. valid.

The collection and use of children's profiles for advertising purposes significantly increases the risk of child abuse. Risk of manipulation and exploitation. Algorithms capable of targeting content to specific audiences. Children can encourage early consumption and reinforce vulnerable behaviors. According to As Lima (2022, p. 81) points out, the specialized literature highlights the related economic problem. regarding the use of data for targeted offers, highlighting the need for restrictions or prohibitions. specific to digital environments designed for minors.

According to Moreira (2023), this scenario requires regulatory authorities and controllers possess the technical resources to audit systems and algorithms that influence decisions. related to children. For this reason, some legal scholars advocate for the creation of procedural rules. specific, auditing obligations and greater sanctioning power, in order to ensure protection. more effective.

Improper handling of children's data can have serious consequences. The circulation of intimate images, grooming practices, and other forms of sexual exploitation is facilitated. due to the speed of dissemination and the permanence of information on the internet. Early exposure It can also compromise the identity formation process and increase future risks of stigmatization, embarrassment or blackmail.

Brazilian case law has also recognized the relevance of this topic, especially in cases related to the inappropriate exposure of minors and the phenomenon of *sharenting,* a practice by Which parents excessively share images and information about their children on social media? Decisions Recent rulings from the Superior Court of Justice (STJ) and state courts have emphasized the need of informed consent and protection of the image, honor and privacy of children (Silva, 2023). This stance aligns with international debates, such as the restrictions applied to TikTok in the UK and the sanctions imposed on companies that violate the General Regulation of Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

According to Ramos (2023), the lack of effective regulatory and supervisory mechanisms This contributes to increasing the vulnerability of minors and reinforces the logic of premature adultification. In this context, children and adolescents are treated as full consumers, without their Specific age-related needs and particularities should be duly considered.

Finally, protecting children and adolescents in the digital environment requires an approach. multidisciplinary, involving legal, psychological, social and technological aspects. Although the While the LGPD represents an important regulatory advancement, significant challenges still persist .

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to ensure its effective application in the face of the rapid transformations in the digital world.

3.1 Legal provisions regarding the overexposure of children and adolescents on social media and the update of the digital ECA

The rights related to image and the preservation of privacy, guaranteed by
The Federal Constitution also covers children and adolescents. However, it is a shared responsibility.
The responsibility of the family, the State, and society to guarantee the protection of the dignity and respect of these individuals.
in addition to protecting them against any form of violence or discrimination. (Monteiro, Fernanda,
2022).

The update to the Statute of Children and Adolescents in the digital context, known as ECA.
The Digital Law (Law No. 15.211/2025) represents a significant advancement in the protection of children's rights and
Adolescents facing technological transformations. The ECA (Statute of Children and Adolescents), created in 1990, did not address this.
The impacts of the internet and social media have made it necessary to create specific regulations for
the virtual environment. Thus, the aim is to ensure that fundamental rights are also guaranteed.
in the digital space. According to Bioni (2019), technological evolution imposes the adaptation of
legal instruments to ensure the effectiveness of these rights.

The new legislation emerges in a context of increasing exposure of minors to digital risks.
such as inappropriate content and misuse of personal data. The Digital ECA establishes guidelines.
stricter measures to protect this public, complementing the original statute with rules aimed at
to the online environment. In this sense, the concept of comprehensive protection is broadened, incorporating the
The digital dimension as an essential part of human development. According to Doneda (2021),
The protection of personal data is fundamental to ensuring the dignity and security of individuals.
especially the most vulnerable

Therefore, when offensive photographs, montages, or comments are disseminated...
and dishonorable, there is a clear affront to one of the fundamental rights of the human person, protected
constitutionally.

When such conduct involves minors, the legal system provides mechanisms.
protection through the Statute of Children and Adolescents (ECA), which ensures respect for
intimacy and privacy of children and adolescents are protected by this legislation.

Given this scenario, it becomes clear that this type of behavior can have an impact.
significant in the lives of the victims, directly affecting their dignity and violating their privacy.
In addition to exposing them to social situations capable of causing profound harm. However, it is important
It should be mentioned that holding individuals specifically accountable for cyberbullying faces obstacles, because...

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For a long time, this conduct was not classified as a crime in Brazil, which made it difficult to punish those who committed it. aggressors (Conte; Rossini, 2010).

One widely debated example in the country regarding the overexposure of children on social media is... the case of the singer Gabriela Abreu Severino, known artistically as MC Melody. Born in In 2007, she began to be exposed on the internet at a very young age, when her father started to publicize her profile. Videos of her singing at age eight. In April 2015, the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of São Paulo launched an inquiry to investigate content considered erotic and sexually suggestive in songs. and choreographies involving children and teenagers in the artistic field (G1 Notícias, 2015).

MC Melody was one of the young artists mentioned in the investigations, due to the presence of elements considered sexualized in their social media presentations, including music and The choreography was inappropriate for her age group. The singer was advised by her father, Thiago Abreu. also a member of the music scene, known as MC Belinho. Although the main focus of If the investigation was related to the possible occurrence of child labor, many complaints They also addressed the content of the songs and the type of performance presented by the child during the shows, often held in nightclubs, were venues that were neither appropriate nor as to the time nor the audience present (G1, 2015).

In this context, the artist's own father ended up contributing to this excessive exposure. because, in addition to being the legal guardian, he also acted as the singer's manager and did not prevent her from... The image was being exploited inappropriately. The girl began to be presented prematurely. as a sexualized figure, adopting an appearance considered adult, with low-cut clothing, Heavy makeup, bikini photos, sensual choreography, suggestive poses, and double-beat music. In that sense, it progressively distanced her from a representation compatible with her childhood.

The case gained significant national attention, even becoming one of the most talked-about topics. searched by Brazilians on Google, with more than 50,000 searches recorded. Furthermore, it was A petition was created on the Avaaz website requesting the intervention and investigation of the Guardianship Council of São Paulo.

CONCLUSION

The research objective was achieved through a bibliographic and documentary survey. which analyzed the limits of the application of the General Data Protection Law (LGPD) in conjunction with the principles of the so-called Digital ECA. The study demonstrated that the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents in the virtual environment cannot rely exclusively on the LGPD, it is necessary its interpretation in harmony with the Statute of Children and Adolescents in light of the new

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digital vulnerabilities. In this context, the Digital ECA (Statute of Children and Adolescents) presents itself as a central instrument of Child and youth protection on digital platforms, ensuring the observance of fundamental rights. also in the online environment.

The research showed that the LGPD guidelines, such as parental consent as stipulated in the law, are being followed. Article 14, faces practical difficulties, such as insufficient age verification, low oversight, and lack of awareness among those responsible. These limitations favor abusive prophylaxis , the overexposure and premature adultification of children and adolescents. Thus, the Digital ECA reinforces the comprehensive protection as provided for in Article 3 of the ECA, as well as the guarantee of dignity and physical integrity, psychological and moral protection guaranteed by article 17.

The study also demonstrated that algorithms, artificial intelligence, and inappropriate content They intensify the risks to mental health and healthy child and adolescent development. In this sense, the Article 7 of the ECA (Statute of Children and Adolescents) and its § 1-A should be interpreted broadly to guarantee environments. Safe and developmentally appropriate digital tools for minors.

It is concluded that data protection in childhood requires a more robust regulatory ecosystem. efficient, with measures such as data minimization, mandatory RIPDs, algorithmic transparency and accountability of digital platforms. In this way, the integration between LGPD and ECA Digital It strengthens the construction of safer, more ethical, and protection-compatible virtual environments. comprehensive care for childhood and adolescence.

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