JBM PARENT COMMUNITY

POLICY & PROTECTION WATCH

OCTOBER 2026

A quick monthly look at policies and decisions affecting children and families

WHAT PARENTS WILL FIND

What changed. What parents should watch. Where to read the official policy.

PROTECTING KIDS. EQUIPPING PARENTS. STRENGTHENING FAMILIES.

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REPORTING WINDOW: October 1–31, 2026

RESEARCH CUTOFF: October 31, 2026

THIS MONTH AT A GLANCE

October's selected updates address Texas special-education protections, parental access to school information, social-media restrictions, AI accountability, and trafficking prevention.

Texas	Updated restraint and time-out rules took effect October 4.
Federal	Agencies announced parental-rights enforcement action.
Florida	An appellate ruling advances the HB 3 litigation.
Multistate	OpenAI lawsuits and Character.AI bankruptcy raise child-safety issues.
Maryland	Trafficking-awareness training requirements took effect October 1.

TEXAS WATCH

Updated Special-Education Protections Take Effect

19 TAC §89.1053 | Effective October 4, 2026

WHAT CHANGED TEA's amended rules clarify that restraint cannot be used for discipline or to force compliance. Each restraint must be documented separately. ARD committees must review time-out use and effectiveness at least annually; training must address disability-related behavior and positive supports.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD WATCH Ask how your district updated its procedures, how it documents and communicates incidents, and whether your child's behavioral supports need review.

OFFICIAL SOURCES: TEA October special-education update

FEDERAL WATCH

Agencies Announce Parental-Rights Enforcement Action

FERPA and PPRA | Agency announcement: October 5, 2026

WHAT CHANGED The Departments of Education and Justice issued a joint parental-rights letter and announced enforcement action against Los Angeles Unified School District over policies they allege withhold information from parents. This concerns existing law; it is not a new statute or a final court finding.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD WATCH Watch for district changes to records access, notification and consent procedures. Request the school's written policies.

OFFICIAL SOURCES: DOJ announcement and joint letter

NATIONAL AND COURT WATCH

Florida Social-Media Restrictions Advance in Court

Florida Statutes §501.1736 (HB 3) | Appeal No. 25-11881 | October 14, 2026

WHAT CHANGED In CCIA v. Uthmeier, the Eleventh Circuit reversed or vacated portions of the preliminary injunction and remanded the case. HB 3 restricts covered accounts for children under 14 and requires parental consent for ages 14–15. Litigation continues.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD WATCH Follow further orders and platform notices about age checks, consent and account access. The ruling does not establish nationwide restrictions.

OFFICIAL SOURCES: Court opinion | Statute

States Challenge ChatGPT Child-Safety Claims

Iowa Consumer Fraud Act | Lawsuits announced October 14, 2026

WHAT CHANGED Iowa announced a lawsuit against OpenAI alleging misleading safety claims and harm to children. Its announcement identifies separate suits by seven other states. These claims are allegations, not court findings.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD WATCH Watch for court orders or settlements requiring changes to safety claims and child protections. Discuss whether children use AI for personal advice or companionship.

OFFICIAL SOURCES: Iowa Attorney General and linked petition

States Seek Protection for Children's Chatbot Data

Character Technologies, Inc. bankruptcy | States' filing: October 14, 2026

WHAT CHANGED State attorneys general sought child-safety and privacy safeguards in any Character.AI sale, including stronger age checks and opportunities to access or delete personal information. These are requested protections, not a confirmed final order.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD WATCH Watch for ownership and privacy notices, deletion options, and changes in how private conversations may be transferred or used.

OFFICIAL SOURCES: New York Attorney General and linked filing

Maryland Strengthens Trafficking Prevention

SB 473 / HB 829, Chapters 278–279 | Effective October 1, 2026

WHAT CHANGED Certain for-hire driver's-license applicants must document trafficking-awareness training. Covered drivers receive liability protections for good-faith reporting of or responses to suspected trafficking.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD WATCH Watch how transportation providers implement training and reporting procedures, particularly services used by teens and young adults.

OFFICIAL SOURCES: Maryland General Assembly, pages 40–41

Selected federal and state developments with additional attention to Texas; not a complete state-by-state legal audit. Policy statuses were last checked October 21; developments through the October 31 cutoff require verification before publication. Parent takeaways are analysis. For information, not legal advice.