

Connecticut AG Investigates Skincare Products Marketed to Kids

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December 1, 2024

If you've been on social media lately, depending on your algorithm, you may have witnessed tween influencers touting expensive skincare routines, or commentators lamenting the rise of the [Sephora Kid](#). Before the holiday, Connecticut AG William Tong [urged](#) parents to exercise caution regarding anti-aging skincare products that are being marketed to children and teens by influencers on social media. The AG is concerned that many of these products include ingredients that are unsuitable, or even harmful, for kids. The AG also sent a detailed inquiry 21-request "[letter](#)" (looking similar to a CID) to Sephora asking about how it markets these products to kids.

According to the AG, when consumers search for "kids" on Sephora's site, several anti-aging products – including products by Drunk Elephant that are designed to address "fine lines and wrinkles" – show up in the results. The AG thinks those products "contain several ingredients harmful to youth skin." (And the authors think kids shouldn't be worried about fine lines or wrinkles because they're kids.) The inquiry letter specifically requests outcomes of searches for a variety of terms, and seems to imply that by including products within a search result, Sephora may be representing them as specifically being "suitable to children."

The [press release](#) states that this is "the latest in a series of measures by Attorney General Tong to address harm to youth stemming from social media," pointing to the AG's recent social media investigations and lawsuits intended to address youth mental health. The AG isn't the only one looking at this issue, though. In a case we [posted](#) about last month, NAD considered whether certain Drunk Elephant products promoted as "safe for kids and tweens" on Instagram were really safe. (NAD determined they were.)

Companies should be careful not to promote products that aren't suitable to kids in marketing that is directed to them – potentially even through search results. If companies use influencers, they should also investigate the influencers' target audiences and give the influencers instructions on what they can and can't say. Between state AGs and NAD, we expect to see more activity in this area in the new year.