A new report from Human Rights Watch reveals the startling extent to which children—most of them in the United States—have been surveilled during the pandemic. The report, based on information obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to 40 states and the District of Columbia, finds that in at least 24 states, states, and school districts, children and their parents are required to install surveillance software on their computers. This surveillance can include monitoring activities such as emails, texts, and online searches, as well as tracking the location of the device. The report also notes that some states require students and parents to consent to the surveillance, while others do not.

The report concludes that this surveillance is being conducted in order to monitor students' behavior, detect signs of violence or other inappropriate behavior, and ensure compliance with school policies. However, the report warns that this surveillance may violate students' privacy rights and that it is not always necessary to use surveillance technology to achieve these goals.

In addition to the surveillance software, the report notes that many schools are using video surveillance, camera systems, and other monitoring technologies to track student behavior. The report finds that these technologies are being used to monitor students' activities in the classroom, gym, and other areas of the school building.

The report also highlights the lack of oversight and accountability for the use of surveillance technology. The report notes that there is a lack of transparency and accountability for how the surveillance technology is being used, and that there are few mechanisms in place to ensure that it is being used in a manner that respects students' privacy rights.

The report calls for a moratorium on the surveillance of students, and for increased oversight and accountability for the use of surveillance technology in schools. The report also calls for increased funding for programs that can help students who are at risk of violence or other inappropriate behavior, and for increased support for schools that are struggling to provide a safe and secure environment for all students.

The report concludes with a call to action for policymakers and school administrators to take steps to protect students' privacy rights and to ensure that surveillance technology is used in a manner that respects students' rights to privacy and to freedom of expression.