

Today we are sharing that Ashton Kutcher, our co-founder, will be resigning from his role as Board Chair at Thorn, effective immediately. This decision is rooted in the recognition of recent events and ensuring Thorn remains focused on its mission: to build technology to defend children from sexual abuse.

The text of Ashton's letter addressed to our board follows below:

September 14, 2023

Thorn Board,

After my wife and I spent several days of listening, personal reflection, learning, and conversations with survivors and the employees and leadership at Thorn, I have determined the responsible thing for me to do is resign as Chairman of the Board, effectively immediately. I cannot allow my error in judgment to distract from our efforts and the children we serve.

As you know, I have worked for 15 years to fight for people who are sexually exploited. Victims of sexual abuse have been historically silenced and the character statement I submitted is yet another painful instance of questioning victims who are brave enough to share their experiences. This is precisely what we have all worked to reverse over the last decade.

The mission must always be the priority and I want to offer my heartfelt apology to all victims of sexual violence and everyone at Thorn who I hurt by what I did. And to the broader advocacy community, I am deeply sorry. I remain proud of what we have accomplished in the past decade and will continue to support Thorn's work. Thank you for your tireless advocacy and dedication to this cause.

Sincerely,

Ashton Kutcher

The voices and experiences of victims and survivors are not just central to our work; they are its heartbeat. Each step we take as an organization is taken with survivor stories and experiences guiding us and informing our commitment to building a better future for all children.

Thorn is staffed by a group of individuals that has passionately dedicated their careers to defending children from sexual abuse. We remain steadfast in our mission, mindful of the trust our community places in us, and confident in our collective dedication to continue the vital work ahead.

Over the last 15 years, we've become a leader in the child safety ecosystem and made undeniable progress toward achieving our vision of a world where cutting-edge technology is proactively developed to defend children.

To date, Thorn has helped the tech industry remove over 2 million potential child sexual abuse files from the open web, helping to end the cycle of abuse and stop revictimization. Every day, our tools help those on the frontlines identify victims and remove them from harm as quickly as possible. Thorn's tools have led to the identification of more than 27,000 children and counting. We've empowered parents and youth with prevention tools and resources; influenced policy designed to protect children; and conducted and shared research to help the entire ecosystem better understand the issue and do their part to prevent child sexual abuse.

We would not be the Thorn that we are today without Ashton's contributions. He has played a significant role in the impact we have made, and we are grateful for his participation over the last 15 years.

"For the past decade I have worked with Ashton on child protection issues," said Thorn board member Ernie Allen. "He has been a strong champion for children and worked tirelessly to protect them from sexual abuse. Through the creation of the DNA Foundation that later became Thorn, he helped build the organization into a major

global resource for law enforcement, tech companies and others in the fight against child sexual exploitation. He made a difference.”

“Ashton founded Thorn over a decade ago with one goal in mind: to protect children from sexual abuse and give them the childhood they deserve,” said Suzanne Bell, Board Member at Thorn. “His unwavering dedication and commitment to Thorn throughout its journey have enabled the organization to become the leader that it is in the child safety ecosystem. It has been my privilege to join him on this mission.”

While the last few days have challenged us all in new ways, we remain steadfast in our mission, mindful of the trust our community places in us, and confident in our collective dedication to the children we serve.

We humbly ask for the continued support of our community, partners, and supporters as we continue our commitment to building a world where every child can be safe, curious, and happy.