FBI Has A New 'Don't Be A Puppet' Game-Like Website To Teach Kids About Violent Extremism

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The FBI released the interactive website "Don't Be A Puppet" that will make teens aware of extremist danger. Even if the initiative was positive, the no-strings-attached-to-reality-implementation makes it hard to take it seriously.
(Photo : FBI)

FBI wants teenagers to stay away from extremist movements and in order to convince them, it launched an interactive game-like website.

The program, dubbed "Don't Be a Puppet," is FBI's plan to raise awareness among teens about the dangers of extremist movements and their wicked ways of recruiting. However noble and necessary the action might be, the execution is lackluster, if not altogether embarrassing.

There are five sections on the site (six is you count the "Help" section), where teens can inform themselves on subjects such as "How do violent extremists make contact?" or "What is violent extremism?"

The site sends off an "adult who tries too hard to be hip" vibe. What is more, the brains behind the website seem to be in very remote contact with the target audience's interests. A first-generation Game Boy in 2016? Really, FBI? Where do we even begin?

The federals host a symbolic game on the website, called the "Slippery Slope to Extremism."

In it, you guide a quick-paced animal through an obstacle race that we suppose represent extremists. The animal seems to be a goat/sheep combo, and we are sure the agency had a subtle metaphor in mind when it chose it.

In one section of the website, there is a quiz about the recruitment tactics of malevolent organizations. In it, the FBI subtly informs teens that they keep tabs on their online activity. It also shows that the FBI understands very little of how the Internet actually works.

Another gem from "Don't Be a Puppet" is the matching phrases game, where players are required to connect ideas with communication techniques. The idea in itself is commendable, but the confusing implementation is not. Some phrases match more than one answer, that's all we're saying.

The site features an extract out of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, where the free speech is explained. Also, there is a section comparing free speech with violent extremism, and detailing the fine thread that separates the two.

Prominent establishment members spoke out against extremism and urged the tech industry to take steps against the global threat. The site developed by the FBI rallies itself to the flag.

"It's the FBI's hope that this new initiative can make a difference in helping to keep young people from being radicalized and recruited, now and in the future," reads the Bureau's announcement.

We certainly hope that the FBI hits the mark with the program, but considering how out-of-touch the platform seems, the only audience it will attract are millennials and generation X members who will visit "Don't Be a Puppet" for its involuntary humor.