

YOUR LIFE IS ONLINE. PROTECT IT!

Public awareness and prevention



[Online sexual coercion and extortion is a crime](#)

[Are you a victim? Get help. report it. We are here](#)

[How to set your privacy settings on social media](#)

[Law Enforcement reporting channels - Child sexual Coercion and Extortion](#)

[Removing links to explicit content](#)

BE CAUTIOUS! A PERSON YOU ONLY KNOW ONLINE MAY NOT BE WHAT THEY CLAIM TO BE

When talking to strangers online it's important to be careful. Unless you have met someone face -to -face, you could be talking to anyone. People can easily lie about who they are online and pretend to be someone they are not, including a friend, a mentor or a boyfriend/girlfriend.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF ONLINE?

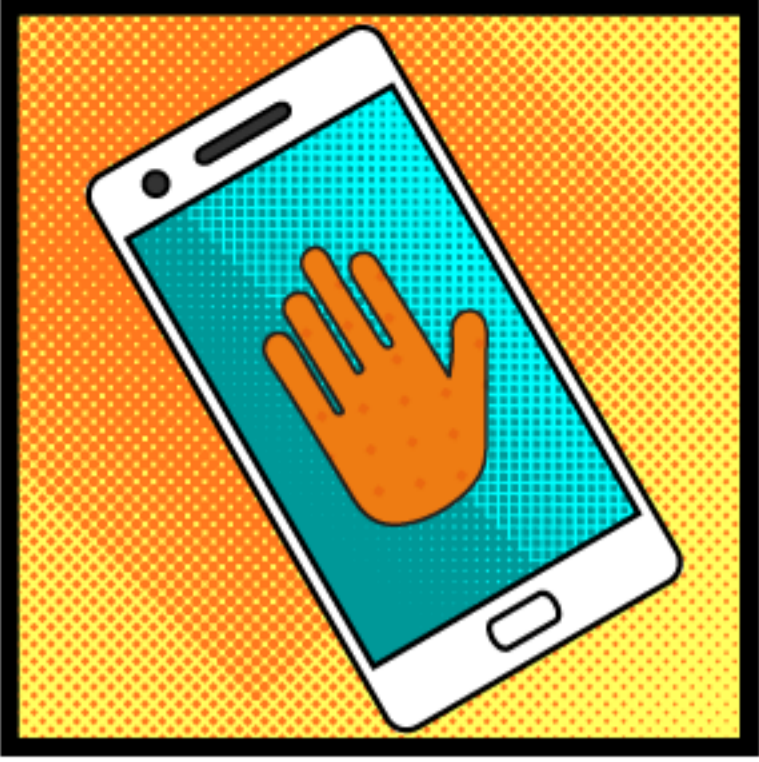
Keep control of what and with whom you share your private information online.

Only **share photos and videos that you wouldn't mind your friends and family seeing.**

If somebody asks you to send them a sexual photo or to record a video with sexual content, ask yourself: **Why does this person want me to do it? What could they do with that photo or video once I send it to them? Could this person use this material to take advantage of me in any way?**

It is perfectly fine to say NO in such circumstances. You and your comfort are important:

- If it's a friend you know very well, they should understand that you are not happy about doing things you are uncomfortable with. If not, maybe they're not such a good friend as you thought.
- If it's a person you only know online, be more cautious. Can you verify the identity of that person? Talk about it with a trusted person in real life, seek advice. If something goes wrong there are solutions, [learn more about it.](#)



Keep your private stuff private

- › **Don't share your personal information** - phone number, address or school - **with someone you have only met online**. If in doubt, ask yourself, what do they need it for?
- › Always **set the privacy settings of your social media accounts** to protect your private data. [See how](#).



How do I look? Be aware of your online presence

Abusers look for young people who use a sexualised username, post sexualised pictures or talk about sex online. **Think about how your online profile makes you appear to others.**



Want to meet up? Always put your safety first

It is a bad idea to share your location or meet up with someone you have only met online. But if you do so, **stay safe: meet in a public place and take a trusted adult with you.**



A 'friend of a friend'? To be sure, ask your friend

It's easy for anyone to post fake photos and stream a fake video over a webcam. If they claim to be a 'friend of a friend', ask your friend if they have met them in person. Anyone can learn about you and your friends from information that they find online.



Finally... Just between us? Make sure you don't expose yourself (or your privacy)

If you send sexual photos of yourself to someone online or do embarrassing things in front of a webcam that may be recording without your knowledge, **you run the risk of those images being shared anywhere and with anyone.** Do you want that to happen?

OFFENDERS WILL TRY TO GAIN YOUR TRUST ONLINE... THESE ARE THE WARNING SIGNS:

Too good to be true? Flattering you and giving you lots of attention

Does this person share all of your interests and give you lots of attention? Are things moving pretty fast? Does this person say that you are pretty, fit or sexy, and praises your profile pictures?

Abusers will do everything they can to gain your trust by making you feel good about yourself or special.

Let's talk about sex

Be cautious if someone is **very flirty or tries to get you to talk about sex online, sometimes really quickly.** It is against the law for an adult to engage with any child who has not reached the legal age for sexual activities.

Got any naked pictures?

Are they asking you to send sexy pictures? Some abusers will tell you that other young people are sending such photos as well./p>

Can we go somewhere more private?

Did you meet in an online public place like a game or a chatroom? Have they asked to add you on Facebook, BBM, WhatsApp or anything which allows private chat? Abusers prefer private chat because it makes it easier to start a relationship and build trust with you. They may want to move a conversation with you to live streaming platforms, such as Skype, aiming to lure you into performing a live sexual act.

Our little secret?

Are they asking you to keep your chat a secret or saying you will be in trouble if anyone else finds out? **Abusers don't want other people to know they are chatting to you,** such as family or friends, because they may be able to help if things go wrong.

Mood swings

People who abuse try to control young people by flattering them and giving them lots of attention. **If you don't do what they want, they take the flattering and attention away or suddenly become very nasty.**

My webcam is broken

Some **abusers pretend to be a boy or a girl around your age and claim their webcam is broken** so you can't see them. Also, it's easy to fake a webcam feed. Just because you think you have seen someone on webcam doesn't mean it is really them!

#SayNO!

- › If someone asks you to say or do things you don't want to or aren't comfortable with.
- › If someone threatens you with sharing your photos and/or videos if you don't do as they say.
- › If someone asks you to keep your chat a secret.
- › If someone reacts in a nasty way when you don't do what they want.
- › If somebody asks to join your private chats/networks.
- › Never webcam with a stranger with a broken webcam.

It is against the law for an adult to engage in sexual activities with a minor who has not reached the age of sexual consent (this age may vary from country to country). If you are going through this situation, tell an adult you trust or go to the police!



ADVICE FOR PARENTS:

Supervise your children's computer or mobile device use.

Discuss how to use devices appropriately with your children.

You may want to maintain your children's online account access information, with their understanding that you can log in at any time.

Communicate with your children.

Explain to them the dangers associated with communicating with unknown people online, sending photos, or engaging in other risky online behaviour.

Let them know that they can come to you without fear of reprisal, and that you have a genuine interest in their safety and online activities. Those exploited through these crimes are victims, no matter what they did or how they responded to the threat.

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| CRIME AREAS | Child Sexual Exploitation • Online sexual coercion and extortion of children |
| TARGET GROUPS | General Public • Law Enforcement • Academia • Professor • Students • Researcher • Press/Journalists • Other |
| ENTITIES | European Cybercrime Center (EC3) |

Source URL: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/public-awareness-and-prevention-guides/your-life-online-protect-it>