Internet Safety Guide for Caregivers

Developed by the CT Human Anti-trafficking Response Team

Cell Phones & the Internet

Resources for Caregivers

The internet can be exciting but also a bit scary for children. Often, they know more about it than adults do. It's important to teach them how to be safe online **before** they start using the internet. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) has great resources, including a Safety Pledge Toolkit, to help keep children safe online.

Safety Pledge Toolkit

NetSmartz: Online safety training and tip sheets

Caregiver Guide to Smart Phone Safety: English and Español

Internet Safety Checklist

Internet Safety Controls

Besides knowing what children do online, adults can use parental controls on computers (like Windows), internet browsers (like Safari), and search sites (like Google). These controls help limit what kids can see and do on the internet.

Windows

Google Safe Searches

Internet Explorer

Chrome

Safari

Microsoft Edge

Firefox

Apple

Android

Google Family Link

Internet Monitoring Resources

Filtering and monitoring software is another way for adults to restrict (filter) and monitor the information children can access on the internet. Below are software options that have received some of the best ratings from PC Magazine and Buyer's Guide.
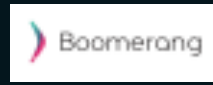
Bark

Net Nanny

WebWatcher

Norton Family

Qustodio

Mobicip

Boomerang

FamilyTime

Locategy

Aura

Social Media

Resources for Caregivers

There are resource guides to assist parents in protecting their children available through Connect Safely.

Parent's Guide to TikTok

5 Minutes with TikTok: Safety Advice for Families

Caregiver's Guide to SnapChat

Caregiver's Guide to Zepeto

Caregiver's Guide to Instagram

Gaming

Resources for Caregivers

There are resource guides to assist parents in protecting their children available through Connect Safely.

Gaming Safety Tips: English and Español

Caregiver's Guide to Fortnite

Caregiver's Guide to Roblox

Caregiver's Guide to Meta Quest Pro

Caregiver's Guide to Discord

Caregiver's Guide to Twitch

Content Hiding Apps

A good place to hide something is often in plain sight. This is precisely what certain hiding apps do. These apps create a password-protected vault where users can store anything from photos and videos to text messages and even other apps. They then conceal their true purpose by disguising themselves as ordinary utilities like a calculator, flashlight, or camera, or by being otherwise inconspicuous. These apps are particularly popular among individuals who wish to keep certain content private, including teenagers. Here are a few examples:

- AppLock
- Calculator Vault
- Apex Launcher
- Private Browser
- Vaulty
- HideU: Calculator Lock
- App Hider
- Parallel Space

Online Enticement and Sextortion

Online Enticement and Sextortion are happening at alarming rates across the country. It is critical we educate our children as early as possible to equip them with information, so they do not fall victim to the many bad actors trolling the internet. Below are some excellent resources that can be a great discussion starting with your child(ren). When you think it is too late and your child's images have been sent, know there is additional support through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

Take It Down

Online Enticement

Sexting

Talking To Teens about Sexting: English and Spanish

Stop Sextortion Video

Sextortion & Online Enticement- A look at the New Epidemic

Online Enticement and Sextortion

Resources Cont'd

Preventing Sextortion Among Youth (tips for parents and youth)

Parent's Guide to Teen Sextortion Scams

Sexting Tips for Parents and Youth: English and Español

You Sent a Sext, Now What: English and Español

Generative AI and sextortion

NetSmartZ: Sextortion resource videos from NCMEC

Sextortion parent guide from NCMEC: English and Español

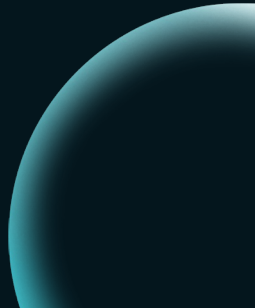Talking with Teens about Sex, Dating, and Relationships

Youth Resources

Children and youth have reported they wish they knew what exploitation and trafficking meant before it happened to them.

Exploitation and How to Protect Yourself

Blue Campaign Youth Poster Series

Youth Human Trafficking Scenario Animated Series (4)

Know the Law

Caregivers are encouraged to report suspected internet violations to their foster care worker for help in reporting suspected violations to the:

Cyber Tip Hotline 1-800-843-5678
https://report.cybertip.org/

Online Enticement of Children for Sexual Acts

It is a crime to use the Internet to knowingly persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a   child younger than the age of 18 to meet for sexual acts or to attempt to arrange such   a meeting (18 U.S.C. §2422(b)).

Unsolicited Obscene Material Sent to a Child

It is a crime to send obscene material to a child younger than the age of 16 if the sender knows the recipient is younger than the age of 16 (18 U.S.C. §1470).
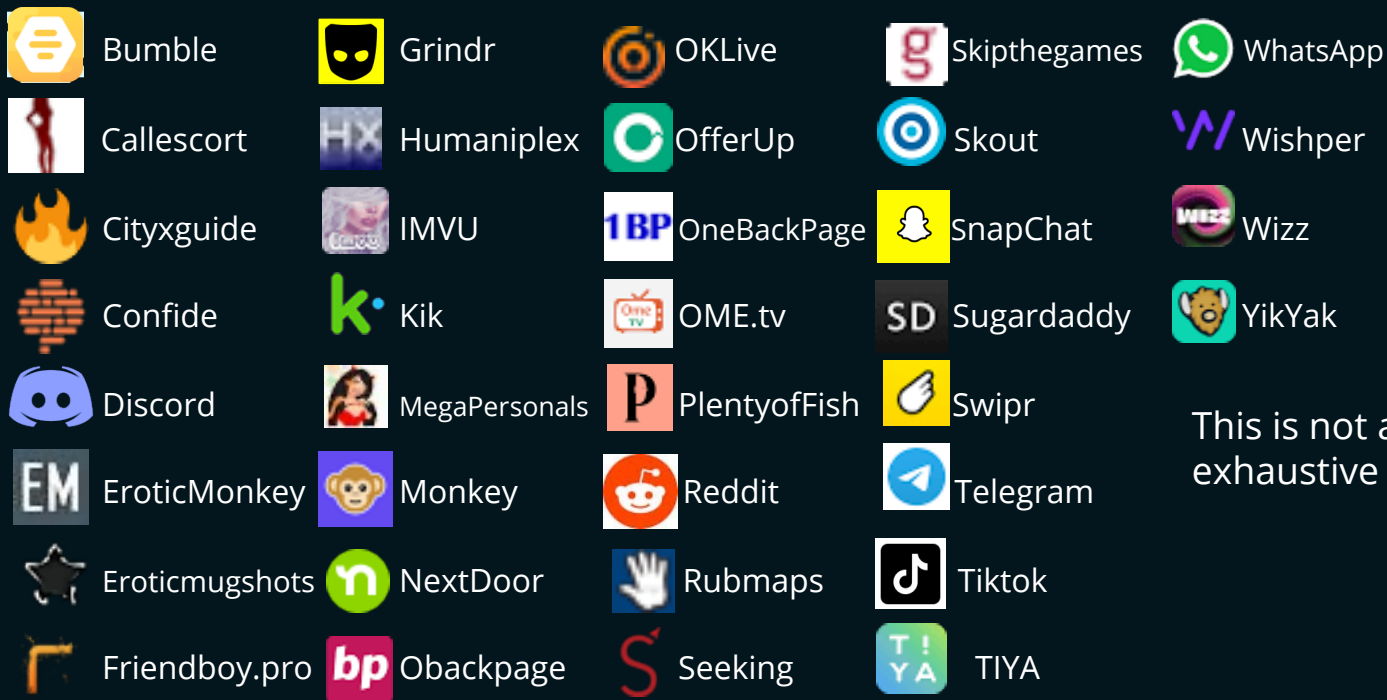
Misleading Domain Name

It is a crime to knowingly use a misleading domain name on the Internet with the intent to deceive a minor into viewing material that is harmful to minors (18 U.S.C. §2252B(b)).

Misleading Words or Digital Images on the Internet

It is a crime to knowingly embed words or digital images into the source code of a website with the intent to deceive a minor into viewing material that is harmful to minors (18 U.S.C. §2252C).

Apps and Sites of Concern

There are resource guides to assist parents in protecting their children available through Connect Safely.

- Bumble
- Grindr
- OKLive
- Skipthegames
- WhatsApp
- Callescort
- Humaniplex
- OfferUp
- Skout
- Wishper
- Cityxguide
- IMVU
- OneBackPage
- SnapChat
- Wizz
- Confide
- Kik
- OME.tv
- Sugardaddy
- YikYak
- Discord
- MegaPersonals
- PlentyofFish
- Swipr
- EroticMonkey
- Monkey
- Reddit
- Telegram
- Eroticmugshots
- NextDoor
- Rubmaps
- Tiktok
- Friendboy.pro
- Obackpage
- Seeking
- TIYA

This is not an exhaustive list.

Safety Planning

Internet & Cell Phone Safety Tips

- Educate yourself and other adults in a child's life
- Educate your children
- Signed agreement with child on boundaries including routine unplanned checks of a child's computer, phone, etc.
- Password protect WI-FI
- Install Parental Filters
- Know how to view browsing history
- Know common acronyms for texting
- Consider non-smartphones to limit online activity
- Consider no phone usage in private spaces or set a curfew