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## ENOUGH IS ENOUGH Internet Safety 101<sup>SM</sup> PARENT TIP SHEET

[BLOG.TRUSTMOVIE2011.COM](http://BLOG.TRUSTMOVIE2011.COM)

[WWW.INTERNETSAFETY101.ORG](http://WWW.INTERNETSAFETY101.ORG)

### Warning Signs That Your Child May Be At Risk Online

- Your child spends large amounts of time online, especially at night, or becomes obsessive about being online.
- You find pornography, child pornography, or other inappropriate sexual content on your child's computer.
- Your child receives phone calls from individuals you don't know or is making calls, sometimes long distance, to numbers you don't recognize.
- Your child is communicating online with someone you don't know on a regular basis.
- Your child receives gifts, mail or packages from someone you don't know.
- Your child turns the computer monitor off or quickly changes the screen on the monitor when you come into the room.
- Your child becomes withdrawn from the family and friends.
- Your child is using an online account belonging to someone else or is using online accounts you are not familiar with.
- Your child becomes secretive about relationships, online or offline.
- Your child is engaging in any type of online risky behavior, including, visiting X-rated sites, communicating with strangers, sending or receiving suggestive or sexual images, videos or texts, or posting personal information.

### What Can You Do To Protect Your Child From Online Exploitation?

*Communication is key in protecting children from online exploitation. Supervise their online activities or limit their access to sites that can facilitate online interaction with people they don't know and trust in real life. If you allow your children access to these sites, you should discuss Internet safety often. Monitor children's Internet use: ask them what sites they visit and to show you any profiles they have posted online. We recommend that parents utilize Internet Safety 101 Rules 'N Tools<sup>®</sup> across all-Internet enabled devices to help children enjoy a safe and rewarding online experience. (You can find a full list of Internet Safety 101<sup>SM</sup> Rules 'N Tools<sup>®</sup> at [www.internetsafety101.org/safety.htm](http://www.internetsafety101.org/safety.htm))*

- **Establish an ongoing dialogue and keep lines of communication open.** Spend time alongside your children and create an atmosphere of trust. Share real stories, ask questions and role-play to help your child understand how to identify and respond to online dangers.
- **Supervise the use of all Internet-enabled devices:** keep your child's computer in an open area of your home. Monitor other points of Internet access including your child's cell phone, portable music device, gaming device, PDA and other Internet-enabled devices.

- **Know your child's online activities and friends:** Be familiar with each of your children's passwords, screen names, and all account information, and have them provide the identities of every person on their buddy list or anyone they have "friended" on social networking or gaming sites. Caution your children to only communicate online with people they know in-person and who have been approved by you. Remind your children that the people they meet online may not be who they say they are, and you cannot recognize a disguised predator, online or offline.
- **Supervise the photos and videos your kids post and send online:** Photos and videos can be uploaded instantly to sites like YouTube and Facebook from any platform with Internet access including your child's cell phone, webcam, PDA, and gaming device. These images may make your child vulnerable to online predators, cyberbullies, and strangers, or lead to damaged reputations.
- **Utilize Parental Controls on all Internet-enabled devices:** In addition to safety rules, protecting kids online requires the use of software tools, better known as parental controls. Parental control software helps prevent objectionable content and dangerous people from gaining access to your child. A comprehensive suite of parental control tools should include customizable filters, monitoring software, time-managing controls, and Instant Messaging (IM) and chat controls. Parental controls should be utilized on all Internet-enabled devices (desktops, laptops, and gaming, mobile, and music devices). However, these resources are not a substitute for parental supervision.
- **Consider using monitoring software, especially if you sense your child is at risk:** Monitoring software, or keystroke capture devices, can provide a full and complete record of where your child goes online, monitor outgoing and incoming communications, and identify a child's online buddies. Many monitoring tools can send parents a periodic report summarizing their child's Internet usage and communications. These programs empower parents and guardians to set online boundaries for their children. Parents should tell their children that monitoring is being used unless the parent suspects their child is involved in risky behavior, in which case it may be better to go stealth.
- **Periodically check your child's online activity by viewing your browser's history:** Watch out for any sites that sound inappropriate (although not every inappropriate site has an inappropriate name!). If you notice the history has been cleared or deleted, have a discussion with your child about the sites he or she visited. Be aware that your child may selectively delete files from the history list. If you are concerned about your child's online activity, you may want to install monitoring software.
- **Understand, even if your child was a willing participant in any form of sexual exploitation, he/she is not at fault and is the victim.** The offender always bears the complete responsibility for his or her actions.
- **Avoid over-reacting** if your kids have been talking to people they don't know online or if they admit that they've come across a dangerous or tricky situation online.

### **Ask "Has someone you met online...."**

- Tried to befriend you? If so, how do you know this person?"
- Talked to you about sex or anything sexual?"
- Asked you for personal information?"
- Asked you for pictures? Sent you pictures?"
- Said anything to make you feel uncomfortable?"
- Offered to send you gifts?"
- Asked you to meet offline?"

## **Instruct your children:**

- Never to arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they met online or through their mobile device;
- Never to never give out identifying information such as their name, home address, school name, or telephone number or to send photos or videos of themselves or their friends to people they only met online;
- To avoid downloading pictures from an unknown source, as there is a good chance there could be sexually explicit images;
- Avoid responding to messages, texts or postings that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or harassing;
- To think before they post and remember that nothing is truly private online. Don't post or send images, videos, text or other content that you wouldn't want to show in front of your school assembly or a prospective employee.

## **What Should You Do If You Suspect Your Child Is Communicating With A Sexual Predator Online?**

- Consider talking openly with your child about your suspicions. Tell them about the dangers of sexual predators and other online risks. Remember, young people, girls especially, may have already developed strong feelings for the predator, whom they may view as a close friend or even a boyfriend.
- Review what is on your child's computer by checking the computer's history or using monitoring software. If you don't know how, ask a friend, coworker, relative, or other knowledgeable person. Pornography or any kind of sexual communication can be a warning sign.
- Use the Caller ID service to determine who is calling your child and talk to your mobile provider regarding their parental control options. Many cell phone providers allow parents to limit or restrict the numbers your child can dial and receive calls from to a parent-approved contact list. Providers also will allow you to block a stranger from calling your home or your child's cell phone.
- Consider installing monitoring software. If you suspect your child is involved in risky behavior, it is better to install the software stealthily to prevent them from going underground.

## **Contact your local or state law enforcement authorities, the FBI and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Immediately if:**

- Your child or anyone in the household has received child pornography;
- Your child has been sexually solicited by someone; or
- Your child has received sexually explicit images from someone.

*If any of these scenarios occurs, turn off the computer to preserve any evidence for future law enforcement use. Do not attempt to copy any of the images and/or text found on the computer. (As recommended by the FBI)*

*Note: This information is excerpted by Enough Is Enough's multi-media Internet Safety 101<sup>SM</sup> Program, designed to educate, equip and empower parents, educators and other caring adults with the knowledge and the resources needed to protect children from online dangers. More information is available at [www.internetsafety101.org](http://www.internetsafety101.org).*

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