



# CITY OF STANFORD

## PSA-INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

04/21/2021



Large numbers of young people are encountering unwanted sexual solicitations that, in the most serious cases, involve being targeted by offenders seeking children for sex. Unfortunately, the Internet is a nearly perfect medium for offenders seeking children for sex. It provides privacy, anonymity, and a virtually unlimited pool of unsupervised children and teenagers who may be susceptible to manipulation. Cloaked in the anonymity of cyberspace, sex offenders can capitalize on the natural curiosity of children, seeking victims with little risk of interdiction. These offenders no longer need to lurk in parks and malls. Instead, they roam from chatroom to chatroom looking for vulnerable, susceptible children.

Today's Internet is also rapidly becoming the marketplace for offenders seeking to acquire material for their child pornography collections. More insidious than the exchange of sexually explicit material among adults, child pornography often depicts the sexual assault of a child and is often used by child molesters to recruit, seduce, and control their victims. Although not all molesters collect pornography and not all child pornography collectors molest children, significant consensus exists among law enforcement officers about the role pornography plays in recruiting and controlling new victims. Pornography is used to break down inhibitions and validate sex between children and adults as normal, and it enables the offender to have power over the victim throughout the molestation. When the offender loses interests, pictures of the victim are often used as blackmail to ensure the child's silence, and when these pictures are posted on the Internet, They become an enduring and irretrievable record of victimization and a relentless, shame inducing violation of that child's privacy.

### Online Safety

The Cyber Crimes Unit makes it a priority to educate parents, children, prosecutors, and law enforcement on the dangers lurking behind the internet.

The Office of the Attorney General has also partnered with Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky to offer statewide trainings for parents and caregivers on how to keep kids safe online. The trainings offer a free [Internet Safety Toolkit](#), which provides helpful information about how to protect children from cyber bullying and online predators. To learn more about current and upcoming child protection training opportunities in your community, visit our [Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Trainings](#) page.

### Reporting Cyber Crime

Contact the Cyber Crimes Unit by calling 866-524-3672 or emailing [DCIForce@ky.gov](mailto:DCIForce@ky.gov). Information may be shared anonymously.

### Resources

Download the free [Internet Safety Toolkit](#)

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Frankfort, Kentucky 40601  
Main Line: (502) 696-5300  
Main Fax: (502) 564-2894  
[Send an Email](#)

The Internet has changed our world forever. We have unlimited access to news, shopping, online communities, etc. When used responsibly, it is a great asset in our daily lives but like anything else, there are people whose intent is to use it to victimize or manipulate others. According to a 2018 Pew Research study, 59% of teens reveal that they have been the target of some form of cyberbullying, with name calling and rumor-spreading being the most common forms of harassment.<sup>[1]</sup> This type of behavior has gone on since the beginning of time but smartphones mean that this can become a nonstop part of a teen's life. The manufacture, distribution and possession of child pornography, which used to be a very secretive "underworld" industry, now thrives because the Internet has made it so easily accessible. Social networking sites and unsupervised Internet usage have created an open forum for predators who seek contact with our children. The **Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force** (control+left click to view ICAC) program was created specifically to enable state and local law enforcement agencies to develop an effective response to technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and crimes against children.

The ICAC program, established by the U.S. Department of Justice in 1998, is a national network of 61 regional task forces, representing over 4,500 federal, state and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. As the lead law enforcement agency for the KYICAC, ( kentuckystatepolice.org )the Kentucky State Police has dedicated investigators, forensic examiners and administrative personnel who work closely with our affiliate agencies on this initiative. Our mission to implement an effective response to these crimes has several components: the ability to investigate and prosecute offenders; the analysis of digital evidence seized as part of these crimes; and Internet safety education providing information on appropriate online behavior and how to report crimes when they occur.

The KYICAC works alongside some very important partners in response to these crimes. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) exists to assist law enforcement and the public to recover missing children and combat child sexual exploitation. Accessible to the public, NCMEC's **CyberTipline** (control+left click to view CyberTipline)can be used to report any type of child abuse from child pornography to child molestation to child sex trafficking. After a preliminary analysis at NCMEC, a report is generated and sent to the ICAC Task Force in that jurisdiction, at which time it will be assigned to an investigator. In addition to the CyberTipline, the NCMEC website provides numerous resources relating to public awareness, education and other issues relevant to child safety.

[1] A Majority of Teens Have Experienced Some Form of cyberbullying, Pew Research Center, September 2018. <https://www.pewinternet.org/2018/09/27/a-majority-of-teens-have-experienced-some-form-of-cyberbullying/>, accessed August 29, 2019.



### **Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)**

Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) detectives protect children from sexual predators by investigating crimes involving child exploitation on the internet, and pursue those involved with manufacturing and distributing child pornography.

The ICAC Task Force works to protect children from sexual predators. They investigate crimes involving child exploitation on the internet. These crimes include:

- Online child enticement
- Child exploitation
- Manufacturing and /or possession of child pornography
- Distribution of child pornography
- Travelers (adults meeting children for sex)
- Sexually explicit conversations (text /application based programs / through the internet)



**Cybertip Reporting (control+left click inside the above box to view cybertipline)**

Cybertips are a way to report suspicious activity you may see or experience online involving children. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) helps keep children safe and assists law enforcement in catching predators and identifying victims.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Charles B. Wang International Children's Building 699 Prince Street Alexandria, VA 22314-3175 800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678) 703-274-3900  
www.missingkids.org www.missingkids.com/cybertip (CyberTipline) A clearinghouse of information on missing and exploited children, NCMEC operates a 24-hour hotline and child pornography tipline and provides a wide range of free services, including technical case assistance, link and pattern analysis on cases, forensic assistance, training programs, and educational material and publications. NCMEC also offers the CyberTipline (see page 3). Parents or children can file a report by completing and submitting an online form that is reviewed by an Exploited Child Unit information analyst and submitted to law enforcement, including the FBI, the U.S. Customs Service, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.



# INTERNET SAFETY TIPS

## Revealing Too Much Information:

1. Parents / Children - remember what you post can affect jobs, scholarships, college.
2. What is in the background in your photos?
3. Are you posting photos with shirts that reflect child's school, sports teams, in front of homes, in your home, and vehicles?
4. Do not Post photos of children in diapers, swimsuits and while taking baths.

## Resources

1. Educate children as young as 2nd grade. Make education age-appropriate for the audience.
2. Communicate with your child and allow for a safe environment for your child to come to you. Remember, we are all learning how to handle social media and electronics.
3. <https://www.netSMARTZ.org/Home>

## Security Features

1. Check all social media security settings for privacy & recheck regularly as security features change.
2. Turn off geo location on devices and apps.
3. Have a password for your home wifi.
4. Do not give your home wifi password to anyone.
5. Remember iPads, inactive phones, or anything that has wifi capabilities can be used to gain access to the internet or apps.

## Gaming

1. Are your kids chatting on gaming devices? Turn off that feature.
2. Typically, kids meet strangers chatting on a game - then move to an app or text messages trying to establish a relationship.

## What can you do?

1. (Children) have a trusted adult to confide in if you get into a sticky situation.
2. (Parents) allow your child a safe place to talk.
3. Kids often think the bad guy will go away if they do what they are asked, like sending inappropriate photos or video chatting but, the extortion will continue. Tell a trusted adult before you get in over your head.
4. Don't talk to people you do not know face to face. People aren't always who they say they are. Adults pose as children. Also, if you video chat and think someone is real, bad guys can make it look like that.
5. When you are feeling down and out and find someone to talk to on the internet or an app, remember they will say things to make you feel good. They will compliment you and share common interests, and try to alienate you from family/friends - which is called grooming. You are not the only person they are talking to. Additionally, they may offer to buy things for you.

## Other things to Think About

1. Creating a fake Social Media account of a real minor is a crime. For example, if someone creates a fake Social Media account of a real child with identifying information of a real child that is a crime.
2. Parents can be held civilly liable if their actions result in a minor harming themselves.