

## Tips on how to recognize online grooming and human trafficking:

- Be aware of who your child is talking to: Teach your child about online safety and encourage them to only communicate with people they know in real life.
- Watch for changes in behaviour: Be aware of any sudden changes in your child's behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn or secretive.
- Pay attention to language: Take note if your child is using sexual language that is inappropriate for their age, or if they are receiving messages with sexual undertones.
- Be cautious of strangers online: Make sure your child knows that people online are not always who they say they are, and to never share personal information.
- Teach your child about boundaries: Make sure your child understands that it is okay to say "no" to anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable, online or offline
- Educate your child about grooming tactics: Teach your child to recognize grooming tactics such as flattery, gift-giving, and pretending to share interests.
- Be aware of online gaming risks: Many online games allow players to interact with each other, and predators may use these platforms to target children.

## Steps to Take if You Suspect Online Grooming

If you suspect that your child is being targeted by an online groomer, there are a few actions you can take to protect your child.

Firstly, report it to the authorities immediately. You can also contact Supportline 179 or BeSmartOnline! for one-to-one support.

## Online Grooming and Human Trafficking: A Growing Problem in the Digital Age

FOR  
PARENTS

Human trafficking has been a prevalent issue for many years, but with the rise of social media and online platforms, it has become even easier for traffickers to target vulnerable children and young people for exploitation.

By using social media to identify potential victims and gain their trust, traffickers can arrange to meet in public places where they can then subject the victim to sexual or other forms of exploitation.

These predators often use coercion and blackmail to maintain control over their victims. Therefore, it is essential for young people to know how to stay safe online and recognize the signs of grooming.



## Protecting Children from Online Grooming: A Guide for Parents

Grooming is a tactic that predators use to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for sexual purposes. This can happen both online and in person. Once the predator has gained the child's trust, they may encourage the child to share sexual images or videos of themselves, or even arrange to meet in person. Children often meet people through social and gaming sites who may not be who they say they are. Therefore, it is crucial for parents to discuss these risks with their children.



To protect your child from online grooming, you should talk to them openly about the dangers they may encounter online.

Show them where to get help if they feel concerned and encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult for support. It is also important to discuss where they interact with friends online.

Remind them that the people they meet online may not be who they say they are and discuss what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like to make them aware.

## Tips to keep children safe online

To keep your child safe online, it is important to encourage them to make use of privacy settings on the social networks and platforms they use so they can stay in control of who can see their content.

Recognizing the signs of online grooming can be difficult because it often occurs at home, and predators often tell children not to talk to anyone about it.

## Signs to be aware of:

- Wanting to spend more time online
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and what sites they visit
- Switching screens when someone comes near the device or hide their phones
- Possessing electronic devices or phones that you haven't given them
- Using sexual language that is inappropriate for their age, and becoming emotionally volatile



**ANYONE CAN BE A VICTIM**  
*of Human Trafficking*

**PREVENT. PROTECT. REPORT.**