

# Online Child Exploitation During: Protecting Children and Youth Against the Risks of Virutal Communication

*Children who have experienced maltreatment in their lives are more likely to be the victim of online sexual exploitation. Implement protective measures, including speaking with children about the risks of sharing explicit content online, interacting with strangers, and manipulation tactics that may be used by online predators.*

## General Suggestions:

- Discuss online safety and the falsity in manipulation tactics.
- Ensure they know internet child exploitation is illegal and the child will not be in trouble for telling a trusted adult.
- Remind children not to interact online with people they do not know and not to send anything online that is sexual in nature or makes them uncomfortable.
- Share the ‘grandma rule’ with children, which suggests that no one should post anything online that they would not want their grandmother (future boss, future in-laws, beloved mentor, etc.) to see.

## Children Ages 5-11

- Discuss online safety using age appropriate vocabulary. Children may not understand the power of technology, such as the ability to record live streams, deceive identity, or that clicking on a link may take them to inappropriate websites.
- Adults should be involved in all online activity at this age. Be considerate of the child’s feelings, but ensure there is supervision on every online platform.

## Youth Ages 12-17

- Sexting, and through extension sextortion, is the most common form of online exploitation for youth. Youth may also not understand that something posted on the internet is permanently traceable, even after it is deleted.
- Adults should be as involved in a youth’s online personal life as they are in a youth’s offline personal life.

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