



**Josh Shapiro**  
Pennsylvania Attorney General

Dear Fellow Parents,

The internet is a powerful tool that allows everyone to communicate and access information to an extent never before seen in human history. And it becomes more powerful every day, with new apps and services opening up an ever-growing online world. However, the anonymity and permanency that the internet provides also creates dangerous opportunities to victimize children.

Children are going to use the internet extensively, whether at home, at school, or on their mobile devices. The best way to protect them is to teach them how to protect themselves. We're here to help. You can reach our staff with any questions you may have on the phone, online, or via social media.

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Only  
**1 in 10**

victims will inform a parent or trusted adult if they are being abuse physically or online

### TAKE ACTION

As a parent, learn as much as you can about the Internet (i.e. chat rooms, social networking sites, websites and news groups), especially from your children. Ask them to show you the places they visit online. This is a great way to keep the lines of communication open.

The Office of Attorney General has several Internet safety programs and presentations. These programs include informative videos created for adults and children to help them better understand the importance of Internet safety. Videos cover topics of online predators, cyber bullying, and safety settings for parents.

For more information or to schedule a speaker to visit your school or community organization contact the Office of Public Engagement at **1-800-525-7642** or [publicengagement@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:publicengagement@attorneygeneral.gov)

### CONTACT US

If your child has been solicited online, **do not** continue the chat and **immediately** contact your local police or the **Child Predator Section** using any of the following methods:

- Call toll-free at **1-800-385-1044**
- Email us at [cpu@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:cpu@attorneygeneral.gov)
- Via anonymous text message. Text **"PAKIDS"**, followed by your tip, to 847411 (TIP411)
- On our website at [www.attorneygeneral.gov](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov) or the PA OAG app



The Office of Attorney General App (PA OAG) can be downloaded for free via the Google Play Store, iTunes App Store, or by visiting [www.attorneygeneral.gov](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov).

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# CYBER SAFETY

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN ONLINE



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## COMMUNICATION: THE FIRST STEP

Children begin using electronic devices at a very young age. Their technological knowledge and skills are extensive, which makes it important to set clear rules and expectations for online activity. Remember, once something goes viral it is always accessible.

Talk to your children about the potential dangers of the Internet such as *exposure to inappropriate material, sexual solicitation, harassment, and bullying*. Encourage your children to confide in you if anything has made them feel uncomfortable.

## CONTROLLING ACCESS

- Set limits on your child's device of who can view their posts, profiles, and communications.
- Install filtering, tracking, and blocking software to monitor what your child is doing online.
- Adjust the parental controls offered by your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to limit your child's access to inappropriate material.
- Check computer and mobile device internet history to see what sites your child visits.
- Regularly monitor your child when they are online and set time limits.
- Monitor any social media apps your child has installed on their devices.
- Turn off electronic devices at bedtime and store them outside of the bedroom.



## ONLINE SAFETY: PREPARE A PLAN

- Establish age-appropriate rules for Internet use, ensure everyone understands them.
- Know your child's passwords
- Advise your child to NEVER:
  - Agree to meet face to face with someone they've met online.
  - Provide their name, phone number, address, school name, parent's name, or any other personal information.
  - Transmit a compromising picture of themselves or others.
  - Engage in cyber bullying by forwarding mean or inappropriate comments or photos.



- Teach your child age-appropriate use of online profiles on social networking sites and blogging, as the person at the other end is not always who they claim to be.

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

Your child might be at risk if he or she:

- Spends large amounts of time online, especially late at night.
- Turns off the computer quickly when you come into the room or becomes upset when you ask to see what they are doing online.
- Receives phone calls from adults you don't know or is making long distance calls.
- Receives mail or gifts from people you don't know.
- Uses an online account belonging to someone else.



## CHILD PREDATOR SECTION

The Child Predator Section (CPS) is empowered to investigate any case in which a minor is the victim of a sexual solicitation from an adult via the Internet. CPS also investigates the online sharing, downloading, and distribution of child pornography. Through aggressive enforcement of current laws, proactive operations targeting child sexual predators, and continual monitoring of the Internet for child pornography, we will not allow innocence to be stolen from our children. CPS also provides assistance to law enforcement agencies throughout the Commonwealth and the United States.

In addition to investigating and prosecuting the cases, the agents and attorneys have created a training program and teach young people and their parents, how to avoid being a victim of a sexual predator. Educating parents and young people about the dangers of sexual predators is extremely important. The training program has the agents, who catch the predators, in classrooms and churches teaching and warning parents and young people about these predators and the tactics they use.

Anyone who has information about child predators is urged to contact the Attorney General's Child Predator Unit at **1-800-385-1044**.