

# KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE FROM ONLINE GROOMING

## What is online grooming?

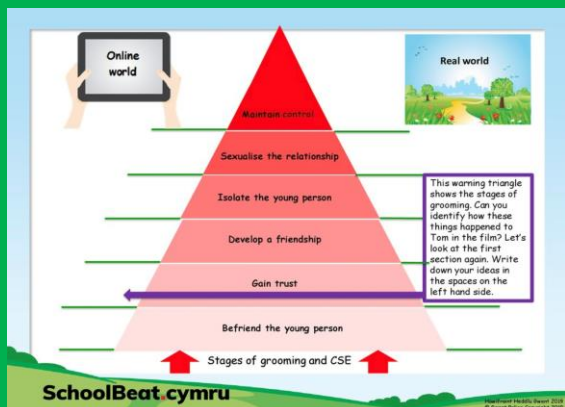
This is when an adult befriends a young person online and pressures or manipulates them into doing something sexual.

This could be sending naked pictures or videos or meeting the young person for their own sexual gratification.



## 6 places online grooming can happen..

- ✓ Chat rooms
- ✓ Social networking sites
- ✓ Dating sites
- ✓ Online gaming sites
- ✓ Instant messaging and streaming apps
- ✓ Photo sharing apps and sites like



Most of us talk to people online – it's a great way to stay connected. It can even be a good way of making new friends sometimes. But it's really important to understand the dangers of talking to someone you don't know.

If someone is under 18 and someone posts an explicit or nude image online you can make a report to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). They can contact the website to try and remove it without getting anyone involved.

Nobody should blackmail or pressure a child into doing something sexual online. If someone is doing this you can make a report to CEOP. Or speak to a Childline counsellor.

## Target

- Observing children
- Finding out their needs, wants and vulnerability
- Developing and gaining trust
- Manipulating children to get them on side
- Glamourising their own interests
- Sharing info within groups

## Test

- Test the child's loyalty
- Offers them protection
- Gives the child a sense of belonging
- Creates dependency
- Introduces them to others perpetrators
- Ask the child to do things
- Tries to get the child to recruit others

## Trap

- Experiences psychological, physical and sexual violence
- Trafficking
- Humiliation and control
- Reinforced dependency
- Blackmail
- Debt bondage
- Isolation from society, friends and family



### Targeting stage

This is when a person or gang target a young person who is vulnerable, as this reduces their chances of getting caught. **Signs of this stage include a person or group:**



### Experience stage

This stage is where this person might try to get you used to their lifestyle, or train you up in what they're doing. **At this stage a person or gang might:**



### Hooked stage

This is the stage where people make you feel like you're a member of their gang, even though actually they're just exploiting you for their own gain. **Signs of this stage include:**



### Trapped stage

Now you feel dependant on the group, the relationship with the person or group exploiting you may start to become unpleasant, as they reveal their true intents or character. **At this stage you may experience:**

## Talk About It

- Show them where to get help if they are concerned and to talk to you or a trusted adult for support
- Spend time discussing where they interact with friends online and how and what they share with others
- Explain how easy it is to pretend to be someone else online, and why an adult may wish to approach them
- Remind them that the people they have met online might feel like friends but they may not be who they say they are
- Discuss what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like to make them aware

## Tools to keep them safe

- Encourage them to make use of privacy settings on the social networks and platforms they use so they stay in control of who can see their content.
- For younger children use our parental control how-to-guides to set the right controls across devices, platforms and internet connections

## Spotting the signs

- Wanting to spend more and more time on the internet
- Being secretive about who they are talking to online and what sites they visit
- Switching screens when you come near the computer
- Possessing items – electronic devices or phones – you haven't given them
- Using sexual language – you wouldn't expect them to know
- Becoming emotionally volatile

## Steps to take

- Report it to the Authorities
- Reassure them it's not their fault
- Seek support from the National Crime Agency's or CEOP
- Contact Childline on 0800 1111 or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 for one-to-one support

Ref: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-grooming-guide-what-parents-need-to-know/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/online-grooming/>