

ONLINE SAFETY

A NWAC Fact Sheet For Parents and Caregivers of Indigenous Youth



THE INTERNET can be a **valuable resource for young people**, but it also comes with **risks**. **Online predators** infiltrate social media platforms that children use like **TikTok and Facebook** for manipulative and dangerous purposes. There is also a lot of readily available **misinformation** that can prevent your child from developing well-informed understandings around their health.

It's important to monitor your child's internet use, but we also know that parents today are busier than ever and it is not always possible to keep a close eye 24/7. Depending on the child's age, it's **also important to respect their privacy and build healthy and trusting relationships** where they can share with you if they are confused or concerned about something happening to them online.

Indigenous kids, especially those living in rural or remote areas, **may be more vulnerable to online manipulation** due to their desire to connect and find community where they can. No matter what their age, **it's always important to keep the conversation about online safety open and to be non-judgmental!**



BASIC ONLINE SAFETY GUIDELINES TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD:

- Turn your location settings off.
- Never share personal information (e.g., address, phone number, school name).
- Never share passwords with anyone except with parents/guardians.
- Never agree to meet someone you've met online without your parents' knowledge and approval.
- Never respond to a threatening email, post, or message.
- Always tell a parent or trusted adult about any communication that has upset you.

BASIC PARENTAL SUPERVISION GUIDELINES:

- Spend time online together to teach your child appropriate online behaviour.
- Stay up to date on the newest apps and trends in kids' lives.
- Monitor time spent on tablets or smartphones (e.g., only allowing computer use in a common room).
- Be aware of any unfamiliar account charges on your credit card or phone bills.
- Take your children seriously if they mention an uncomfortable online exchange.

WARNING SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD IS BEING TARGETED:

- Withdraws or seems distant while spending long hours online, particularly at night or when there is no supervision.
- Receives phone calls from individuals you don't know.
- Has new clothes or gifts that you don't recognize.
- Shuts off the computer or phone when you walk in.

WARNING SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD IS BEING TARGETED:

- 1) Be aware that online child sexual exploitation is a problem.
- 2) Talk to your kids openly and regularly. Help them feel comfortable turning to you if they experience issues online.
- 3) Look for warning signs.
- 4) Get help if needed by visiting cybertip.ca.

Check out www.stbbi.nwac.ca for additional fact sheets and more!

Native Women's Association of Canada
L'Association des femmes autochtones du Canada

