# PROTECTING YOUR CHILDREN: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKERS, PEDOPHILES, AND GROOMERS



# ATB

## ANTI TRAFFICKING BUREAU

# PROTECTING YOUR CHILDREN: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKERS, PEDOPHILES, AND GROOMERS

## *Anti-trafficking Bureau*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

As parents, your primary goal is to keep your children safe. In today's world, it's crucial to understand the risks posed by human traffickers, pedophiles, and groomers. These predators use manipulation and deceit to exploit children, both online and in person. This guide provides practical, step-by-step tips to help you protect your children from these dangers.

1. **Educate Yourself and Your Children**:

**Understand the Threats:**

- **Human Traffickers:** These criminals may try to lure children into situations where they are forced to work or do other harmful things.

- **Pedophiles:** Individuals who are sexually attracted to children and may try to exploit them.

- **Groomers:** People who build trust with children, often over time, to manipulate and eventually exploit them.

**Teach Your Children:**

- **Simple Definitions:** Explain these dangers in age-appropriate ways. For young children, you might say, "Some people pretend to be nice, but they want to hurt kids. We need to be careful and tell a grown-up if anything feels wrong."

- **Body Boundaries:** Teach children that their body is their own, and no one should touch them without their permission. Use the "No, Go, Tell" method—say "No," leave the situation, and tell a trusted adult.

- **Secrets:** Explain that some secrets are bad, especially if someone tells them not to share something with you. Encourage open communication.

Here are simple, age-appropriate definitions parents can use to explain the dangers of human traffickers, pedophiles, and groomers to young children:

1. **Human Traffickers:**

   o "Some bad people try to trick or take others to make them do things they don't want to do, like work or leave their family. It's important to stay safe and always be with trusted grown-ups."

2. **Pedophiles:**

o "These are people who try to touch kids in a way that's not okay. Remember, no one should touch your body if you don't want them to. Always tell a grown-up if something feels wrong."

3. **Groomers:**

   o "Sometimes, bad people try to be extra nice to kids to trick them. They might give gifts or say things that make you feel special, but it's just to get you to trust them. Always tell a grown-up if someone is acting like this, even if they seem nice."

# TEACHING BODY BOUNDARIES

Teaching children about body boundaries is essential for their safety and well-being. Here's a step-by-step guide using the "No, Go, Tell" method to help parents empower their children to understand and protect their personal space.

**Step 1: Start with Simple Body Ownership Concepts**

**Teach Them:**

- "Your body belongs to you. No one should touch it without your permission."

- Use clear, age-appropriate language to explain that certain parts of their body are private and no one should touch them in those areas except to keep them clean or healthy (e.g., during bath time or a doctor's visit, and only with a parent present).

**Example Phrases:**

- "If someone tries to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable, you have the right to say 'No.'"

- "Private parts are the areas covered by a swimsuit, and no one should touch or ask to see them."

**Step 2: Explain What Safe and Unsafe Touches Are**

**Safe Touches:**

- Hugs, high-fives, or pats on the back from family members or trusted adults, but only if the child is comfortable.

**Unsafe Touches:**

- Any touch that makes them feel uncomfortable, especially if it's on their private areas or if someone asks them to keep it a secret.

**Practice:**

- Role-play different scenarios where your child can practice identifying safe vs. unsafe touches. Ask them how they feel during each scenario and what they would do.

---

**Step 3: Teach the "No, Go, Tell" Method**

This simple, easy-to-remember method helps children react quickly and safely if someone violates their boundaries.

**1. NO** — Say "No" firmly:

- Teach your child that if someone touches them inappropriately, they should say "No" in a loud, strong voice. They don't need to worry about being polite in these situations.

- Practice saying "No" together with your child so they feel confident using it in uncomfortable situations.

**Example:**

- "If someone tries to touch you in a way that makes you feel bad or scared, you can say 'No!' and it's okay to shout it."

**2. GO** — Leave the situation immediately:

- Tell your child to get away from the person as soon as they can. It's important to leave the situation, even if the person is someone they know or like.

- Teach them to run to a safe place, such as to you, another trusted adult, or a public area.

**Example:**

- "After you say 'No,' go away from that person quickly. Find a safe spot like being near a trusted adult or a busy place where other people can help."

**3. TELL** — Tell a trusted adult right away:

- Teach your child to always tell you or another trusted adult (teacher, family member, or caregiver) if someone tries to touch them inappropriately or asks them to keep a secret about touching.

- Emphasize that it's important to tell, even if the person said to keep it a secret or threatened them. Assure them they will not be in trouble for speaking up.

**Example:**

- "After you leave, tell me or another grown-up you trust. Even if the person said it was a secret, you should always tell someone."

---

**Step 4: Use Everyday Examples to Reinforce Boundaries**

**Explain Social Situations:**

- Help your child understand everyday examples of personal boundaries, such as:

    o "You don't have to hug someone if you don't want to."

    o "If you don't want to be tickled, it's okay to ask someone to stop."

**Teach Them to Ask for Consent:**

- Encourage your child to practice respecting others' boundaries by asking for permission before giving hugs or other forms of affection.

**Example:**

- "If you want to give your friend a hug, it's a good idea to ask, 'Can I give you a hug?' first."

---

**Step 5: Role-Play Different Scenarios**

**Practice Makes Perfect:**

- Go through different scenarios where your child might need to use "No, Go, Tell." Practice saying "No" in a loud, clear voice, leaving the scene, and telling an adult.

**Example Role-Play:**

- Pretend someone tries to touch their shoulder when they don't want to be touched. Have them say "No," move away, and pretend to tell you what happened.

- Try another situation where an adult says, "This is our secret" and have your child practice saying "No, I need to tell my parents."

---

**Step 6: Encourage Open Communication**

**Create a Safe Environment:**

- Make sure your child feels comfortable coming to you with questions or concerns. Encourage them to talk to you about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable, no matter how small.

**Ask Open-Ended Questions:**

- Instead of asking "Did anyone touch you?" ask, "Is there anything that made you feel uncomfortable today?" This opens up space for more conversation.

**Reassure Them:**

- Remind your child that they will not be in trouble if they come to you about something. Let them know they can always tell you, even if someone tells them not to.

---

**Step 7: Reinforce the Concept Over Time**

**Repeat the Message:**

- Continue to reinforce these lessons as your child grows. Have regular conversations about body boundaries and the "No, Go, Tell" method to keep the information fresh in their mind.

**Update for Age Appropriateness:**

- As your child gets older, you can provide more detailed explanations of safety, body autonomy, and consent.

**Encourage Confidence:**

- Praise your child when they show confidence in expressing their boundaries or practicing the "No, Go, Tell" method.

---

**Conclusion**

Teaching your child body boundaries and the "No, Go, Tell" method is a powerful way to protect them from inappropriate touch and dangerous situations. By having these ongoing conversations and practicing together, you'll equip your child with the tools they need to recognize unsafe situations and respond confidently. Always keep the lines of communication open so your child feels safe and supported in talking to you about any concerns.

# TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT SECRETS

Helping children understand the difference between good and bad secrets is crucial for their safety. This step-by-step guide will help parents teach their kids to recognize when a secret is unsafe and how to handle it, promoting open communication.

**Step 1: Explain the Difference Between Good Secrets and Bad Secrets**

Start by helping your child understand that not all secrets are bad, but some secrets can be unsafe.

**Good Secrets:**

- These are secrets that are safe and fun, like a surprise party or a gift for someone's birthday. Good secrets are only kept for a little while and eventually make people happy.

**Bad Secrets:**

- These are secrets that make someone feel confused, scared, sad, or uncomfortable. Bad secrets can involve someone asking them not to tell you something, especially if it's about touching, hurting, or doing something wrong.

**Example:**

- "A good secret is like keeping a surprise birthday present. A bad secret is when someone asks you to keep something that makes you feel bad or tells you not to tell me about it."

---

**Step 2: Teach Them to Trust Their Feelings**

Explain to your child that if any secret makes them feel uncomfortable, worried, or scared, they should always tell you. They should trust their feelings—if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

**Reassure Them:**

- Emphasize that they will never get in trouble for telling you a secret, even if someone says they will.

**Example:**

- "If a secret ever makes you feel sad or scared, you should always tell me or another adult you trust. It's important to listen to how you feel."

**Step 4: Role-Play Different Scenarios**

**Practice Makes Perfect:**

- Act out scenarios where someone asks your child to keep a secret. Help them practice saying "No," leaving, and telling you what happened.

**Example Role-Play:**

- Scenario 1: A friend says, "Don't tell anyone, but I took this from the store."

  o Practice how your child can respond: "No, I'm going to tell my mom because that's not okay."

- Scenario 2: An adult says, "This is our little secret. Don't tell your parents."

  o Practice saying: "No, I have to tell my parents about everything."

**Step 5: Encourage Open Communication**

Let your child know that they can come to you with any secret, question, or worry, no matter what. Reinforce that they will never be in trouble for telling you a secret, even if someone else says they shouldn't tell.

**Ask Open-Ended Questions:**

- Instead of asking, "Do you have any secrets?" ask questions like, "Has anyone ever asked you to keep a secret from me or made you feel uncomfortable?"

**Reassure Them:**

- Let your child know they can trust you with anything and you'll always be there to listen and protect them.

**Example:**

- "You can tell me anything, even if someone says not to. I will always listen, and you won't get in trouble."

**Step 6: Reinforce the Lesson Over Time**

**Revisit the Conversation:**

- Have regular conversations with your child about secrets, body boundaries, and safety to ensure they feel comfortable talking to you about anything.

**Step 7: Emphasize That Secrets Should Never Be Kept From Parents**

Explain that no secret is ever too small to share with you, especially if it involves their safety or makes them feel uncomfortable. Reinforce that no one should ever ask them to keep a secret from their parents.

**Example:**

- "It's never okay for someone to say, 'Don't tell your mom or dad.' You can always tell me, no matter what anyone says."

**Step 8: Encourage Them to Tell, Even if It Feels Hard**

Help your child understand that it's okay to feel nervous about telling a secret, but they should always come to you, even if the person who asked them to keep the secret seems nice or friendly. Emphasize that their safety is the most important thing.

**Example:**

- "Sometimes, it can feel hard to tell a secret, but you'll always be safe if you come to me. I will always help you."

---

**Conclusion**

By teaching children the difference between good and bad secrets, using the "No, Go, Tell" method, and encouraging open communication, you can help protect them from unsafe situations. Consistent conversations about safety, boundaries, and secrets will empower your child to trust their feelings and come to you when something doesn't feel right. Always let them know they can talk to you about anything, and you'll be there to listen and protect them.

# TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY

In today's digital world, it's essential for parents to help their children navigate online spaces safely. This guide provides practical steps to monitor your child's online activity while fostering open communication and building healthy digital habits.

---

**Step 1: Explain Online Safety in Simple Terms**

Start by helping your child understand that the internet can be fun, but it's important to be careful. Explain that some people online may not be who they say they are, and it's crucial to only talk to people they know in real life.

**Example:**

- "The internet is like a big playground, but just like in a playground, we need to be safe. Not everyone we meet online is nice, so we only talk to people we know, like our friends or family."

---

**Step 2: Set Clear Rules for Internet Use**

Establish rules for when, where, and how long your child can use the internet. This helps set boundaries and ensures that online activity is balanced with other important aspects of life like homework, family time, and outdoor play.

**Tips:**

- Designate specific times for internet use (e.g., after homework or on weekends).

- Have them use the internet in shared spaces, such as the living room, rather than in their bedroom.

**Example:**

- "You can use your tablet for 30 minutes after you finish your homework, but only in the living room where I can see."

---

**Step 3: Teach the Importance of Personal Information Protection**

Explain to your child that they should never share personal information, like their full name, address, school, or phone number, with anyone online. Make sure they understand that personal details can be misused by strangers.

**Example:**

- "Just like you wouldn't give your home address to someone you don't know in real life, you shouldn't give it to anyone online. Keep your personal information private."

**Tip:**

- Help them set up usernames that don't reveal any personal information.

---

**Step 4: Monitor What They're Doing Online (we will dive in the know how later in this guide)**

Parents should actively monitor their child's online activity to ensure their safety. This can be done through parental control software, checking browser history, and having open conversations about their online experiences.

**Tips:**

- Use parental control apps to block inappropriate content and set screen time limits.

- Check which websites or apps your child is using regularly.

**Example:**

- "I'm going to check the websites you visit and make sure they're safe. If you ever see something that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell me right away."

## Step 5: Teach Them to Recognize Red Flags

Explain to your child that if anyone online asks for personal information, wants to meet in person, or makes them feel uncomfortable, they should tell you immediately. Help them understand that not everyone online is honest about who they are.

**Example:**

- "If someone online asks you for your name, where you live, or wants to meet you, say 'No' and come tell me right away."

**Red Flags to Teach Your Child:**

- Someone they don't know starts chatting with them.

- They feel uncomfortable or pressured during online conversations.

- They are asked to keep an online conversation a secret from you.

## Step 6: Use the "No, Go, Tell" Method for Online Safety

Teach your child how to respond if someone online makes them uncomfortable or asks them to do something they don't like.

**1. NO** — Say "No" to anything that feels wrong:

- If someone online says something mean or tries to get personal information, your child should say, "No" and stop engaging with them.

**2. GO** — Leave the website, app, or game:

- Encourage your child to leave the situation by closing the app, website, or game immediately.

**3. TELL** — Always tell a trusted adult:

- Make sure your child understands that if anything happens online that makes them feel scared or confused, they should tell you or another trusted adult right away.

**Example:**

- "If someone online ever says something that makes you feel weird, just say 'No,' close the app or game, and come tell me."

## Step 7: Stay Involved in Their Online World

Take an interest in the apps, games, and websites your child enjoys. This will help you understand what they're doing online and give you the opportunity to spot potential dangers.

**Tips:**

- Play online games with your child or explore their favorite apps together.

- Ask them to show you what they're watching or doing online.

**Example:**

- "What game are you playing? Let's play it together! I want to see what it's like."

---

### Step 8: Encourage Open Communication

Let your child know they can always come to you if something happens online that makes them feel uncomfortable, even if they think they might get in trouble. Create an environment where they feel safe talking about their online experiences.

**Tips:**

- Praise your child for coming to you if they encounter something unsafe online.

- Avoid being overly critical or punishing them if they accidentally access inappropriate content.

**Example:**

- "You can tell me anything that happens online, even if you think it's something bad. I'm here to help, not to get mad."

---

### Step 9: Discuss Online Strangers

Help your child understand that just like in real life, they shouldn't talk to strangers online. Even if someone seems friendly, remind them that they should only talk to people they know from real life.

**Example:**

- "Just like we don't talk to strangers on the street, we shouldn't talk to strangers online, even if they seem nice."

**Tip:**

- Set rules about who they are allowed to communicate with online, such as family members and close friends.

---

### Step 10: Create a Family Internet Safety Agreement

Work together to create a family internet safety agreement that outlines the rules and expectations for online behavior. This can include limits on screen time, rules about sharing information, and guidelines for how to handle uncomfortable situations.

**Example Rules to Include:**

- Only use approved apps or websites.

- Never share personal information.

- Always tell a parent if something feels wrong online.

**Example:**

- "Let's write down our internet safety rules together so we all know how to stay safe online."

---

**Step 11: Regularly Review Online Safety**

As your child grows and their internet use changes, revisit conversations about online safety. Make sure they know how to handle new apps, social media, or online gaming experiences.

**Tips:**

- Periodically check your child's internet use and have regular discussions about what's safe and what's not.

- Update your parental controls as needed to fit their age and online activity.

**Example:**

- "You're starting to use new apps now, so let's talk about staying safe when you use them."

---

**Conclusion**

By actively monitoring your child's online activity, setting clear rules, and teaching them to recognize red flags, you can help protect them from online dangers. Consistently reinforce the importance of personal information protection and foster open communication so that your child feels comfortable coming to you with any concerns.

# MONITORING YOUR CHILD'S ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's important to monitor your child's online activity to help them stay safe in digital spaces. This guide offers practical, step-by-step instructions for keeping an eye on what your child is doing across social media and online gaming platforms.

## Step 1: Set Up Parental Controls on Devices

Most devices (smartphones, tablets, and computers) offer parental control settings that allow you to monitor and manage your child's online activity. These settings can limit access to inappropriate websites, restrict downloads, and monitor their time spent online.

**How to Do It:**

- On iPhones: Go to **Settings > Screen Time** and enable parental controls to monitor usage.
- On Android: Go to **Settings > Digital Wellbeing & Parental Controls** to set limits and manage app usage.
- On computers: Use built-in parental controls like **Windows Family Safety** or **Mac Screen Time** to set browsing restrictions.

**Example:**

- You can set a time limit for social media apps like Instagram to one hour a day. This ensures they're not spending too much time online.

## Step 2: Familiarize Yourself with the Platforms They Use

Before monitoring your child's activity, it's essential to understand the platforms they're on. Create your own accounts on the same platforms they use (such as Facebook, Instagram, or Roblox) so you can learn how they work and follow what your child is exposed to.

**Platforms to Be Aware Of:**

- **Facebook**: A social media platform where users can share photos, videos, and status updates.
- **Instagram**: A photo-sharing app where users post pictures and videos and communicate via direct messages.

- **Roblox**: An online gaming platform where users create and play games, often interacting with others through chat.

**How to Do It:**

- Join these platforms and explore the settings. This will help you understand what your child can see, share, and experience on each one.

**Example:**

- If your child is using Roblox, create your own Roblox account to check the in-game chat feature, privacy settings, and see which games your child plays.

---

**Step 3: Adjust Privacy Settings on Social Media**

Ensure your child's social media accounts are private, which means only friends or approved followers can see their posts. This step significantly reduces the risk of strangers contacting them or accessing personal information.

**How to Do It:**

- **Facebook**: Go to **Settings > Privacy Settings** and change their account to private. Ensure their friends list and posts are only visible to approved friends.

- **Instagram**: Go to **Settings > Privacy > Account Privacy** and switch to "Private Account." This makes sure only people your child approves can follow and interact with them.

- **Roblox**: Under **Settings > Privacy**, ensure that chat features are limited to friends only, or disable them completely.

**Example:**

- On Instagram, set your child's account to private so only friends they approve can view their photos or message them. This prevents strangers from seeing their content.

---

**Step 4: Link Your Child's Account to Yours (Where Possible)**

Some platforms allow parents to link their child's account to their own, which makes it easier to monitor activity. For example, Facebook and Instagram allow you to follow your child's account, and platforms like Roblox offer parental monitoring features.

**How to Do It:**

- **Facebook**: Friend your child on Facebook, so you can see their posts, comments, and interactions.

- **Instagram**: Follow your child's Instagram account and turn on post notifications to see when they post something new.

- **Roblox**: Use Roblox's **Parental Controls** to monitor their activity, including who they're chatting with and which games they're playing.

**Example:**

- Friend your child on Facebook so you can see what they're posting and who they're interacting with. This allows you to step in if you notice any red flags.

---

**Step 5: Use Parental Monitoring Software**

There are numerous apps and software available to help you monitor your child's online activity across multiple platforms. These tools can track which apps your child is using, monitor social media, and alert you to potential issues.

**Top Monitoring Tools:**

- **Bark**: Monitors texts, emails, and social media activity for concerning content and sends you alerts.

- **Qustodio**: Tracks online activity, monitors screen time, and blocks inappropriate websites.

- **Net Nanny**: Filters harmful content, limits screen time, and lets you see your child's activity.

**How to Do It:**

- Sign up for one of these services, install it on your child's device, and customize settings to monitor specific apps like Instagram, Facebook, and Roblox.

**Example:**

- Bark can alert you if your child receives concerning messages or if it detects signs of bullying or predatory behavior in their social media conversations.

---

**Step 6: Check Browser History and App Usage Regularly**

Periodically review your child's browser history and app usage to see which websites they visit and how much time they spend on each app. This helps you identify patterns in their online behavior and any potential issues.

**How to Do It:**

- On **Google Chrome**: Go to **History** to see which websites have been visited.

- On **iPhone or Android**: Go to **Settings > Battery > Battery Usage** to see which apps have been used and for how long.

**Example:**

- By checking your child's browser history, you can ensure they're not visiting inappropriate websites. If you see unfamiliar sites, have a conversation about their content.

---

**Step 7: Review Their Friends or Followers List**

Regularly review who your child is connected to online. Strangers or people your child doesn't know in real life could pose a risk. Encourage them to only add people they know personally.

**How to Do It:**

- **Facebook**: Review your child's friends list under **Profile > Friends** and talk to them about anyone you don't recognize.

- **Instagram**: Check their **Followers List** by going to their profile and asking about unfamiliar names.

- **Roblox**: Check their **Friends** under the profile section of their account.

**Example:**

- Ask your child who their friends are on Roblox and explain why they shouldn't add people they don't know in real life. This helps ensure they only interact with trusted individuals.

---

**Step 8: Set Time Limits for Online Activity**

Limit how much time your child spends online each day. This helps prevent excessive screen time and allows you to have control over when and how they access the internet.

**How to Do It:**

- On **iPhone**: Go to **Settings > Screen Time** to set limits on specific apps like Facebook, Instagram, or Roblox.

- On **Android**: Use **Digital Wellbeing** to set daily limits on app usage.

- Many parental control apps (like Bark or Qustodio) allow you to set screen time limits remotely.

**Example:**

- Limit social media time to one hour per day using Screen Time settings on their device. This helps balance their online and offline activities.

**Step 9: Encourage Open Conversations About Online Experiences**

Create an open and trusting environment where your child feels comfortable talking to you about what they experience online. Encourage them to come to you if they encounter anything that makes them uncomfortable or if someone online asks for personal information.

**How to Do It:**

- Regularly ask your child about their time online: "What games did you play today?" or "Did anything weird happen online?"

- Let them know that you're there to help and won't punish them if they accidentally see or do something they shouldn't.

**Example:**

- "If you ever see something online that makes you uncomfortable, it's okay to tell me. I won't be mad; I just want to make sure you're safe."

**Step 10: Regularly Update Online Safety Settings**

As your child grows and starts using new apps, review and update their online safety settings. Stay involved as they explore different platforms, making adjustments as needed to keep them safe.

**How to Do It:**

- Periodically review your child's privacy settings, friend lists, and online activity.

- Check for new apps they've downloaded and ensure parental controls are in place.

**Example:**

- When your child starts using a new app, sit down together and go over the privacy settings to make sure their account is secure.

**Conclusion**

Monitoring your child's online activity requires a balance of technology and communication. By setting up privacy controls, using parental monitoring tools, and maintaining open conversations, you can help protect your child from potential online dangers while fostering a healthy and safe digital environment.

# TOGETHER, WE CAN PROTECT MORE CHILDREN

By using the tips in this guide, you're already making a difference in keeping your children safe from predators and online dangers. However, the fight against human trafficking and exploitation requires more than awareness—it demands action and a united community effort.

At the Anti-trafficking Bureau, we work tirelessly to:

- Investigate human trafficking networks and bring perpetrators to justice.

- Provide direct support and resources to victims.

- Educate parents, schools, and communities about the pervasive threat of trafficking.

- Advocate for justice and lasting change to dismantle these horrific networks.

**We can't do this without YOU.**

**Become a J.U.S.T.I.C.E. CHAMPION Today**

If you found this guide helpful, consider becoming a **J.U.S.T.I.C.E. CHAMPION**—a dedicated supporter committed to dismantling human trafficking, advocating for justice, and restoring dignity to survivors.

As a JUSTICE CHAMPION, you'll:

- Play a key role in funding investigations and prevention efforts.

- Help raise awareness in communities to protect vulnerable children and families.

- Provide essential resources to survivors as they rebuild their lives.

**Every child deserves to grow up safe, free, and loved.** But none of this can happen without your help.

**How You Can Help**

1. **Become a JUSTICE CHAMPION**: Join our mission today by visiting https://www.antitraffickingbureau.org/donate. You can make a monthly or one-time donation to support our work.

2. **Spread the Word**: Share this guide and encourage others to take a stand against trafficking.

3. **Get Involved**: Volunteer your time, host awareness events, or partner with us to make a bigger impact. Learn more at https://www.antitraffickingbureau.org.

**Join the Fight Today**

Your support fuels the mission to end human trafficking and ensure every child and survivor has a future of freedom and dignity. **Together, we can make a difference.**

**Donate now or become a JUSTICE CHAMPION at https://www.antitraffickingbureau.org/donate.**