ARE YOU FRIENDS WITH AN ONLINE GLITCH?

A SAFETY GUIDE FOR TEENS ON DETECTING ONLINE GROOMING BEHAVIOUR AND CHILD ABUSE MATERIAL

We know in high school, it's **cool** to have heaps of friends. But adding people online just to increase the number of friends you have, won't make you popular.

Befriending people online - who you don't know or have never met before - can be really dangerous since people use social media and games with criminal intent. Even if you have a mutual connection between a person online and a real friend, not everyone is who they say they are online.

MAKING NEW FRIENDS ONLINE
If you receive a friend request via social media or gaming platforms, do some detective work to find out if this person is real. If you have mutual friends, text or message them and ask how they know this person. Ask yourself questions like, 'Have you heard of this person before?' 'How many mutual friends do you have?' 'Is their profile set on public or private?'

If the answers don't seem legit – it's best to quit! Delete, block or decline the request. If the person is **actually** real, you can always add them as a friend later on.

Even if an online person checks out, it's important to protect yourself. Make sure you disable your location area and that your profile is private via device or app settings.

ARE YOU FOR REAL?
You've made a new online friend. Things seem to check out and you start to trust this person. They've become someone you can open up to about anything and they say the same thing about you. All of sudden, they ask you to do things that make you feel uncomfortable. They might offer you free online gifts or in-app purchases in exchange for nude images or videos of yourself. They say if you don't do these things, they will hurt you or hurt themselves. They may be crossing a line and you don't even realise it.

If an online friend asks for a nude photo of yourself, think twice before you click-a-pic.

Ask yourself, 'Would I want my family or friends to see this pic?' or 'How would I feel if this pic ended up online without my permission?'

If you don't like the idea of your parents, siblings or teachers seeing a nude photo of you – don't send it. Once the image has been shared with another person, there's no CTRL+Z button - you've lost complete control of who will see, keep or share the image online.

When you say 'no' to sending a nude pic to an online friend, they may act pushy, manipulative or threaten violence upon yourself or themselves. Talk to a parent or trusted adult about what's going on, although it might be an awkward conversation, they'll be able to advise how to best handle the situation.

IF YOU REGRET IT, RESET IT!
You've sent an intimate photo of yourself to someone you met online...now what?

Perhaps you feel like you've made a mistake, found your image online or it's been shared among people at school. Speak to either a parent or trusted adult straight away and tell them what's happened.

Reporting the incident to **eSafety.gov.au** will help remove the image or video online. Collect evidence by taking a screenshot of the image and website, before jumping online and filling out a report.

WHO TO CONTACT
If you are a victim of Child Abuse Material, make a report to remove explicit images or videos by submitting online evidence at **www.eSafety.gov.au**

Suspicious online profiles can also be reported to gaming platforms or apps via video game settings.