



IS YOUR CHILD TALKING TO AN ONLINE **GLITCH?**

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

When you give children an electronic device or allow them to use a computer, mobile phone or tablet, you are giving children permission to navigate the internet on their own. This sense of digital freedom makes it easy for children to create online accounts on social media and gaming platforms - sometimes without their parents' permission or even their knowledge.

Most online platforms or chatrooms do not require any formal or legitimate identification which means anyone can join and create profiles as themselves...or as someone else. People who create fake online profiles and accounts are usually motivated by criminal intent such as the grooming of young children to produce illicit images and videos for possession or distribution.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE MATERIAL?

Child Abuse Material (CAM) is the creation, access and dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos of children under the age of 18 and is an indictable offence under Victorian legislation.

WHO ARE CHILD ABUSE MATERIAL PERPETRATORS?

Perpetrators of CAM and/or 'Hands-Off' offenders do not have distinctive profiles. They can be of any age, gender or ethnicity. They have jobs, families, friends and normal everyday lives. Most perpetrators of CAM are first-time offenders. They may seem like they are difficult to detect in real life, but online there are many ways to reveal who they **really** are.

WHO IS YOUR CHILD REALLY TALKING TO?

To build a trusting relationship with young online users, perpetrators of CAM will offer kids free gifts including clothing, toys, electronic devices or in-app or gaming purchases. Turning off in-app purchases on your child's online apps or games via general settings will prohibit the purchases of online gifts.

If your child is talking to someone new online, you may see changes in their offline behaviour.

Children may show signs of secrecy; turning off their computer screen or hiding their phone and spending an unhealthy duration of time on their devices.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS?

The best way to approach online safety is to create a safe and open environment that allows two-way communication between a child and an adult. Try speaking with your child about meeting new friends online **away** from electronic devices - you don't want to seem nosy or like your prying on their online activities! Let your child know that they are only responsible for their own behaviour online but should be cautious of how others behave.

HOW TO MAKE ONLINE GAMING AND SOCIAL MEDIA SAFER FOR CHILDREN?

Many gaming and social media platforms consist of online chat components and by utilising the correct safety settings, you can protect the security of children while gaming online. The eSafety Commissioner has a range of in-depth guidelines that can assist with creating a safer environment for your children while playing online. This includes setting guidelines for popular games and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Clash of Clans, Minecraft, Pokemon Go and Playstation games.

For tips on setting your children's gaming, video and social media privacy settings, please visit:

www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/esafety-guide

WHO TO CONTACT?

If you are a guardian of a young victim of Child Abuse Material, notify police and make a report to remove any explicit images or videos by submitting online evidence at **www.eSafety.gov.au**

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

**IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT PRODUCERS OF EXPLICIT CHILD ABUSE MATERIAL
PLEASE MAKE CONFIDENTIAL REPORT TO CRIME STOPPERS VICTORIA ON
1800 333 000 OR AT WWW.CRIMESTOPPERSVIC.COM.AU**