

How to talk to your child about grooming

A GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS BASED ON AGE

Ages 6-10	<p>Key Message</p> <p>"Your body and your feelings matter. If anyone tries to make you keep secrets or makes you uncomfortable, it's okay to tell me" (NetSmartz, 2021).</p> <p>Example</p> <p>"Sometimes, people try to trick you into thinking they are your friend when they're not. If someone asks you to keep a secret or gives you gifts, tell me or another adult you trust."</p> <p>Follow Up: Reinforce that adults should never ask for secrets or inappropriate behavior.</p>
Ages 11-13	<p>Key Message</p> <p>"Not everyone online is who they say they are, and some people try to trick others into doing things that aren't safe" (NCMEC, 2022).</p> <p>Example</p> <p>"There are people who pretend to be friends online but might be trying to hurt others. If someone online makes you uncomfortable or asks for pictures, let me know immediately."</p> <p>Follow Up: Discuss how predators may disguise their intentions and encourage them to report uncomfortable behavior.</p>
Ages 14-18	<p>Key Message</p> <p>"Groomers use gifts, attention, or favors to manipulate teens into unsafe relationships. Trust your instincts - if something feels off, it probably is (Stop the Traffik, 2020).</p> <p>Example</p> <p>"Some people may make you feel special by giving you things or saying nice things, but they might have harmful intentions. If anyone asks you to keep secrets or makes you feel uncomfortable, you can always talk to me."</p> <p>Follow Up: Share real-world stories of grooming and encourage the teen to share if something feels wrong.</p>

