

E-Safety Guide for Teens

YOUTH CENTRAL ONLINE SAFETY TIPS FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
VICTORIA POLICE EXTRACT (2020)



Protect Your Private Information

Only give your mobile phone number and email address to people you can trust. Think about the information you have in your online profiles - if it includes your home address, your mobile number and a photo of you, it makes you very easy to find.

And when it comes to things like bank details or credit card numbers, you should make double-sure that you don't give that information out without thinking about the possible negative consequences first.

Keep Your Passwords to Yourself

Never share your password - ever. Make sure your password is at least eight characters long, a mix of letters and numbers and not the name of your favourite band, pet or football team.

Photos

Think twice before sending or posting a photo. A private joke can become a public embarrassment in one click. Once it's out there you can't take it back and it can travel a long way very quickly.

Chatting to Strangers

It's not necessarily bad to chat to strangers online, but be aware they might not be who they say they are. Don't share private information and if you are planning to meet them, take a friend, choose somewhere busy and, if possible, meet during the day.

Moderate Comments

If you've got a blog, make sure you moderate comments. You might consider publishing a blog comment policy, so people know what's okay to discuss and why you have deleted their comments.

Arguments

If an online argument is turning into a flame war, let it go. Step away, take a few deep breaths and remember what you are posting is probably not something you'll be proud of tomorrow.

Is It Time to Act?

No matter how prepared you are, sometimes, bad things happen to careful people. If any of these things have happened, it might be time to take a stand:

- Having a friend pass on a private online conversation to someone else without your permission
- Being harassed via messages, Facebook, Twitter, email or in-game chat
- Being tricked into giving out a secret online
- Having an embarrassing picture of you posted or sent around online
- Being signed up to receive unwanted e-mails, like pornography, by someone else
- Having someone break into your account or steal your password
- Finding out that the person you're e-mailing, texting or messaging isn't the person you thought they were
- Having someone pretend to be you online
- Being entered in an online poll or contest without your knowledge
- Having someone post nasty comments on your guestbook, blog, or on a discussion board

What To Do

If you find yourself on the wrong end of some suspect, nasty, or even illegal, online activity, there are steps you can take to start sorting out your digital issues:

(a) Let Someone Know

Tell someone you trust or contact a support service such as [Kids Helpline \(1800 55 1800\)](https://www.kidshelpline1800.com.au) or [eSafety](https://www.esafety.vic.gov.au). Don't retaliate or reply - this can lead to a flame war and only encourages the other person.

You can also access help through Victoria Legal Aid's [Below the Belt](https://www.belowthebelt.com.au) Android app, which has advice about things like sexting and cyberbullying.

(b) Change Your Password

If you think someone has been accessing your email or social media accounts, change your password and see if things settle down. Make sure your new password is at least eight characters long, a mix of letters and numbers and not the name of your favourite food, pet or football team.

(c) Block or Report

If the bullying is happening via social media, you can use your account settings to block the accounts being used to bully you. If this doesn't stop the bullying, you can report the bullying to your Internet Service Provider or mobile phone provider to ask for more advice.

If you are receiving threatening messages and feel in danger, call 000 and report it to the police.

(d) Save The Evidence

Learn how to keep records of offending online conversations, messages and images. To do this you can print out emails and web pages or take screen captures.

Helpful Links & Resources

- [eSafety](#) - The Australian Government's eSafety site is designed to help empower you to be safe online.
- [ThinkUKnow](#) - Helpful site full of tips on how to stay in control on the web.
- [eHeadspace](#) - eheadspace is a confidential, free and secure space where young people 12 - 25 or their family can chat, email or speak on the phone with a qualified youth mental health professional.
- [Lifeline](#) - If you or someone you know need someone to talk to, for any reason, about anything, you can call Lifeline on 13 11 14 24 hours a day.
- [Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800](#) - Kids Helpline is a free, 24-hour counselling service for young people aged 5-25 years. Counselling is offered by phone, email and over the web.
- [Tagged](#) - An Australian film about a group of high-school friends who post a rumour about a rival and spark a chain reaction that leaves no one untouched. Will these friends avoid being tagged forever?



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