

Online Grooming

What parents need to know

internet
matters.org

Grooming is when someone seeks to build an **emotional connection with a child** to gain their trust for sexual purposes. It happens both online and face to face.



What is online grooming?

Children may often meet people through **social and gaming sites** that aren't who they say they are so it's important to discuss the risks with them.



Once groomers have gained a child's trust they may **encourage them to share** sexual images, or videos of themselves, live stream, or arrange to meet.

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Groomers are **not always strangers** and sometimes children may not be aware that they are being groomed **believing they're in a relationship** with the person.

Ways to protect your child

Talk about it

Although a tricky subject to talk about with your child it is important that you start a conversation

Show them where to get help if they are concerned and to **talk to you or a trusted adult** for support

Spend time discussing where they interact with friends online and how and what they share with others

Explain how easy it is to pretend to be someone else online, and why an adult may wish to approach them

Remind them that the people they have met online might feel like friends but they **may not be who they say they are**

Discuss what **healthy and unhealthy relationships** look like to make them aware

