Let's Talk Teens

Promoting Healthy Relationships & Preventing Exploitation

For Parents and Guardians of Teens & Young Adults:

Preventing Bullying, Harassment, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault & Sex Trafficking

Teen Lures™ PREVENTION

By Rosemary Wooden Webb and Jennifer Wooden Mitchell with Kenneth Wooden

Being the parent of a teen is especially challenging in today's constantly connected world. Teens face complicated issues, with which many parents do not have first-hand experience.

- Seventeen percent (17%) of teens aged 12-18 reported being cyberbullied two or more times over the course of the previous 30 days. Cyberbullying Research Center, 2016

- Among 12-18 year olds, 19% said they had received a nude or nearly nude image (sexting) from someone they knew; 12% admitted to sending such an image to someone else. Cyberbullying Research Center, 2016

- 67% of teens know how to hide what they do online from parents and guardians. Pew Research Center Internet & Technology, 2016

The most effective strategies for protecting today's high-tech teens are surprisingly low tech: education, communication, vigilance and trust.

The majority of teens look to their parents for direction on important issues and value their advice. Thankfully, 94% of parents talk to their teen about privacy and responsibility on social media, and discuss what is appropriate for them to share online*.

Regarding dating, teens say that parents most influence their decisions about sex, love and relationships*.

*Pew Research Ctr Internet & Technology, 2016 /Nat'l Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2016

Healthy Relationships

Setting Personal & Digital Boundaries

To ensure teens develop and maintain healthy, respectful relationships, model and discuss them at home. People in healthy relationships show each other respect. They are free to talk openly and honestly. They are comfortable making decisions both together and independently. They trust and support each other. They build each other up. They respect each other. They are equals.

Unhealthy relationships are unbalanced. In an attempt to control the other person, one person may be verbally abusive or insulting, say or text cruel or belittling things, or use physical or sexual violence. Examples of controlling behaviors iclude: excessive texting, wanting to know where their partner is at all times, deciding how they dress or with whom they can be friends.

By discussing how to set personal and digital boundaries, and creating an expectation of mutual respect, parents and guardians can help teens live safe and happy lives.

You Are A Marvel

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that will never be again.

...And what do we teach our children? We teach them that two and two make four, and that Paris is the capital of France.

When will we also teach them what they are?
We should say to each of them:
Do you know what you are?

You are a marvel. You are unique.

In all the years that have passed, there has never been another child like you. Your legs, your arms, your clever fingers, the way you move.

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven.

You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel.

And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel?

You must work - we must all work - to make the world worthy of its children.

~Pablo Casals

Self Esteem

Dating Violence

Cyber Bullying

Sexting

Sexual Harassment

Healthy Relationships

Sexual Assault

Sex Trafficking

Respect

Consent

Drugs & Alcohol

Threats & Secrets

Suicide Prevention

Helplines

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, parents and caregivers can work on the following skills with teens to help them develop and maintain healthy relationships:

- **Respect:** showing consideration for the feelings and well-being of the other person.

- **Anger Management:** dealing with anger in positive, non-violent ways.

- **Problem Solving:** knowing how to break problems down, find possible solutions, and consider the likely outcomes for each solution.

- **Negotiation and Compromise:** turning problems into "win-win" situations in which each partner gets some of what he or she wants.

- **Assertiveness — Not Aggression:** asking for what one wants clearly and respectfully, without threats, intimidation, or physical force. Assertive communication means respecting the rights of others, and standing up for your own rights.

Victimization of teens, including bullying, dating violence and sexual assault, has continued under a veil of secrecy for generations. Today's teens, however, are increasingly speaking out against these crimes. Parents can support teens by staying informed, modeling healthy relationships and openly discussing the following related topics addressed in this guide:

- Teen Lures, Disclosing Abuse and Reporting Considerations; **Authority Lure** ....pgs **4-5**

- Dating Violence, Date Rape, Consent, Drugs & Alcohol; **Affection Lure** .... pgs **6-7**

- Volunteering, Instincts & Intuition, Asking for Assistance; **Assistance Lure**....................pgs **8-9**

- Technology & Exploitation, Sexting, Sex Trafficking; **Ego-Fame Lure**................. pgs **10-11**

- Cyber Interactions, Risk-Takers, Social Apps Teens are Using; **e-Lure**...............................pgs **12-13**

- Social Media & Privacy, Over-sharing & Identity Theft; **Name Lure**...................... pgs **14-15**

- Electronic Aggression, Teens & Internet Pornography; **Games Lure**.................... pgs **16-17**

- School Violence & Shootings, Teen Suicide Prevention; **Emergency Lure** .... pgs **18-19**

e-Lure
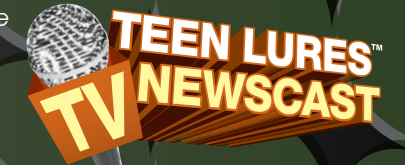
"Living Out Loud"

Today's teens live out loud via constant texts, tweets, posts, IMs and blogs, providing a steady stream of personal and private information to the world. This broadcasting can leave teens vulnerable to electronic threats including cyberbullying, identity theft, harassment, stalking and exploitation.

Communicate with your teen online and electronically. Regularly discuss how much information they share, how often and what messages they are conveying about themselves. Recognize that Gen Z teens are likely to have fake (or secondary) accounts to give them a more private & confidential means of expression with a select group of friends. Remind your teen often: nothing online is private! *(See also Over-sharing Online, page 14)*

Cyber Interactions

The majority of teens regularly and safely interact electronically with people they don't know through gaming and social media. Most know how to ignore, block, delete or handle online propositions. When 10-17 year olds receive unwanted sexual requests online, 43% are from other teens (2/3 met online; 1/3 knew in-person prior), a quarter of them are 18-25 years old.*

*Source: Trends in Unwanted Sexual Solicitations, by JKimberly J. Mitchell, Lisa Jones, David Finkehor and Janis Wolak; Crimes Against Children Research Ctr, University of New Hampshire

- Become familiar with all technology your teen uses; communicate with them via text & social media.
- Acknowledge if your teen is more tech savvy than you, and ask for their assistance.
- While interacting with your teen electronically, monitor their activities in an agreed-upon manner.

Teenage Risk-Takers

Teens who are risk-takers also tend to be risk-takers online. Most adolescents who meet online acquaintances in person go willingly, go more than once, and are expecting a sexual encounter. Many of these teens describe feeling in love.*

*Source: Online Predators and Their Victims, by Janis Wolak; Crimes Against Children Research Center, University of New Hampshire

Spend time with your teen. Help them work through day-to-day issues to minimize the chance they will engage in risky behavior. Make behavioral expectations clear. If teens do misuse technology (and like most teens, they will probably make a few mistakes), hold them accountable for their actions. Consider revoking the privilege for a period of time. Together, work out a plan for your teen to regain their tech privileges and your trust.

Which Social Apps are Teens Using?

While the names and functions of popular social apps are ever-changing, teens' fixation with social media is constant. And while teenagers will always be ahead of the technology curve from parents and guardians, adults can stay informed with which apps their teens are using in two easy steps.

1. Ask your teen to show or tell you about the latest social apps they are using: what do they like and dislike about them? Do they use the location feature(s), or do they prefer ghost mode? What are other kids posting?

2. Have a teen who doesn't share with you? Open the App Store on their phone or device and scroll through it. Apps that say "GET" in a small circle on the right are not being used; apps that say "OPEN" have been downloaded onto their device, whether visible or not. To look up apps, use the Search option in the App Store. Type "dating apps," "hidden photo vault," or other phrases to see if these apps are "OPEN" and downloaded on the device. Discuss any apps you feel are unhealthy for your teen and why.

The same technology that offers teens incredible learning and social opportunities also provides cyber bullies and predators with the means to prey on innocent people. Cyber criminals use the same lures online as they use to con teens offline. Remember, too, that teens themselves misuse technology, with their peers as victims.

This newscast examines how oversharing makes teens more vulnerable.

The Con

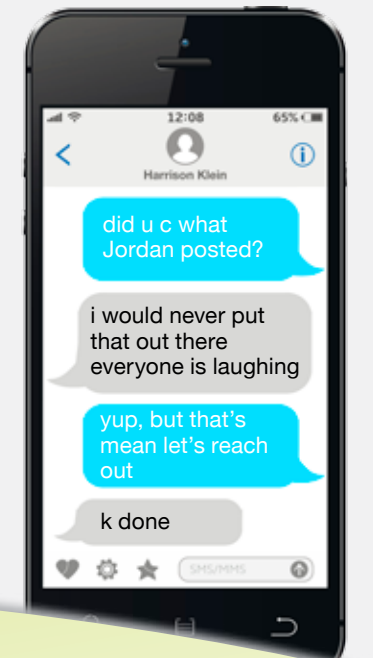Web-enabled technology generates three main threats for teens:

1. Peer Exploitation: Teens are bullied, harassed, stalked and exploited, often by their own friends or peers. Sexting is requested or demanded, inside & outside dating relationships.

2. Cyber Predators: Although the least common threat to teens, cyber predators do exist and lure unsuspecting teens into exploitation and worse.

3. Sex Trafficking: Teens are lured online using the very lures outlined in this guide. Foster, runaway and LGBTQIA youth are at increased risk. (See also page 10, Teen Exploitation.)

Preventing the Con

- Help your teen establish digital boundaries to discourage over-sharing.
- Alert teens to the potential legal, social and emotional ramifications of cyberbullying and sexting.
- Warn your teen that some people prey on uninformed and unsuspecting teens.
- Together with your teen, establish clear rules for using technology, as well as consequences of misuse.
- If your teen breaks established rules, follow through with love, understanding and pre-determined consequences.
- Help your teen report e-crime to local police, cybertipline.org or your state U.S. Attorney's Office.

did u c what Jordan posted?

i would never put that out there everyone is laughing

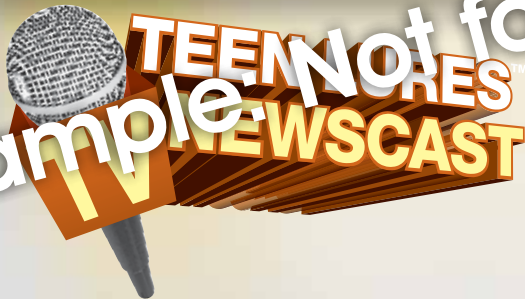*yup, but that's mean let's reach out*

k done

Anna's Story

Jorge, 17, repeatedly texted Anna, 16, asking for a topless photo. Reluctantly, Anna finally agreed. Then Jorge demanded a completely nude pic of Anna. If she didn't comply, he threatened to forward her topless pic to all his friends.

Anna didn't allow Jorge to extort her into further exploitation. She went to school administrators and the police. When Jorge was called to the office, Anna's topless photo was found on his cell phone, along with nude pics of fifteen other minors. He confessed and was arrested on child pornography charges.

WWW **For parents:** cybertipline.org - National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
For teens: teenluresprevention.com/teens

Teens Talking About Tough Issues

Teen Lures TV Newscast (for Grades 7-12) facilitates peer teaching and learning through Student Anchor-led Newscasts, followed by Educator-led Class Discussions. The program gives middle and high school students opportunities to openly discuss issues affecting teen personal safety and proven prevention strategies. Encourages vital classroom, peer and parent discussions to promote teen health and safety.

Let's Talk Teens is the parent complement to the *Teen Lures TV Newscast.* It is designed to help parents communicate with teens about healthy life choices. Read and study this guide, share it with your teen, and use it to prompt regular discussions at home. Available at https://childluresprevention.com/shop/

By talking candidly with teens, we show respect and support for their growing independence, provide invaluable input on their health and safety, and let them know help is available from family, friends and helplines.

"To teach is to learn twice."
– Joseph Joubert

Teens taking the lead with the Teen Lures TV Newscast to:

- Promote Healthy Relationships.

- Create media & have vital dialogues about bullying, harassment, dating violence, sexual assault & sex trafficking prevention.

- Eliminate secrecy surrounding these issues.

- Help stop the cycle of teen exploitation.

For more information, visit **teenluresprevention.com**

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