Who are sexual exploiters

Your parents might have told you that exploiters are old, creepy loners. Or you may have seen TV shows where an exploiter was portrayed as someone well-dressed, rich, and popular.

The truth is, it's often neither of these things. **An exploiter can be anyone**. They can be young, old, poor, rich, and any gender. An exploiter can be:

- a religious leader
- a team coach
- an employe
- a friend
- a family member
- a boyfriend, girlfriend, or partner
- a teacher

...or just about anyone else. A 2019 Statistics Canada report found that **83% of individuals accused in human trafficking cases were men, and 65% of them were men between 18 and 34 years old**.

EXPLOITERS USE DIFFERENT METHODS TO TRY TO RECRUIT, LURE, AND GROOM YOUNG PEOPLE FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

These tactics, or methods, can include:

- Posing as your boyfriend, girlfriend, or lover.
- Giving you lots of affection and being very romantic (seeming "too good to be true")
- Giving you lots of expensive gifts like jewelry, cell phones, computers, clothing, or even pets.
- Promising a glamorous lifestyle and lots of money
- Providing you with lots of alcohol and drugs
- Offering you free housing and transportation
- Posing as a trusted adult or peer
- Isolating you from your family, friends, and community (for example, by making you feel like your parents are unfair, or your friends aren't as cool as they are)
- Hosting parties and asking you to invite friends your age

750,000 PEOPLE GO ONLINE LOOKING TO CONNECT WITH YOU FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES PER DAY

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It doesn't matter who you are: exploiters target young people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, and sexual orientations. They are often looking for someone who is lonely, who needs a friend or a place to live, and who will respond to connection.

Exploitation often happens online.

In February 2021, The United Nations estimated that on any given day, 750,000 people go online looking to connect with youth for sexual purposes.

Online exploitation can happen to anyone, from anywhere. An exploiter is not always a stranger – **it's often someone you know**.

Online exploiters use social media, online advertising, and dating sites to meet, recruit, and groom young people. **They are very good at seeming kind and trustworthy**.

Online exploitation can happen on any online platform where there is access to a live-stream, messaging, or private chat feature.

25 is the average age of an exploiter

It most frequently occurs on live-streaming apps, such as: Discord, Omegle, Yubo, Twitch, and social media apps, including: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. 1 in 3 luring attempts reported to Cybertip happened on Instagram, Snapchat, or Kik.

Exploiters aren't always that much older than you. A 2021 report from Cybertip.ca said that **the median age of exploiters was 25.** This means that some exploiters are older than 25, but it also means a lot of them are under 25.

Many youth report being sexually exploited by their peers, and we have heard cases where the exploiter is as young as 12.

You may have heard the word sextortion. This means threatening to share private or sexual photos of a young person unless you pay money, or send more naked images.

Between August and December 2021, Cybertip processed 27 reports of sextortion via Snapchat alone.

In these incidents, the exploiters hacked, (or said they had hacked) into a teen's "My Eyes Only" folder and gained access to nude images.

In most cases the exploiter asked for money in return for keeping the images private. In some cases, the exploiter asked for additional sexual images of the teen.

Online exploitation and luring can lead to human trafficking.