Red Flags of Online Exploitation

Technology changes fast, but common red flags of online exploitation remain the same. Knowing the signs can help you protect your child. **Talk regularly about online safety and remind your child they can come to you if something feels wrong.**

Red Flags to Teach Your Child

Be cautious if an online contact:

- Gives excessive compliments or attention.
- Offers gifts, game currency, codes, or gift cards.
- Asks for personal details, photos, or videos.
- Asks to move to a private chat or another platform.
- Brings up sexual or age-inappropriate topics.
- Encourages risky or harmful behaviour.
- Ignores boundaries or will not accept "no."
- Uses pressure, guilt, manipulation, or threats.
- Wants to meet in person.

Signs Parents Should Watch For

Watch for changes such as:

- Hiding screens or online activity.
- Frequently mentioning a new online friend.
- Feeling anxious, upset, or withdrawn after going online.

These signs do not always mean exploitation, but they are reasons to check in.

What to do

Teach three simple steps:

Block. Report. Tell a Trusted Adult.

Block the person, report the behaviour, and tell a trusted adult right away.

For more tips, see Ten Tips for Keeping Kids Safe Online.

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