**CANADIAN CENTRE** *for* **CHILD PROTECTION** ®
*Helping families. Protecting children.*

# HOW TO TALK WITH TEENS ABOUT ONLINE LURING

## 1. Explain what online luring is and how it happens.

Online luring is when someone (typically an adult, but not always) uses technology, like chatting or direct messaging through an app/game/website, to communicate with a child or youth in order to sexually harm them. This communication may seem friendly or casual at first and gradually evolve into sexual conversation, or it may escalate quickly.

## 2. Ask youth why they think this is a *Criminal Code* offence in Canada.

Listen to their perspective and discuss the importance of laws to keep youth safe online. Minors are dependent on adults for survival; they do not have the same experience or level of development and cannot compete with adults looking to harm them. This is especially relevant online because the internet is not set up for children and youth, nor is it regulated, making it easier for them to come across people and information that can be dangerous.

## 3. Teach them about red flag behaviours that signal a situation is unsafe.

Someone looking to sexually harm children and youth may manipulate them into complying with sexual requests using common tactics that include:

- Falsely identifying themselves as a peer (e.g., a youth from another school, connected through sport, friend of a friend).

- Inappropriate affection (e.g., expressing love when they just met, "I wish I could hug/ kiss/cuddle you").

- Excessive attention (e.g., contacting several times a day).

- Keeping secrets (e.g., encouraging secret accounts that are hidden from parents/caregivers).

- Flattering, complimenting, or showing support for the youth.

- Promising gifts, money, tablets, drugs, alcohol.

- Pitting the parents against the youth by saying things like, "your parents are too strict" or "your parents don't understand you."

- Sending sexual pictures to make the youth more comfortable sending sexual pictures/ videos in return.

- Taking pictures with or without the youth's knowledge while live-streaming.

- Threatening, intimidating, or harassing the youth.

**4. Discuss how to get out of conversations and/or online relationships when they feel uncomfortable.**

> Discuss ignoring and deleting or blocking the person and/or making up excuses to get out of the situation (e.g., "my parents grounded me, you won't hear from me again").

**5. Emphasize the importance of getting help – coming to you or another safe adult or reaching out to [NeedHelpNow.ca](NeedHelpNow.ca) for help.**

> Explain that if this has ever happened or does happen to them or someone they know, you want to know about it and you want to help them. This is too serious for youth to manage on their own; and the good thing is, they're not alone and it's never too late to get help.

**6. Share a real case and, together, identify the red flag behaviours/tactics and discuss what the youth should do.**

> ### Real Case
>
> Sarah, a 13-year-old girl, has been talking to someone she met online for two weeks. Sarah thinks the person she is talking to is a 15-year-old boy. He messages her at least 20 times a day. This is what some messages from him have included...
>
> He has told Sarah that she is the most amazing person he ever met and he is so happy he found her. He told her he thinks he is in love with her and wants to marry her one day. Every day he tells her how much he misses her when they're not messaging. He said he really wishes they could cuddle. He wants her to create a secret Instagram® account so they can keep their relationship just between them and hide it from her parents. He also wants to know what she is wearing every day.
>
> **Are there any red flags?**
>
> Yes.
>
> **What are the red flags?**
>
> - They've only been talking for two weeks – too familiar, too intense, too fast
> - Showing too much affection right away – wanting to cuddle, most amazing person he ever met, expressing love and marriage
> - Inappropriate attention – messaging 20 times a day, wants to know what she is wearing
> - Wanting her to keep secrets from her parents and hide their conversations
>
> **What should the youth do?**
>
> Sarah should screenshot the messages, block this user and not respond if they try to reach her another way, and save the username information for making a report. Sarah needs to tell a safe adult, such as parent or caregiver, about what happened so they can help her. Sarah and/or Sarah's parents/caregivers can report it to [Cybertip.ca](Cybertip.ca) or local law enforcement, as well as to Instagram.