



What do I do if I am a victim of an online sexual predator

Report Sexual Predators

If you, your child, or loved one, is in emotional distress, call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline anytime.

If you're being harassed, extorted, or threatened, contact local law enforcement immediately and file an IC3 report. If you sent intimate images and are being blackmailed, also report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline at [CyberTipline.org](https://www.cybertipline.org).

Preserve evidence first. If there are threats, child sexual exploitation, stalking, or extortion, report to law enforcement or NCMEC as appropriate. Then use the platform's reporting tools, block or restrict contact if needed for safety, and keep messages, usernames, profile links, and other account data.

If the perpetrator sent messages containing threats of physical violence, sexually explicit materials of minors, or other offensive messages, law enforcement may subpoena Social Media platforms for information on the perpetrator. If social media companies ban an account prior to this subpoena, critical evidence could be lost. Always immediately report any messages to law enforcement that contain the following content prior to reporting the account:

- Threats of violence
- child sexual abuse material (CSAM) or sending sexually explicit messages or photos
- Taking a photo or video of someone in a place where he or she would expect privacy
- Stalking and hate crimes

Get to a Safe Place, Physically and Emotionally

- If you are in immediate danger, call 911.
- If you are a minor, tell a trusted adult (parent, counselor, teacher, etc.) right away.
- If someone is threatening to release images (sextortion or revenge porn), do not comply with demands. Their goal is to manipulate you.
- You are not to blame and you will not get into trouble for reporting. This may be a crime, and it should be reported against you.
- If you are in emotional distress, call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline anytime.

Gather Evidence

Immediately:

- Gather Evidence
 - Screenshots Aren't Enough
 - Record your screen while scrolling through the messages (especially on Snapchat or IG stories)





- Save usernames, emails, phone numbers, userIDs, gammertags, timestamps, and context
- Don't just screenshot, create a timeline of events
- Use a Second Device
 - Use your phone to record the messages or profile from a secondary device if the original app doesn't allow saving or notifies the sender
 - Copy all evidence to two external USB drives and/or backup one version to the cloud.
- Preserve Metadata
 - Export chat logs or files when possible
 - Don't crop screenshots, keep the entire frame intact
- Apps like Bark or Qustodio can help monitor activity, but they often miss private DMs or "vault" apps. If you're seeing red flags, go straight to manual review.

Cease Contact

- DO Put the device in airplane mode and lock down all other devices
- Do NOT delete messages or profiles. After preserving evidence and making urgent reports, block or restrict contact if needed for safety.
- DO NOT respond to and don't forward messages.
- Preserve evidence first. If there are threats, child sexual exploitation, stalking, or extortion, report to law enforcement or NCMEC as appropriate. Then use the platform's reporting tools, block or restrict contact if needed for safety, and keep messages, usernames, profile links, and other account data.

Report to Local Law Enforcement

This may be a crime, and it should be reported. Predators can and should be investigated. Call your local police department (non-emergency number) and ask to file a report with a detective trained in cybercrime or sex crimes.

If you're not sure who to contact:

- Cuyahoga County Sheriff: (216) 443-6000
- Cuyahoga County Sheriff: sheriff.cuyahogacounty.us
- Geauga County Sheriff: (440) 286-1611
- Geauga County Sheriff: co.geauga.oh.us

Report to Federal Agencies

- FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)
 - Report at: www.ic3.gov
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)
 - File a CyberTip: CyberTipline.org
 - You can report anonymously.
 - If you're under 18 and your image is online, NCMEC can help remove it.
- Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) – For child exploitation, sextortion, or trafficking





- Report anonymously at: ice.gov/tiplineice.gov/tipline

Report to the Platform or App

After preserving evidence and making urgent reports if needed, report the perpetrator to the App or Social Media Platform. Most platforms have a Trust & Safety or Report Abuse feature. Report the account that contacted you, even if it's been deleted.

- Instagram: [Help Center](https://help.instagram.com/)
- Snapchat: safety.snapchat.com
- Discord: discord.com/safety
- TikTok: support.tiktok.comsupport.tiktok.com

Keep all report confirmation numbers or screenshots.

Secure Your Online Accounts

- Change passwords for accounts that may have been compromised, reused, weak, shared, or exposed.
- Enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) on all accounts.
- Remove unknown devices or sessions from account settings.
- Ask a trusted adult or advocate to help check for reposts if needed to see if any images have been posted.

Consider Legal Protections

- Ask law enforcement or an advocate about options for protection orders, especially if the predator is known to you.
- You may be eligible for legal support and free victim advocacy.

Get Support (You Are Not Alone)

In Northeast Ohio:

- Cleveland Rape Crisis Center (CRCC) – 24/7
 - 216-619-6192 or 440-423-2020
 - clevelandrapecrisis.org
 - Offers confidential counseling, advocacy, and support—available to adults, teens, and children.
- Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence (OAESV)
 - State Helpline: 1-888-886-8388
 - oaesv.orgoaesv.org
- RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) – 24/7
 - 1-800-656-HOPE
 - rainn.orgrainn.org





For Legal Advocacy:

- Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center
 - ocvjc.org
 - 614-848-8500
 - Offers legal help for victims of sexual exploitation, stalking, and harassment.
- Legal Aid Society of Cleveland
 - lasclv.org lasclv.org

Remove Non-Consensual Images

If your images have been posted online:

- Contact the website host or use abuse reporting tools.
- Use takeitdown.ncmec.org - A free NCMEC service to help minors remove non-consensual or explicit images.
- Request content takedowns from search engines (Google, Bing, etc.).

