

HOW2TALK TO SURVIVORS



Parents and trusted adults: With summer leading to increased screen time for children and teens, the risks of encountering predators online are higher. Be prepared with these tips so you can respond appropriately if someone you know experiences online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Remember — it's never the victim's fault!

Always



- Take immediate action if you see any signs or symptoms of self-harm or suicidal thoughts.
- Be empathetic. Your initial reaction may be anger, but remove any shame, blame or judgement.
- Thank them for trusting you with their very personal experience.
- Walk them through the importance of reporting the exploitation and saving all conversations, chats, messages, photos and videos between them and the offender.
- Validate that you believe them and want to help.
- Assure them they are not in trouble with law enforcement.
- Focus on the priorities: The victim's safety, stopping the abuse, reporting the incident and maintaining open lines of communication.
- Let them know that reporting the incident is the best way to stop the abuse.
- Offer to be there to support them when they tell their parent or trusted adult, or when they meet with law enforcement about the incident.
- Identify a variety of safe people with whom they can talk to about the situation, such as a parent, counselor, teacher, coach or friend.
- Report the exploitation or abuse to authorities via the Know2Protect Tipline at **833-591-KNOW** (5669) or call **911**.

Never



- Engage with the offender. Leave that to law enforcement while you focus on the victim's needs.
- Ask for a detailed disclosure or specifics about the exploitation or abuse. Leave that to law enforcement officials and other professionals.
- Respond with anger or become overly emotional.
- Shame, blame or judge the child for what happened.
- Use scare tactics that may make the child regret coming forward.