



PRESS RELEASE

Tacoma Police Department
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Detectives Ask Families to Talk With Kids About Online Predators

Tacoma, Wash. – Internet predators continue to be a threat to the safety of juveniles and young adults. Detectives with the Special Assault Unit have seen an increase in cases of children, some as young as eight years old, and teens being coerced into providing nude photos to criminals on the internet. These predators are experts in manipulation and often have set up very realistic social media accounts portraying themselves as someone the victim will bond with. This might be a fellow game player, a like-minded teenager, or even an “adult who understands.” Once the suspect convinces the victim to send one nude photo or live video clip, they use it to blackmail the victim into providing more photos. For example, “If you don’t send me another picture, I will post this to all your friends on social media.” Or for younger children, “If you don’t send another photo, I will send your parents this picture and you won’t get to play video games ever again.”

Some steps that can be taken to protect today’s children include talking about the threats that exist online and monitor the apps being used to interact with individuals online. A valuable resource for additional information is NCMEC (The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children). Their web site covers numerous issues that kids face today and aids adults trying to find answers to questions they may have.

<https://www.missingkids.org/home>

[Blog Collection Prevention \(missingkids.org\)](#)

If photos have been posted to social media, NCMEC has a service to help remove online nude or explicit photos and videos taken while the victim was under 18. Find that link here:

<https://takeitdown.ncmec.org/>

SAU detectives continue to solve these cases and arrest online predators. Together, we can help keep our community safer.

If you find out your child has been a victim of an online predator, contact your local police agency. Predators are known to target multiple victims. Coming forward can help law enforcement identify the suspect, identify additional victims, and prevent children from being victimized.

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