



Tips for Older Teens: Online Safety

From the Minnesota Attorney General's Office

**Think you really know
that cute boy you met online
after hours of messaging?**

**He's actually a 57-year-old
recently-paroled rapist.**

Protect Yourself: Keep Your Identity Private

If you are in any type of public website, don't give out your name, address, cell or other phone number, school name, work location or any other information that could help someone figure out who you are or where you live, work or go to school. Don't give out information on family and friends, either.

Think twice before posting your picture. Sexually suggestive photos are likely to draw attention from sexual predators. The photo may also be quite embarrassing for you when viewed by your family, people you know from your neighborhood, from work and church.

When You Are Online, Anyone Can See and Read What You Post

Who might see your online profile?

- Your friends
- Your teachers
- Your parents
- Your coach
- Sex offenders
- Employers
- Scholarship committees

Never post anything on the Internet that you wouldn't want the **WHOLE WORLD** to know.

Never Get Together with Someone You "Meet" Online

The biggest danger to your safety is getting together with someone you "meet" online.

You can never be positive that people you meet online are who they say they are. For example, some sex offenders surf social networking sites for victims.

Between 1996 and 2004, the FBI opened 11,855 cases nationwide involving sexual predators trying to lure minors through chat rooms and other computer links.¹ That statistic doesn't even include incidents involving young adults.

Protect yourself against sexual assault, stalking, identity theft and burglary by not posting personal information.

Discuss all your meeting plans with your parents.

Never Respond to Messages That Are Hostile Or Inappropriate

If you get a message that is hostile or inappropriate, don't respond. Instead, show the message to your parents or another trusted adult to see if there is anything that can be done to put a stop to it.

¹ "Exposing dangers that lurk on the Internet." Maggi Martin Newhouse News Service. Times-Picayune, New Orleans, La.: Jan. 2, 2006.