

# Cybertip.ca ALERT



With school closures due to COVID-19, children who are at home will potentially have more unrestricted time online. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection, through its program Cybertip.ca, is urging families to have conversations about internet safety and to work together to implement strategies that ensures everyone's digital well-being.

## What should parents be aware of?

- Your child may want to spend increased time connecting with friends by live streaming or video chatting. Talk to your child about the ease by which screengrabs and video recordings from live streams or video chats can be saved and used against tweens to embarrass or harm them, even by people they know. Be mindful that some live stream apps/platforms feature private messaging where anyone can direct message your child. To learn more about the risks of live streaming and ways to safeguard kids, visit [protectkidsonline.ca/live](https://protectkidsonline.ca/live).
- Online gaming is another way your child may want to connect with friends and pass the time. Like live streaming, gaming platforms can open kids up to receiving chats or private messages from people they don't know in real life. For example, Cybertip.ca [released an alert](#) regarding the popular multi-player website Roblox after receiving reports concerning requests to meet up in person, and/or sexually suggestive chat messages being sent to children under the age of 12 within the game. For more information on online gaming concerns, and what you can do, read the blog [Glitching Out](#) on ProtectKidsOnline.ca
- TikTok is a hugely popular app for tweens and teens, and they may want to spend more time creating and posting content. Teens may be tempted to take risks or act explicitly to get more followers or likes on a video. This can also be heightened by TikTok challenges, which are created by TikTok and the community itself. While most are just silly viral trends or marketing schemes, some can be dangerous. Read more about TikTok and how to keep tweens/teen safe while using it on our blog, [A Quick Guide to TikTok](#).
- In the past two years, Cybertip.ca analysts have classified 600 reports as luring – adults communicating online with a child for a sexual purpose – through a variety of apps and services such as Facebook/Messenger, Instagram, Snapchat, KIK, and online gaming platforms. Learn more about the ways in which offenders attempt to gain access to children online by visiting [cybertip.ca/grooming](https://cybertip.ca/grooming).

## What can parents do?

1. Have regular conversations about online safety. This includes talking about the online games your kids are playing, the apps they're using, and who they are chatting with. For tips on how to get the discussion started, visit [protectkidsonline.ca](https://protectkidsonline.ca) for age-appropriate ideas.

2. Set the expectation you will monitor your child's online activities, and work together to establish guidelines around texting, social media, live streaming, and gaming, such as who your child can do these things with and on what apps.
3. Become familiar with, or revisit the parental controls on computers, phones, and tablets. Some devices allow parents to limit access to specific apps, social media sites, internet content, and features available within the device.
4. For younger children, help them create their login, password, and profile information ensuring it is set to private. For tweens and teens, know their username/character name and password, as well as the email address used to sign up for apps/games/social accounts.
5. Help tweens/teens set up privacy settings in apps/games/social accounts. With a private account, users can approve or deny followers/friends, restrict who can view their content and profile information, and limit incoming messages to followers/friends only. Work together to decide who to accept as followers/friends.
6. Tell your child that if they come across something or someone while chatting/messaging/texting that makes them feel uncomfortable, they can tell you without fear of getting in trouble or losing online privileges. Remind them that their safety is what is most important to you.
7. If you see, read, or hear anything sexual from an adult towards your child online, report it to [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca).

**And remember, there's no amount of online filters or safety controls that can replace parental supervision and communication.**

Visit [protectkidsonline.ca](https://www.protectkidsonline.ca) for more information on kids' online interests, the potential risks, and points to help parents talk about online safety with kids no matter what their age.