



## Could you be tricked online? Spot the signs

If you talk to strangers online it's important to be careful, to trust your instincts and know what to do if things go wrong. Here are a few warning signs:

### Too good to be true?

Do they share all of your interests and give you lots of attention? Are things moving pretty fast? We all like attention, but remember abusers will do everything they can to make you feel special. If they ask you to do anything you're not comfortable you can always say no.

### Flattery

Do they praise pictures on your profile, saying you're pretty, fit or sexy? They will try to make you feel good about yourself or special. It's harder to think critically if someone's praising you so be especially careful.

### Let's talk about sex

They will try to get young people to talk about sex, sometimes really quickly. Most of us feel less shy online than in real life so talking about sex can be easier. But be cautious if someone is very flirty or tries to get you to talk about sex online. You don't have to say or do anything you're not comfortable with. Remember – it is against the law for an adult to have sex with anyone under 16 and whatever they say, sex between adults and children is always a bad idea.

### **Got any sexy pictures?**

They might ask for sexy pictures and tell you that other young people send them. Remember, if they're asking you for indecent pictures they are breaking the law. Some will go on to threaten to share them with your friends or family if you don't do what they want.

### **Can we go someone more private?**

Did you meet in a public place like a game or a chatroom? Have they asked to add you on Facebook, BBM, Whatsapp or anything which allows private chat? Private chat makes it easier to start a relationship and build trust with you. Think before adding people to your networks – do they need to private message you or can you keep chatting in a more public place?

### **Our little secret?**

Abusers don't want other people to know they're chatting to you - because other people, family or friends, may be able to help if things go wrong. They might ask you to keep your chat a secret or say you'll be in trouble if anyone else find out. If someone is making you do things you don't want to do or aren't comfortable with you shouldn't keep it a secret.

### **Mood swings**

People who abuse try to control young people by flattering them and giving lots of attention. If young people don't do what they want - they take that away or suddenly become very nasty. You don't have to do anything you're not comfortable with.

### **My webcam's broken**

Some abusers pretend to be a boy or a girl around your age and claim their webcam is broken so you can't see them. Never webcam with a stranger with a broken webcam. Remember – it's easy to record and fake a webcam feed. Just because you think you've seen someone on webcam doesn't mean it's really them!