

Parents and carers

Unsafe versus safe people



You can help protect teenagers and younger children by talking with them about unsafe and safe people online. Try to avoid using language about 'bad' or 'good' people and instead focus on concrete examples of behaviour – it's simpler to understand. You can use language like this.

Who is an unsafe person?

An unsafe person is someone who:

- asks a child to keep secrets from their family
- asks for personal information or pictures of bodies
- pressures or rushes a child into saying or doing things
- wants private online chats or video calls without their family knowing
- gives lots of special attention or gifts to keep a child engaged
- lies or is vague about who they are.

Safe people do NOT do these things.

It's good to remember that unsafe people can seem kind and friendly at first. They can be a stranger, or someone known to you or your child.

Help your child choose a safety network

A safety network – three to five safe and trusted adults who a child can talk to whenever they feel worried or unsafe. These adults will listen to and believe them and do their best to help them.

Depending on the age and ability of your child, draw a picture or make a list of who is in their safety network.

Teach your child that they do not have to decide who is safe or unsafe on their own. It's best that they talk about it with you or someone else in their safety network, to help decide who can be trusted.

Getting help and reporting

You can help your children understand that help seeking is about keeping them safe and supported. Police, eSafety and support services are focused on protecting teenagers and younger children and preventing further harm.

If there is immediate danger, **call triple zero (000)**.

Where appropriate, reports of online child sexual abuse material, sexual grooming can be made to the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) at accce.gov.au/report. This includes AI modified or generated images and videos.

eSafety can investigate cyberbullying of children, image-based abuse (sharing, or threatening to share, intimate images without the consent of the person shown) and illegal and restricted content. You can find more information about reporting at esafety.gov.au/report.

You can also find a list of support services at esafety.gov.au/report/counselling-support.

For more information about talking with your child about unsafe and safe people, scan the QR code.

