

KNOW2PROTECT®

EXIT STRATEGY CHECKLIST

for Parents and Trusted Adults



As kids and teens spend more time online, they may occasionally encounter situations that make them feel uneasy or uncomfortable. This resource is designed to help you, as parents and trusted adults, support them in building their own exit strategy for those challenging moments online. Together, you can make their online experience safer by discussing the following strategies.

- ☐ **Help Identify Red Flags Online:** Help kids and teens understand what behaviors online are unacceptable. Let them know what red flags to look for — someone online asking for personal information, sharing inappropriate images or trying to engage in sexual conversations; trying to get them to send inappropriate images or videos; threatening or blackmailing them; asking them to keep secrets; asking to meet in person or trying to get them to move to a different platform — these are all indicators of online exploitation.
- ☐ **Stop.** Once a child or teen senses that a situation online is making them uncomfortable, teach them to shut down the conversation and walk away immediately. Empower them with the knowledge that no matter what, they should not pay or send images, or if they have already done so, they should not send more; doing so makes things worse, even if they are being threatened, bullied or fear retaliation. Help them understand that they should block all the social media accounts of the perpetrator and discourage them from accepting any new friend requests.
- ☐ **Save everything.** Explain to them that even if it is scary to do so, they should save all messages, photos, screenshots and the offender's account information in its original form. Do not alter, change or delete anything. The more law enforcement knows, the better they can help. And remind them that you will be there to support them even if the content is embarrassing, shocking or scary.
- ☐ **Report it.** The sooner the crime is reported, the better. Reporting online child sexual exploitation and abuse can help stop the perpetrator before it happens to someone else. Call 911 if the child or teen is in immediate danger. Visit dhs.gov/know2protect/how-to-report to learn more. Ensure law enforcement can access the device.
- ☐ **Get help.** Remind kids and teens that there is always hope and they are not alone. Get more tips for supporting a child or teen you care about at dhs.gov/know2protect/survivor-support.



Together We Can Stop Online Child Exploitation™
To learn more, visit know2protect.gov

