Atlas Free®

5 Essential Tips to Keep Kids Safe from Online Exploitation

Spending time online can be a great opportunity for learning and connection. But it's also important to be aware of the potential dangers lurking in the digital world.

Here's how you can help keep your child safe from potential predators, groomers, and traffickers.

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Why It Matters:

Human trafficking doesn't require kidnapping–most often, victims are trafficked by some-one they know or think they know. These relationships often start online. Common tactics traffickers use are romance and deceit to coerce their victims. Often, these romances start in chats on social media or gaming platforms. An increasing form of online exploitation is sextortion, where a victim is tricked into sharing inappropriate content and then black-mailed. You can read more about it **here**.

1. Understand Online Exploitation

Your children's education starts with your own. Go **here** to learn more about trafficking. For example, most sex trafficking victims are trafficked by someone they know, often starting online. Predators will use everything from online gaming platforms that have chat functions, to social media like Snapchat and Instagram which both feature vanishing messages. Educate yourself and then talk to your kids about the dangers.

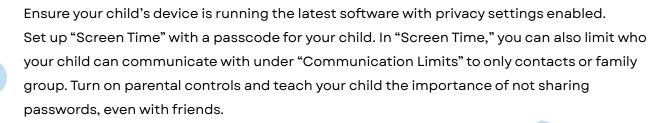## 2. Create a Safe Environment for Conversation

Online sexual exploitation is a deeply invasive and violating experience for the victim. Keeping your child safe requires open conversation, and your child must feel safe to express their mistakes and failures for such conversation to exist. Creating this environment begins long before any issues arise online–take the opportunity now to start having grace-filled conversations about hard topics with your kids so that they feel comfortable bringing dangerous situations to you down the line.

3. Monitor Online Activity and Location

Your child could accidentally come across violent, dangerous, or sexually explicit content. Use parental controls and safe search settings to ensure their online experience is age-appropriate. Regularly check in on what they're viewing and discuss why some content is not suitable. You may consider installing location monitoring software like Life360 on their phones, and requiring that all passwords be shared with you.

4. Keep Devices Updated

Ensure your child's device is running the latest software with privacy settings enabled. Set up "Screen Time" with a passcode for your child. In "Screen Time," you can also limit who your child can communicate with under "Communication Limits" to only contacts or family group. Turn on parental controls and teach your child the importance of not sharing passwords, even with friends.
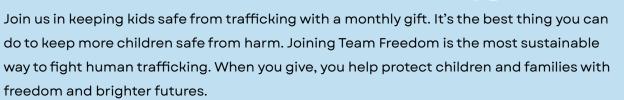
5. Educate About Safe Online Behavior

Discuss with your child the importance of keeping personal information private, including their location on social media. Explain the tactics traffickers use when they manipulate victims through romantic relationships, often starting online.

Take Action

By educating yourself and sharing this knowledge, you're helping to stop human trafficking. As you read this, millions of children need our protection. Atlas Free Network Members are bringing justice, holding perpetrators accountable for child sexual abuse material, advocating for policies to prevent online sexual crime, and working toward a day where all children are safe from sex trafficking. Supporters like you allow us to expand our efforts and protect the world's most vulnerable.

Will You Join Us?

Join us in keeping kids safe from trafficking with a monthly gift. It's the best thing you can do to keep more children safe from harm. Joining Team Freedom is the most sustainable way to fight human trafficking. When you give, you help protect children and families with freedom and brighter futures.

Atlas Free combats sex trafficking and exploitation of women and children online and in 26 countries. Through prevention efforts, holding traffickers accountable, and creating pathways for healing for victims with over 57 safe homes, we can see a world where children can thrive in freedom.

Give monthly and join the fight.
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