

# NO ESCAPE ROOM

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## Discussion Guide for Parents & Caregivers



[NoEscapeRoom.org](https://NoEscapeRoom.org)

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## RESOURCES

Watch the Video: [NoEscapeRoom.org](https://NoEscapeRoom.org)

NetSmartz: [NCMEC.org/NetSmartz](https://NCMEC.org/NetSmartz)

CyberTipline: [CyberTipline.org](https://CyberTipline.org)

Take It Down: [TakeltDown.NCMEC.org](https://TakeltDown.NCMEC.org)

Adolescent Development Explained: [opa.hhs.gov](https://opa.hhs.gov)

# INTRODUCTION

Today's technology is where kids socialize, build friendships, learn skills, and explore their identity. However, many platforms—including gaming, social media, and AI-powered apps—use persuasive designs to keep users engaged, and offenders take advantage of this by utilizing technology to gain access to kids. Staying aware and involved helps ensure online experiences remain positive for your child.

**No Escape Room** is an interactive video that presents a storyline about sextortion. Throughout the video, a teen faces several decisions that could impact the outcome, and you as a viewer can select the direction you want to go. You will experience how teens interact online, examples of split-second decisions they have to make, and how quickly sextortion can occur.

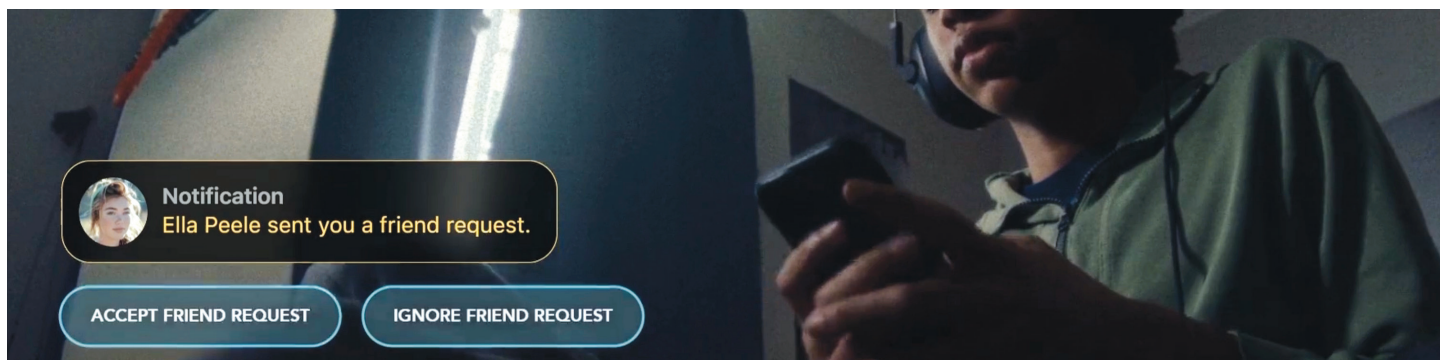
**This guide** follows each of the teen's decisions and provides additional context, conversation starters, and safety strategies so you can explore these scenarios with your child and develop a prevention strategy together.

## General Tips for Parents and Caregivers

- **Collaborate and include your child whenever possible.** Set expectations about online activities including screen time, games, apps, interactions, and AI tools. This fosters understanding and cooperation.
- **Remember that you are the caregiver.** It's okay to check their online activity. Be transparent about why, emphasizing that supervision is about protection and not control. Look for ways to compromise.
- **Practice being a trusted adult.** Listen, remember what they say, don't interrupt, respond calmly, keep your promises, and share your opinions. Explain that intense parental reactions are a natural instinct, and sometimes you can't help reacting strongly when they're in danger because you love them and want the best for them, not because you are mad at them.

# ELLA SENDS A FRIEND REQUEST

## SHOULD HE ACCEPT THE REQUEST OR IGNORE IT?



### OPTION 1: IGNORE THE FRIEND REQUEST



**Privacy settings** create a false sense of security.

- Offenders and children are skilled at bypassing safety features.
- Offenders also reach out to kids through group chats or open servers and forums.

Here are some more effective ways to address technology safety:



**Teach them about healthy versus unhealthy relationships and use specific examples.**

Examples of red flags:

- People who match perfectly or have everything in common with you.
- Having extreme feelings, good or bad.
- Texting you constantly throughout the day. If the other person is actually a teen, they would be in school and not able to text.
- Getting upset with you often.
- Making you feel guilty or bad.



**Create a technology safety plan together.**

The plan should include:

- Online and offline behavior agreements.
- Check-ins with their children and monitoring of phone activity.
- Ways to celebrate responsible behavior.
- Crisis intervention, including where to report, who to talk to, and what to do.
- Include a “I Need Help Card”—if they give it to you, it means they need help right away, and questions can come later.

## ELLA SENDS A FRIEND REQUEST

Should he accept the request or ignore it?



### Practice supportive and open communication.

- Share your experiences, especially those where you felt betrayal, embarrassment, shame, or fear of losing something important to you, like friends or a job. This may help reduce their fear or shame about coming to you if something happens.
- Avoid questions starting with “Why...?” Instead, say “Let’s look at what happened.”



**Make a safety network together.** Identify the following people and resources they can reach out to if something happens and they are not ready to talk to you:

- Three trusted adults from different parts of their life
- Three friends
- Reporting resources such as [CyberTipline.org](https://www.cybertipline.org) and [Takeltdown.NCMEC.org](https://www.takeltdown.ncmec.org)



### Talk openly about online risks and emphasize what victimizations may look like.

- Online enticement, sextortion, and AI-generated explicit content all involve someone committing a crime, and the victim is not to blame.

## OPTION 2: ACCEPT THE FRIEND REQUEST



### It’s normal for teens to take risks both online and offline.

Some behaviors they may engage in online include:

- **Seeking connection** by adding new people, oversharing, and even sending nudes.
- **“Safer” risk-taking** by using apps with disappearing messages.
- **Feeling safe and putting their guard down** can lead to oversharing or sexting, especially if the offender has groomed them.



**Offenders take advantage of the normal developmental changes kids go through**, using their reactions and insecurities against them.

Technology gives offenders easy access to many children at once.

## ELLA SENDS A FRIEND REQUEST

Should he accept the request or ignore it?



### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

**How do you know if someone you meet online is really who they say they are?**

- Ask friends you know offline about the request.
- If it is an online-only friend, try to take things slow.
- If something happens, small or big, talk to me or Friend A, Adult B, etc.



**What is your goal for spending time online (playing games, social media, etc.)?**

- Let's think of ways you can stay focused on that. If it is to play a game, do not switch the conversation to a private chat or share private or personal information.



**What are negative feelings you have noticed when playing a video game or spending time on social media?**

- Help them identify their triggers and reactions.
- Together, develop coping strategies to minimize the fight, flight, or freeze instinct when making decisions under pressure. *Example: physical activity or talking to a friend or trusted adults.*



### SAFETY STRATEGIES:

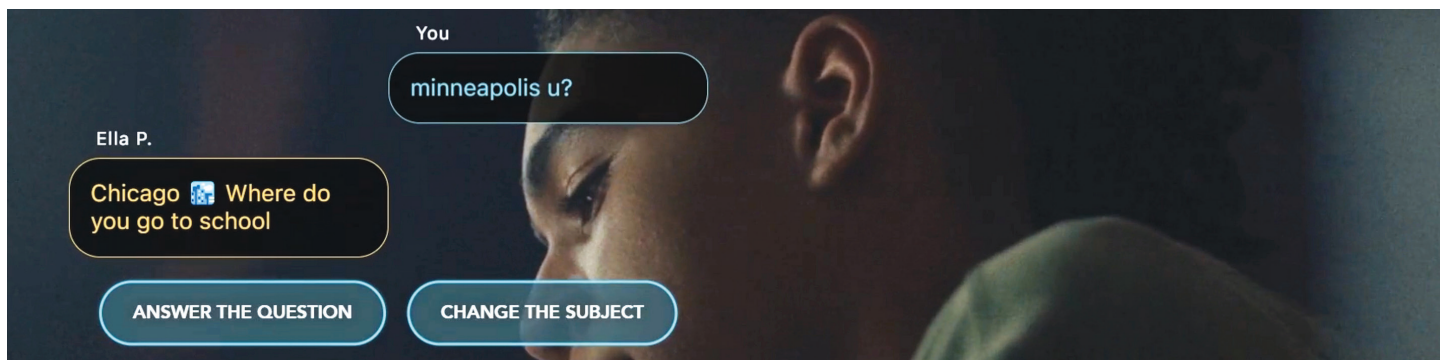
**Trust develops over time.**

- It takes time to learn about people's reactions in different situations.
- Consider how you feel about them over time, instead of trusting them immediately.

**Be cautious**—with the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI), it is becoming harder to determine what is authentic and what is not.

# "WHERE DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL?"

SHOULD HE ANSWER THE QUESTION OR CHANGE THE SUBJECT?



## OPTION 1: ANSWER THE QUESTION



**Teens care deeply about fitting in, which influences their decisions and reactions.**

When they feel disconnected from people in their offline lives, many seek friends and community online. This can lead them to trust too quickly or overshare, making it harder to recognize what is safe versus what can increase their risks.

**Offenders often use information children share online to:**

- Develop trust and get close to them
- Manipulate them
- Threaten and control them

### CONVERSATION STARTERS:



**Talk about private versus public information.** If the information helps someone identify who you are or where to find you, don't share it online.

- What is okay to share with people online:
  - Favorite sport or video games
- What is **not** okay to share:
  - School name, address, after-school activities, passwords, family plans, and other family details

### SAFETY STRATEGIES:



**Create a plan for a healthy online–offline activities balance,** especially if your child struggles to find community offline.

**Explore activities offline or groups they can join,** such as learning a new skill, community programs, or classes.

## “WHERE DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL?”

Should he answer the question or change the subject?

### OPTION 2: CHANGE THE SUBJECT

**Offenders often contact multiple students from the same school** to see who will respond or share personal information.

#### CONVERSATION STARTERS:



**Help teens recognize traps that offenders may exploit:**

- **Thinking trap:** “Everyone shares their personal info online. If I don’t, they will ghost me or think I am a loser.”
- **Reframe:** Setting boundaries about personal information shows self-confidence. If someone judges you for protecting yourself, that’s a red flag about them, not you.

#### SAFETY STRATEGIES:



**Practice expressing and receiving rejection:**

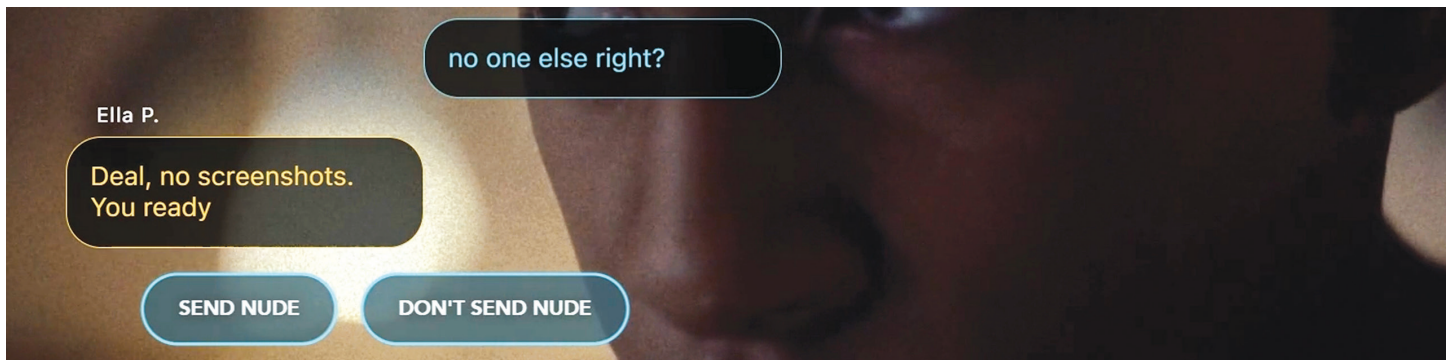
- “Let’s keep the game here,” or “Bye, that’s not okay for you to ask.”
- “It is okay for someone to ghost me—it means they were not worth my time.”

**Practice safe adult responses:**

- “Have you heard about sextortion? Sending nudes aren’t safe because you can’t control where it goes. But if you do share one and someone tries to use it to blackmail you, they’re committing a crime and it’s not your fault.”

# "SEND A NUDE?"

## SHOULD HE SEND A NUDE OR NOT?



### OPTION 1: SEND NUDE



**Offenders are extremely skilled** at using young people's developmental stage to their advantage. They entice them, making them feel safe and then share inappropriate content and use their typical adolescent emotional reactions—fear, embarrassment, or panic—to blackmail them.

#### **Offenders exploit developmental behavior in teens by:**

- Creating connection through the same interests.
- Making them feel special in a romantic way.
- Making them feel like they have no choice but to send nudes because of the offender's threats.
- Using AI-generated explicit content to cause panic.



**Upstanders play a major role in prevention.** Teach children to support victims, refuse to reshare pictures they receive, and understand why resharing nudes can be harmful.

#### **CONVERSATION STARTERS:**

##### **Ask these questions:**

- If you're messaging with someone around your age, do they contact you frequently throughout the school day? Are you and your friends on your phones all day without breaks?
- Why would someone ask you for a nude so soon after meeting you? Would you do that with someone you just met? You do not have to answer me, but think about it.

**Share the statistic** that 80 percent of teens do not sext.

Mori, C., Park, J., Temple, J. R., & Madigan, S. (2022). Are Youth Sexting Rates Still on the Rise? A Meta-analytic Update. *The Journal of adolescent health : official publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 70(4), 531–539. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.10.026>

## “SEND A NUDE?”

Should he send a nude or not?



### Reframe the message:

- Go beyond just saying “don’t send nudes.”
  - Instead, remind them if an image is shared or used to threaten them, it is never their fault. The blame is on the person misusing the image or threatening them.
- Talk about Take It Down and other reporting tools.



### SAFETY STRATEGIES:

**Plan:** Create a code word with your child. When your child uses it, you know they need a trusted adult.

### Practice what to do if they start to feel like there’s no way out:

- Use grounding techniques
  - Example: 5-4-3-2-1 technique—Notice 5 things you see, 4 you can touch, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, 1 you taste.
- Contact [CyberTipline.org](https://www.cybertipline.org)
- Reach out to a trusted adult.
- Use the coping techniques you’ve practiced.

## OPTION 2: DOESN’T SEND THE NUDE



**Learn about teen development.** Understanding how teens think, feel, and make decisions can help you frame conversations in ways that resonate with them. This can make your safety talks more effective and less like lectures.

For more information about teen development, visit [OPA.HHS.gov/Adolescent-Health/Adolescent-Development-Explained](https://opa.hhs.gov/Adolescent-Health/Adolescent-Development-Explained).

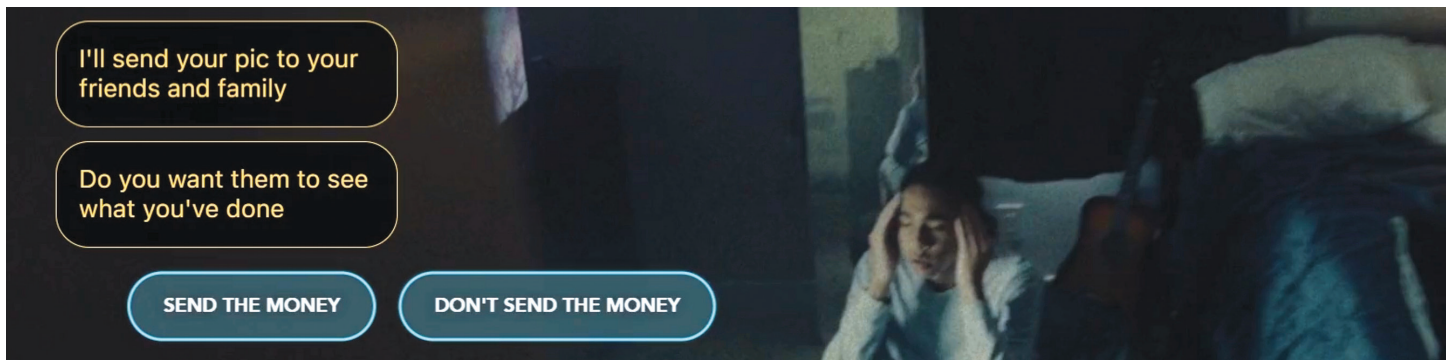


### SAFETY STRATEGIES:

- **Use daily activities** to offer guidance rather than lectures.
- **Support coping skills** such as resilience and problem-solving.
- **Develop their well-being** through sleep, exercise, and connection.
- **Allow safe, independent risk-taking** to help them build confidence and competence.
- **Create a safety plan:** See attached Safety Plan Template

# WHEN SEXTORTION HAPPENS

## SHOULD HE SEND THE MONEY OR NOT?



### OPTION 1: SEND THE MONEY



**When sextortion happens, it is a crime.** Offenders' threats are persistent, extremely aggressive, and continually raise the level of threats. Children feel like there is no way out.



In financial sextortion cases:

**Offenders often target kids with recognized social status,** such as athletes or student leaders.

**There can be life-altering, devastating consequences.** Offenders convince victims that losing their social status will ruin their lives, creating intense psychological pressure and fear.

**This is a crime.**

- Share age-appropriate examples of other kids who have experienced sextortion so kids understand it happens to others and that they are not alone.
- Emphasize that it is **never** their fault.
- Explain that offenders are often adult criminals who use aggressive tactics, including:
  - Ongoing threats to ruin their life.
  - Threatening to doxx them.
  - Negotiating for time and money.
  - Countdowns.
  - Sleep deprivation

## WHEN SEXTORTION HAPPENS

Should he send the money or not?



### How to respond if a child discloses sextortion:

- Stay calm.
- Avoid judgment and “Why?” questions (e.g., “Why did you send it?”).
- Do not delete the pictures or account.
- Block the offender.
- Report to the [CyberTipline](#) or [Take It Down](#).
- Do not comply with the demands.



### CONVERSATION STARTERS (USE CLEAR, DIRECT LANGUAGE):

- If you send a nude and someone is using it to threaten you, would sending another nude be a mistake? Yes. Are you a bad person? Of course not. Is this your fault? **No, the person threatening you is committing a crime.**
- I am talking to you about what sextortion is and how it happens so that if you or someone you know experiences this, you know that **it is not your fault and there is help.**



### SAFETY STRATEGIES:

- Work on deactivating the **fight-or-flight response**.
- **Walk through how to report** to the [CyberTipline.org](#), [TakeItDown.NCMEC.org](#), and directly to the app.

## OPTION 2: DO NOT SEND THE MONEY



**Do not comply with the demands.** Offenders often share pictures even when victims comply—doing what they demand won’t stop them from asking for more money or releasing the pictures online.

# NEW THREATS



**Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI)** is being used to create synthetic “deepfake” nudes, so some victims are targeted even without sending explicit images themselves. Offenders use “nudify” apps or other GAI tools to create images or videos, then threaten the child to make them send more content or money.



**Chatbots** are being used by offenders to create messages that sound relatable, making it easier to connect with a child.



**Sadistic online groups** are targeting kids who are seeking connection and community. Offenders approach them in support groups, gaming platforms, and other open forums, using grooming tactics to gain control. Their aim is to coerce children into harming themselves or others. NCMEC has recently seen a sharp rise in these cases.

Watch the interactive movie at:  
**NoEscapeRoom.org**



# FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY PLAN

A Guide Created Together by:

CHILD & PARENT/CAREGIVER DATE

**Three Trusted Adults**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Three Friends**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Rules**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Technology-Free Zones**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Family Code Word**

**Important Reminders**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY PLAN

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## Reporting Tools

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Red Flags Online

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Ways to Verify a Person Online

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Responses to Inappropriate Requests Online

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## What to Do if Someone Threatens Me

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY PLAN

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## Barriers to Asking For Help

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Offline Activities

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Mental Health Exercises

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Community Resources

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Consequences For Breaking The Rules In The Safety Plan

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Review Contract When (getting a new device, after a year, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Family Technology Contract

Child initials

Parent/Caregiver Initials

**I NEED HELP CARD**  
**TRUSTED ADULT, READ THIS RIGHT**  
**AWAY. I REALLY NEED YOUR HELP.**

I NEED HELP CARD FROM CHILDREN  
TO TRUSTED ADULTS

Dear

I am feeling scared, confused, or unsafe right now.  
I need your help immediately.

Please don't be mad at me or disappointed. I'm trying  
to do the right thing by coming to you. I need you  
to stay calm, listen, and help me figure this out.

This is what I need from you:

- ☐ Be with me
- ☐ Stay calm
- ☐ Help me
- ☐ Tell me I'm not in trouble

Thank you,

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