

## MISSION : INFORMED PARENTS

Part of the Sûreté du Québec's CyberSûreté program, this guide provides information on the risks associated with the use of online technologies and the dangers linked to the use of the Internet. It also offers advice on safety and prevention measures to take so that the role that you play in this regard with your children is a positive one.

### the risks associated with technologies

- Information, a photo or a video sent privately can become public.
- A young person, active on social media and whose security settings are disabled, is a fraudster's victim of choice.
- The anonymity on the Internet can more readily lead young people to actively bully, harass or make threats.
- Sexual predators or fraudsters can record photos or videos to trick children into believing that they are indeed communicating with someone their age. Cloaked in this deception, the predators or fraudsters can more easily extort intimate content or money.  
For example, fraudsters can send the young person a screenshot of his or her list of friends and the video recording that they made, threatening to distribute the content to the young person's loved ones if he or she does not do as instructed by them.
- A young person may be exposed to hateful, violent or sexual material.

## What can you do as parents?



### Take an interest in your children's "online" life

- Ask your children about their online habits through simple questions about the social media they use, the games they play, the sites they regularly visit, their list of friends, their preferred influencers, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with the social media, apps and games used by your children.
- Learn about the age ratings of games and apps, as they give clues about the content to which your children may be exposed.



### Set clear rules

- Make sure that your children fully understand your expectations with respect to their online behaviour.
- Check the privacy settings of the social media accounts used by your children.
- Use a parental control or filtering program if you feel that it is needed.



### Discuss online safety

- Suggest strategies that your children can use for dealing with situations that they find uncomfortable: consult a trusted adult, turn off the device's screen, end the discussion, block the person, etc.
- Ask your children about their ability to stay safe online: Do you know how to block someone? Do you know how to change your security settings? Do you know how to report undesirable behaviour?
- Educate your children about, and raise their awareness of, the type of information that they share on the Internet (photos, address, name, etc.).
- Ask your children if they ever accept requests from friends of people they don't know.
- Avoid taking a punitive approach. Instead, make sure that you are open and attentive so that your children will see you as someone they can turn to if there is something wrong.



### Deconstruct false beliefs

- Explain to your children that the content they access online (websites, social media, etc.) does not reflect reality.
- Discuss the consequences of sending and sharing intimate images (consequences in terms of the law, consequences for the victims, their future, etc.).
- Young people tend to believe that "everyone" sends intimate images when such is not the case. Discuss this mistaken belief with them!
- Remind them that they have the right to say "no" to any request that makes them uncomfortable and that no one has the right to pressure them.

## Legal consequences

### Sexting

Sexting among young people consists of the production, distribution and redistribution of sexual content (photos, videos, etc.) via information and communication technologies. In matters of child pornography, criminal charges can be laid concerning:

ITS PRODUCTION

ITS POSSESSION

ITS DISTRIBUTION

ACCESS TO IT

The Sûreté du Québec encourages the public to take action and report any instance of sexual exploitation.

### Non-consensual distribution of intimate images

It is illegal to distribute an "intimate image" without the consent of the person concerned. If the image features someone under 18 years of age, it may be illegal to distribute it, even with the person's consent.



### Cyberbullying

Posting offensive or degrading content, in the form of comments, photos or videos, may lead to criminal charges. Indeed, under the Criminal Code, the following are offences:

DEFAMATION  
(DEFAMATORY LIBEL)

UTTERING  
THREATS

CRIMINAL  
HARASSMENT

## For advice and support

**cybertip!ca**<sup>®</sup>  
1 866 658-9022



**PROTECTKIDS**  **ONLINE.CA**<sup>™</sup>

## To report to the police and file a complaint



**SÛRETÉ DU QUÉBEC**

911 (\*4141 or 310-4141 for municipalities not served by 911)



**YOUR  
LOCAL POLICE**



Anonymous reporting