

# 💬 Talk to Your Kids **Guide**

Age-appropriate conversation scripts — have the right talk at the right time

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## Why Conversations Matter More Than Controls

Parental controls are important, but they are not foolproof. Children will eventually access the internet without filters. The most powerful protection is a child who knows what danger looks like and trusts you enough to tell you when something happens.

✔ **Key principle:** Never punish a child for coming to you about something that scared them online. If they fear your reaction, they will stop telling you. Keep the door open, always.

## Conversation Scripts by Age

### Ages 5–7 — First Online Safety Talk

*"The internet is like a big playground. Most people there are kind, but just like on a real playground, there are some people we don't talk to. If anyone online asks where you live, what school you go to, or wants to meet you in real life — you come tell me right away. And remember, nothing you tell me will ever make me angry at you."*

### Ages 8–10 — Gaming & Chatting

*"I know you love playing Roblox. I want to make sure you know that not everyone you meet in games is actually a kid. Some adults pretend to be kids online. If anyone in a game starts asking personal questions, wants to give you gifts, or asks you to move to another app to chat — that's a red flag. Tell me and we'll handle it together."*

### Ages 11–13 — Social Media & Photos

*"Before you post any photo online, ask yourself: would I be okay if this photo was shown to everyone at school, our whole family, and strangers? Because once something is posted, you can't take it back. And if anyone asks you to send a photo you wouldn't want me to see, the answer is always no. Come talk to me. I will never be angry at you for that."*

### Ages 14–16 — Sextortion & AI Threats

*"There are people online who use tricks — including AI-generated fake photos — to pressure teenagers into sending images, then threaten to share them unless you pay or send more. If this ever happens to you, do not pay, do not send anything else, and come tell me immediately. We will report it together. You will not be in trouble."*

## Warning Signs Your Child May Be in Danger

- Becomes secretive or closes screens when you approach
- Receives gifts or money you didn't authorize
- Mentions a new "friend" they've never met in person
- Uses device late at night or hides it
- Seems upset or anxious after online interactions

⚠ **If you suspect active grooming:** Do not confront the suspected adult yourself. Document everything and contact NCMEC at 1-800-843-5678.

## Monthly Check-In Questions

- "What games or apps have you been enjoying lately?"
- "Have you met anyone new online this month?"
- "Has anything made you uncomfortable online? No judgment."
- "Is there anything you saw online that you want to talk about?"