

Let's Talk Teens

*Promoting Healthy Relationships
& Preventing Exploitation*



For Parents and Caregivers of Teens & Young Adults:
Preventing Bullying, Harassment, Dating Violence & Sexual Exploitation

Teen Lures PREVENTION.com

*By Rosemary Wooden Webb and Jennifer Wooden Mitchell with Kenneth Wooden
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Let's Talk About It

Self
Esteem

Being the parent of a teen is especially challenging in today's constantly connected world. Teens face complicated issues, with which many parents do not have first-hand experience.

- One out of every four teens has experienced cyberbullying, and one out of every six has done it to others. *Cyberbullying Research Center, 2013*
- 39% of teens surveyed sent/posted sexually suggestive messages; 20% have sent/posted nude or semi-nude images of themselves. *Sex and Tech Study*
- One in 11 teens report being hit or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend at least once in the past 12 months. *Choose Respect*
- Teenagers are victims in 51% of all reported sexual violence. Most victims are female and know their offender. *Rennison*

The most effective strategies for protecting today's high-tech teens are surprisingly low-tech: education, communication, vigilance and trust.

Luckily, most teens look to their parents for direction on important issues and value their advice. "Teens say that parents **most** influence their decisions about sex, love and relationships." *Nat'l Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy*



Healthy Relationships

Setting Boundaries

To ensure teens develop and maintain healthy, respectful relationships, model and discuss them at home. People in healthy relationships show each other respect. They are free to talk openly and honestly. They are comfortable making decisions both together and independently. They trust and support each other. They build each other up. They respect each other. They are equals.

Unhealthy relationships are unbalanced. In an attempt to control the other person, one person may be verbally abusive or insulting, say or text cruel or belittling things, or use physical violence. Examples of red flags in an unhealthy relationship include: excessive texting and/or calling or a partner deciding how the other dresses or with whom they can be friends. By discussing how to set personal boundaries, and creating an expectation for healthy relationships, parents can help teens live safe and happy lives.

You Are A Marvel

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that will never be again.

...And what do we teach our children? We teach them that two and two make four, and that Paris is the capital of France.

When will we also teach them what they are?

We should say to each of them: Do you know what you are?

You are a marvel. You are unique.

In all the years that have passed, there has never been another child like you. Your legs, your arms, your clever fingers, the way you move.

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michaelangelo, a Beethoven.

You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel.

And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel?

You must work - we must all work - to make the world worthy of its children.

~Pablo Casals



According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, parents and caregivers can work on the following skills with teens to help them develop and maintain healthy relationships:

- **Respect:** showing consideration for the feelings and well being of the other person.
- **Anger Management:** dealing with anger in positive, non-violent ways.
- **Problem Solving:** knowing how to break problems down, find possible solutions, and consider the likely outcomes for each solution.
- **Negotiation and Compromise:** turning problems into "win-win" situations in which each partner gets some of what he or she wants.
- **Assertiveness — Not Aggression:** asking for what one wants clearly and respectfully, without threats, intimidation, or physical force. Assertive communication means respecting the rights of others, and standing up for your own rights.

Youth victimization has flourished under a veil of secrecy for generations. Today's teens, however, are not afraid to speak out against crimes of aggression that target them, i.e. bullying, dating violence and sexual exploitation. Parents can support teens by staying informed, modeling healthy relationships and openly discussing the following related topics:

- Teen Lures, Disclosing & Reporting Offenses;
Authority Lurepgs 4-5
- Dating Violence, Date Rape, Drugs & Alcohol;
Affection Lurepgs 6-7
- Stewardship, Instincts, Asking for Assistance;
Assistance Lure.....pgs 8-9
- Cell Phones, Electronic Exploitation & Human Trafficking;
Ego-Fame Lure..... pgs 10-11
- Cyber Solicitations, Risk-Takers, Extreme Social Networking;
e-Lure.....pgs 12-13
- Social Networking & Privacy, Over-sharing;
Name Lure pgs 14-15
- Electronic Aggression, Teens & Internet Pornography;
Games Lure pgs 16-17
- School Violence, Teen Suicide Prevention;
Emergency Lure pgs 18-19

Teen Lures

Youth victimization, in all its forms, occurs at every socioeconomic level. Over 90% is committed by someone known and trusted by the teen. Much of it is peer abuse. The Lures on the following pages are widely used to intimidate, bully, harass, exploit, abduct and abuse teens. Those who commit these acts of aggression are manipulators. They typically employ a lure, a con or a combination of both to facilitate their wrongdoing.

The main function of a lure is to neutralize or override the gut instincts that are basic to personal safety. Those who con others can be persuasive, charismatic and quick with a good story. An excellent ability to size people up, combined with a good sense of timing, is key to carrying out these offenses.

The fundamental weakness of lures and cons is that they are lies. Awareness, critical thinking and a healthy dose of suspicion will help teens steer clear of potentially exploitive and abusive situations. Each of the Teen Lures on the following pages explores interrelated issues facing young people today. By keeping current with these topics, and maintaining open lines of communication, parents can help preserve the personal safety of teens.

Get Involved

- If you think your teen is being bullied or otherwise victimized, trust your instincts and get involved.
- Don't assume your teen will tell you. Ask him/her directly and provide support.
- Reassure your teen they will not lose their freedom or privileges.
- Become familiar with state law surrounding bullying and abuse of minors.
- Document incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or assault.
- Don't hesitate to report a crime against your teen to local law enforcement.

Disclosing and Reporting Offenses

It can be extremely difficult for teens to disclose and report offenses against them. They may sincerely love the person who is victimizing them. The person may be significant in the teen's social life or esteemed in their community. The person may be providing food and shelter. The teen may be threatened into silence and secrecy. Teen victims are in no way at fault if they are bullied, harassed or sexual exploited. Sometimes, however, victims feel ashamed because they mistakenly believe it was somehow their fault. It is not! Fault lies solely with the offender.

By disclosing and reporting abuse, teens can:

- Assert their right to healthy relationships.
- Stop the violence and feel safe again.
- Get professional help and begin healing.
- Help prevent the offender from hurting others.

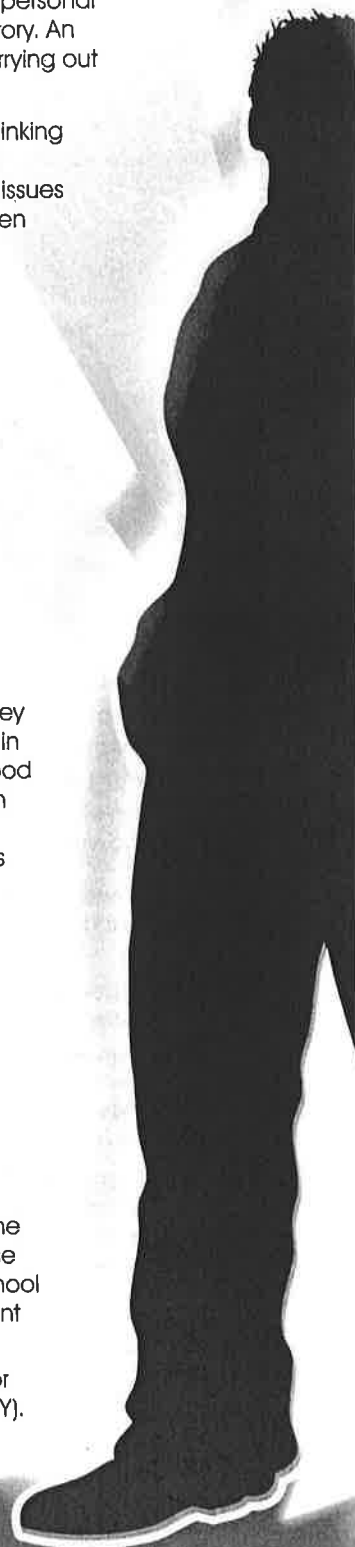
Download "What to do if your Teen Discloses Sexual Abuse" at TeenLuresPrevention.com/parents

Mandated Reporters

When choosing who to talk to about victimization, teens should be aware that some people are mandated reporters and must report disclosed incidents of child abuse and maltreatment to proper authorities. Mandated reporters include teachers, school guidance counselors, social workers, doctors, dentists, nurses, and law enforcement officers. In some states, parents are also mandated reporters.

For anonymous advice, LoveIsRespect.org has trained Peer Advocates available; or call the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474 (1-866-331-8453 TTY).

If in immediate danger, call 911.



Authority Lure

As featured in the



Positions of authority can be exploited to intimidate teens into abusive situations.

As parents and caregivers, we've taught our teens to respect and obey authority figures. Most of the time, we expect teens to act accordingly. When authority figures overstep personal boundaries, however, teens have a right to assert themselves.

The Con

Sometimes authority roles are exploited to intimidate or force teens into sexual abuse. Teens are caught off guard when a person in a position of authority or influence (even a boyfriend or girlfriend) crosses the line from appropriate behavior to controlling or abusive behavior.

Some individuals actively seek out positions where they have authority and power over teens (foster parent, coach, youth minister or mentor.) This position of power can provide an opportunity to lure teens into a sexual relationship.

Convicted rapists have admitted to posing as security officers and store detectives. To appear real, some used fake badges and uniforms or attached strobe lights to their vehicle. Fake badges, as well as police-type lights, are widely available for public purchase.



This Newscast demonstrates the dangerous realities of blindly obeying authority figures and reminds teens of their right to question authority.

Preventing the Con

- Regularly discuss and model healthy relationships.
- Give your teen permission to disobey anyone who tries to force her into inappropriate, unsafe or illegal activities.
- Discuss authority figures and their responsibility to behave appropriately.
- Assure your teen that you support and believe in them.
- Teens have a legal right to request a uniformed police officer in a marked police car, especially if he is skeptical about someone's credentials.



Tyrell's Story

Tyrell was fifteen and totally into music. His music teacher, Ms. McGuire, gave Tyrell a lot of attention and said he had great potential. When Ms. McGuire offered to give Tyrell private guitar lessons after school, he jumped at the chance.

After several weeks, Ms. McGuire insisted Tyrell kiss her and touch her. Tyrell felt it wasn't right, but Ms. McGuire reminded him that she was in charge and demanded he do what she said. Instead, Tyrell refused, left and told his guidance counselor. Teens have the right to stand up to authority figures.

WWW



For parents: teenluresprevention.com/parents

For teens: loveisrespect.org

Dating Violence

Dating violence is controlling, aggressive or abusive behavior in a romantic relationship. It can include verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse, or a combination. Both males and females can be victims of this type of relationship violence.

Teen victims of dating violence are not at fault. Nothing a teen says, wears or does gives another person the right to belittle, scare or hurt them. If a teen thinks they are in an abusive relationship, they can tell someone they trust or call a help hotline. (See Reporting Offenses, page 4)

Safety Tips for Teens:

- When going out, let someone know where you are going and when you'll return.
- Until you get to know someone well, go out in a group, or with other couples.
- Bring your own money, in case you need to pay a bill, or pay to get yourself home.
- Keep an escape plan in mind, in case a date becomes abusive.

Acquaintance & Date Rape

Acquaintance rape is when someone a teen knows uses pressure (including drugs/alcohol), violence, deception or threats to force unwanted sexual activities. If committed in a dating relationship, it is referred to as Date Rape.

A sexual act is considered rape if it happens without consent being freely given – even if previous sexual contact occurred. Rape can happen to both males and females, by trusted friends, family members, or complete strangers.

Sexual crimes are not a teen victim's fault. The abuser is solely responsible.

Drugs/Alcohol used in Rape

Not using drugs and alcohol can help protect a teen's personal safety. Drinking and drugs reduce one's ability to think and communicate clearly, putting teens at risk of being unable to verbally or physically resist sexual advances or remember what happened.

Sometimes acquaintance and date rapists use "Date Rape Drugs" such as Rohypnol (roofies), GHB (depressant) or Ketamine ("Special K"). The drugs are slipped into a teen's drink in an effort to incapacitate them or cause blackouts.

Safety Tips for teens:

- Avoid drugs and alcohol, and people who use them.
- Pour your own beverage & keep it with you at all times, including visits to the restroom.
- Have a trusted friend keep an eye on you; do the same for your friend.
- Trust your instincts about people, behaviors and situations.
- If you suspect you've been drugged, call 911 immediately.

Ask Your Teen: "Did you know that...?"

- 1 in 4 teens in a relationship report being called names, harassed or put down by their partner via cell phones and texting. *Tech Abuse in Teen Relationships, Liz Claiborne & TRU.*
- About 10% of students nationwide report being physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months. *Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance, Ctrs for Disease Control & Prevention*
- 1 in 10 high school girls – and one in 20 boys – reported being forced into sex at some point in their lives. *Howard, D.E., & Wang, M.Q., Journal of Adolescent Health*

Help is available for teens at the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 (1-866-331-8453 TTY). **If in immediate danger, call 911.**



Affection Lure

As featured in the



Most people who show interest in teens genuinely care about them. But some people cross the line from affection to abuse. The offender is usually someone the family knows and trusts, such as a family friend, peer, relative, or single mother's boyfriend. Teenagers starved for attention, lacking adequate supervision, or facing difficult situations at home (i.e. divorce, substance abuse, neglect) are especially vulnerable to the Affection Lure.

Relationship violence, including acquaintance rape and date rape, is the most common crime against teens – and the least reported.



In this newscast, a convicted sexual criminal tells viewers how he conned his way to his victims.

The Con

In teen romantic relationships, one partner may try to manipulate the relationship to gain control over the other person. A boyfriend or girlfriend may at first appear attentive and loving, then turn verbally, emotionally or physically abusive, especially when angry.

Grooming is a process of desensitizing a youngster with a series of increasingly inappropriate behaviors. A teen may be showered with attention and gifts, taken to special places, introduced to adult-oriented experiences, told dirty or inappropriate jokes, allowed cigarettes, alcohol and drugs, shown pornography, and/or compelled to use secrecy.

In online/electronic relationships, deepest, darkest feelings are shared, causing teens to quickly feel a close connection. But is the person really who they seem to be?

Preventing the Con

- Talk with teens about healthy vs. unhealthy relationships.
- Assure your teen they deserve healthy and respectful relationships; unfriend people who are disrespectful.
- Encourage teens to clearly communicate their personal and digital boundaries - and to defend them.
- Discuss Grooming Behaviors (above) with your teen.
- Strongly communicate an expectation that your teen will not use drugs and alcohol. Sober = Safer.
- Reassure them that you & help hotlines are available 24/7.



Evan's Story

After a Championship win, coach Tom, 37 and father of two, gives beer to his favorite high school basketball player, Evan. Coach Tom tells Evan it's his choice whether or not to drink the beer. Once Evan has had several beers, the coach he has long admired begins making sexual advances.

Evan leaves, but feels partly responsible because he "chose" to drink the beer. Evan is not responsible. This was a con. Coach Tom has committed the crimes.

WWW

For parents: ncvc.org – National Center for Victims of Crime

For teens: loveisrespect.org/get-help – Teen Dating Abuse Hotline

Volunteering and Stewardship

More teens than ever before are volunteering in their communities, and nearly one-third of our nation's schools incorporate volunteering into classroom experiences.

When teenagers learn to give to others, they grow up knowing they can make a significant difference in the world. In 2013, over 62 million Americans volunteered nearly eight billion hours of service through organizations, worth approximately \$173 billion to America's communities.

Source: Volunteering in America 2010; State and City Trends and Rankings, VolunteeringinAmerica.gov

Research shows that teens who learn to be social, caring and responsible:

- perform better in school.
- have higher self-esteem and are more resilient.
- are 50% less likely to drink, smoke or use drugs.

To Keep Volunteer Opportunities Safe:

1. Check background of organization & staff references.
2. Ensure your teen will be properly supervised.
3. Inquire about health and safety procedures.

Trusting Instincts

The human body is wired with an impressive inner warning system called instincts. We use instincts every day to protect us from danger. For example, when something comes toward our eyes quickly, we blink. Or when something is thrown at us, we bring our hands up and turn away.

Thoughts and feelings like *"It doesn't feel right"* or *"He just seems weird"* are our instincts warning us to stay alert and proceed with caution. Recognizing, trusting and following instincts can help protect teens from unsafe behaviors and situations. If something doesn't feel right, teens should trust their gut and ask for help, if needed.

"Good instincts usually tell you what to do long before your head has figured it out."
— Michael Burke, Author

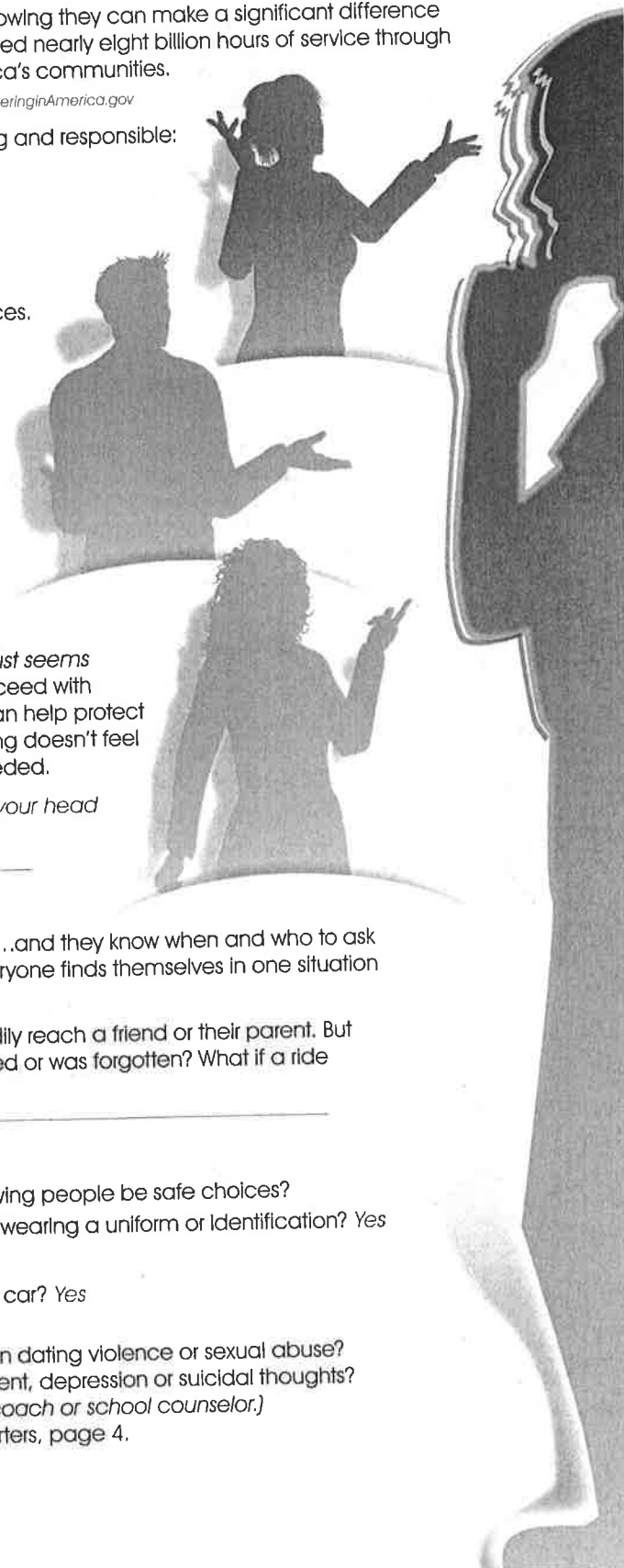
Asking for Assistance

Successful business people are driven and motivated...and they know when and who to ask for help. The same is true for teens. At some point, everyone finds themselves in one situation or another where they need to ask for help.

Thankfully, most teens have cell phones and can readily reach a friend or their parent. But not always: what if a cell phone needs to be recharged or was forgotten? What if a ride didn't show up or a teen is lost?

Ask Your Teen:

1. If you needed assistance in public, would the following people be safe choices?
 - a. An employee at a place of business, preferably wearing a uniform or identification? Yes
 - b. A parent with kids of their own? Yes
 - c. A uniformed police officer with a marked police car? Yes
2. Who can you go to for help if you're a victim of teen dating violence or sexual abuse?
Who can you talk to about cyberbullying, harassment, depression or suicidal thoughts?
(Examples: parent, relative, favorite teacher or coach or school counselor.)
For anonymous advice, see also Mandated Reporters, page 4.



Assistance Lure

As featured in the



Teens like to be helpful, to volunteer and practice stewardship in their schools and communities. They should, however, use caution when offering or accepting assistance.

While it's usually safe to help others, individuals with a hidden agenda may try to take advantage of the kind and generous nature of teenagers.

The Con

Teens may be offered assistance, like a ride, use of a cell phone, or help carrying something.

Some individuals may insist on providing assistance, whether the teen wants it or not.

Teens may also be asked for directions or help carrying packages into a building or to a vehicle.

Some offenders go as far as pretending to be disabled and in need of a helping hand.



This newscast demonstrates how lending or receiving a helping hand may put teens in a compromising situation.

Preventing the Con

Teens should always put safety first, before accepting or lending a helping hand to anyone.

Instruct teens:

- Choose who helps you; don't let others choose you or insist on providing their assistance.
- Don't feel obligated to help or speak to anyone who is asking for, or offering, assistance.
- Trust your gut if a person's behavior or a situation doesn't feel right.
- When asking for assistance, safe choices include a trusted adult, a parent with kids, an obvious employee or a uniformed police officer.
- Consider joining Teenangels at Teenangels.org to help keep yourself and others safer online.



Michelle's Story

Michelle was an Environmental Studies college major. In the early morning hours, she left friends at a downtown restaurant to meet other friends at a nearby party. She was alone and her cell phone wasn't working.

A man noticed her problem and offered use of his own cell phone. Michelle accepted his offer, and was seen talking to him as she walked toward campus. She never made it to the party or back to her dorm. Six days later, her body was found. Michelle had been raped and murdered by the man who offered her the use of his cell phone.



teenluresprevention.com/cbs-tv.asp

Watch this astounding 6-min. video of Ivy League college students being conned by the Assistance Lure. They admit to ignoring their instincts, and look where they end up!

Teens and Cell Phones

- 64% of parents look at the contents of their teen's cell phone.
- 62% of parents have taken away teen's cell phone as punishment.
- 17% of teens who pay all cell phone costs are sexting; only 3% of teens who pay some or no cell phone costs sext.

*Source: Pew Internet; Teens and Mobile Phones

Electronic Exploitation & Human Trafficking

Sexting

- The act of sending sexually explicit messages or images, primarily between peers via their cell phones.
- Teens who sext can face criminal charges, which vary state to state.
- Some states are lessening penalties associated with child pornography and sex offender registration requirements, but teens who sext will still face criminal charges.

Teen Exploitation/Prostitution

- **Teens for "Hire":** Some teens are solicited online to send nude or suggestive images in exchange for money, drugs, clothing or other gifts.
- **The New Goodnight Kiss:** Teens performing oral sexual acts for payment. They rationalize that if they're going to do it anyway, they might as well get paid.
- **Human Trafficking:** Teens, particularly girls, are preyed upon by boyfriends or other males who lure them into forced prostitution. Ensnared teens can be forced to lure friends or acquaintances into the trap of human sex trafficking.

Preventing Exploitation of Teens

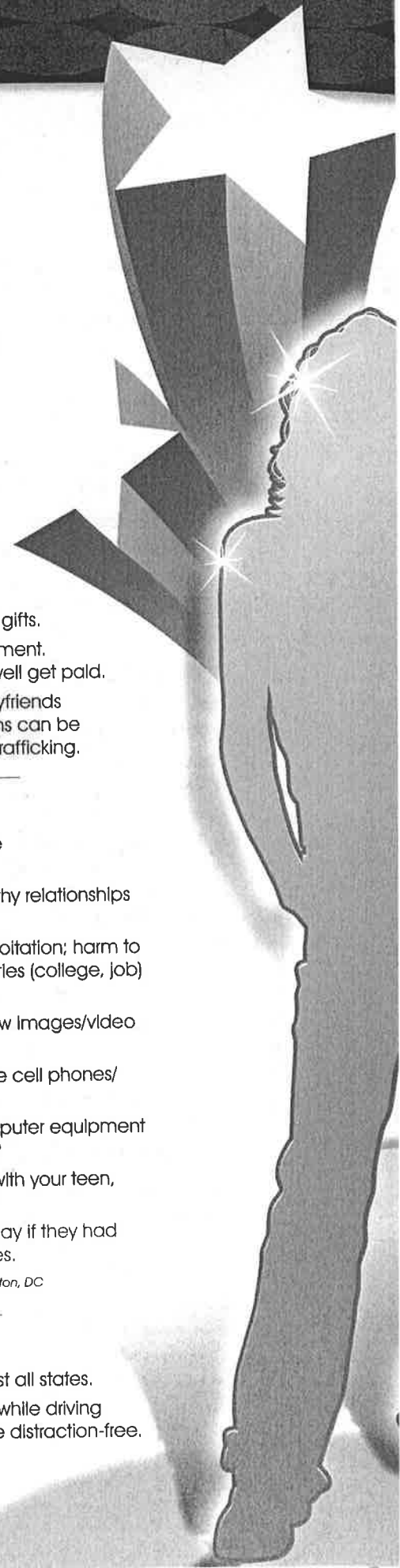
1. Promote respect for self and others. Teens with high self-esteem are less likely to be exploited, or to abuse others.
2. Assure your teen that she/he is worthy of healthy relationships. Healthy relationships support abuse-free lifestyle choices.
3. Talk openly about the damaging consequences of electronic exploitation; harm to self-respect, criminal charges for sexting, threat to future opportunities (college, job) and the lifelong risk of images re-surfacing.
4. Monitor teen's cell phone and other web-enabled devices to review images/video sent, received or stored.
5. Keep web-enabled electronics out of teens' bedrooms. Confiscate cell phones/electronics at bedtime. (Your teen may be secretly relieved!)
6. Question existence of unexplained new clothing, electronics, computer equipment or cash. From where and whom did these items come – and why?
7. If exploitation is suspected, have a calm face-to-face discussion with your teen, voicing concerns and offering your love, support and help.

Nine out of 10 teens reported that sexual activity would be easier to delay if they had "more open, honest conversations" with their parents about sexual issues.

Source: Albert, B., National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, Washington, DC

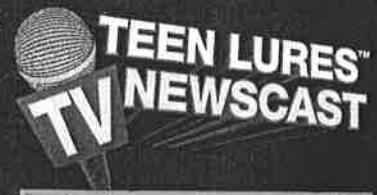
Ask Your Teen: "Did you know that...?"

- Cell phone use & texting are now banned for teen drivers in almost all states.
- According to the Foundation for Traffic Safety, using a cell phone while driving quadruples the risk of crashing. Teens can make a pledge to drive distraction-free.



Ego-Fame Lure

As featured in the



Appeals to the ego
may cloud judgment and put teens at
increased risk for exploitation by peers and others.
This can happen in person, online or electronically.

Showering a person with compliments is an effective way to gain
their attention and begin to build trust. Flattery often plays an
integral part in grooming teens for seduction, usually by someone
the teen knows and trusts.

The Con

With appeals to their ego, teens may be pressured into
sexual activity or self-exploitive behaviors like sexting.
Some teens are approached online and offered money
and gifts in exchange for explicit images.

Criminals posing as talent scouts have long preyed on
the unsuspecting. Fame is within everyone's reach now
that reality TV and YouTube are universal. Teens may
be offered the opportunity to model, act, appear on a
reality show or some other exciting opportunity.



This Newscast demonstrates
how easily teens may
neglect their personal
safety when persuaded
by flattery.

Preventing the Con

- Teens should be wary of anyone who showers them with compliments.
- Teens should not remove clothing for pictures or video, nor post or send inappropriate images or texts.
- No amount of money, or gifts, is worth risking one's reputation or personal safety.
- Teens should be wary of anyone who offers an irresistible opportunity. Remember: If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- An adult should always verify the credentials of talent scouts/instructors and attend try-outs/auditions. Teens need to be 18 to sign any legal documents.



Ashleigh's Story

Ashleigh, 17, had a new boyfriend, Peter. On Facebook, Peter was 19 and handsome - and he was sending her suggestive text messages. Ashleigh couldn't wait to meet him. When she did, a 32-year-old man claiming to be Peter's father met her. Sadly, "Peter's father" drove Ashleigh to a secluded area, sexually assaulted her, and then took her life.

Ashleigh's Mom hopes other teens will be more open with their parents about who they are talking to online, instead of doing it secretly. For security, show profiles to parents, meet online friends in public areas only and bring an adult.

WWW

For parents: teenluresprevention.com/parents

For teens: teenluresprevention.com/posters.asp

"Living Out Loud"

Today's teens live out loud via constant texts, posts, IMs, tweets and blogs, providing a steady stream of personal and private information to the world. This broadcasting can leave teens vulnerable to electronic threats including identity theft, harassment and exploitation.

Communicate with your teen online and electronically. Regularly discuss how much information he/she shares, how often and what messages they are conveying about themselves. Remind your teen often: nothing online is private! (See also *Over-sharing*, page 14)

Cyber Solicitations

The majority of teens regularly and safely interact electronically with people they don't know. They know how to block, ignore, delete, or handle online solicitations. However, one in five 10-17 year olds receive unwanted sexual solicitations online, and most of them are from other teens.*

*Source: *Online Predators and Their Victims*, by Janis Wolak; Crimes Against Children Research Center, University of New Hampshire

- Become familiar with all technology your teen uses; communicate with them via text & social networking.
- Acknowledge if your teen is more tech savvy than you, and ask for their assistance.
- While interacting with your teen electronically, monitor their activities in an agreed-upon manner.

Teenage Risk-Takers

Teenagers who are risk-takers also tend to be risk-takers online. Most adolescents who meet online acquaintances face-to-face (f2f) go willingly, go more than once, and are expecting a sexual encounter. Many of these teens describe feeling "in love."*

Spend time with your teen. Help them work through day-to-day issues to minimize the chance they will engage in risky behavior. Make behavioral expectations clear. Hold teens accountable for misuse of technology. Consider revoking privileges for a period of time as a logical and effective consequence.

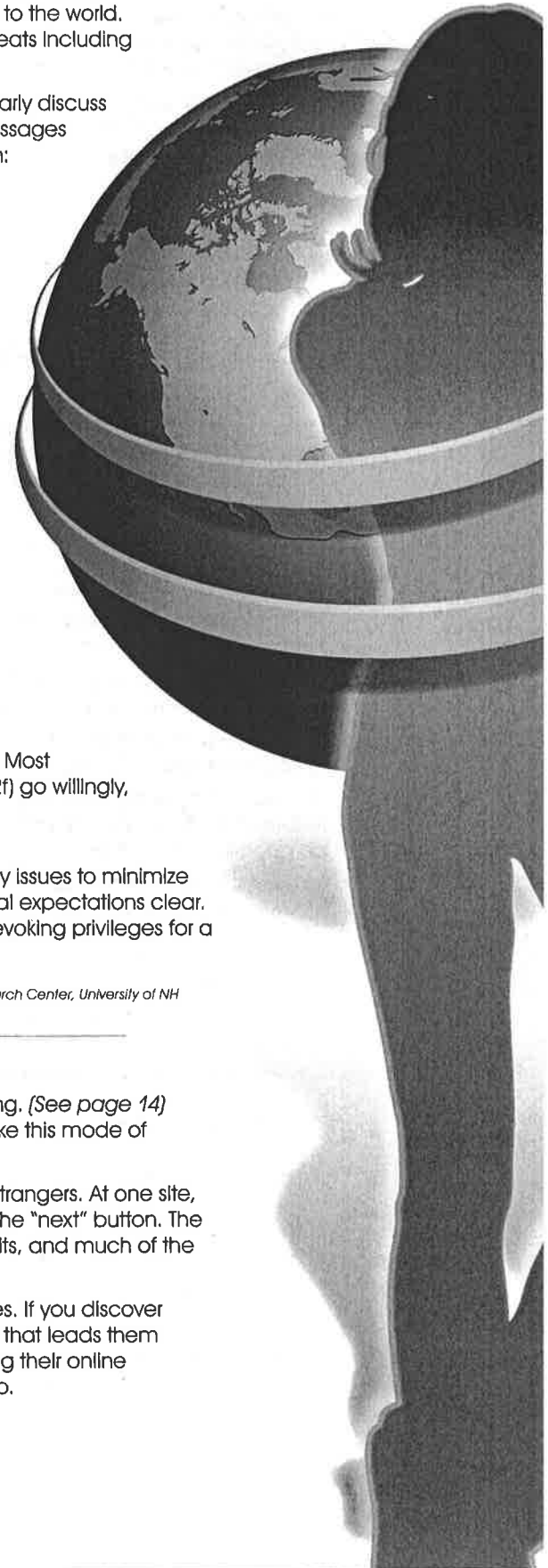
*Source: *Online Predators and Their Victims*, by Janis Wolak; Crimes Against Children Research Center, University of NH

Extreme Social Networking

Social networking sites are a primary method of teen socializing. (See page 14) Extreme social networking sites with video chat capabilities take this mode of social interaction to a whole new level.

Extreme social networking sites connect a teen with random strangers. At one site, either person can decide to chat and watch the other, or hit the "next" button. The wheel spins again to reveal another stranger. There are no limits, and much of the content is sexual.

Most teens are **not frequenting** extreme social networking sites. If you discover your teen is, find out why. What is happening in your teen's life that leads them to risky behavior? Let your teen know that you will be monitoring their online and electronic communications from time to time. Then do so.



The same technology that offers teens incredible learning and social opportunities also provides cyber bullies and predators with the means to prey on innocent people. Cyber criminals use the same lures online as they use to con teens offline. Remember, however, it is usually teens themselves who are misusing technology, with their peers as victims.

The Con

Web-enabled technology generates three main threats for teens:

- 1. Peer Exploitation:** Teens are bullied, harassed, stalked and exploited, often by their own friends or peers.
- 2. Self-Exploitation:** Teens send/post images of themselves (sexting), have sexual conversations and/or agree to meet face-to-face, either willingly, under pressure or by force.
- 3. Cyber Predators:** Although the least common threat to teens, cyber predators do exist and have lured unsuspecting teens into exploitation and worse.



This newscast examines how oversharing makes teens more vulnerable.

Preventing the Con

- Help your teen establish digital boundaries to discourage over-sharing.
- Alert teens to the legal, social and emotional ramifications of cyberbullying and self-exploitation.
- Warn your teen that some people prey on uninformed and unsuspecting teens.
- Together with your teen, establish clear rules for using technology, and consequences of misuse.
- If your teen breaks established rules, follow through with love, understanding and pre-determined consequences.
- Help your teen report e-crime to local police, cybertipline.org or your state U.S. Attorney's Office.



Anna's Story

Jorge, 17, texted Anna, 16, asking for a topless photo. Reluctantly, Anna agreed. Then Jorge demanded a completely nude pic of Anna. If she didn't comply, he would forward her topless pic to all his friends.

Anna didn't allow Jorge to harass her into further self-exploitation. She went to school administrators and the police. When Jorge was called to the office, Anna's topless photo was found on his cell phone, along with nude pics of five other minors. He confessed and was arrested on child pornography charges.



For parents: cybertipline.org – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
For teens: teenluresprevention.com/teens

Social Networking & Privacy

Social networking sites are set up to encourage users to share as much, as often and as publicly as possible. These sites are designed to increase the amount of information shared over time. Privacy settings exist, but are not the default. Privacy settings need to be manually reset on a regular basis.

Teens are more inclined to over-share online because they are:

- impulsive.
- unable to fully consider consequences.
- susceptible to peer pressure.
- under-informed about their rights to privacy.

The Pew Internet & American Life Project survey indicates teens are aware that some personal information needs to be protected: 55% of teens restrict access to their profile in some way.

Most teens don't post private information such as their full name, phone numbers or school attended on public profiles, because they know this is risky. In fact, almost two-thirds of teens with profiles (63%) believe that a motivated person could eventually identify them from the information they publicly provide on their profiles.

It's a fine balancing act for teens to determine:

How much information they need to share to successfully socialize and make new friends **vs.** keeping some things private and staying safe.

Social Question and Answer Sites

Social Q&A websites have gained popularity, but they are not for the faint-of heart. These sites (spring.me and ask.fm) allow teens to invite their hundreds of online friends to ask questions or post comments anonymously. The questions and/or answers are often mean-spirited, have sexual content or constitute flat-out cyberbullying.

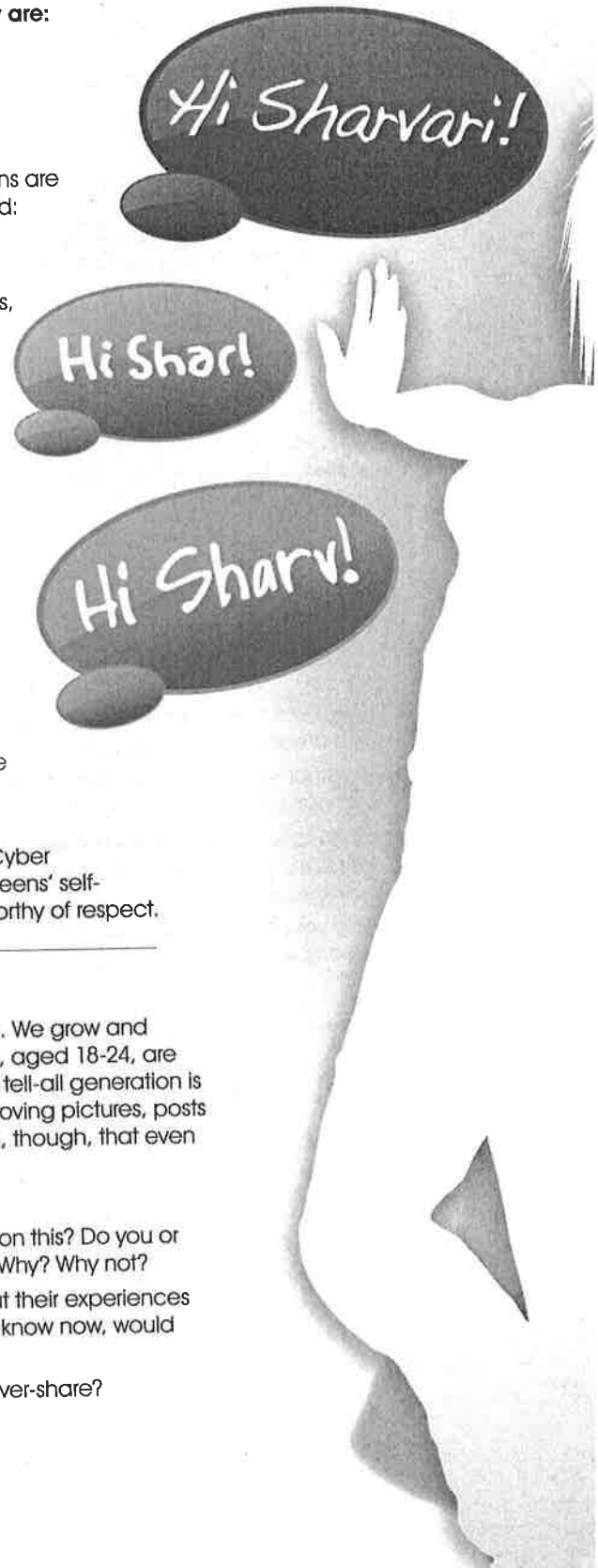
Sites facilitating bullying should be avoided. There are consequences to cruel, harassing and threatening posts. Cyber bullying is a punishable crime in all 50 states. Nurture your teens' self-esteem and emphasize that each person is unique and worthy of respect.

Over-Sharing

All human beings are imperfect and apt to make mistakes. We grow and improve by learning from our mistakes. Many young adults, aged 18-24, are beginning to realize that they have been over-sharing. This tell-all generation is rethinking their "living out loud" lifestyle. Many are now removing pictures, posts and links as they apply to colleges and jobs. Keep in mind, though, that even hired "scrubbers" can't guarantee 100% clean up.

Ask Your Teen:

1. Do you think you over-share? What are your thoughts on this? Do you or your friends post too much? Is it in your best interest? Why? Why not?
2. Have you talked with someone in their mid-20's about their experiences with over-sharing? If they knew then as much as they know now, would they have shared less?
3. What steps can you take today to ensure you don't over-share?



Name Lure

As featured in the



When addressed by name, there is a natural tendency to let our guard down and automatically trust the person on some level.

Teens do a lot of socializing online and electronically. Over-sharing puts teens at risk for the Name Lure, as well as Identity theft.

The Con

When addressed by name, most people (including adults) immediately feel a level of comfort. However, just because someone knows our name doesn't mean they should automatically be trusted. Anyone can learn a teen's name by overhearing it, asking someone, noticing it on belongings, or seeing a tagged image.

Teens need to be protective about protecting their identity and privacy, and that of their friends. If someone knows a teen's screen name, phone number or email address, they can usually locate the teen if they try hard enough.

Some teens pose as others to bully and harass their peers electronically. This behavior constitutes identity theft, which is a crime.



This newscast demonstrates the importance of keeping one's guard up - even when someone knows our name.

Preventing the Con

- Urge your teen to use an unidentifiable screen name and password-protected walls.
- Urge teens to update privacy settings regularly and to only use first or nicknames on open networks.
- Remind teens to ask permission before tagging friends; use first names, nicknames or initials only.
- Passwords, PIN numbers, social security numbers and other personal information should not be stored on cell phones. These numbers should be memorized and kept in a secure location.
- If someone is posting/sending cruel or harassing messages, verify in-person that it is really them and not someone posing as them. Report such illegal behavior.



Sharvari's Story

Sharvari's friend, Will, tagged her in a FB photo. The next day, Sharvari got an email from Will's "friend" Noah, who claimed to recognize her from South Shore mall, where he worked. He told Sharvari he loved her smile and would really like to meet her. He'd be working that evening, and would she like to meet him there alone so he could get to know her?

Sharvari ignored the email because she'd never been to that mall. "Noah" could be anyone, and she'd never go alone to meet someone she didn't know. She requested that Will use her first name only when tagging her.



For parents: privacyrights.org/social-networking-privacy
For teens: privacyrights.org/fs/fs21-children.htm#6

Electronic Aggression

Cyberbullying & Harassment

Cyberbullying and harassment are the most common e-threats facing teens. They occur when one teen sends another an electronic communication intended to torment, threaten, bully, humiliate, embarrass or otherwise target the receiver. The sender may do this through texting, IM, video chat, gaming sites, blogs or via social networking sites.

Examples:

- Stalking a boy/girlfriend via cell phone, in an attempt to control them.
- Posting embarrassing images to humiliate them.
- Sending cruel or threatening text messages to someone to intimidate them.

Bullying is amplified and accelerated when youngsters take it electronic. Electronically, bullying becomes a spectator sport where countless bystanders witness, and may choose to participate in, the bullying.

Teens often don't report electronic aggression because they are afraid of losing computer privileges or fear the aggression might get worse. Others don't believe someone can or will help them; think they can handle it by themselves and don't want parents to worry.

Proactive teens are spearheading prevention efforts in their schools and communities. Some take a pledge not to bully or harass one another, because healthy relationships do not include any form of negativity or aggression.

Encourage your teen to be a leader by speaking out against all forms of aggression. For more information about cyberbullying, visit Stopcyberbullying.org. Download free Safety Pact at: teenluresprevention.com/pdfs/TLP-E-SafetyPact.pdf

Teens & Internet Pornography

Internet pornography is a multi-billion dollar a year industry, comprised of hundreds of millions of web pages. A recent study reveals that more than one-third of 16-17 year old boys said they had intentionally visited X-rated sites in the past year.^[1] Yet, many parents don't talk to their kids about pornography and its harmful effects on healthy sexual development.

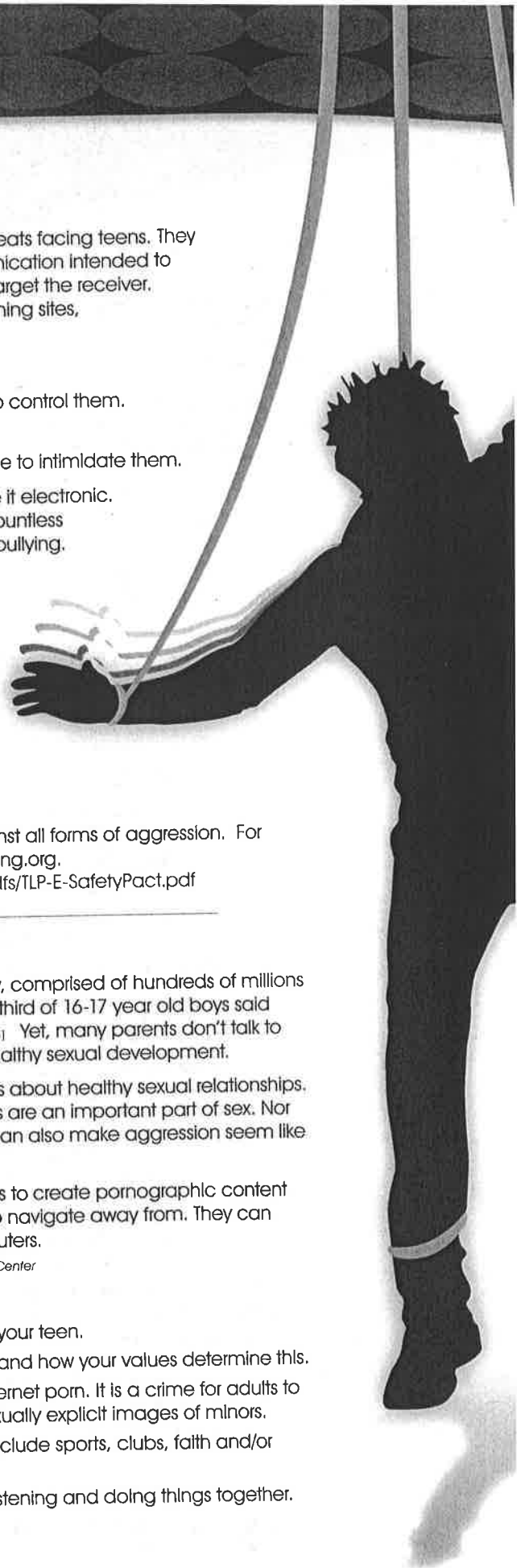
Exposure to Internet porn can skew teenagers' perceptions about healthy sexual relationships. Pornography does not show that feelings and relationships are an important part of sex. Nor does it show ramifications, such as pregnancy or STDs. It can also make aggression seem like a normal part of sex, which it is not.

Pornography can be highly addictive and may lead teens to create pornographic content themselves, which is illegal. Lastly, porn sites are difficult to navigate away from. They can add themselves to favorites or desktops and infect computers.

[1] Janis Wolak, University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center

What Parents Can Do:

1. Be proactive and talk about Internet pornography with your teen.
2. Set specific limits. Review what is and isn't appropriate and how your values determine this.
3. Review the legalities of minors viewing and sending Internet porn. It is a crime for adults to show minors pornography, and for anyone to share sexually explicit images of minors.
4. Evaluate whether your teen's life is balanced: Does it include sports, clubs, faith and/or youth groups? How well is your teen doing in school?
5. Most importantly, spend time with your teen, actively listening and doing things together.



Game Lure

As featured in the



Physical and mental challenges are important. Some teens meet these needs via athletics and organized sports. Still more teens visit interactive online gaming sites with unlimited players, many with voice and video chat capabilities.

Both physical and virtual games are engaging to teens, but can make them vulnerable to harassment and exploitation, including by peers.

The Con

Most individuals who coach and play sports are generous, trustworthy people who greatly enrich the lives of teenagers. However, a coach, or teammate, may pressure a teen into sexual abuse or exploitation. Touching usually begins innocently, then escalates into sexual abuse or exploitation. This can occur before/during/after a game, in a locker room, vehicle, hotel room or other secluded space.

Online gaming and chat options can lead to harassment, bullying, sexual conversations, encounters with Internet pornography and real life meetings. The majority of incidents are peer to peer.

Some teens are tricked into being restrained or placed in isolation under pretense of a game, stunt or magic trick.



This newscast demonstrates how sports, body contact games and online gaming sites can be manipulated to abuse and exploit teens.

Preventing the Con

- Encourage your teen to report sexual comments and inappropriate touching during a game to a trusted adult.
- Remind your teen to forbid anyone to physically restrain them.
- Attend sporting events with your teen and participate in, or monitor, their online gaming.
- Set specific expectations for your teen's online behavior, and clearly convey consequences for any violations.
- Urge your teen not to share passwords - not even with close friends.
- Help teens report hackers, harassers and other Internet offenders to parents and gaming administrators.



Cheryl's Story

Riya was sleeping over at Cheryl's house. They stayed up late video chatting, which Cheryl's Mom didn't consider risky. She gave Cheryl and Riya their space until she heard a loud thump. When she opened the door to check on the noise, Cheryl flipped her laptop closed. The girls were in bed wearing PJ's and camisoles, looking guilty.

The girls had sent inappropriate pictures of themselves and a sexual message to a teen they didn't even know. Cheryl's Mom immediately confiscated her laptop, but the crime had already been committed - and the images of Cheryl and Riya are forever public property.

WWW

For parents: wiredsafety.org - Wired Safety

For teens: rainn.org - RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline, 1-800-656-HOPE

Emergency Plan

Some lures are employed with a sense of urgency or with an invented emergency. The goal is to short circuit the victim's instincts and push them into making a split-second decision. Such hasty decisions are usually based on emotion and not facts.

Having a pre-arranged Emergency Plan takes the guess work out of real and fabricated emergencies. An Emergency Plan also helps remind teens that being rushed into making decisions can compromise personal safety.

Discuss what your teen should do in various emergency situations. How can they verify an emergency? Whom should they call? Where should they go?

School Violence

Teens should feel safe at school. It is a place for learning, and that includes learning how to get along with others. Students can do a lot to make their school a safe and healthy environment. More than ever, it is important for teens to respect and admire the differences in others and to have empathy for those less fortunate.

In school shootings, teenaged gunmen have consistently cited relentless bullying by fellow students as the primary cause of their rampages. Talk to your teen about the importance of treating others with respect and dignity, and expecting it in return. Discuss the beauty of America's rich diversity of cultures, customs and ethnicities. Celebrate these at home, at school and in your community.

Let your teen know they can talk to you anytime about serious issues like prejudice, bullying, harassment, threats of violence, and weapon possession by schoolmates. Help them to report offenses to local law enforcement and school officials.

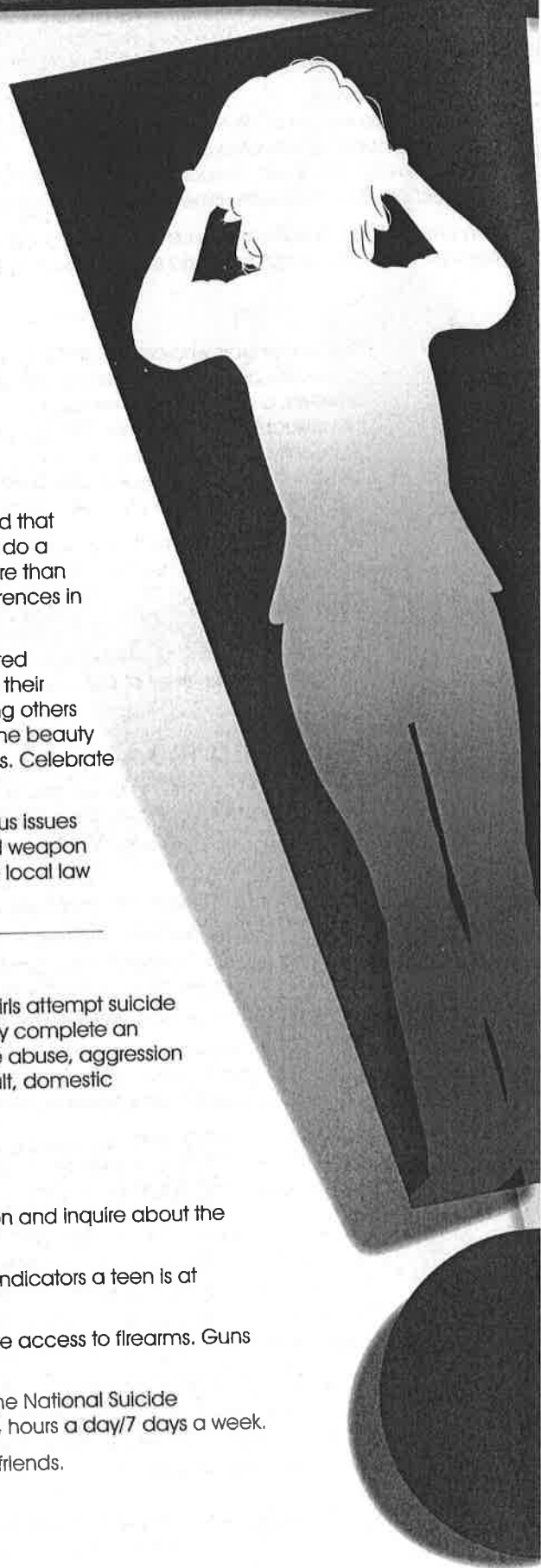
Teen Suicide Prevention

Each year, thousands of teenagers commit suicide. Teen girls attempt suicide more often, but teen boys are 4 times more likely to actually complete an attempt.^[1] Strong risk factors include depression, substance abuse, aggression and disruptive behavior. Teens traumatized by sexual assault, domestic violence and bullying are at elevated risk.

What Parents Can Do:

1. Talk to your teen about suicide and suicide prevention.
2. Request your teen's doctor regularly screen for depression and inquire about the youngster's state of mind.
3. Take talk of, and attempts at, suicide seriously. Both are indicators a teen is at grave risk.
4. Teenagers who express suicidal thoughts should not have access to firearms. Guns are used in over half of all teen suicides.
5. If your teen is at high risk and/or speaks of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline @ 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
6. Encourage your teen to share this information with their friends.

[1] "Teen Suicide", Ohio State University Medical Center, Ohio State University.



Emergency Lure

As featured in the



Emergencies are a fact of life and can be an immediate risk to health, property or life. They require quick thinking, and every second counts. An unexpected emergency can throw a teen off their game. Those with bad intentions know this. By inventing a crisis, they can easily fool an unsuspecting teen.

When teens are confronted with emergency situations that require split-second decisions, they may not be able to think clearly or consider future consequences of their actions. This can compromise their safety.



This newscast shows teens just how easily an emergency situation can interfere with good decision-making.

The Con

Teens may be told that someone they love has been hurt, that something happened at their school, or that one of their most valued belongings is missing, broken or stolen.

Teens may also be told they need to meet, or go with, someone immediately or they will risk losing out on an exciting opportunity. Being pressured into making an immediate decision, without the benefit of thinking things through or verifying information, can be risky.

Preventing the Con

- Stress the importance of staying calm during emergencies and taking the time to critically assess the situation.
- Remind teens to listen to and trust their instincts. What appears to be an emergency may actually be a con.
- Encourage teens not to let anyone rush them into making decisions.
- Advise teens to go nowhere and do nothing unless an emergency has been verified. If uncertain what to do, teens should seek help from a parent, relative or other trusted adult.
- Create an Emergency Plan with your teen. Update it annually to reflect changes within your family.



Nona's Story

Eighteen year old Nona posted her dream of working with animals on Facebook.

Chris D, 20, friended her. Using details from Nona's FB page, he conned her into a meeting. Chris said he worked for an animal welfare group and could get Nona a job. She saw this as an opportunity to follow her dreams and quickly agreed to accompany him on a camping trip to rescue injured animals. Nona told her brother that if she didn't go, she'd lose the job opportunity.

That was the last time Nona's brother saw her alive. When we're pressured into making rushed decisions, our personal safety can be compromised.



For parents: afsp.org – American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
For teens: TeenCentral.Net