

WHAT TO DO IF...

internet
matters.org

My child was contacted by a stranger

Supporting children with additional needs

If your child is contacted by a stranger who seeks to harm them, they might feel scared, angry at themselves or worried that it might happen again. Use the steps below to support yourself and your child through the experience.

1

Reassure them

Thank your child for telling you about the interaction.

Let them know that **they are not in trouble** and did the **right thing** coming to you.

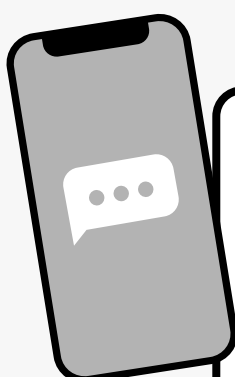


Review the interaction

2

Not everyone online seeks to cause harm.

Review the interaction with the user and view their profile to **understand who they are** and whether the interaction **seems safe and appropriate**.



3

End communication

If you do not trust the user, **block them** on the platform to stop them from contacting your child again.

Report users that are inappropriate or break the rules to the platform. **Take screenshots** of these messages first to keep as evidence.

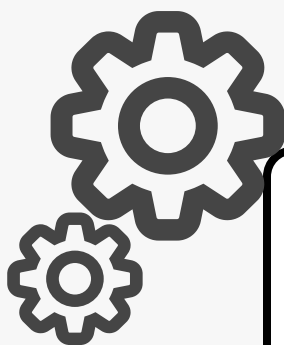


Manage safety settings

4

With your child, go through **privacy settings**. Customise who can contact your child.

Set up **parental controls** within in apps and games to further limit who can contact your child.



5

Chat and check-in

Talk about the importance of **safety settings** and **telling you** if a stranger contacts them.

Check-in on their **friends lists** regularly and ask your child about the people they **talk to** or **play online games with**.



Some children with additional needs may need extra support after contact with a harmful stranger.

Scan the QR code for practical advice, conversation support and next steps.