

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

# KNOW2PROTECT

Together We Can Stop Online Child Exploitation™

A forthcoming Department of Homeland Security national public awareness campaign to educate and empower children, teens, parents, trusted adults, and policymakers to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse.



know2  
protect™



## WHAT IS ONLINE CSEA?

Online child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) is a horrific crime that targets some of the most vulnerable people in our communities – our children and teens. It includes a broad range of criminal acts that involve the victimization of a minor for sexual gratification or some other personal or financial gain.

DHS' Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) is a global leader in combating online CSEA. Know2Protect™ relies on the expertise and authority of HSI special agents tasked with finding online predators and bringing them to justice. Despite the collaborative work with key partners, online CSEA is growing at an alarming rate and HSI cannot investigate and arrest its way out of this crisis. The goal of Know2Protect is to increase national awareness of this crime and share preventative strategies to stop future victimization.

## THE THREAT

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), the nation's clearinghouse for child sexual abuse material, received more than one million reports for the first time in 2014. Since then, the numbers have increased at an alarming rate.

**16.9M**

reports submitted  
in 2019

**21.7M**

reports submitted  
in 2020

**29.3M**

reports submitted  
in 2021

**32M**

reports submitted  
in 2022

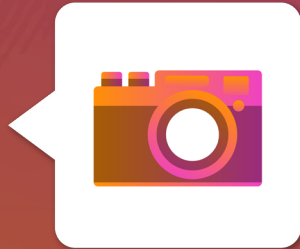


## FACTS AND FIGURES

Our expanding digital world and increased connectivity provides more opportunities for predators to exploit and abuse our children and teens. Because this crime occurs all over the world, it has become a global epidemic and requires a bold response.

In FY 2022, NCMEC received **32 MILLION REPORTS** of suspected child sexual exploitation.

— NCMEC



In FY 2022, HSI arrested 4,459 individuals for crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children and helped secure **MORE THAN 2,100 CONVICTIONS.**

— HSI

In FY 2022, The Child Exploitation Investigations Unit (CEIU) — part of HSI Cyber Crimes Center — identified and/or rescued **1,170 CHILD VICTIMS** in child exploitation investigations.

— DHS



## TOP TEN TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TRUSTED ADULTS

Online CSEA can feel overwhelming and beyond your control. However, everyone can play a role in helping to stop this crime. It starts with understanding the threats, taking preventative measures, and spreading the word.

1. Create a dialogue with your child for open two-way conversations.
2. Password protect or control access to your child's app store and gaming downloads.
3. Set time and area limits for use of devices. Set device check-in times.
4. Set all apps, games, and devices to private.
5. Turn off location data services for social media and nonessential apps.
6. Talk about the permanency of data. Online data can last a lifetime.
7. Create contracts with your child regarding online behavior.
8. Know your child's friend lists and remove any strangers.
9. Your child should never leave a game to chat with someone they don't know on a different platform.
10. Do not delete messages or images from predators. Save usernames, screenshots, and images as evidence.



# HSI

# PROJECT iGUARDIAN™

## PROJECT iGUARDIAN™ SPOTLIGHT

*Project iGuardian™ is the official in-person educational arm of the Know2Protect campaign to teach the public about the ongoing threats children and teens face from online predators*

### MEET THE iGUARDIANS™

A savvy duo of HSI special agents and their trusty canine sidekick join forces with a student and teacher to form our team of iGuardians™. They spread Know2Protect's call to action: educate the public on the dangers of online CSEA, help prevent future crimes, and empower the public to report suspected abuse.

### SCHEDULE A PROJECT iGUARDIAN PRESENTATION

The Project iGuardian team is available to inform your community of ways to protect children and teens from online predators. Our presentations are delivered by HSI special agents and other subject matter experts. These audience-specific presentations are given to schools, community groups, corporations, and nonprofit organizations that are looking to learn more and join the fight against online CSEA.

To request a presentation, email us at [iguardian.hq@hsi.dhs.gov](mailto:iguardian.hq@hsi.dhs.gov).





## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

A crucial element in fighting this horrific crime is through raising awareness. Know2Protect cannot do this alone. The campaign will launch spring 2024 and will have free informational resources that the public can print or share digitally to reach every community. Connecting with us on social media is another great way to raise awareness. Everyone has a place in this fight.

## PARTNER WITH KNOW2PROTECT

There are several ways organizations can partner with us. We provide Know2Protect partners with tailored opportunities to collaborate, such as in-person iGuardian training events, co-branded materials, creative ads, and joint promotional opportunities to expand the campaign's reach. Help connect us with your organization, leaders, and stakeholders.

To learn more about partnering with us, email us at [know2protect@hsi.dhs.gov](mailto:know2protect@hsi.dhs.gov)

