

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

September 2019 Vol. 17 No. 09

This issue highlights aspects of
child trafficking, including information from
the Preda Foundation in the Philippines.



U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking Sponsors of 'Stop Trafficking'

- Adorers of the Blood of Christ
- Adrian Dominicans
- Benedictine Sisters of Chicago
- Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS
- Benet Hill Monastery
- Cenacle Sisters, N. Amer. Prov.
- Congregation of Notre Dame
- Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
- Congregation of St. Joseph
- Daughters of Charity, Province of the West
- Daughters of Charity, Prov. of St. Louise
- Daughters of the Holy Spirit
- Dominican Sisters of Houston TX
- Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, CA
- Dominican Sisters of Peace
- Dominican Sisters of San Rafael, CA
- Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, WI
- Dominican Sisters of Springfield, IL
- Felician Sisters
- Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls
- Franciscan Sisters of Peace
- Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
- Franciscan Sisters of the Poor
- Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart
- Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters
- Marianites of Holy Cross
- Maryknoll Sisters
- Medical Mission Sisters
- Northern California Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking
- Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
- Presentation Sisters, Aberdeen
- Presentation Sisters, San Francisco
- Racine Dominicans
- Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
- Religious Sisters of Charity
- SC Ministry Foundation
- School Sisters of Notre Dame, North America
- School Sisters of St. Francis of Christ the King
- Sisters of Bon Secours
- Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati
- Sisters of Charity of Halifax
- Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth
- Sisters of Charity of Nazareth
- Sisters of Charity of New York
- Sisters of Charity of St. Joan Antida
- Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word
- Sisters of Christian Charity Mendham, NJ & Wilmette, IL
- Sisters of Mercy Catherine's Residence
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Sisters of Notre Dame, CA Prov.
- Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, USA
- Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province
- Sisters of St. Francis of Clinton
- Sisters of St. Francis of Colorado Springs
- Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque
- Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate
- Sisters of St. Francis of Redwood City
- Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God
- Sisters of St. Francis Rochester, MN
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Chestnut Hill Philadelphia
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, USA & Canada Prov.s
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange
- Sisters of the Divine Savior
- Sisters of the Good Shepherd
- Sisters of the Holy Cross
- Sisters of the Holy Family
- Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
- Sisters of the Humility of Mary
- Sisters of the Precious Blood
- Sisters of the Sacred Hearts
- Society of the Divine Savior
- Society of the Holy Child Jesus
- Society of the Sacred Heart
- U.S. Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union

Children Suffer at the Hands of Exploiters

Fr. Shay Cullen, an Irish Columban priest, began the *Preda Foundation* in 1974 to give sanctuary and rehabilitation to youth who found drugs their only refuge. Hundreds of youth and children, who are in dire circumstances, are being helped. Periodically Shay writes reflections about his work. This issue of 'Stop Trafficking' features excerpts related to the trafficking of children.

The Backdrop for the Exploitation of Filipino Children

Father Shay Cullen describes the situation in the Philippines.



The Philippines is a country with some of the greatest inequality. There are 16 million Filipinos who suffer serious poverty out of population of 107 million. Six million live in extreme poverty. They suffer the burning heat of summer and the downpours and floods of the rainy season in hovels made of plastic sheeting, scrap wood and rusty metal sheets. They eat one meager meal a day, rarely with fish or meat scraps. Most are uneducated, jobless and have low access to health care.

Meanwhile, the government, supposedly there to uplift the lives of the poor and create a more equal society, has conducted a war-on-drugs policy killing as many as 22,360, according to the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* since May 2016.

The children are the most affected. Poor nutrition causes stunted growth and learning disabilities. They come from dysfunctional families, where harsh words, rejection, hard work and abuse is the norm. They witness violence and sexual activity from an early age. They are the abandoned throw-away children of the Philippines.

They take to the streets to survive, to escape beatings, broken homes, hunger. They survive by joining street gangs and sniffing industrial glue to block the pain of living without love, care, education and hope of a future. They are mostly innocent children aged from ten to 15 years old and, while not criminally liable for misdemeanors, are nevertheless arrest-

Philippines cont. on pg. 2



Awareness

2

Philippines *cont. from pg. 1*

ed for being homeless street children.

They are jailed illegally and suffer beatings, sexual abuse and "slavery" from other older inmates. Children commit only 2% of all crimes in the Philippines.

The wealthy politicians, mostly members of the economic elite (some .00001% own as much as 70% of the national wealth), buy their way to government positions and protect the wealth of the Philippine super rich. They pass laws to benefit themselves and reward their rich supporters with lower taxes and few regulations so their corporations and multinational partners can disregard environmental protection laws and more or less do what they want with their money.

Child Sex Tourism

Hundreds of thousands of young girls and boys are lured, forced and trafficked into the global sex industry every day. Human traffickers operate with relative impunity and sell the youth into sex bars and clubs that are given government permits and operating licenses. This makes the Philippines part of the corrupt industry where drugs and sex dominate and young people are sold as commodities in a slave market for the wealthy sex tourists.

The behind-the-scenes reality of sex clubs is devastating. Provided with a

bed in a crowded dormitory, usually at the back of the sex bar or club or hotel, as many as forty girls can be living in inhumane conditions. They have to pay for their accommodation and for their daily food. It is all marked up against their expenses and billed to them at a high price. Despite the vaunted war-on-drugs in the Philip-



See: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5jvt2o2y7pc06le/AABUYknPy7PrjM2q0gZXu7ata?dl=0>

pines, the illegal drugs are everywhere in the sex tourist industry. The young girls are addicted or dependent and owe the pusher. They can never escape, unless they take the risk of being arrested and charged with prostitution and drug use.

In sex tourism, young women are paid a basic wage for dancing. If a customer wants to have them for sex, the sex bar gets paid for that. It is called a "bar fine." The customer has to pay but the bar owner keeps most of the money. It is a lucrative business.

The freedom and impunity of the sex industry in the tourist belt is a very bad precedent. Some local men are influenced by it and abuse their own children. It is a vicious circle of abuse and exploitation.

The tourism industry is one of the biggest money earners in most developing economies but the fact is that it is seldom reported, investigated or exposed by the media. The church too is silent about the corrupt industry. Though

some think sex tourism is confined to red light districts, it is there in beach resorts and fancy tourist hotels.

I (Fr. Cullen) was sitting in the lobby of a posh hotel in Manila waiting for some journalists.

A waiter approached me. "Sir, can I get you a drink?" he asked politely. "Just coffee, thanks," I replied. He continued, "You are alone and it is getting to evening. Do you want anything else sir?" I thought he was referring to having a meal. "You seem to be alone, would you like me to arrange a companion for you?" I was immediately alert. What was this offer in a four-star tourist hotel? I decided to play along and find out. "Oh, really, can you arrange that?" I asked. "How young would you like?" he asked. "How young can you provide?" I asked him. "Well, sir, it depends on how much you are willing to pay. A twelve-year-old will cost six thousand pesos."

I was really shocked at this! A twelve-year-old child was offered to a foreign-looking tourist right in the hotel lobby! I realized I should have recorded it on my cell phone. I answered, "No, no, not now. If I want anything more, I will contact you." When I tried to have him arrested for human trafficking and pimping minors, he had disappeared. The hotel staff tipped him off most likely. However, it was

strong evidence that this sex tourism pervades hotels and resorts.

Sex tourism is here to stay. It seems to be government-supported or at least tolerated as a normal part of life. Though many condemn the human exploitation of women and minors, the trade in sex tourism flourishes.

Non-government organizations continue to campaign to curb the abuse of children that are in the sex tourism industry.

Sex Tourism *cont. on pg. 3*





Awareness

Sex Tourism *cont. from pg. 2*

The Preda Foundation has in recent months received more than twenty rescued victims aged between 14 and 17 years, all of them lured and coerced into brothel hotels and tourist resorts. Preda gives shelter and therapy to as many as 63 children at times. After the rescue, they tell of their harrowing experiences of being sexually abused and exploited. They recover with the help of Emotional Release Therapy at the *Preda Home for Girls*.

But thousands more remain in the sex tourist industry and are at grave risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and being subjected to brutality and rape. The Preda Foundation has prosecuted several foreigners and local tourists and abusers on behalf of the victims in past years. Some foreign child sex abusers retaliate and harass the Preda advocates and social workers with baseless complaints. But Preda stands its ground and defeats the sex abusers.

Preda supports legal action for the child victims so justice will be done. There is success with eight convictions being won on average per year. In 2018, sixteen child abusers were found guilty and received life sentences for child sexual abuse. By May 2019, Preda legal action saw eight more child sex abusers convicted. More are expected. So there is hope that justice can be done for many more victims.

The foreign sex tourists that abuse youngsters in developing countries will become dependent upon and addicted to underage sex. They will return to their own countries with a strong appetite for it and will abuse many more children there. That is another curse of the sex tourism business.

Governments need to provide alter-

natives for young people. All operating permits and licenses must be cancelled. More educational opportunities and support for the very poor, especially girls, and dignified work for adults must be provided to end the cruel, dehumanizing sex tourist industry.

'Raid'

The 16-minute ABC news report shows how raids are conducted to save Filipino children caught in the sex trade. The perpetrator, Arthur Benjamin, is a 50-year old U.S. citizen who laughed in the face of what he carried out until he was faced with proof of his exploitation. Members of the Preda Foundation collaborated with U.S. ICE agents in the 2013 raids. After more than four years in a harsh Philippine jail, he was deported to the U.S. and placed on trial in California.

To see the report, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xRCk8Ni-cs>

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/americans-targeted-allegedly-running-underage-prostitution-philippines/story?id=18582802>



U.S. Children in Foster Care: Easy Prey for Human Traffickers

Children removed from unfit families and put in foster care are highly vulnerable to being trafficked, prey to predator sex traffickers who may find their young victims at bus stops, shopping malls or street corners, as well as on social media and online chat rooms.

More than 437,000 children in the U.S. were in foster care at the end of 2016, according to the Los Angeles-based *National Foster Youth Institute*. In 2018, one in seven children reported missing was likely a victim of sex trafficking and of those, 88% were in the care of child welfare when they went missing, according to the *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children* (NCMEC).

Foster care youth are at particular risk of being trafficked when they "age out" of the system at age 18 or 21, depending on where they live, experts say. "We have cases of clients who literally were trafficked the day they left foster care," said a representative of *FAIR Girls*, (<https://www.fairgirls.org>) an anti-trafficking group in Washington D.C.

(<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trafficking-fostercare/without-family-u-s-children-in-foster-care-easy-prey-for-human-traffickers-idUSKBN1I4oOM>)



Awareness

Children Bond with Their Traffickers

New research defines the relationship that forms between children who are sold for sex and the criminals who traffic them. The discovery should make it easier for law enforcement and healthcare providers to identify child victims, rescue them, and help them reenter society. About 1 million children are victims of sex trafficking worldwide.

The paper, which appeared in the *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* (Vol. 46, May–June 2019, Pages 48-54), reviews research on trauma bonding and sex trafficking from 1990 to 2017 and identified three tools traffickers use to force a psychological bond on their child victims:

- severe power imbalance;
- alternating brutal and seductive behavior;
- and social isolation that leads to the victim's perceived inability to escape.

"In sex trafficking of children, captivity is followed by this previously unrecognized process now identified as 'trauma coercive bonding,'" said Rosario V. Sanchez, a PhD candidate at Rutgers University School of Nursing.

"During recruitment, the trafficker creates an emotional bond with the victim—then replaces it with primal terror. Unpredictable assaults and death threats alternate with occasional, false expressions of romance or kindness. Confused about what constitutes intimacy, safety, and love, these children feel responsible for the abuse, protect the abuser, and feel remorse, shame, and guilt when the abuse stops."

Traffickers with multiple victims use isolation, favoritism, and conflict to turn the victims against each other. This, combined with the shame of their forced sexual acts, causes victims to become more withdrawn and dependent on the trafficker. They view the trafficker as safe and trustworthy, but fear law enforcement, health care providers, and even their own families.

The researchers found that *trauma coercive bonding* disrupts the child's social and emotional development and leads to physical and mental health conditions that persist long into adulthood. These can include depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-destructive behavior, chronic stress that contributes to a host of other disorders, and repeat victimization. Victims lose their identities and become emotionally vulnerable and unable to maintain relationships. All of these effects make returning to society difficult.

Understanding how this bond affects children, whose psychological immaturity magnifies the power imbalance and makes them depend on the trafficker more over time, will help aid workers identify and rescue child victims, Sanchez said.

It will also help them better understand why many former victims continue to engage in risky behavior—such as agreeing to trade sex for money or favors, or returning to the trafficker—even after their return to a safe environment.

(<https://www.futurity.org/child-sex-trafficking-bond-2026972-2/>)

([https://www.pediatricnursing.org/article/So882-5963\(18\)30288-4/fulltext](https://www.pediatricnursing.org/article/So882-5963(18)30288-4/fulltext))



Predators

Most predators start the process by identifying and targeting a specific victim. This can be done by trolling areas where children play, go to school or hang out. It can also be done online through chat rooms, gaming and social media apps. The "hunting" phase enables the predator to determine behavior, emotions and statements made by children that can be manipulated later.

The predator also looks for avenues of being alone with the child, as well as the relationship the child has with parents, friends, neighbors and how that can be used.

Developing trust and access is the next phase. This can be through a "friend" request, by opening a chat with the child, playing games with the child (online or at a local park), or providing him/her rides, treats, presents. This is designed to build trust through appearing to be the only one that understands the child and is routinely a "sympathetic ear". This continues until the individual plays a more important role in the child's life. The predator continues to develop the trust but also expresses their relationship as the most important thing in the child's life. Predators use statements like, *"I can't live without you. I don't know what I'd do to myself if you stop talking to me."* These are all ways to make the child more and more tied to the predator.

The next step is isolating the child from friends and family. The previous steps have set up the relationship to the point where the child depends on the predator and feels that the predator is the only one he/she can trust. This isolation then develops into secrecy and lying in order to cover up the previous stages. The child then becomes conflicted, scared and unsure of her/his self, which allows the predator to continue "grooming" the child for their intended purpose.

The last two stages are when the predator initiates a sexual relationship with the child which overwhelms the child psychologically and emotionally

Predators *cont. on pg. 9*



Advocacy

Children Hanging Out Online: Potential Dangers!

Texting Apps

GroupMe is an app with no fees or limits for direct and group messages. Users also can send photos, videos, and calendar links.

What parents need to know

- It is for older teens. The embedded GIFs and emojis have some adult themes, such as drinking and sex.
- Without fees or limits, teens can share and text constantly, which can be addictive.

Kik Messenger is an app that allows children to text for free. It is fast and has no message limits, character limits, or fees if you only use the basic features. Because it is an app, the texts do not show up on your child's phone's messaging service, and you are not charged (beyond standard data rates).

What parents need to know

- Stranger danger is an issue. *Kik* allows communication with strangers who share their *Kik* usernames to find people to chat with. The app allegedly has been used in high-profile crimes, including the murder of a 13-year-old girl and a child-pornography case.
- It is loaded with covert marketing. *Kik* specializes in "promoted chats" -- basically, conversations between brands and users. It also offers specially designed apps (accessible only through the main app), many of which offer products for sale.

WhatsApp lets users send text messages, audio messages, videos, and photos to one or many people with no message limits or fees.

What parents need to know

- It is for users 16 and over. Many younger teens seem to be using the app, but this age minimum has been set by *WhatsApp*.
- It can be pushy. After you sign up, it automatically connects you to all the people in your address book who also are using *WhatsApp*. It also encourages you to add friends who have not signed up yet.

Discord started as a place for gamers to chat while playing video games but became a bigger platform where users use text, voice-chat, and video-chat to discuss a wide variety of topics.



What parents need to know

- There are public and private "servers" or discussion groups. Teens can join public groups, ask to join private ones, or start their own. The safest option is for them to join a private group with people they actually know.
- Some groups are more moderated than others, some are labeled NSFW ('not safe for work') due to sexual content, and some are hate-filled. Many groups are meant for adults only, and some are totally tame and

well moderated. If your child is in one of the latter, the risk is much lower.

Photo and Video-Sharing Apps and Sites

Instagram lets users snap, edit, and share photos and 15-second videos, either publicly or within a private network of followers. It unites the most popular features of social media sites: sharing, seeing, and commenting on photos. It also lets you apply fun filters and effects to your photos, making them look high-quality and artistic.

What parents need to know

- Teens are on the lookout for "likes." Similar to Facebook, teens may measure the "success" of their photos -- even their self-worth -- by the number of likes or comments they receive. Posting a photo or video can be problematic if teens are posting to validate their popularity.
- Public photos are the default. Photos and videos shared on *Instagram* are public unless privacy settings are adjusted. Hashtags and location information can make photos even more visible to communities beyond a teen's followers if his/her account is public.

Children can send private messages. *Instagram Direct* is like texting with photos or videos and you can do it with up to 15 mutual friends. These pictures do not show up on their public feeds. Although there is nothing wrong with group chats, children may be more likely to share inappropriate stuff with their inner circles.

Tik Tok - Real Short Videos is a performance- and video-sharing social network that mostly features teens lip-synching to famous songs but also includes some original song-writing and singing. Users can build up a following among friends or share posts publicly.

What parents need to know

- Songs and videos contain lots of iffy content. Because the platform features popular music and a mix of teen and adult users, swearing and sexual content are commonplace.
- Gaining followers and fans feels important. Teens want a public

Online Apps cont. on pg. 6



6

Advocacy

Online Apps *cont. from pg. 5*

profile to get exposure and approval, and many are highly motivated to get more followers and likes for their videos.

Microblogging Apps and Sites

Tumblr is like a cross between a blog and *Twitter*: It is a streaming scrapbook of text, photos, and/or video and audio clips. Users create and follow short blogs, or “tumblogs,” that can be seen by anyone online (if they are made public). Many teens have tumblogs for personal use: sharing photos, videos, musings, and things they find funny with their friends.

What parents need to know

- Porn is easy to find. This online hangout is hip and creative but sometimes raunchy. Pornographic images and videos and depictions of violence, self-harm, drug use, and offensive language are easily found.
- Privacy can be guarded but only through an awkward workaround. The first profile a member creates is public and viewable by anyone on the internet. Members who desire full privacy have to create a second profile, which they are able to password-protect.
- Posts are often copied and shared. Reblogging on *Tumblr* is similar to re-tweeting: A post is reblogged from one tumblog to another. Many teens like and, in fact, want their posts to be reblogged.

Twitter is a microblogging tool that allows users to post brief, 140-character messages -- called “tweets” -- and follow other users’ activities. It is not only for adults; teens like using it to share tidbits and keep up with news and celebrities.

What parents need to know

- Public tweets are the norm for teens. Though you can choose to keep your tweets private, most teens report having public accounts. Talk to your children about what they post and how a post can spread far and fast.
- Updates appear immediately. Even though you can remove tweets, your followers can still read what you wrote until it is gone. This can get children in trouble if they say something in the heat of the moment.

Live-Streaming Video Apps

Houseparty - Group Video Chat

is a way for groups of teens to connect via live video. Two to eight people can be in a chat together at the same time. If someone who is not a direct friend joins a chat, teens get an alert and can leave the chat. One can also “lock” a chat so no one else can join.

What parents need to know

- Users can take screenshots during a chat. Teens like to think that what happens in a chat stays in a chat, but that is not necessarily the case. It is easy for someone to take a screenshot while in a chat and share it with whomever they want.
- There is no moderator. Part of the fun of live video is that anything can happen, but that can also be a problem. Unlike static posts that developers may review, live video chats are spontaneous, so it is impossible to predict what children will see, especially if they are in chats with people they do not know well.

Live.me – Live Video Streaming

allows children to watch others and broadcast themselves live, earn currency from fans, and interact live with users without any control over who views their streams.

What parents need to know

- It is associated with *Tik Tok* - including *musical.ly*. Because of the parent app’s popularity, this streamer is very

popular, and many children who use one app use the other, too.

- Children can easily see inappropriate content. During a review, there were broadcasters cursing and using racial slurs, scantily clad broadcasters, young teens answering sexually charged questions, and more.
- Predatory comments are a concern. Because anyone can communicate with broadcasters, there is the potential for viewers to request sexual pictures or performances or to contact them through other social means and send private images or messages.

YouNow: Broadcast, Chat, and

Watch Live Video is an app that lets children stream and watch live broadcasts. As they watch, they can comment or buy gold bars to give to other users. Ultimately, the goal is to get lots of viewers, start trending, and grow your fan base.

What parents need to know

- Children might make poor decisions to gain popularity. Because it is live video, children can do or say anything and can respond to requests from viewers in real time. Though there seems to be moderation around iffy content (children complain about having accounts suspended “for nothing”), there is plenty of swearing and occasional sharing of personal information with anonymous viewers.
- Teens can share personal information, sometimes by accident. Teens often broadcast from their bedrooms, which often have personal information visible, and they sometimes will share a phone number or an email address with viewers, not knowing who is really watching.
- It is creepy. Teens even broadcast themselves sleeping, which illustrates the urge to share all aspects of life, even intimate moments, publicly -- and potentially with strangers.

Self-Destructing/Secret Apps

Snapchat is a messaging app that lets users put a time limit on the pictures and videos they send before they disappear. Most teens use the app to share goofy or embarrassing photos

Online Apps *cont. on pg. 7*



Advocacy

Online Apps *cont. from pg. 6*

without the risk of them going public. However, there are lots of opportunities to use it in other ways.

What parents need to know

- It is a myth that *Snapchats* go away forever. Data is data. Whenever an image is sent, it never truly goes away. (For example, the person on the receiving end can take a screenshot of the image before it disappears.) *Snapchats* can even be recovered. After a major hack in December 2013 and a settlement with the FTC, *Snapchat* has clarified its privacy policy, but teens should stay wary.
- It can make sexting seem OK. The seemingly risk-free messaging might encourage users to share pictures containing sexy images.
- There is a lot of iffy, clicky content. *Snapchat's Discover* feature offers a grab-bag of articles, videos, and quizzes from magazine publishers, TV networks, and online sources mostly about pop culture, celebrities, and relationships (a typical headline: "THIS is What Sex Does To Your Brain").

Whisper is a social "confessional" app that allows users to post whatever is on their minds, paired with an image. With all the emotions running through teens, anonymous outlets give them the freedom to share their feelings without fear of judgment.

What parents need to know

- *Whispers* are often sexual in nature. Some users use the app to try to hook up with people nearby, while others post "confessions" of desire. Lots of eye-catching, nearly nude pics accompany these shared secrets.
- Content can be dark. People normally do not confess sunshine and rainbows; common *Whisper* topics

include insecurity, depression, substance abuse, and various lies told to employers and teachers.

- Although it is anonymous to start, it may not stay that way. The app encourages users to exchange personal information in the "Meet Up" section.

Chatting, Meeting, and Dating Apps and Sites

Monkey -- Have Fun Chats. If you remember *Chatroulette*, where users could be randomly matched with strangers for a video chat, this is the modern version. Using *Snapchat* to connect, users have 10 seconds to live video-chat with strangers.

What parents need to know

- Lots of teens are using it. Because of the connection with *Snapchat*, plenty of teens are always available for a quick chat, which often leads to connecting via *Snapchat* and continuing the conversation through that platform.
- Teens can accept or reject a chat. Before beginning a chat, users receive the stranger's age, gender, and location and can choose whether to be matched or not.

MeetMe: Chat and Meet New People.

The name says it all. Although not marketed as a dating app, *MeetMe* does have a "Match" feature whereby users can "secretly admire" others, and its large user base means fast-paced communication and guaranteed attention.

What parents need to know

- It is an open network. Users can chat with whomever is online, as well as search locally, opening the door to potential trouble.
- Lots of details are required. First and last name, age, and ZIP code are requested at registration, or you can log in using a Facebook account. The app also asks permission to use location services on your teens' mobile devices, meaning they can find the closest matches wherever they go.

Omegle is a chat site that puts two strangers together in their choice of a text chat or a video chat. Being anonymous can be very attractive to teens, and *Omegle* provides a no-fuss way to make connections. Its "interest boxes" also let users filter potential chat partners by shared interests.

What parents need to know

- Users get paired up with strangers. That is the whole premise of the app. And there is no registration required.
- This is not a site for children and teens. *Omegle* is filled with people searching for sexual chat. Some prefer to do so live. Others offer links to porn sites.
- Language is a big issue. Since the chats are anonymous, they are often much more explicit than those with identifiable users might be.

Yubo (formerly Yellow - Make new friends)

is an app that is often called the "Tinder for teens" because users swipe right or left to accept or reject the profiles of other users. If two people swipe right on each other, they can chat and hook up via *Snapchat* or *Instagram*.

What parents need to know

- It is easy to lie about your age. Even if you try to enter a birth date that indicates you are under 13, the app defaults to an acceptable age so you can create an account anyway.
- You have to share your location and other personal information. For the app to work, you need to let it "geo-tag" you. Also, there are no private profiles, so the only option is to allow anyone to find you.
- It encourages contact with strangers. As with *Tinder*, the whole point is to meet people. The difference with *Yellow* is that the endgame is sometimes just exchanging social media handles to connect there. Even if there is no offline contact, however, without age verification, teens are connecting with people they do not know who may be much older.

Amino - Communities, Chat, Forums, and Groups is an interest-based app that lets users find

Online Apps *cont. on pg. 8*



8

Online Apps *cont. from pg. 7*

people who are into the same things. Teens can join groups -- or create them -- and then post within the group, follow other users, and chat with them via text, voice, or video.

What parents need to know

- Contact with strangers is part of the experience. While it is great for children to be able to feel a sense of belonging and kinship with others, the mix of children and adults blended with all varieties of chat makes it risky. Also, unless a child is in a closed group, everything they post is public, and other users can search for them. Make sure your child's location is not included in their profile.
- Mature content and bullying is common. Since each community makes its own rules, profanity, sexual references, and violent content are a part of some forums. A lot of what your child sees, whom they meet, and what people post is determined by the groups they decide to join, as some are very tame and some are definitely not for children.
- It is not made with children in mind. Because this app was not created for children, it does not have the same safeguards or privacy standards as apps that are made for children.

Remember: Any child participating in sexual activity at the behest of an adult is being trafficked.

The bottom line for most of these apps? If teens are using them respectfully, appropriately, and with parental guidance, they should be fine. Take inventory of your children's apps and review the best practices.

(Source: Polly Conway and Kelly Schryver -- <https://www.common sense media.org/blog/16-apps-and-websites-kids-are-heading-to-after-facebook>)

Advocacy

Safeguarding Children

The *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's* (NCMEC) CyberTipline (<https://report.cybertip.org>) is the nation's centralized reporting system for the online exploitation of children. The public and electronic service providers can make reports of suspected online enticement of children for sexual acts, extra-familial child sexual molestation, child pornography, child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, unsolicited obscene materials sent to a child, misleading domain names, and misleading words or digital images on the internet.

What Happens to CyberTip Information?

NCMEC staff review each tip and work to find a potential location for the incident reported so that it may be made available to the appropriate law-enforcement agency for possible investigation. NCMEC also uses the information from its CyberTipline reports to help shape its prevention and safety messages.

Potential Sextortion of Children

Teach children to "self-report" to NCMEC (<https://report.cybertip.org>) and/or to speak about it with a trusted adult. Check for ways to limit the spread of unwanted explicit content in various apps at this link: <http://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/isyourexplicitcontentoutthere>

Application of Child Pornography Laws to Selfies

If an adult takes a sexually explicit picture of a minor and shares it via social media or in a text message, that adult will likely have run afoul of some child pornography laws.

But what about a minor who takes *selfies* and sends them discreetly to another teen? What if the receiver then forwards the photos to others? Have they violated any laws? In many states, the answer is *yes*.

Though their laws were created to protect minors from exploitation caused by others, states are prosecuting minors under child pornography statutes for sending nude or otherwise lurid self-portraits, even when the minors sent the *selfies* without coercion. The common quirk in the laws is that there is no exception for taking or distributing sexually explicit pictures of oneself. Thus, a high school student sending a racy *selfie* to a boyfriend or girlfriend could subject both themselves and the receiver to prosecution for child pornography. If the picture makes its way around other social circles through online or direct sharing, anyone who received or distributed the photo could also find themselves open to charges. For more details, go to: <http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-charges/child-pornography-and-selfies--what-you-need-to-know.html>



**IF YOU SUSPECT
CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING,
CALL
1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or
VISIT www.cybertipline.org**



Action

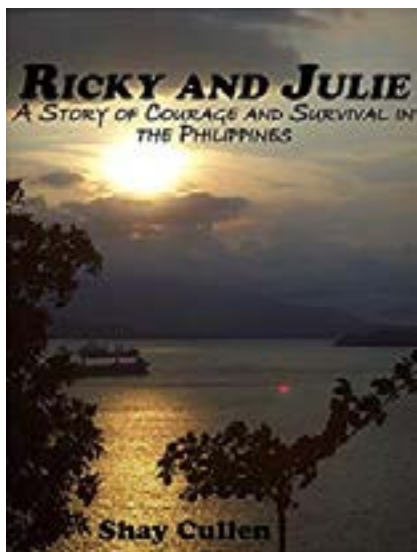
9

'Ricky and Julie: A story of human trafficking in the Philippines'

The book, authored by Shay Cullen and based on true events, recounts Filipino village children being trafficked into the sex industry by a powerful family, as well as how street children are being saved rather than murdered.

Go to:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/Bo7DXKX4SV/>



Predators *cont. from pg. 4*

making it easier to manipulate and control. This then evolves into the predator controlling the relationship through threats, intimidation, guilt or force. This process is also seen in many cases of domestic violence and elder abuse relationships.

For the complete article, go to:

<https://www.wfmynews2.com/article/news/crime/what-is-child-grooming-a-qa-with-police-every-parent-guardian-should-know/83-687b01b9-c8ab-40fb-b311-19e63bc0420c>

Missing Children

The *ADAM Program* helps locate missing children — fast — using *LexisNexis'* innovative technology to distribute posters with a photo and details about a missing child to police, news media, schools businesses, medical centers and individuals within a specific, targeted geographic area. Designed, donated and managed by *LexisNexis Risk Solutions*, the ADAM Program has helped in the recovery of over 180 missing children.

(<https://risk.lexisnexis.com/adam>)

ADAM

Automated Delivery of Alerts on Missing Children

Powered by LexisNexis®



'Taxi'

Victims of child sex trafficking are everywhere. Would you recognize the signs? Can you see them?

A21 and NCMEC teamed up on the "Can You See Me" campaign to increase awareness that child sex trafficking is happening in plain sight.

Watch "Taxi"

https://youtu.be/aSbAOA_h2Dg

'Two Little Girls'

This is a 3-minute animated film aimed directly at young women in Eastern Europe and other regions who are in danger of being sex trafficked. The film was made in consultation with a group of Albanian women who were trafficked to the UK and rescued by the *Poppy Project*. Find it at:

<http://www.twolittlegirls.org>

Informative Web Sites: (Each contains information related to human trafficking)

Preda Foundation

<http://www.preda.org>

Parents' Guide

<https://yourgeardeconstructed.com/parents-internet-safety-security-screen-time-guide/>

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) Resources

<http://www.missingkids.com/our-work/publications>

Talk Today -

Safer Tomorrow

10 Conversation Starters

<https://endsexualexploitation.org/download/10-conversation-starters/>

For Parents

<https://bestcellphonespyapps.com/parental-controls-for-smart-phones-and-the-internet/>

**Toll-Free 24/7 Hotline
National Human Trafficking
Resource Center
1.888.3737.888
Text "BeFree" (233733)**

Stop Trafficking! is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among USCSAHT members, organizations and concerned persons, collaborating to eliminate all forms of human trafficking.

To access back issues, go to:

<http://www.stopenslavement.org/past-issues-chronological.html>

To contribute information, please contact:

schafer@stopenslavement.org

Editing and Layout: Jean Schafer, SDS