

# **How Your Child can be Trapped: 10 Ways Children Can be Exploited Online**

The world of the Internet can be a world of good research, especially for kids who want to have the latest in news and current affairs. This world of good research and information is also a place of lurkers and shadows – your child can expose himself or herself to dangers, simply by virtue of being a child in a world where grown ups are not necessarily the nicest people to deal with. In fact, with technology improving and becoming all the more accessible, the Internet is becoming an even more frightening place.

As the Internet develops, moreover, there are many more ways that your child can be used, abused, humiliated, and exploited online. Here are only a few ways that you may want to take into consideration before willingly handing your kid that new PC with its fast Internet connection.

## ***1. They can be made to buy things through specially tailored messages that kids will like.***

Marketing to children can be difficult, but once it is done, it can be even harder to convince your child that a certain toy, pair of shoes, or musical instrument should not be bought because it is either useless or the family cannot afford it. Some marketing messages can be so skilful online, and buying online can be very easy. If your child gets hold of your credit card, and if he or she sees something that he or she likes online...well, you know the rest.

## ***2. They can be lured into giving personal information, and even confidential family information.***

Asking a child to give information is not easy, especially with good education of children when they are cautioned about talking to strangers. However, if a grown up is relatively nice online, and if he or she seems to be a friend of the family because he or she knows so much about the family, then maybe sharing a phone number or address won't be too bad? Be careful about who your children talk to online – they may end up going to your house and stealing your things, and that's only the beginning – and that's just the least that they can do.

## ***3. They can be made to do online jobs for a minimal fee***

When we talk about children, we are talking about minors, or anyone below the age of eighteen. As early as sixteen, your kids may want to find work, and they will probably choose to flip burgers or clean restrooms. However, some would like to work online, say as writers or designers. Now not all online employers are nice: some will be hideous with payments, and they may try to convince your child to earn so much less for giving so much work.

**4. *They can be lured into child pornography.***

This is perhaps the most dangerous aspect of life online, and this is something you may need to really educate your child on. This can be as mild as asking a child for pictures; it can graduate to more dangerous things, and if your child is not careful, he or she may end up being kidnapped or lured into real life prostitution.

**5. *They can be put on child pornography websites – and with only a graphics editor to finish the job.***

Your child may not pose for a website – but his or her picture can be altered to look like he or she is being prostituted. Be careful about how frequently your child posts his or her pictures, and what pictures are being posted online. You never know how graphics design talent can be put to evil use.

**6. *They can be the victims of cyber bullying***

There are many ways that your child can be harassed online, and children can be traumatized in many different ways because of threats or intimidation. Be wary and always watch your child's behavior. If he or she is showing signs of being bullied, then start taking action.

**7. *They can be introduced to violence that they will not be prepared for.***

Gore is not difficult to come by online – and it can be the kind of gore that your children will be traumatized with. From pictures to videos, people with violent tendencies can exploit your children's innocence.

**8. *They can be introduced to issues about sex and sexuality that they will not be prepared to understand.***

Pornography is only the beginning – there are many different forums and mailing lists online that can change the way your child views sex, which should be seen as a symbol and act of gentle and kind love.

**9. *They will get the wrong information and even a bias on a lot of matters.***

With extremely biased hate sites, with wrong information, and with people posing as experts, your children can do their research and yet fail miserably in school. Not everyone is an expert online, so caution your child accordingly – and let him or her use the library if he or she has to do research for school.

**10. *They can be lured to causes or organizations that you would never dream of seeing them in.***

Hate and discrimination all have their nests online – and your child, with just the right messages and convincing, can be part of the gang.