



## Internet Grooming

Sexual grooming [particularly of children] also occurs on the **Internet**. Some perpetrators will pretend to be children online and make arrangements to meet with them in person. With the number of children using social connection sites such as **Facebook & MSN**, it is a problem that parents and workers need to be aware of.

### **NSW police have a special unit called the Child Exploitation Internet Unit**

The Child Exploitation Internet Unit is a unit within the New South Police, State Crime Command, and Sex Crimes Squad.

### **Mission of the Child Exploitation Internet Unit**

*To investigate child sexual exploitation that is facilitated through the use of the Internet and telecommunication systems.*

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- To proactively identify and then investigate people using the Internet and telecommunication systems to groom and procure (get) children for the purposes of sexual exploitation and to bring such offenders to justice.
- To investigate the production, dissemination and possession of images of child sexual exploitation (Child Pornography) that is helped by use of the Internet and telecommunication systems.
- Coordinate the NSW Police response to matters relating to child sexual exploitation referred from external law enforcement agencies.
- Provide assistance to other police in respect to specialist advice and technical support relating to the investigation of crimes facilitated through the use of the Internet and telecommunications systems.
- Establish, develop and maintain professional networks with other State, National and International Law Enforcement bodies and external agencies involved in the investigation of computer facilitated sexual exploitation of children.
- To assist with community awareness & education about safely using the Internet and protecting children from internet facilitated sexual exploitation.

**Q. What is 'online procuring and grooming'?**

**A.** Online Procuring is where an adult contacts a child online (usually via the Internet or mobile telephone) and by the words and actions during this contact they encourage, entice, recruit or induce the child to engage in sexual activity. Online Grooming is conducted in a similar fashion and is often a preliminary step to procuring, where the adult (through the words and actions) attempt to lower the child's inhibitions regarding sexual activity or heighten their curiosity by sending pornographic material or talking about sexual matters.

**Q. How does 'online procuring and grooming' work?**

**A.** The online contact usually occurs in on line chat rooms and/ or social networking sites. Adults with an established sexual interest in children will frequently go to chat rooms that are known to be popular with children (e.g. Yahoo & MSN). They will generally attempt to keep up to date with all the latest fashions in clothes, music and sport so they can either pass themselves off as another child or as an adult who is in tune with children's interests. The adult might identify a younger, more naive or vulnerable child in a chat room, and they will make them the focus of their attention. They will have the child believe that they are their 'special friend'.

For further information, go to their website:

[http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community\\_issues/children/child\\_exploitation](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/children/child_exploitation)