

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Age assurance

methods platforms use to check or estimate a user's age, from typed birthdays (the least reliable) to ID checks and facial estimation.

Algorithm / the feed

the system that chooses what your child sees next.

CSAM

child sexual abuse material. The correct term; every image is evidence of a child being abused.

Cyberflashing

sending unsolicited sexual images.

DM

direct message; a private message inside an app.

Doxxing

publishing someone's private details (address, school, number) to invite harassment.

Deepfake

AI made image, video, or audio of a real person doing or saying something they never did.

End to end encryption

only the sender and receiver can read the messages; the platform generally cannot.

Family plan organiser

the account that controls a shared subscription or family group, and can often see members' activity or location.

Grooming

building a relationship with a child in order to abuse or exploit them. It can involve attention, flattery, gifts and secrets.

Loot box

a paid in game reward of unknown contents, with chance mechanics similar to gambling.

Metadata

data about data, such as when and where a photo was taken.

Nudification tool

software that fabricates a nude image from an ordinary clothed photo.

Parasocial relationship

a one way bond a child feels with a creator who does not know they exist.

Sextortion

blackmail using an intimate image, real or fabricated. In NCMEC and Thorn data, about 90% of victims in the financial sextortion cases analysed were boys aged 14 to 17.

Sharenting

parents oversharing children's photos and details online.

Stalkerware

hidden software that reports a device's messages, photos, location, and calls to another person.

Streaks

daily contact counters that can turn friendship into an obligation.

Take It Down

free anonymous NCMEC tool that helps remove a minor's intimate images from participating platforms. takeitdown.ncmec.org

Vault app

an app that hides photos or files, sometimes disguised as a calculator.

VPN

routes internet traffic through an encrypted tunnel; can protect privacy on public WiFi and can bypass home filters and age checks.

2FA / two factor authentication

a second code needed to log in. Codes are never read out to anyone.