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District Attorney's Office reminds our community about smart, safe internet habits

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill is reminding our community to practice smart and safe internet habits while online.

“There is always a risk of online sexual exploitation, but now that risk could increase as more people, particularly our youth, stay home and look for ways to pass the time,” said District Attorney Rod Underhill. “We want our community to stay engaged with each other, especially during this very difficult time, and technology is a great way to do that, but we know there are people who are willing to take advantage of a situation to lure children and teens and to sexually exploit them.”

Recently, a 22-year-old man pleaded guilty to one count of online sexual corruption of a child in the first degree, one count of rape in the third degree and one count of sodomy in the third degree.

The man met a teenager online using a social media website, which resulted in him having unlawful sexual contact with the victim who was under the age of 16.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Human Trafficking Team recommends that parents and guardians have conversations about internet safety and establish rules for children and teens while they use the internet and other social media applications.

Additionally, the DA's Human Trafficking Team recommends that:

- Parents and guardians know what social media applications their children and teens have downloaded and that parents and guardians become familiar with those applications and then reasonably and responsibly monitor the use of those applications and overall internet use.
- Parents and guardians should remind their children and teens that it is never appropriate for a minor to send or receive sexually explicit messages or images.
- Children and teens should be told to never reveal personal identifying information about themselves or their family members to strangers who they have met online.
- Children and teens should be reminded that online predators may create fake accounts and represent themselves as a classmate or a friend of a friend in an attempt to build trust.
- Children and teens should be encouraged to report any unwanted behavior or contact or any situation that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

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- Parents and guardians should support a child or teen who comes forward with information about potential illegal or unwanted online contact, and remember that other children or teens may be using the internet or social media apps for cyber bullying.

Locally, to report a non-life threatening emergency or to request law enforcement contact, call 503-823-3333.

Child pornography cyber tips can be made online using the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's website](#) or by calling their national tip line at 1-800-843-5678.

The [Multnomah County District Attorney's Human Trafficking Team](#) includes two attorneys, an investigator and a victim advocate. Additionally, an attorney assigned to the MCDA gang unit is available to help prosecute cases and support the team as trafficking routinely intersects with gang violence.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office's Human Trafficking Team works to protect victims utilizing a three-prong approach: (1) aggressively prosecuting those who traffic victims to sex buyers; (2) reducing demand for exploitation in all forms to include a dedicated focus on a reduction of sex buyers; and (3) ensuring adequate protection and support for victims of human trafficking.

If you are involved in sex trafficking, or know of someone who is being trafficked, call the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#) at 1-888-373-7888 or 9-1-1.

COVID-19 Notice:

The health and well-being of all employees and community members we serve is a top priority for the Multnomah County District Attorney. Our office is working with the court, defense bar, local law enforcement and other system partners to carefully balance the needs of public health and public safety.

For information about the operational changes implemented by the District Attorney's Office in response to the novel coronavirus, please [click here](#).

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