

# SAFETY PLANNING

## Online Safety Tools + Information for Women/Feminized Folks



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# O N L I N E   S A F E T Y   A N D D A N G E R S

Online safety has always been a barrier for women, girls and trans people. Now that the two pandemics have collided, the risks and barriers for safety start to emerge at a rapid speed.

**Cyber-misogyny** (coined by Vancouver-based West Coast Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) is real and rampant, internationally and locally referred to as online or information and communication technology (ICT) violence against women/girls.

73% of women/AFAB people are abused online worldwide, according to the UN Broadband Commission's 2015 report. More than half (52%) of the women polled disagree with this statement: **"The Internet is a safe place to express my opinions."**



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# ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

1. There is no such thing as private on the internet- if you are posting photos of yourself or your home, make sure that you are not including a house number, a street name or other significant indicators that could lead someone to figure out your physical location.
2. Get a VPN and protect your IP address and location from hackers, incels and other people.
3. Be cautious about using geo-location services, apps, Foursquare, or any method which shares where you're at. Cyberstalking is common and geo-locators can be used against us. If you are using a geo-locator to notify your friends of your location, great! just make sure to turn it off afterwards.
4. Check your privacy settings at least once every few months - there are many times automatic settings are defaulted- you can change and control these.
5. Make sure you know the person who is sending you a friend request- if you have a public profile this means the additional step of clicking on the profile to use your best judgment before accepting.
6. Don't leave your webcam connected or on without a sticker or guard over the camera.



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# O N L I N E S A F E T Y T I P S

1. Strong passwords are worth the effort-- This means having a special book that you have access to only with your passwords to help you remember.
2. If you are using public computers make sure to clear all cookies and cache afterwards, malware can be used to access your name and financial information.
3. Use two step verification for all of your emails and finances online
4. Keep in mind that Wi-Fi networks in public places like coffee shops, libraries or airports are not secure. Never send personal information through public Wi-Fi and disable the connection when you're not using it.
5. Before you sell or dispose of your computer or mobile device, completely wipe its hard drive to remove files, personal photos and all the information you have stored on it with overwrite software.



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# ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

Keeping yourself safer online when advocating for your beliefs, your truth and the impacts of sexual/gender-based violence is necessary. Online stalking, doxxing and cyber bullying effect more than 2.5 million people in Canada. Women were more likely to report having been cyberstalked than men.

(2014 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety/Victimization)

If you are exposing an abuser online- make sure you have a safety plan with cyber security measures in place.

If you are engaging in conversations/comments on public forums and groups- try enabling your privacy settings to ensure people cannot access your photos or information without adding you as a friend.

If you are worried about someones behaviour towards you online- document it, reach out to a friend to talk about it or call a community organization/crisis line to walk you through some options.



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# ADULT SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ONLINE

Sending intimate images between adults over the age of 18 is legal when each person voluntarily agrees to participate, and where no intimate image is shared without the person who is in the photo or in the video.

In Canada, it is against the law to show an image of someone privately doing a sexual act, who is naked, or who is exposing an intimate part of their body without the permission of the person who is in that image.

If you threaten to share or show intimate images to others as a way of forcing the person in the image into doing something or not doing something. **This is known as extortion.**

Secretly take someone's photo, to video them, or to spy on them when they are exposing an intimate body part, they are naked, or are engaged in a sexual act. **This is known as voyeurism.**

Also, it is considered identity fraud if someone pretending to be you creates fake accounts of you by using your private photos.



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# HOW CIS MEN CAN SUPPORT OUR ONLINE SAFETY

1. Do not share photos of any kind without her/their consent, do not get angry when someone says no, honour this and honour their boundaries.
2. Do not record her/them without their/her permission, if you are recording an incident or harm- make sure you check in with the victim/survivor first before posting it, sharing it or turning it in as evidence.
3. When you see your friends using social media to attack women/trans people through online forums, group chats, comments. Call them in our out- hold them accountable, help them understand why this is violent and how they can do better.
4. Accountability is key- if you post something or share something and a woman/trans person lets you know it was not ok. Believe them, apologize if it's needed and learn from it.
5. If you are using an online dating app It is NEVER okay to show up to someones workplace, home, social hangouts without asking first. If she/they have not text you back or responded to your messages- leave it alone. move on. **it's okay and you can release those feelings in other ways that have nothing to do with us.**



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