Online predators and identity thefts

A definition

Online predators are people on the Internet who create secret online relationships with children. Identity theft can also be someone stealing the identity of someone else online to use their advantage, such as money or insurance.
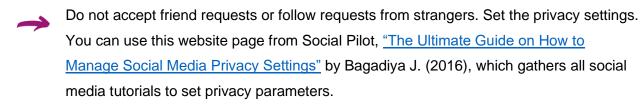
Why is this important?

According to the Migration and Home Affairs DG from the European Commission, around 31% of internet users in the EU reported a case of phishing or pharming.

Tips and tricks

→ Do not accept friend requests or follow requests from strangers. Set the privacy settings. You can use this website page from Social Pilot, "The Ultimate Guide on How to Manage Social Media Privacy Settings" by Bagadiya J. (2016), which gathers all social media tutorials to set privacy parameters.

→ Never share personal information or photos with strangers online, and use a unique password for each social media account.

→ Create an open discussion with your students or your children about the danger of online predators and identity theft.

→ Always log out if you are using another device than yours or if you lend your device to someone else. You can use VPNs or Virtual Private Networks to prevent identity theft.

Useful resources and tools

↖ N26. (2021), 4 simple ways to avoid identity theft on social media, is an article providing tool to prevent you from identity theft on social media.

↖ If you don't know where privacy settings are, you can use this website by the National Cybersecurity Alliance, which gathers all privacy settings links to popular devices and online services. There is a "Social Networks" list if you scroll down.

↖ This article by Luthi B. (2022), "What Is Identity Theft and How Do I Make Sure It Doesn't Happen to Me?", provides information on how identity theft happens, the consequences, tips to avoid it, and how to deal with it if you are implicated. The part on Credit Cards is not for students, but other information is still helpful.

This article called "What Personal Information Can Be Used to Commit Identity Theft?" by McGurran B. on Experian (2022) provides tools to know how to prevent identity thefts.

The Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission published a complete "Study on online identity theft and identity-related crime", explaining what identity theft is and what the context is in Europe.