



Olivia's Story: It Started With an i-Phone



Part 1: Navigating the Threat of Online Grooming

**Olivia's story reflects the true experiences of countless participants on their journey of healing at Wellspring Living.*

Olivia had always loved spending summers with her grandmother. But at fifteen, this summer felt different. The activities she once enjoyed now felt dull and predictable. Besides, she carried an entire world of entertainment in her pocket—her iPhone—and it was far more exciting than board games or evening walks.

Late at night, after the house had gone quiet, Olivia slipped online. She chatted with people on Snapchat and explored worlds in Minecraft. Among all the usernames and conversations, one stood out: Jamal. He made her laugh. He noticed her. He complimented her in ways that made her feel seen and special.



89 percent of sexual advances toward children happen in Internet chatrooms or via instant messaging.



Over the course of two months, **their conversations grew longer and more personal.** Jamal asked questions about her life, her feelings, and her dreams.

One evening, he pushed the boundaries of their friendship, asking her to share more of herself with him. Olivia hesitated—but then agreed. After that, the questions came more easily, and she answered them without much thought. Soon, Jamal wanted details about her daily life. Eventually, he asked where she was staying for the summer. Olivia told him it was her grandmother's house. Not long after, he asked for the address—and she gave it to him.

One night, during another late conversation, **Jamal suggested they meet in person.** Olivia's heart raced. She felt excited and grown up. Jamal was no longer just an online friend. In her mind, he was becoming something more—maybe even her boyfriend.

Olivia's story is not unique. According to National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), **most children are sold for sex on the internet,** and not on the street.



Online Grooming Process



- **Targeting:** Trafficker identifies a child via posts and hashtags.
- **Engagement:** They gain trust through flattery and shared interests.
- **Isolation:** They encourage secrecy in conversations.
- **Exploitation:** They solicit photos, personal info, or in-person meetings.
- **Control:** They use shame or threats to escalate abuse after compliance.

Take Action Against Sexual Exploitation!

Our children, like Olivia, are at serious risk online, with **over 50% of victims of sexual exploitation aged 12 to 15**. With most advances happening in chatrooms and through messaging, we must act now!

Parents and grandparents, you can make a difference by educating your children about online safety and monitoring their online activity. Here's what you can do to protect your loved ones.



TIPS ON KEEPING TEENS SAFE ON SOCIAL MEDIA



FOR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS

- ⚠ Learn about your children's websites, apps, and games.
- ⚠ Monitor kids' social media and gaming activity.
- ⚠ Discuss appropriate online behavior with your kids.
- ⚠ Explain the permanence of online posts and images.
- ⚠ Ensure kids use privacy settings on profiles.
- ⚠ Warn children about interacting with strangers online.
- ⚠ Encourage strong passwords and appropriate screen names.
- ⚠ Prohibit meeting online contacts without adult supervision.

