Sadistic Online Exploitation (SOE)

SOE groups use threats, blackmail, and manipulation to coerce or extort victims into producing, sharing, or live-streaming act of self-harm, animal cruelty, sexually explicit acts, swatting, doxing, and/or suicide. The footage is then circulated among members of the network to continue to extort victims and exert control over them.

Victim Characteristics

Victim Demographics

- Often minors, ages 10-17
- Typically female, though males are also targeted

Victim Background

- Often lack stable support network
- Often have mental health concerns
- Unfettered access to the internet
- Alienated from community

Victim Targeting

- Social media sites, gaming platforms, and mobile apps
- Offender presents as trustworthy person to gather information

What the Public Can Do

- Look for indicators and warning signs such as cuts, bruises, carvings, words, or symbols on the skin. Be aware of changes in appearance including neglect of appearance or hiding specific body parts.
- Monitor children's and other vulnerable individuals' online activity and discuss risks associated with sharing personal information.
- Use discretion when posting images, videos, and personal content online, particularly those that include children and/or their information.
- Ask about sudden behavioral changes, becoming more isolated, dropping out of activities, or changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Recognize if your child is receiving anonymous gifts, such as items delivered to your home, money, gaming currency, or other virtual items.
- Identify if family pets uncharacteristically avoid or are fearful of your child or you.

If You Believe You or Someone You Know is a Victim:

Do Not Delete: Retain all usernames, email addresses, websites, or names of platforms used for communication, photos, videos, etc.

Immediately Report to:

FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center: **IC3.gov or 1-800-CALL-FBI**
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: **www.cybertipline.org or 1-800-THE LOST**
FBI Buffalo: **716-856-7800**
Contact your local police department
Consult your pediatrician or other healthcare provider who can provide an initial evaluation or a referral to a mental health professional
If this is an immediate, life-threatening emergency, DIAL 911

FBI: Committed to Protecting our Children