



CITY OF FORT WAYNE

SHARON TUCKER, MAYOR

Police Department • Paul Smith, Police Chief

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FWPD Raises Awareness about Dangerous Online Group

The Fort Wayne Police Department is alerting parents, guardians, educators, and young people about violent online networks that target and exploit children and other vulnerable individuals, including a dangerous network known as "764."

These predators use Discord, Roblox, Telegram, and other social media, gaming, and messaging services to develop relationships with children.

What begins as a friend request, gaming conversation, private message, or request for a photograph can escalate into grooming, sextortion, threats, and psychological manipulation. Pictures and information children send become weapons. Once they're close, 764 ultimately manipulates, threatens, blackmails, or extorts them.

"These online groups' sole purpose is violence and predation; there is no other reason for their goal," said Detective Brian Martin with the FWPD.

764 wants to isolate, scare, shame, and control your children, but you aren't helpless. Build good habits by talking with your children regularly about who they talk with online and taking any threats they receive seriously.

Watch for sudden or unexplained behavioral changes, including increased secrecy surrounding phones or computers; panic or anxiety after receiving messages; withdrawal from family and friends; new or unknown online contacts; hidden or multiple accounts; significant changes in eating or sleeping habits; unexplained injuries; self-harm; or fear that photographs, videos, or personal information will be released.

"We as Parents, teachers, counselors, and Law Enforcement must keep up with the recent trends used to target our children. We must review our children's social media, gaming, and online activity," Det. Martin said. "We must ask questions about who our children are communicating with, whether they personally know these people, and what they are chatting/talking about. What are they asking our children in chats and asking our children to share with them?"

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If your child has been threatened, tell them that asking for help is more important than embarrassment over anything that has already occurred.

When you can do so safely, preserve the evidence. Document usernames, account names, messages, threats, dates and times, telephone numbers, email addresses, and other identifying information. Do not immediately delete accounts or communications that may contain evidence, and do not confront or independently investigate the suspected offender.

For more information, view coverage of this dangerous group and learn what to watch for.

Investigate TV: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2914893328857816>

CBC: <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/209-front-burner/episode/16240780-764-the-violent-extremist-network-targeting-kids-online>

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