



## ONEIDA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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*Grady M. Hartman*  
Sheriff

*Daniel L. Hess*  
Chief Deputy



### NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – Tuesday, June 18, 2019

County of Oneida – As the summer vacation is in full swing, Sheriff Hartman wants to remind parents about “Stranger Danger”. Not the “Stranger Danger” of the past, but the danger that occurs when our children interact with predators online. We are in a new era where your children can meet strangers without leaving your home. Whether your child is playing video games or simply visiting Facebook or other apps on their cellular phone, they can encounter predators looking to create a relationship with them and then meet them. These crimes have become part of the daily national news; but are also crimes that occurs in Wisconsin and specifically in Oneida County.

The Oneida County Sheriff's Office has put a special focus on Internet Crime Against Children this year. In the first five months of 2019, the Oneida County Sheriff's Office has intervened in at least a dozen incidents where children (those under 18 years old) were the intended victim of an adult who wanted to take the child to a secluded place and have sexual contact with them. Before the actual meeting occurs, the predator has shared nude photos with the child and asked the child to share nude photos. Predators have come from hours away to Oneida County to have contact with children. In several cases, predators have disguised their identity by sending pictures of someone else. These encounters have not occurred because the Oneida County Sheriff's Office Internet Crimes Against Children team has been able to intervene.

Another emerging crime are predators blackmailing children. Predators begin a relationship with children and then convince the child to send one photo of themselves nude. Once they have one nude photo, they will use the photo to blackmail the child to send more by threatening to post the photo so that others can see the photo.

Not only has the Oneida County Sheriff's Office Internet Crimes Against Children team intervened in cases where predators have been looking for children, they have also found children on adult sites posing as adults attempting to meet adults for sexual contact.

Sheriff Hartman knows that the Sheriff's Office Internet Crimes Against Children team cannot intervene in all cases and urges parents to be active in their child's online activity. Parents should speak with their children



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about internet safety. Children must understand that once they share a photo of themselves, it can never be retrieved. Children must also be aware that they can never truly know who they are chatting with as predators often hide their true identities so that they cannot be caught.

Not only must parents educate their children, they should look at their child's cellular phones, tablets, computers, and video gaming systems that allow for chatting. Parents should know passwords and be able to access all areas of these devices. If a parent finds an app on the phone that they are not aware of, they should open the app and look through them. If parents find anything that concerns them, parents can contact law enforcement.

The Wisconsin Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and the Department of Public Instruction have created an excellent online resource that can educate parents about internet safety. It can be found at this link: <https://dpi.wi.gov/internet-safety/new-interactive-safety-resource-available>.

Sheriff Hartman hopes that this summer will be a happy and safe summer for all of the families who live in and visit Oneida County. His team will continue to seek online predators and assist the community in keeping our children safe.

Any media requesting additional information about this release should contact Captain Terri Hook (715)361-5150 (desk) or (715)493-6753 (cell).

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