

# Welcome to our Web Rangers Digital Literacy **Training** **Guide for Parents!**



Web Rangers empowers children with skills and knowledge, so they use the internet and social media safely and responsibly, so they are able to champion their rights in the digital world.

Web Rangers is here to help you navigate the challenges and opportunities of raising children in a digital world.

Technology can be a powerful tool, but it can also be used to harm children. Imagine receiving messages from a stranger that track your child's daily routine, or discovering that personal images and videos have been shared online without consent.

These situations are not hypothetical—they describe digital abuse and TGBVF that millions of children face every day.





## What is TGBVF?

Technology facilitated Gender Based Violence and Femicide (TGBVF) refers to any act that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified using ICT technologies or other digital tools that are likely to result in, physical, sexual, political, or economic harm, or the infringement of other rights and freedoms.

source: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/fags/digital-abuse-trolling-stalking-and-other-forms-of-technology-facilitated-violence-against-women>

The more children use technology, the more vulnerable they become to cyberbullying, harassment, and other forms of abuse. Girls, in particular, are at higher risk. According to UN Women, between 16–58% of children globally experience technology-facilitated abuse, with sexual harassment, stalking, and non-consensual sharing of images among the most reported forms.

It was further found that over 300 million children were affected by online sexual exploitation and abuse in 2024 with sexual harassment and stalking being the most reported forms of TGBVF.

Abuse online can quickly **spill over into real life**, making it hard for children to feel safe at home, at school, or in public spaces

### How do I know when TGBVF is being perpetrated against my child?

Tech-facilitated abuse can appear in several ways:

- **Cyberbullying** – Mean or threatening messages sent online
- **Online harassment** – Repeated unwanted attention or intimidation
- **Doxxing** – Sharing personal information maliciously
- **Non-consensual sharing of images** – Sometimes called “revenge porn”
- **Misinformation & disinformation** – Manipulated content targeting your child

### What can I do to help my child protect themselves from TGBVF?

*News reports emerged in 2025 of social media company Meta being compelled by the Johannesburg High Court to shutdown anonymous Instagram accounts and WhatsApp channels distributing false rumors and sexually explicit content involving school children.*



While monitoring your child's online activity is vital, it's equally vital to **equip them with strategies and resources** to respond confidently to abusive content:

- **Report harmful content** – Use built-in social media tools or independent reporting platforms to alert moderators.
- **Block abusers** – Limiting contact helps reduce stress and exposure.
- **Adjust privacy settings** – Keep profiles private to prevent strangers from accessing personal content.
- **Use content filters** – Minimize exposure to explicit, violent, or harassing material.

### **When Legal Action May Be Needed?**

If the content poses a serious threat to your child, legal avenues exist to protect them:

- **Film & Publications Act** – Criminalizes the creation and sharing of harmful online content.
- **Protection from Harassment Act** – Protects children from cyberbullying, harassment, and stalking.
- **Cybersecurity Act** – Safeguards children from online sexual exploitation and abuse.
- **Children's Act** – Protects children from all forms of abuse and allows victims to seek justice.

**If you believe a law has been violated, report it to the South African Police Service immediately.**

### **Support Resources for Parents and Children:**

- Several organizations can provide guidance and help for survivors of bullying and violence:
- **Childline (116 or [childline.org.za](https://www.childline.org.za))** – Assistance for any child victim of abuse.
- **FPB Hotline (0800 148 148)** – Report harmful online content.
- **Teddy Bear Foundation ([teddybearfoundation.org.za](https://teddybearfoundation.org.za))** – Professional support for children affected by abuse.
- **Equality Court / Dept of Justice & Constitutional Development** – Handles hate speech or online discrimination cases.

Protecting children from online harms is a shared responsibility. Parents, educators, and children themselves all play a role in creating safer digital spaces. By working together, we can combat cyberbullying, TGBVF, and the spread of online abuse.



For more information on this topic and other subject related to child online safety -

## Stay in Touch

Stay Updated: Subscribe to our newsletter for the latest in digital literacy and safety. Learn more at [\*\*Web Rangers\*\*](#).

Digital Dilemmas? Get expert advice from Agony Aunt to navigate your child's online challenges. Visit [\*\*Hash Play\*\*](#) for support.

Report Misinformation: Encounter harmful content online? Report it to [\*\*Real 411\*\*](#) for expert reviews and action against digital threats to democracy.

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