



BLACK HORSE PIKE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
HIGHLAND REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
Office of School Counseling
450 Erial Road, Blackwood, NJ 08012
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Ms. Carey Speziali, Director of School Counseling

Counselors: Christopher Bennett, DJ Gore, Alicia Guida,
Tiffany Strauss, Lauren McElroy, Ashley Yandach
Jeanette Vizoco, Student Assistance Coordinator
Abigail Altman, Mental Health Assistance Counselor

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I want to make you aware of a recent social media extortion plot that is aimed at our most vulnerable population; our children, both male and female. This extortion plot has gained both statewide and national attention.

These predators request nude photos of the child after becoming “friends” with the child on their social media sites. If the child does not comply, they threaten to Photoshop their faces onto another nude body and share the photos with all of their friends. Often the child will give in at this point, thinking that it will put an end to this ordeal. If the child continues to refuse, the result is the same. The predator follows through on the threat by sharing the pictures to everyone on the child’s “friend list” as well as uploading them to any number of illegal pornographic internet sites. Once that has happened, it is very difficult to remove or “take down” these pictures. Other children are being targeted and are answering requests for additional photographs or “dirt” on the original victim. To be very clear, any person that complies with this request would be committing a criminal act against the victim.

Whether you are a parent or caregiver of a boy or a girl, we urge you to have discussions with your child about internet safety. Please caution them about providing any pictures or personal information to anyone online. Create a safety plan with your child so that if they are faced with a request like this they will be able to get help immediately. Your child can report this themselves to the School Resource Officer. Let them know that it is okay to tell you, the caregiver, about what has happened. The important thing is that they feel safe about asking for help and do not give in to the threats made by the predator. There are approximately one of these crimes reported to our Gloucester Township Police Department per month. If you have any knowledge of this happening to a child, you should report it immediately to the police department. It can be difficult to monitor our children’s social media sites. That is why talking with your children ahead of time about the importance of internet safety, and this scam in particular, is so very important.

More information can be found on the sites listed below as well as contact information for reporting a cybercrime.

You can report your concerns to the Gloucester Township Police Department at (856) 228-4500 or contact our School Resource Officer Jason Smith at (856) 227-4100, ext.4611 or jsmithsro@bhprsd.org.

You can also report a concern or check out additional information about cybercrime on The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children website:

<https://www.missingkids.org/>.

Please take some time to look at the websites on the next page and talk to your children about cybersafety.

Thank you,

Jeanette Vizoco

Highland Regional High School Student Assistance Coordinator

jvizoco@bhprsd.org

(856) 227-4100, ext. 4011

Connect Safely

<https://www.connectsafely.org/>

Webwise Kids

<https://www.webwisekids.org/>

Online Teen Safety Guide

<https://staysafe.org/teens/>

Digital citizenship, online safety and civility

<https://www.safekids.com/>

Online Safety for Teens

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/internet-safety.html>

Internet Safety for Parents

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/net-safety.html>

Teens 14+ online Safety Advice/downloadable safety guide

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/14plus/>

How to Keep Your Teen or Tween Safe Online

<https://www.safewise.com/resources/internet-safety-for-teens/>

Tips for Safe Social Networking for Teens

<https://www.connectsafely.org/social-web-tips-for-teens/>

10 Internet Safety Tips for Children and Teens

<https://www.safervpn.com/blog/internet-safety-tips-children-teens/>

A Parent's Guide to Social Media

<https://internetsafety101.org/parentsguidetosocialmedia>

Privacy and Internet Safety

<https://www.common sense media.org/privacy-and-internet-safety>