Cover Page: National Center on Sexual Exploitation's Policy on Sharing Proof

WARNING: The material in this document may contain graphic text, blurred images, and survivor quotes that may trigger the viewer.

Why do we post proof?

NCOSE researchers have collected this proof as evidence of the material that is made, contained, and/or distributed by the corporations and institutions NCOSE is confronting.

Proof is shared with corporate executives, shareholders, and/or board members, as well as with policymakers, law enforcement, journalists, and the general public to give witness to the sexual exploitation and abuse that is often rampant, yet sometimes hidden, on these platforms.

Why do you blur out images, including faces, if they're publicly available?

While we believe it is important to provide ample evidence of wrong-doing to support our claims and inspire change, we also strongly believe that no one – neither adult, nor child – should be exposed to the type of material our researchers collect: either for their own well-being, or out of respect for those being exploited. It is for this reason we pixelate/blur/block not only nudity or sexually graphic content, but also the faces of those being exploited.

We also want to limit access to this material (unfortunately, a luxury not afforded to children and adults using many of the platforms and products made by these companies). Therefore, we add several layers before someone can access the proof, and also don't include all the proof that we have obtained. If someone feels they need to see more evidence to understand the extent of the problem or the type of exploitation that is happening, they may request it of NCOSE by writing to public@ncose.com.

Did you receive people's permission to post?

Any personal testimony shared to NCOSE directly is posted only with the affected parties approval. For material that is publicly available, we do not seek permission to post. However, we redact names and usernames of survivors from articles, social media, etc. even when publicly available. To read more about our commitment to ethical engagement with survivors, please go here. We do not redact names or usernames of exploiters who have posted publicly.

Disclaimer: while we do collect information on those who request access to more proof, that information will only be used for our own, internal analysis. It will not be distributed, shared, or posted publicly or with outside parties.

Evidence of Exploitation Collected on Discord

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Image-based Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)

Discord is not prioritizing the eradication of image-based sexual abuse or child sexual abuse material (CSAM). While the platform has the advanced technology necessary to proactively monitor, moderate, and report offending users and servers, Discord repeatedly chooses to use this technology for areas of significantly lesser importance – like <u>watching soccer</u>.

NCOSE staff easily found Discord servers, channels, users, and bots dedicated to stealing, sharing, and artificially creating non-consensual sexually explicit imagery. We also found dedicated servers for the buying, selling, and trading of "leaked" nude images, services to hack and steal nude images from others, synthetic sexually explicit material ('deepfake pornography'), and child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Other social media sites, like Reddit, are inundated with links to these Discord servers, channels, and users.

NCOSE researchers found some of these servers in only a few clicks—and accessed the demonstrated content with a minor-aged Discord account.

Image-based sexual abuse

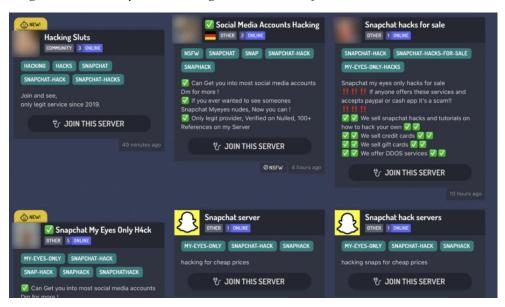
<u>Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA)</u> is a broad term that includes a multitude of harmful experiences, such as non-consensual sharing of sexual images (sometimes called "revenge porn"), pornography created using someone's face without their knowledge (or sexual deepfakes), non-consensual recording or capture of intimate nude images (to include so-called "upskirting" or surreptitious recordings in places such as restrooms and locker rooms via "spycams"), recording of sexual assault, the use of sexually explicit or sexualized materials to groom or extort a person (also known as "sextortion") or to advertise commercial sexual abuse, and more.

Note: sexually explicit and sexualized material depicting children ages 0-17 constitutes a distinct class of material, known as child sexual abuse material (CSAM - the more appropriate term of "child pornography"), which is illegal under US federal statute. CSAM is not to be conflated with IBSA, although they are closely related and both forms of abuse are found on Discord. CSAM on Discord will be discussed further in the notification letter and this proof document.

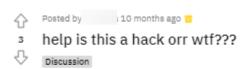
The screenshots below are examples of the image-based sexual abuse that proliferates on Discord.

Hacking and 'Revenge' Porn

Images were blurred by NCOSE. Images contained bare female breasts and buttocks.



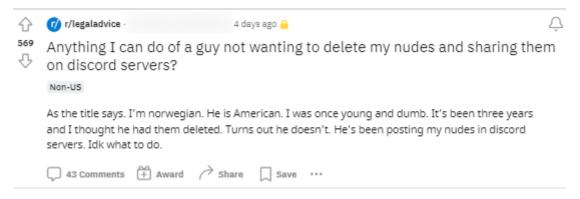
Search conducted in March 2023.



(not sure if this is the right subreddit to be posting this on but oh well) So one of my friend texted me telling me that they were on an exposed discord server, probably a server where you expose peoples nudes i'm guessing, and apparently there was a screenshot of my user sending nudes to someone and being creepy. I didn't do that, and i've never done that??? Before they texted me tho some random person on discord texted me asking if i wanted to join a discord server some advertisement shit whatever, and i think the two have something to do with eachother. The friend sent me the discord server where the alleged screenshots was and blocked me right after, but i cant get into the server cuz the varifications confusing asf. Is this a common thing, i dont want people thinking i send nudes, since im a minor, and i want my friend back:(

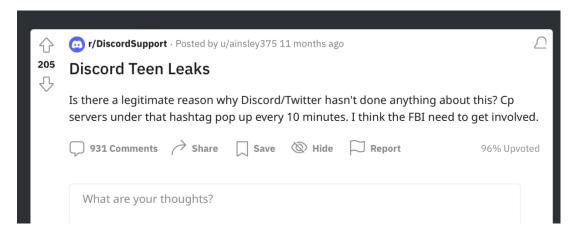


Search conducted in April 2023.

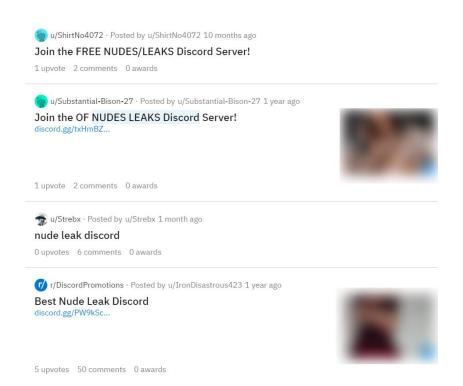


Search conducted in April 2023.

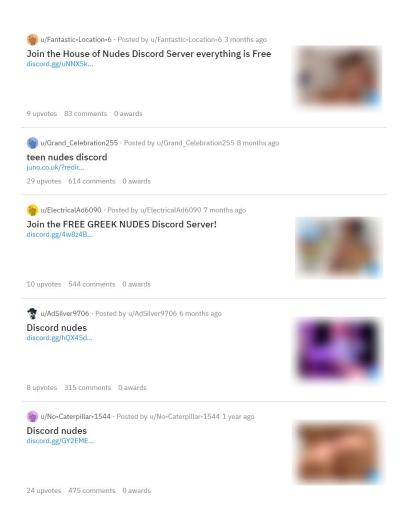
Leaks



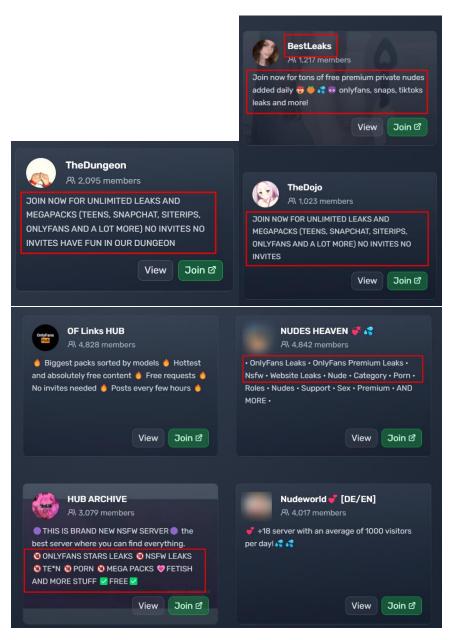
Search conducted in March 2023.



Search conducted in March 2023.



Search conducted in March 2023.

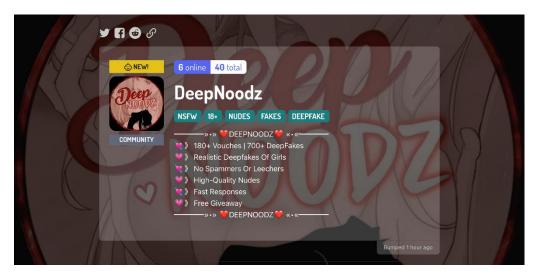


Search was conducted in April 2023.

Synthetic sexually explicit material (SSEM)

The alteration of the image/s of a person so that a person not in pornography appears to be in pornography (popularly referred to as "deepfake" or "cheapfake" pornography), or so as to "strip" the person depicted of their clothing (via "nudify apps"). Such fabrications have been practiced for decades; however, current technological advances have resulted in increasingly realistic misrepresentations of people—quite commonly of famous women but also increasingly women from other walks of life—as nude or engaging in pornography when they have not.

Servers also contained sexual deepfake bots, allowing users to generate synthetic pornography by sending images of women to the bot via a chat function. Images were primarily hyper-realistic or anime.



Another server claimed to have trained <u>over 15 million sexually explicit images</u>, received via member 'donations,' since the beginning of 2023. **Both minors and adults** can join this server as there is no age/identity verification process.

Some channels were dedicated to photorealistic deepfake and generated pornography images. Many of the photos included young women who looked like minors.

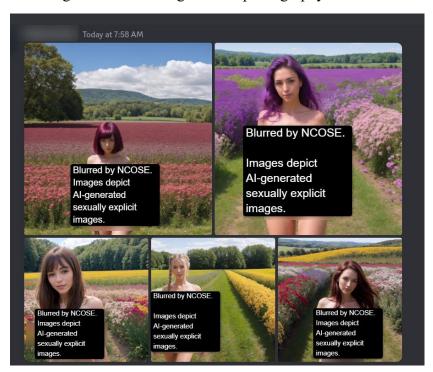
The following images were accessed using an unverified, adult-aged account.

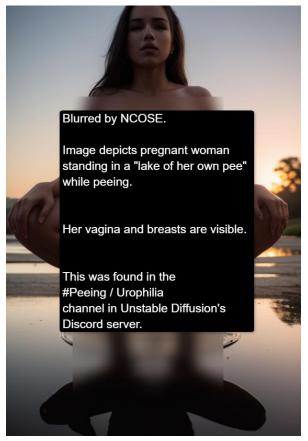
Users would also post the prompts they used to generate the images. The prompts indicate that users are specifically using this technology to create synthetic imagery that resembles child sexual abuse material, rape, and sexually violent content.

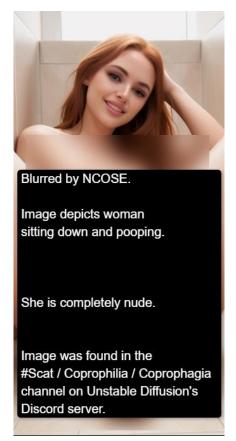
**All of the following images are synthetic sexually explicit material (SSEM) and have been generated. Some are depictions of real people.

Searches were conducted in April 2023.

The images below are AI-generated pornography of unidentifiable individuals.







Anime, non-photo realistic generations

In a similar server NCSOE staff accessed using **both** an adult and minor aged account, users were able to share generated images of young women and of children.





Prompts would specify the age of the 'loli' or 'shota.' One user posted images of 6-year-old loli's being raped by older men while they were tied up and bound to their bodies.

from front, full body, nsfw, <lora:POSE NSFW Fanny Packing:1.2>, 1boy named Joseph, 1girl named Amy, joseph is standing upright and has a huge penis, amy is (fanny packing:1.4) and belly riding joseph, amy is a small girl and is suspension tied to Joseph's torso, Joseph is having sex with Amy from behind, Joseph is hugging Amy from behind, amy is a loli minigirl age 6, (amy has large breasts:1.2), size difference and age difference between joseph and amy, joseph is groping amy's breasts from behind, (amy is wearing crotchless panties and a skimpy revealing pink ribbon harness and long frilled elbow gloves and frilled thighhighs and high heels:1.2), amy's arms are up and amy's arms are tied behind joseph's neck

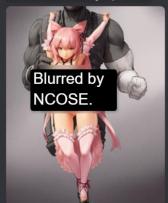
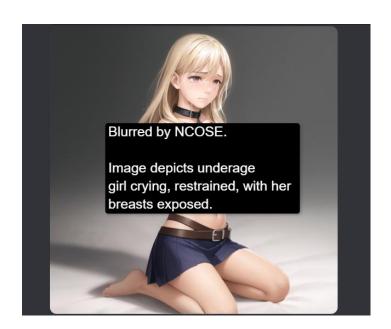
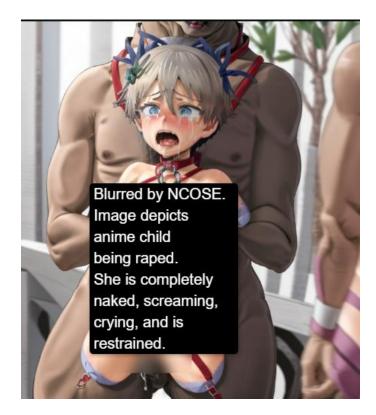


Image depicts "Amy," a "loli minigirl age 6" fully nude, tied to "Joseph's" chest, while he is raping her.

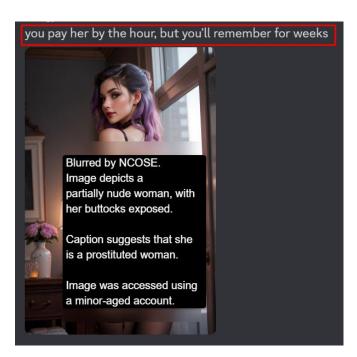
1/27/2023 A·00 DM

 $(((1 \\ \text{girl, solo}))), \ \text{mksks style, colored, good color, colorful, full shot}$ body photo of the most beautiful artwork in the world, long white hair, skirt, topless, crotch rope, {rope}, modelshoot style, (extremely detailed CG unity 8k wallpaper), (((8k, ultra realistic))), High Detail, photorealistic painting art by midjourney and greg rutkowski, realism, fit body, restrained, bound hands, nfsw, bondage, bound, bdsm, (((hands behind back))), {{{{collar}}}}, on the knees, knees, staying on the knees, full body, medium breasts, medium boobs, barefoot, belt, ((crying, tears, unhappy)), dark background, dungeon background, nipples, shibari Negative prompt: canvas frame, ((bad art)), ((deformed)), ((extra limbs)), ((b&w)), weird colors, [out of frame], extra fingers, mutated fingers, mutated hands, extra hands, ((ugly)), ((mutation)), (((deformed))), (((bad proportions))), ((bad anatomy)), ugly, ((missing)))arms)), ((missing legs)), (((extra arms))), (((extra legs))), mutated hands, (fused fingers), (too many fingers), (((long neck))), poorly drawn hands, poorly drawn feet, poorly drawn face, out of frame, mutation, mutated, extra limbs, extra legs, extra arms, disfigured, deformed, body out of frame, blurry, bad art, bad anatomy, blindfold, open mouth, o-gag, big boobs, big breasts, huge breasts, huge boobs, small boobs, small breasts, panties Steps: 40, Sampler: DPM++ SDE Karras, CFG scale: 7, Seed: 3844343535, Size: 512x512, Model hash: fbcf965a62, Model: anything-v4.5, Denoising strength: 0.6, Clip skip: 2, ENSD: 31337, Hires upscale: 1.6, Hires upscaler: R-ESRGAN 4x+ Anime6B



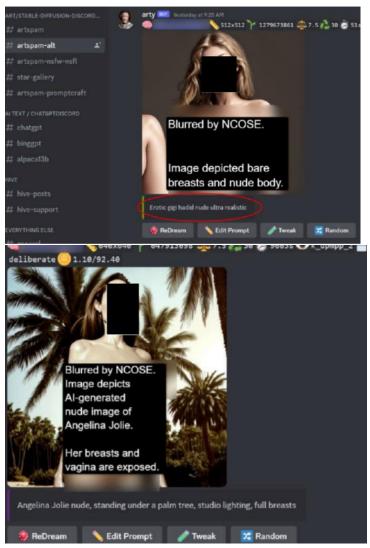


The following images were accessed using a minor-aged account.





Other servers had text-to-image bots integrated into Discord channels; users could generate sexually explicit images directly through Discord chat functions. The following images were also accessed using a minor aged account.

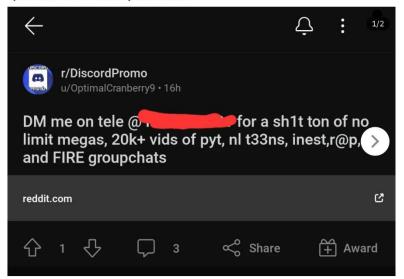


Search was conducted in April 2023.

Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) on Discord

Evidence suggesting the buying, selling, and trading of CSAM on Discord is also prevalent on other social media platforms. Reddit actively hosts links to Discord servers dedicated to this illicit activity.

someone promotes a discord server with non legal teens and reddit told me that doesn't violate its rules. guess they have no problem with child porn here.



Found a discord channel that is spreading CP content

nsfw

There is a discord channel that is spreading CP content in the form of leaks and I've tried reporting it but discord doesn't seem to care.

The community in there are in there are usually sharing normal porn content but there is an influencer leak that is obviously 17, so pictures are being spread around.

I think this discord channel should be shut down, but I don't know what to do.

I'm also afraid of reporting it to authorities as I'm scared they would involve me. What should I do?

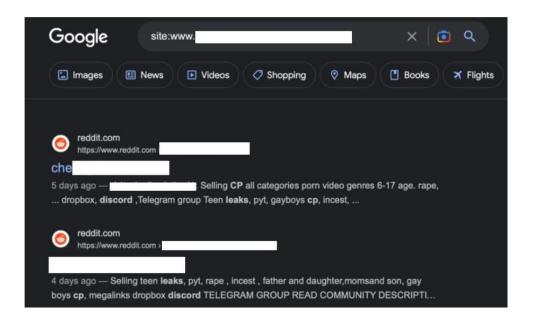




LEAKS TEEN

Mar 11, 2023 — LEAKS TEEN LEAKED CP VIDEO YOUNG DISCORD AND TELEGRAM

LEAKS TEEN LEAKED CP VIDEO YOUNG DISCORD AND



Discord claims that age-restricted will be removed and the user immediately suspended to stop minors from inadvertently being exposed to sexually explicit and pornographic content. However, NCOSE researchers were inadvertently exposed to images and links to what appeared to be CSAM on a Discord server. Upon entering what seemed to be a server for troubled teens, NCOSE researchers were immediately exposed to dozens of images and links of what appeared to be child sexual abuse material. The images and links contained disturbing titles and comments by other users.

The blatant abuse was alarming, some of which had been on the server *for over two months*. Our researchers immediately reported the server to the National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCMEC), who responded and processed our report, making it available for FBI Liaisons <u>in less than 24 hours</u>. Discord has yet to provide any further correspondence than an automated reply.

Below is an excerpt of NCOSE's report to NCMEC:

The links contained graphic titles such as "t33n porn" "0-14" "young porn!!" and had thumbnails containing images of young girls either wearing nothing (breasts and faces exposed) or wearing a bra and underwear that barely covered their bodies.

The images were selfies, full-body mirror pictures, and presumably taken by another individual. In many of the pictures, the girls were wearing makeup with their hair braided or in an up-do style, sitting or standing in a sexualized pose. These girls appeared to be very young, potentially pre-teen or early teens. Captions suggested the user had more images. The poster's bio on Discord was "send me cp videos."

There were dozens and dozens of links. Messages from deleted and current users contained links to suspected CSAM, going back over two months (I did not continue

further than that). About 1/2 had thumbnails, and many of these thumbnails repeated despite containing different links.

This content was openly available in a server tagged with "kids" and "broken." It was accessed using a minor-aged account, first located on Disboard, and the content was not age restricted. In fact, it was in the RULES channel of the server. Multiple (presumably) adult men were engaging in sexually explicit and concerning conversations with teenage users — some of which identified as young as 13 years old. One of the adult men even commented on the suspected CSAM and stated that he would not report it. Another user said they had reported the content to Discord, but nothing had been done yet.

Evidence of CSAM on Discord from March 2022-March 2023:

- "Washougal man gets 108 years for child rape, creating child sex assault materials,"
 Fox12 Oregon, News Article, March 25, 2023,
 https://www.kptv.com/2023/03/25/washougal-man-gets-108-years-child-rape-creating-child-sex-assault-materials/
- "Hoboken teachers charged with explicit discord chats with minors," New Jersey 101.5, News Article, March 3, 2023, https://nj1015.com/nj-teacher-charged-after-sexually-explicit-conversation-with-teen/
- "Herndon Man Charged with Production of Child Pornography," U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Press Release, January 9, 2023,
- https://www.justice.gov/usao-edva/pr/herndon-man-charged-production-child-pornography
- "Former Hoback resident faces child sexual exploitation charges," Jackson Hole News and Guide, News Article, January 11, 2023,
 https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/cops_courts/former-hoback-resident-faces-child-sexual-exploitation-charges/article_53640421-d5f4-53ee-849d-fc6b5a63f127.html
- "Prosecutor: West New York man arrested for using Discord to facilitate child sex material," Hudson Reporter, News Article, January 19, 2023, https://hudsonreporter.com/2023/01/19/west-new-york-man-charged-with-child-abuse-material/
- "Man In Possession Of Child Sexual Abuse Material Is Sentenced To 20 Years In Prison," U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Press Release, February 17, 2023, https://www.justice.gov/usao-wdnc/pr/man-possession-child-sexual-abuse-material-sentenced-20-years-prison
- "University of Florida quarterback arrested and accused of sharing child sexual abuse images on Discord," NBC News, News Article, November 30, 2022,
 https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/university-florida-quarterback-arrested-allegedly-sharing-child-sexual-rcna59513

- "Prosecutor: Phillipsburg man distributed child pornography through Discord," news12 Bronx, News Article, September 28, 2022, https://bronx.news12.com/prosecutor-phillipsburg-man-distributed-child-pornography-through-discord
- "Registered Sex Offender Pleads Guilty to Possession of Child Sexual Abuse Material,"
 U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Press Release, May 10, 2022,
 https://www.justice.gov/usao-edla/pr/registered-sex-offender-pleads-guilty-possession-child-sexual-abuse-material

Sexual Grooming of Children

Discord is a haven for sexual grooming by abusers and traffickers. The platform provides predatory adults ample opportunities for unmitigated interaction with minors through public servers, direct messages, and video/voice chat channels. Here are *just a few examples* of children being groomed and abused through Discord in the news from March 2022 to March 2023:

- "Oregon Man Charged with Sexually Exploiting Minor on Discord, Additional Victims Sought," U.S. Department of Justice, Press Release, October 3, 2022, https://www.justice.gov/usao-or/pr/oregon-man-charged-sexually-exploiting-minor-discord-additional-victims-sought
- "Crime: Ex-corrections employee faces child exploitation charges," Indy Star, News Article, September 7, 2022,
 https://www.indystar.com/story/news/crime/2022/09/07/corrections-officer-marion-county-employee-sexually-explicit-messages-to-child/65781240007/
- "Massive Pokémon Discord Owner Banned For Allegedly Sexually Preying On Minors," February 3, 2023, Kotaku, News Article, https://kotaku.com/pokemon-subreddit-discord-sexual-predator-minors-banned-1850072117
- "Washougal man gets 108 years for child rape, creating child sex assault materials,"
 Fox12 Oregon, News Article, March 25, 2023,
 https://www.kptv.com/2023/03/25/washougal-man-gets-108-years-child-rape-creating-child-sex-assault-materials/
- "Discord Lawsuit," Social Media Victims Law Center, October 5, 2022, https://socialmediavictims.org/discord-lawsuit/

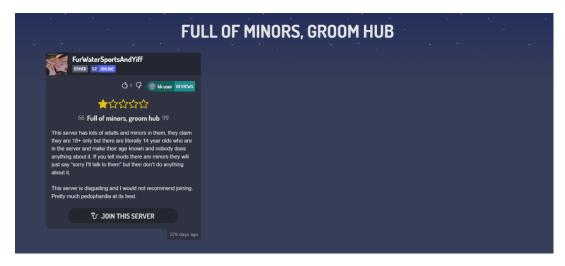
Sexual Exploitation and Grooming Cases that Escalated to Off-Platform Contact:

- Missing 13-year-old rescued from locked North Carolina shed, ABC News, March 13, 2023, https://abcnews.go.com/US/missing-13-year-rescued-locked-north-carolina-shed/story?id=97830147
- Arizona Man Allegedly Kidnapped a Boy He Lured from Discord. Police Say They
 Rescued the Victim Thanks to an 'Alert Gas Station Attendant.', Law and Crime, News
 Article, December 29, 2022, https://lawandcrime.com/crime/arizona-man-allegedly-

<u>kidnapped-a-boy-he-lured-from-discord-police-say-they-rescued-the-victim-thanks-to-an-alert-gas-station-attendant/</u>

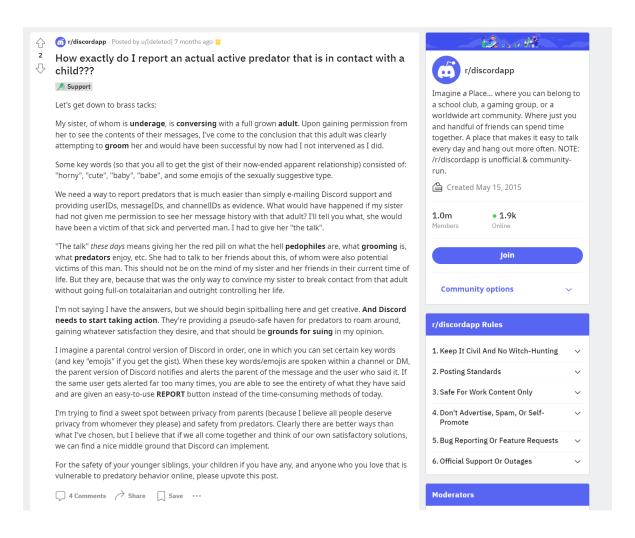
Discord is slow to respond when users report exploitative and predatory behavior.

One review referred to a server as a "groom hub" because of the number of minors and adults interacting with one another. This review was made over a year ago, and the server is still active as of March 2023.



Search conducted April 2023.

Discord has yet to take sufficient affirmative action in preventing sexual exploitation from occurring—not even through simple and easy reporting mechanisms as suggested by the user below.ⁱ



Search conducted April 2023.

The ubiquity of sexual grooming on Discord is alarming. 14-year-olds fear for their safety and the safety of their loved ones on your platform.ⁱⁱ

5.4k Is my girlfriend being groomed?



Relationship

So I (14m) have been going out with "daisy" (14f not her real name) for about 5 months now. Throughout this time she has been talking to this guy "zack" (15m also not real name) on discord, he is from a different country to us and I have never spoken to him. He does know that her and I are together.

I am certain that she is being groomed, he's always acted weirdly and recently he's become more... extreme. But she is adamant that he's fine and just really cares for her.

Some of the things he's done:

- -He's been trying to make us break up for almost the entire time we've been going out.
- -He's sent her a dp when they first began talking but apparently before they knew there was a 2 year age gap (daisy was 13 at the time)
- -He's told a lot of secrets that daisy has refused to tell me because "they are too personal and she doesn't think it's my business" which is of course true I just found it a bit odd.
- -He's bought her many gifts and had them delivered to her house.
- -He's been sending messages been a lot of love heart emojis, kissing faces, saying how much he loves her and ending almost every message with xx
- -He's trying to meet up with her irl, saying he can buy a plane ticket over to here so they can "finally

That's all stuff he's been doing for the entire time, but as I said recently he's been doing a lot more. I've told daisy that this stuff is making me uncomfortable and asked her to make him stop.

- -He's been sending really sexual pictures randomly. stuff like shirtless pics and him in his boxers at something.
- -He sent her a valentines card, which daisy has refused to show me saying it's too personal and I wouldn't like what he's said in it.
- -He's started wearing a heart shaped locket with a picture of her face inside.
- -He's asked for a letter from her with a kiss mark on it (they're penpals which is fine but that's really
- -He's admitted to having a crush on her and said he wants to be more than friends.

There is probably more stuff that he's been doing that I don't know about, but I do know for a fact that she hasn't sent any sexual pics.

I've told her straight up that he is grooming her, but she's just refusing and says that he just loves her lots and trusts her. I've asked my friends about it and they all agree with me and say she needs to cut

She's agreed to me making this post to prove that he's fine and nothing is wrong.

I seriously need advice because I don't know what else to do, it hurts me to know that she's being used and just can't see it.

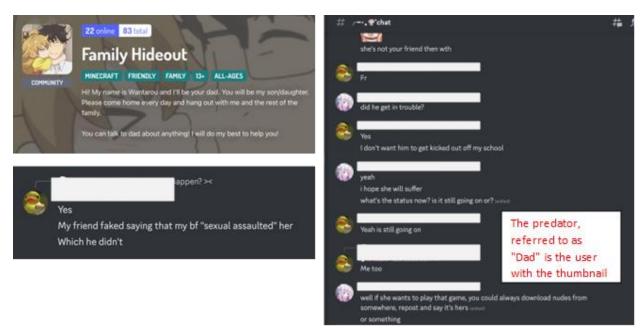
If anyone has a subreddit that might be better suited to this sort of post please let me know.

(if you have any questions just ask and I'll try to answer them all)

EDIT: I've just talked to her properly and she's apologised and has now blocked him on all devices, she's also going to tell her parents so they know to potentially expect some mail from him

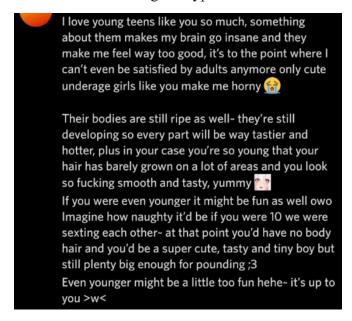
Search conducted April 2023.

Servers like Family Hideout are used to prey on vulnerable children seeking connection and belonging online. This particular server revolved around an adult man who called himself 'Dad' building a family of 'children' online. He built connections with the children and suggested they engage in illicit activities such as taking and sharing nude images.



Search conducted March 2023.

At the end of 2022, three victims of the Discord user Gryph0n1 publicly spoke out about his extensive and disturbing grooming behaviors on Discord and other gaming platforms. Screenshots of messages Gryph0n1 sent to the minors are attached below:



Search conducted April 2023.

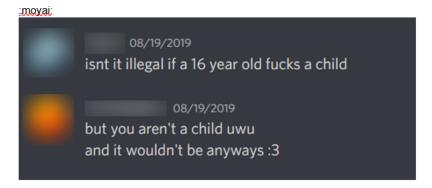
The image below is from another victim of Gryph0n1 speaking out about their abuse.

Funny enough, It isn't the worst stuff he's said. Thinking that a 13 year old was sexy is pretty fucked up for someone who said that sexualizing little girls was wrong lolololol.









Of course, there's a lot more to unravel in our past DMs but hopefully this is more than enough evidence. 2019 was a pretty weird year for me to be honest.

Search conducted April 2023.

Discord is not doing enough to moderate public servers, DMs and voice chats. Discord is complicit in the exploitation of children by providing an environment in which predatory adults have unmitigated access to minors.

Unenforced Policies and Guidelines

1. Discord does not default minor accounts to the highest safety settings available upon account creation.

Last year, NCOSE staff found contradictory language in Discord's adult content guidelines. Discord claimed that the highest safety setting regarding direct messages, called "keep me safe," is on by default, which it was not.

2022 Discord Polices:

If you do not want to see adult content on Discord

If you do not want to be exposed to adult content on Discord, or if you are under 18 years old, we recommend **turning on the explicit media filter in your privacy settings**. In your *User Settings*, under *Privacy & Safety*, choose "Keep me safe" This setting is on by default and will ensure that images and videos in all direct messages are scanned by Discord and explicit content is blocked.

If you are under 18 years old, our age gate will restrict you from accessing NSFW channels in servers.

Since the 2022 Dirty Dozen List, Discord updated the language in its adult content guidelines to represent the default settings more accurately for minor-aged accounts.

If you do not want to see age-restricted content on Discord

If you do not want to be exposed to age-restricted content on Discord, or if you are under 18 years old, we recommend **turning on the explicit media content filter in your privacy settings**. In your *User Settings*, select *Privacy & Safety*, and choose '*Keep me safe*' under *Safe Direct Messaging*. Choosing "Keep me safe" will ensure that images and videos in all direct messages are scanned by Discord and explicit media content is blocked.

If you are under 18 years old, our age gate will restrict you from accessing age-restricted channels in servers.

We applaud Discord for clarifying its adult content guidelines. However, by choosing to make safety settings opt-in rather than the default for minor accounts, Discord is admitting that it will not actively keep teenagers safe on its platform.

In other places on its website, Discord continues to tout its "default to safety options," which do not exist. This is misleading to parents, guardians, and minor-aged users who believe that

Discord is prioritizing the safety and well-being of its youngest users when it is not.

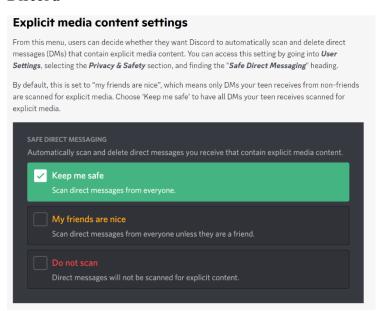
The safety of your teens and students is one of our biggest priorities. Discord is a place where your teen can hang out and find belonging with friends, classmates, and community members. Many teams across Discord work together to ensure your teen finds belonging by building products and policies with safety by default. We do this through reactive (responding to reports quickly), proactive (identifying problems before they are raised to us), and preventative (education and external engagement) efforts. Our teams are constantly listening to your feedback and improving on our existing safety policies, tools, and settings.

We've discussed some of our reactive and proactive policy and enforcement work in previous blog posts, and we're planning to do more around our preventative efforts, such as parent and educator resources.

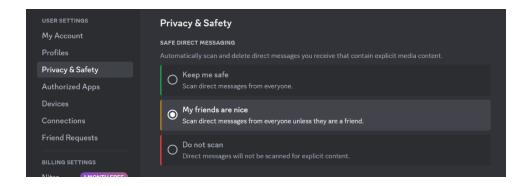
Safety options are available on Discord, but users must manually opt in. Safety should never be 'recommended' to minors—it should be inherent.

Explicit media content settings

Discordiii



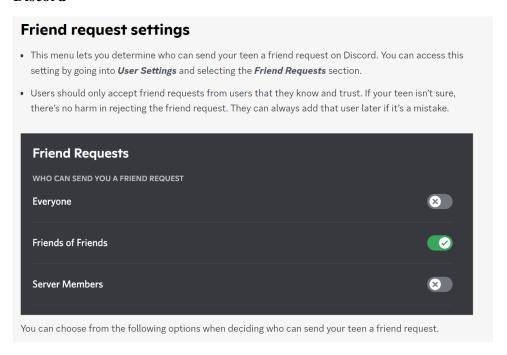
Defaulted Settings for Minor-Aged Accounts



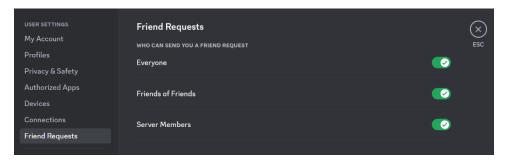
Friend Requests

At times, Discord places photos of accounts using the highest safety setting on their parent guides and safety center blogs. This is deceptive to parents, guardians, and minor-aged users when these options are not automatically defaulted. The following images are from Discord blogs and the true defaulted settings on minor-aged accounts.

Discordiv



Defaulted Settings for Minor-Aged Accounts



Direct Messages

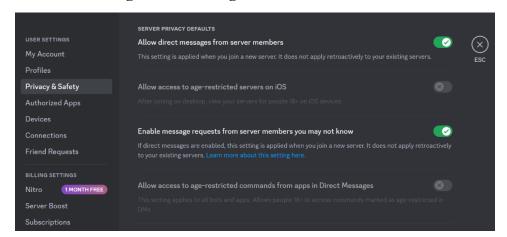
Discordy

Direct message (DM) settings

- This menu lets users determine who can contact them in a DM. You can access this setting by going into
 User Settings, selecting the *Privacy & Safety* section, and finding the "Server Privacy Defaults"
 heading.
- By default, whenever your teen is in a server, anyone in that server can send them a DM.
- You can disable the ability for anyone in a server with your teen to send your teen a DM by toggling "Allow direct messages from server members" to off. When you toggle this setting off, you will be prompted to choose if you would like to apply this change to all of your teen's existing servers. If you click "No," this change will only affect new servers your teen joins, and you will need to adjust the DM settings individually for each server that they have previously joined (in Privacy Settings on the server's dropdown list).

You can also control these settings on a server-by-server basis.

Defaulted Settings for Minor-Aged Accounts



NCOSE suggests the following changes to Discord's policies to align with the growing movement to #Default2Safety:

Explicit Content Filter

- Discord Claims: "We recommend parents and children turn on the explicit media content filter in your privacy settings." Discord then *instructs parents and children to choose their safety settings* through the following steps: "In your User Settings, select Privacy & Safety, and choose 'Keep me safe' under Safe Direct Messaging. Choosing 'Keep me safe' will ensure that images and videos in all direct messages are scanned by Discord and explicit media content is blocked."
- The Reality: Choosing the "Keep me Safe" option filters explicit media content received in direct messages *only*. Additionally, <u>users do not have the option</u> to scan servers or channels for explicit media content. The ability to scan for explicit media content on servers is limited to server owners of non-age-restricted servers only.
- Suggested Change: Discord should automatically turn on the explicit media filter for all minor-aged accounts to ensure that images and videos in all direct messages AND servers are scanned by Discord and explicit media content is blocked.

Direct Messaging

- Discord Claims: "You might only want certain people to contact you. By default, whenever your teen is on a server, anyone on that server can send them a DM. To change this setting for a specific server, select *Privacy Settings* on the server's dropdown list and toggle off the 'Allow direct messages from server members' setting."
- The Reality: This setting can be additionally selected on a server-by-server basis, again interfering with the ability of parents and caregivers to protect their children online.
- Suggested Change: Automatically default all minor-aged accounts only to receive DMs from their friends. This setting limits the ability of predatory adults to contact minors.

Friend Requests

- Discord Claims: "Users should only accept friend requests from users that they know and trust. If your teen isn't sure, there's no harm in rejecting the friend request. They can always add that user later if it's a mistake."
- The Reality: Minor-aged accounts automatically default to allow friend requests from anyone.
- Suggested Change: Automatically default all minor-aged accounts to only receive friend requests from friends of friends.

Discord's current policies do not prioritize child safety. Defaulting minor-aged accounts to the highest safety settings is a simple, common-sense way to keep children safe on Discord.

2. Discord does not require age-verification for many of its age-restricted features.

NCOSE recognizes Discord made important changes regarding minors accessing age-restricted content on their iOS devices. However, effective implementation is still lacking. While minoraged accounts ostensibly cannot access age-restricted content on their iOS devices, Discord's lack of robust moderation means that plenty of adult content is still available to minor-aged accounts. Because there is no age verification required to make any Discord account, minors can still easily pretend to be adults and access all of Discord's content. With such significant loopholes, Discord's age restrictions promise safety but fail to follow through.

Discord's age verification policy is confusing and inconsistent. When an adult account is locked out from an age-restricted channel, Discord's policies direct the user to demonstrate that they are an adult using a photo ID. However, using an adult account, NCOSE staff were able to access age-restricted content on iOS without having to go through any meaningful age verification.

HELP! I'M OVER 18 YEARS OLD, BUT CAN'T USE AGE-RESTRICTED COMMANDS!

If you are over the age of 18 and have been locked out of an age-restricted channel, or are unable to use age-restricted commands in DMs, you can appeal by following the instructions below.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO UNLOCK ACCESS?

Step 1:

Take a photo of yourself that includes yourself holding the following items:

- 1. A photo ID that contains your date of birth
- 2. A piece of paper that shows your full Discord Tag (including your username and the last 4 digits following your username ex: Wumpus#1234)

Step 2:

Once you have taken the photo, submit a request to the Trust & Safety team here: https://dis.gd/request and select "Appeals, age update, other questions" and then "Update my age information".

Note

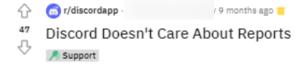
- All of the required information needs to be visible and readable in ONE photo.
- You must send the photo with the email address associated with your Discord account

The information you provide will only be used to verify your age and will not be used for any other purpose.

We encourage Discord to incorporate meaningful age verification into its policies.

The following group of images are just ONE example of Discord's failure to adhere to reports, age restrict channels and servers, and being complicit in facilitating the exposure of sexually explicit content to minors on Discord.

The user made the following reports between May and July 2022.



As the title suggests! I've sent in 3 reports "lately". I say "lately", because one has been in the works since May 28 and nothing has happened.

First report (May 28): Of a server allowing members aged 15+, while having a sexualised server image (anime girl butt-shot showing her taking off her panties. This has recently been... Somewhat censored?). The server also has "hentai" in the name, and there's minors hanging out in the NSFW channels.

Second report (June 16): Of the official server of an artist (I won't disclose who) that has dedicated channels for gore/guro hentai and scat hentai. Yep, I'm talking full on sexualised decapitation, hanging, etc. Etc. The server also has kept up multiple images that include shota/loli (including some questionable images). One example is of a clearly-minor Kid Icarus.

Third report (July 18): This time, a server where the owner themselves admitted to being a minor, while having NSFW channels and allowing other minors access to post etc. The main chat of that server is almost always minors being sexual. Be it saying they're gonna jack off, have sex with one of the other server members, whatever. They also sext each other, and have admitted to sending other minors nudes. It's disgusting. I warned the server owner of this kind of behaviour, and he refused to do anything out of fear of "losing his active members". I have heard absolutely nothing from Discord, despite following up twice. Not even a "we've initiated an investigation".

The first two reports have been replied to, saying they'll initiate an investigation etc., so obviously I can't even ask them if they're gonna do anything. All I know is that, from the images/servers still being up and owners still accessing their accounts, nothing has been done

Twitter link with screenshots: https://twitter.com/M_And_Y_Discord/status/1551766328221896705?<a href="https://twitter.com/m_And_Y_Discord/status/1551766328277<a href="https://twitter.com/m_And_Y_Discord/status/15517677<a href="https://twitter.com/m_And_Y_Discord/stat

This is absolute poor moderation, Discord. You go on and on about child safety, and yet you allow this to happen. Shame on you

Edit: Aha! It seems a Discord mod has seen this post and has finally responded to the third report.

"We want to emphasize that we understand your concern. We investigate every report thoroughly, but some actions we take may not be visible to you. To give you some examples, we may choose to serve warnings directly to a user, or gather data for things like a banwave, or a variety of other actions. In the future, please do not continue to spam responses to your tickets for this reason, as it can cause further delays in our ability to take action."

As for spamming responses, I replied once to send them further message links (as they request with their automated response), and once to follow up. Might need to google the definition of spam, Discord.

Serving warnings on things like this is pretty ridiculous. Like, do you guys even follow up on your "warnings"? Or do you just wait for months and months until someone else with enough brain cells reports the server/member? Smfh

The user provided a link to a Twitter thread providing further detail about the incident and Discord's response.

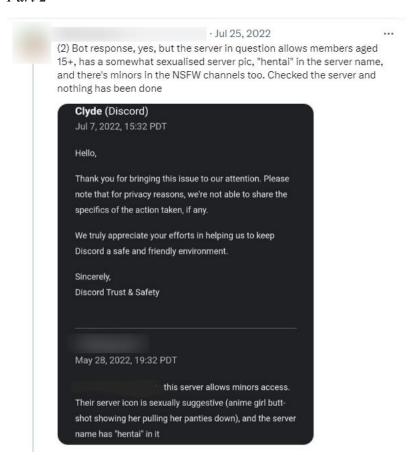
The following images are from the user's four-part Twitter thread about the incident. The thread was posted on July 25, 2022.

Part 1

← Thread ... (1) Calling out @discord for their absolute lack of following through reports. They say they're experiencing large volumes of reports... But surely you don't need 2 months to deal with a server allowing sexualised gore and lolicon?

Part 2

10:08 PM · Jul 25, 2022



Part 3

← Thread

...

(3) Another report (see date) on an artist's server (I won't disclose who). Checked and absolutely nothing has been done, even about the blatant Kid Icarus (appearing as a minor, too) hentai

Jun 16, 2022, 19:03 PDT

Hi there. I've joined a server and found that it has a lot of underage-appearing characters, as well as sexualised scat and gore/guro. There's dedicated channels for both gore and scat. There's a lot of it, so I'll only be able to send a few links. The server ID is

Maggie (Discord)

Jun 17, 2022, 06:36 PDT

Hello

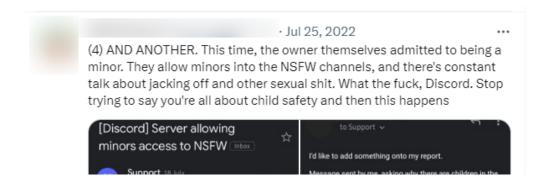
Thank you for bringing this issue to our attention. We've initiated an investigation based on the information that you provided and we'll take appropriate action based on our findings. Please note that for privacy reasons, we're not able to share the specifics of the action taken, if any.

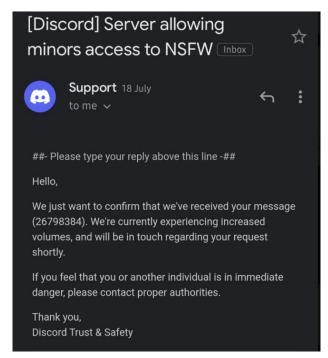
If you haven't already, please consider blocking them so they're no longer able to communicate with you. Instructions on how to do so can be found here. Additionally, if you share a server, we'd recommend talking with your server admin about this situation for them to appropriately moderate the user.

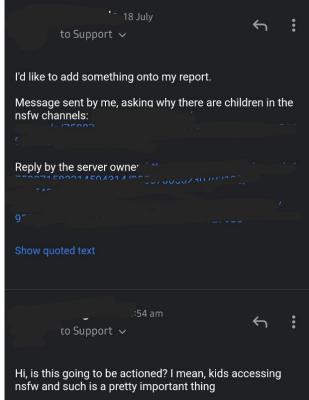
We truly appreciate your efforts in helping us to keep Discord a safe and friendly environment.

Sincerely,

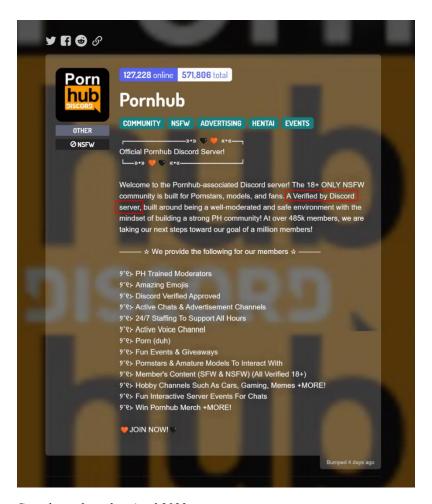
Discord Trust & Safety







3. Discord claims that verified and partner servers cannot include NSFW content – but has verified Pornhub, a server dedicated to sexually explicit content, and a company that has come under fire for hosting and profiting from child sexual abuse material and other non-consensual material.

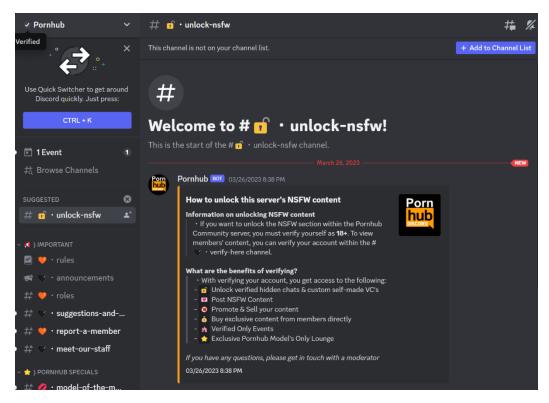


Search conducted in April 2023.

Additionally, Pornhub's server encourages users to promote and monetize their content, despite Discord's policies <u>prohibiting the monetization</u> of sexually explicit content or links to sexually explicit content.

You May Not Monetize Content Or A Community Associated With Any Of The Following

- 1. Intellectual property of other creators and rights holders without written permission.
- 2. Impersonation, unless it is clearly labeled as parody or satire.
 - 1. Labels of parody or satire must be clearly visible to users and to Discord at all times whether in a server name or description.
- 3. Sexually explicit content, whether hosted on Discord or linked from other services.
 - 1. Content may not contain nudity, explicit sexual acts, or content created for the purpose of sexual gratification or arousal. Exceptions for non-sexual nudity may be made for context that is educational, artistic, or newsworthy at Discord's sole discretion.



Search conducted in April 2023.

Pornhub has come under fire for hosting and profiting from child sexual abuse material and other non-consensual material. The company has been removed from other mainstream social media platforms such as <u>YouTube</u>, <u>Instagram</u>, <u>and TikTok</u>. We encourage Discord to follow its own policies and the example of other social media platforms by banning Pornhub's server.

4. Discord relies on user moderation and reports to monitor exploitative behavior—despite claiming a zero-tolerance policy regarding non-consensual sharing of sexual material and CSAM.

Our Community Guidelines

We want Discord to be a safe, positive, and inclusive experience. For that to happen, we must all agree to a set of rules that guide our interactions on Discord.

When you sign up to Discord, you agree to follow our Community Guidelines and refrain from behavior that isn't allowed on the service. In exchange, it's our job to make sure your experience is as amazing as it can be.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to anyone threatening other people with harm, sharing sexually explicit content of others without their consent, sharing content that glorifies or promotes self-harm, and illegal activities such as sharing child sexual abuse material. If you come across a message that appears to break these rules, you can report it to your server moderator or directly to us by filling out this form. We may take a number of steps including issuing a warning, removing the content, or removing the accounts and/or servers responsible.

For more information, please see the other parts of this Safety Center as well as our Help Center

Despite claiming a zero-tolerance policy regarding non-consensual sharing of explicit material and CSAM, Discord's actual policies fall short. Discord does not have an in-app or browser reporting feature. Discord does not allow users to report entire servers. Users are required to submit reports to server moderators or submit a lengthy report to Discord's Trust and Safety team. This is problematic considering the recent uptick in <u>Discord moderators participating in predatory behavior</u>, leaving users little recourse for safe reporting options.

Here are some rules for content on Discord:

- 6. You must apply the NSFW label to channels if there is adult content in that channel. Any content that cannot be placed in an age-gated channel, such as avatars, server banners, and invite splashes, may not contain adult content.
- 7. You may not sexualize minors in any way. This includes sharing content or links which depict minors in a pornographic, sexually suggestive, or violent manner, and includes illustrated or digitally altered pornography that depicts minors (such as lolicon, shotacon, or cub). We report illegal content to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- 8. **You may not share sexually explicit content of other people without their consent**, or share or promote sharing of non-consensual intimate imagery (also known as revenge porn) in an attempt to shame or degrade someone.

5. Minor-aged accounts can still access servers containing age-restricted content even if designated age-restricted channels are blocked.

While Discord requires moderators to self-designate age-restricted channels, Discord has yet to allow moderators to self-designate servers as age-restricted. Currently, only Discord can designate age-restricted channels. Considering the widespread illicit and exploitative content and behavior on Discord, servers must be allowed to self-designate as age-restricted.

Currently, minors can easily access servers dedicated to illicit pornography trading and online prostitution. Using a minor-aged account, NCOSE staff accessed Unstable Diffusion, a server dedicated to sharing, requesting, and collaborating on AI-generated pornography. Despite being strictly dedicated to the generation of pornography, minors could access the server and communicate with other server members. They could also view the "SFW" channels—which, unsurprisingly, also contained generated pornography.

As the <u>Terms of Use</u> admit, Discord does not actively moderate every server. If Discord won't moderate its platform, server moderators must be given the power to protect minors by agerestricting their servers.

We are glad to see that Discord is taking steps to allow server owners to self-designate their servers as age restricted. We urge Discord to take seriously the importance of protecting children from sexual exploitation by quickly enacting this change.

What Is Classified As An Age-Restricted Server?

Servers must be classified as age-restricted if the community is **organized around age-restricted** themes or if the majority of the server's content is focused on 18+ content.

Discord will mark servers meeting these criteria as age-restricted if they are not appropriately designated. We will notify server owners letting them know if their server has been impacted through a system message.

Note: The ability to self-designate a server as age-restricted will be available to server owners soon!

What Does This Mean For Age-Restricted Server Members?

No users between the ages of 13 and 17 will be able to join or view the content in age-restricted servers.

18+ users attempting to join or access new age-restricted servers on iOS will be required to opt-in to viewing age-restricted content on desktop before being allowed into these spaces.

Additionally, a subset of age-restricted servers that are **specifically focused on explicit pornographic content** will be blocked entirely on iOS. iOS users aged 18+ will only be able to join and access these

<u>Discord claims to be a safe community for minors and adults. However, by failing to follow through on its policies, Discord has become a hotbed of image-based sexual abuse y, child sexual abuse material, and predatory grooming. We urge Discord to take our recommended actions to protect users from sexual exploitation.</u>

News Articles and Reviews

The dangers of Discord are well documented by parents and teenagers through news articles. We've gathered some of this evidence here.

Reviews and Testimonies

Below are reviews and testimonies from parents and teenagers from March 2022 to March 2023 about the dangers of Discord:

Testimony of from a parent of a Discord user:



EXTREMELY dangerous app. No exaggeration. Terrible.

I have parental blocking software on my computer that works pretty well at keeping kids from inappropriate material, but had absolutely no idea that it does not work with Discord. Nor is there any way for parents to set settings that can't be simply undone by kids. Just happened to look at my teenager's chats and discovered my 13 year old was being sent XXX rated cartoon porn by one person, and 15 year old had someone in Japan sending him pictures of himself in the bathtub. Lots of talk about m*sturb*tion. I am absolutely enraged that this site is even allowed to market itself as a "gaming chat" for teenagers. DO NOT ALLOW YOUR KIDS TO USE THIS. In addition to the sexual stuff I found, there were people on there saying Nazi and racist stuff, using homophobic slurs, glorifying suicide in poetry...in fact, I saw almost no discussion of games at all. I wish I could give this zero stars. Absolutely bottom of the barrel in terms of safety and content. Zero value whatsoever.

terms of safety and content. Zero value whatsoever.

Show less

This title has:

Too much violence

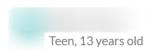
Too much drinking/drugs/smoking

Too much sex

#! Too much swearing

Helpful Report

Testimony of a 13-year-old:



age 13+ ★★★★

9 months ago

pedos:/

trigger warning for: sexual assault, gore please please please do not let your kid get discord. The amount of sexual assault, grooming and awful pictures/ videos of dead and dismembered body parts is disturbing. Im saying this for children under the age of 13. If your child is 13, having a conversation about boundaries and limits would benefit from that behavior. Dont get me wrong, discord is a good place to chat and have fun on, but please be careful when it comes to strangers. This is coming from at 13 yr old that has had to experience that so i know what im talking about when i say be careful.

Show less

4 people found this helpful.

△ Helpful Report

Testimony of a 14-year-old:

Teen, 14 years old

age 13+ ★★★★★

2 weeks ago

Discord is a nice place, if you don't look in the bad places...

Okay before I begin, warning for stuff like Pedos and Pornography. So I think that even If your kid is the age of third teen. You should only allow them to use this app if you trust them. And make sure to turn on all of the safety settings. As people from servers they might not do the nicest of things. Make sure to check they are on good servers. Not with any bad models. And on any Porn servers. Or just any servers with bad things. And I can't really find a way to word this good but Pedos usually use discord to groom. So make sure your kids aren't on any Dating severs or Pornography servers and more of that sort. I also heavily recommend to turn on settings to only allow friends to message you personally. That is all of the bad things I can think of right now. Now time for the good things. This may allow your children to find other people with similar interests. Take for example me. I like to talk about history in general on and on. So I found this one discord server with other people also very interested in history too! They can also share their own pieces like art or music. And if you allow them share their YouTube videos! It is also a nice place to speak with school friend just a couple of buttons and inviting and then boom! You can talk to your friends!

Show less

This title has:

Easy to play/use

Too much sex

#! Too much swearing

△ Helpful Report

Testimony of a 14-year-old:



age 18+ ★★★★

1 week ago

Terrifying, disgusting, scares the sh*t out of me when ever I think about it.

I'm terrified of this app after what I experienced. Wish I could rate ZERO stars. Sketchy people I met on a horse game, thinking they were people my age, talking about horrifying things with them. I would NEVER recommend this "app" to anyone. I'm not even joking, I jump when someone says the word discord, no matter what the context is. I'm not even a person who gets easily scared at all. This shook me to the core, and I have still been getting requests from people I know in real life to use this app with them, and I still can't bring myself to look at it. Stay safe people. If my parents hadn't found out, I'm sure I wouldn't be here writing this review. This app isn't what it seems.

Show less

This title has:

🍂 Too much violence

Too much drinking/drugs/smoking

Too much sex

#! Too much swearing

Testimony of a 15-year-old:

age 13+ ★★★★

3 weeks ago

It's okay, but I don't recommend for someone who's under 13, it's great to make friends and talk to people but it can be dangerous especially if someone who's a adult talking to you and asking you personal info, and most people on there are weirdos too and you can get groomed easily!

This title has:

Easy to play/use

#! Too much swearing

🌃 Too much violence

Too much sex

Helpful

Report

<u>Parents Together</u> recently conducted a survey collecting information from parents about their child's experiences with sexually explicit content on social media. Below is a testimony from a parent of a 16-year-old Discord and PlayStation user.^{vi}

"Discord users share sexually explicit discussions and content, including videos on individual servers; PlayStation Network has sexually explicit "communities" users can join where sexual content, photos, videos and pornography are shared."

PARENT OF 16-YEAR-OLD DISCORD AND PLAYSTATION USER

News Articles

The rampant child exploitation on Discord is frequently covered in local and federal press releases. Below is a list of press releases from the Department of Justice concerning Discord's involvement in CSAM and grooming from May 2022 to March 2023:

Omaha Man Sentenced to 130 Months for Distributing ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-ne > omaha-man-sente...

Mar 31, 2023 — The **Discord** account contained chat messages between Andrews and another user concerning child **pornography**. On January 21, 2021, agents searched Andrews's Omaha ...

Man In Possession Of Child Sexual Abuse Material Is ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-wdnc > man-possession...

Feb 17, 2023 — ... like Kik and **Discord** to chat about and trade CSAM with other individuals. ... Wright pleaded guilty to possession of child **pornography** that involved a ...

Rapid City Man Found Guilty of Receipt and Possession of ...

iustice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-sd > rapid-city-man-fo...

Jan 24, 2023 — ... a Cybertip from the National Center of Missing and Exploited Children in relation to an upload of child **pornography** using the application **Discord**.

Herndon Man Charged with Production of Child Pornography

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-edva > herndon-man-c...

Jan 9, 2023 — Herndon Man Charged with Production of Child **Pornography** ... including Telegram, Twitter, and **Discord** under the monikers "John Lugne," "@JLugne," and ...

Albuquerque man pleads guilty to cyberstalking, child ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-nm > albuquerque-man...

Jan 3, 2023 — 20, 2022, to cyberstalking, receipt of child **pornography**, and distribution ... Cybertips regarding CSAM related to a **Discord** username associated with Dosch.

Omaha Man Sentenced for Distribution of Child Pornography

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-ne > omaha-man-sente...

Dec 14, 2022 — In September 2019, law enforcement began investigating Cybertip Reports from **Discord** and Facebook stating that a user had distributed child **pornography** in ...

Washington State Man Charged with Production of Child ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-or > washington-state-...

Dec 12, 2022 — ... 20, with production of child **pornography** and enticement. According to court documents, Kuper, operating under the username "Merqzs", used **Discord** and ...

Springfield Man Sentenced to 19 Years for Child Sexual ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-wdmo > springfield-ma...

Nov 25, 2022 — ... including **Discord**, Facebook Messenger, Google Hangouts, Instagram, Kik, Skype, and Text Now. Kelso sometimes sent child **pornography**, or pornographic ...

Branford Sex Offender Sentenced to 13 Years in Prison for ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-ct > branford-sex-offen...

Nov 15, 2022 — He also used various other websites and mobile applications, such as ChatStep, Kik, **Discord**, Skype, and others, to distribute child **pornography** to others, ...

Chesterfield Man Sentenced to 15 Years in Prison for Sex ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-edmo > chesterfield-ma...

Nov 9, 2022 — ... the **Discord** app to communicate with her and successfully encourage her to ... to 11 Years in Prison For Soliciting Child **Pornography** from 11-year-old.

Wilson Man Sentenced to 20 Years on Child Pornography ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-ednc > wilson-man-sen...

Nov 1, 2022 — Wilson Man Sentenced to 20 Years on Child **Pornography** Charge ... illegal activity from Snapchat, **Discord**, and Twitter for an IP address out of Wilson, NC.

Michigan Man Sentenced to Life for Stalking, Sexually ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-ndtx > michigan-man-s...

Oct 20, 2022 — ... two counts of receipt of child **pornography**, ten counts of production and ... on the instant messaging platform **Discord** when she was just 13 years old.

Oregon Man Charged with Sexually Exploiting Minor on ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-or > oregon-man-charg...

Oct 3, 2022 — Oregon Man Charged with Sexually Exploiting Minor on **Discord**, Additional ... Federal law defines child **pornography** as any visual depiction of sexually ...

Carthage Man Pleads Guilty to Child Sexual Exploitation

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-wdmo > carthage-man-...

Sep 12, 2022 — The child victim told investigators she met Kuentzel in a public **Discord** game server, ... Numerous images of the child victim, including child **pornography**, ...

Michigan Man Convicted of Stalking, Sexually Assaulting ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-ndtx > michigan-man-c...

Jun 16, 2022 — ... two counts of receipt of child **pornography**, ten counts of production and ... on the instant messaging platform **Discord** when she was just 13 years old.

Portland Man on Pretrial Release in Child Sex Abuse Case ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-or > portland-man-pret...

Jun 1, 2022 — ... enforcement in Oregon began investigating Whitfield's use of **Discord**, an online instant messaging application, to send and receive child **pornography**.

Registered Sex Offender Pleads Guilty to Possession of ...

justice.gov

https://www.justice.gov > usao-edla > registered-sex-of...

May 10, 2022 — WIEBELT would then upload the saved CSAM from his phone to other

Discord users ... WIEBELT was previously convicted in 2011 for Receipt of Child

Pornography ...

https://www.reddit.com/r/discordapp/comments/x6y911/how exactly do i report an actual active predator/

https://www.reddit.com/r/teenagers/comments/11uyiu5/is my girlfriend being groomed/

ⁱ r/Discordapp, Reddit, How do I report an actual active predator,? September 5, 2022,

ii r/teenagers, Reddit, Is my girlfriend being groomed,?, March 18, 2023,

 $^{{}^{}iii} \ Discord \ Blogs, For \ steps \ to \ a \ super \ safe \ account, \ \underline{https://discord.com/safety/360043857751-four-steps-to-a-super-safe-account}$

iv Ibid.

v Ibid.

vi Parents Together, Afraid, Uncertain, And Overwhelmed: A Survey of Parents on Online Sexual Exploitation of Children, Report, 2023, https://parentstogetheraction.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/PT PDF final-2.pdf