

Safety Practices of Online Dating

Over 40 million Americans have used at least one online dating service¹. Over the past three years, nearly 1 in 5 recently married people met online, almost double the number of people who met in a bar, club, or other social gathering place². More students are using dating websites, so they should protect themselves by knowing the following information.



The risks of online dating:

- 10% of sex offenders use online dating services
- 10% of members are scammers
- 11% of all daters are married, and 51% are already in a relationship
- Each year, internet predators commit more than 16,000 kidnappings, 100 murders, and thousands of rapes².

Safety Tips Before Meeting:

- Use background checks and other forms of online systems of checking personal history of potential partners.
- Report suspicious users to the dating site administrators.
- Remain anonymous or limit the information you share until you feel comfortable and confident in revealing identity.
- Be wary of people who are looking to meet immediately, need a place to live, or seem like they do not have much to offer. These people may try to use or manipulate you.

Safety Tips When Meeting a Date:

- Let a trusted friend know when you are going on a date. Give your friend the name and phone number of your date, as well as the address of the place you are meeting.
- Ask a friend to call you at a certain time to make sure you are okay.
- Take time to get to know someone online before meeting in person; avoid potential dates who want you to act immediately or on impulse.
- Meet in public places during daytime hours.
- Remain sober when meeting your date.

¹ <http://www.match.com/magazine/article/4671/>

² <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/23/AR2010042300014.html>