

764 and The Com: Misconceptions and Guidance

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This article series looks beyond ideology to reveal the online dynamics and ecosystems that accelerate youth radicalization by normalizing violence and rewarding cruelty and harm. Through short, practical explainers, this series seeks to equip caregivers, school officials, and other frontline practitioners with essential information on the complex and rapidly evolving online landscape that young people navigate today.

Since 2023, the online networks 764 and The Com have drawn attention because of their association with high-profile cases of sextortion, mass shootings, and suicides of minors. Arrests of members of these groups have also risen sharply, increasing the interest of the media and concern from caregivers, school officials,

and other frontline practitioners. This short explainer addresses common misconceptions about 764 and The Com to provide readers with the information necessary to understand the threat these organizations pose to young people.

Key Takeaways

- If you are concerned that someone you know may be involved in The Com or 764, reach out to a trusted community organization or leader for help (see the “Resources” section for information on how to get help). **In the case of an imminent threat of harm, call 911.**
- Anyone can become involved in The Com regardless of gender, race, or age, though both victims and perpetrators are trending younger.
- Com networks target and groom young people on mainstream platforms, especially gaming sites. Caregivers, school officials, and other frontline practitioners should be particularly alert to instances in which a child is participating in a private or invitation-only online space.
- Caregivers, school officials, and other frontline practitioners should watch for indicators of involvement with The Com or 764, including sudden or significant changes in behavior and other key warning signs (see the section “What practitioners and caregivers should watch for”).
- Understanding the risk posed by 764 is not the same as understanding the risk posed by the broader Com. Different Com networks pose different threats to young people and their communities.
- Though young people may claim that a concerning post or interaction is “just a joke,” internet memes and humor can hide real threats.
- Perpetrators often enter such networks as victims, and they often require interventions to address their experiences as victims in addition to their roles as perpetrators.

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Common misconceptions about 764, The Com, and related networks

X Misconception: 764 and The Com are the same

Though their names are often used interchangeably, 764 and The Com are not the same. Instead, 764 represents one small piece of The Com. As one researcher noted, using “764” to refer to “The Com” is like using a single hockey team’s name to refer to the entire National Hockey League.¹ Understanding the distinction between 764 and The Com is crucial because different elements of The Com engage in different behaviors.

The Com refers to a constellation of small cells and private internet spaces. Its networks and cells engage in a wide variety of online and offline violent and nonviolent crimes. Some cells (including 764) focus on the sexual exploitation and extortion (i.e., sextortion) of minors and related crimes. Other Com networks focus on cybercrime. Still others focus on *offline* organized crime. Different networks use different names and symbols, employ different tactics, and pose different threats to young people.

764 is a network within The Com that engages in the sextortion of minors and attempts to incite both members and victims to commit sexual abuse, animal abuse, hate crimes, self-harm and suicide, and other acts of violence.² 764 is the most well-known network within The Com because of numerous arrests of high-profile 764 sextortion perpetrators; in addition, 764 has been connected to high-profile incidents of offline violence, including the 2025 school shooting in Nashville, Tennessee.³ Members often identify young victims online, befriend them, groom them, and then attempt to extract sexual images from them and push them to engage in self-harm, suicide attempts, animal abuse, or abuse of family members. The network also provides instruction manuals for this kind of abuse and exploitation, including the “Suicide Guide,” “Sextortion Handbook,” and “Dox Guide.”

No Lives Matter (NLM) is a 764 splinter group that focuses on offline violence; it has been associated with such high-profile incidents as a knife attack by Swedish 14-year-olds and the Southport stabbings by a British 17-year-old.⁴ NLM encourages violence for the sake of violence and for gaining internet clout and status. Instruction manuals with titles such as “Kill Guide,” “Terror Guide,” and “Evil Has No Limit” circulate in this network, providing instructions on how to carry out acts of violence.⁵ Because the network glorifies violent actors as heroes, young people involved in NLM may pose a real risk of violence against others.

Maniacs Murder Cult (MKY) is a Com network with members and victims in the US and around the world. Like NLM, MKY focuses largely on instigating offline violence, but it is significantly more ideological than either NLM or 764. MKY explicitly endorses neo-Nazi themes and satanist practices but doesn’t approve of the sextortion of minors, as 764 does. To join, potential members must pass a vetting process that includes providing evidence of offline violence, cybercrime, or recruitment and propaganda creation.⁶

Other related networks include Purgatory, NSO9A (the National Socialist Order of Nine Angles), Satanic Front, Temple Ov Blood, and Terrorgram Collective.

Importantly, these networks aren’t organized groups or formal entities. Some have no clear leadership, and others have anonymous leaders who come and go. Members and cells sometimes coordinate, but they more often work independently, adopting the brand, aesthetics, and tactics of groups in The Com or even of international terrorist groups. This amorphousness can make it challenging for law enforcement to identify and hold perpetrators accountable.

X Misconception: this happens on the dark web

These networks are not restricted to the darkest corners of the internet.⁷ Rather, members of these networks work through platforms commonly used by young people, including **Minecraft**, **Roblox**, **Snapchat**, and **Instagram**. Members frequently seek to groom potential victims using these public, mainstream platforms—often by reaching out through in-game chats on gaming sites before inviting victims to join private groups on **Discord**, **Telegram**, or **Kik** (programs that many teens already use). One 17-year-old Connecticut teen was first contacted on Roblox. She was convinced her groomer was romantically interested in her, agreed to talk with him on Discord, and was quickly pressured to send sexual images.⁸ Similarly, an Oklahoma middle schooler who shared artwork with her art class via Discord used the platform to look up horror stories and was subsequently targeted for sextortion in a private Discord server.⁹ Once a potential victim opts into a more isolated space, such as a private server, they are frequently exposed to graphic content meant to traumatize and desensitize them before being subjected to more aggressive grooming and coercion techniques.¹⁰

X Misconception: all participants in these networks must be evil

The young people who end up in these networks are often vulnerable in ways that leave them susceptible to harmful influences.¹¹

Many perpetrators entered these networks as victims. They began as targets of grooming, were subjected to sextortion or other pressure, and began to victimize new targets to comply with demands from their own groomers. This **victim-to-perpetrator cycle** mirrors other abuse dynamics, such as those of child sexual abuse. Perpetrators often have a history of victimization that must be addressed independently to prevent the cycle of harm from continuing.¹²

Mental health conditions can also play a role in victim selection and membership. Com networks such

as 764 target young people with mental health issues, seeing them as vulnerable to coercion and influence. Instruction manuals on recruitment focus on teenage girls with signs of eating disorders or bipolar disorder, claiming they are “emotionally weak/vulnerable.”¹³ In their recruiting, networks such as MKY look for self-identified “sociopaths.”¹⁴

X Misconception: these are neo-Nazi or white supremacist groups

The participants in these networks can have widely varying motivations. Some perpetrators are previous victims, some join to pursue power or “**clout**,” some want to foster their interest in sadism, and some participate in response to deep loneliness and isolation. One teen girl perpetrator explained that when she succeeded at convincing her victim to commit suicide, she was participating in “a competition of who could do the worst thing. So I obviously felt very cool.”¹⁵ Some members appear to be engaging in “**nihilistic violent extremism**,” motivated by a desire to cause harm for its own sake or destroy modern society. Young people interested in these networks may not show any hint of Nazism, white supremacy, or other extreme ideas.

Nor do these networks look like white supremacist groups. Some networks may specifically target young people of color and LGBTQIA+ youth for grooming and victimization, and those victims may themselves become perpetrators.¹⁶

That said, a subset of Com networks do endorse neo-Nazi ideas and practices, some are associated with neo-Nazi organizations, and many draw on neo-Nazi aesthetics. Com networks with ties to neo-Naziism are usually influenced by **Order of Nine Angles (O9A)**. O9A is not a network itself but rather a set of practices and ideas that recurs like a virus in extremist spaces and infects many Com networks. O9A adherents preach a type of nihilistic and fascist satanism, pushing ritualistic violence against people and animals. It has no leader or formal members; rather, adherents of O9A ideology spread its ideas to sadistic online communities.¹⁷ Many Com networks draw inspiration from O9A.

X Misconception: this is just teen boys victimizing teen girls

In most cases, the pattern is that of young adult men victimizing teen girls. Though data are limited,¹⁸ *perpetrators* are mostly male and have an average age of 20, whereas *victims* are mostly female (84 percent) and are on average 15 years old.¹⁹ These young adult men often exploit the age difference between victim and perpetrator.

However, it's important to remember that not all cases fit this profile. In 2025, a 15-year-old European teenage girl convinced a 25-year-old Canadian man to commit suicide on a livestream.²⁰ Young boys, such as the 13-year-old who was coerced into suicide in 2022, are also vulnerable to victimization.²¹ And although adults and teens make up the majority of those involved in these networks, **young children are also at risk as both perpetrators and victims**. Researchers report that both victims and perpetrators are getting younger every year, with the youngest perpetrator being arrested at 11 and the youngest victim being targeted at 8.²²

X Misconception: this is just an edgy online internet culture

Com networks use humor to hide an exploitation ecosystem dedicated to real-world harm and violence. Although jokes and memes flood these online spaces, this type of content has a darker function: it is designed to recruit new members and create plausible deniability. **Jokes and memes are entry points** for edgy, highly online young people who may see the shock value as alluring and transgressive. Humor also makes it hard to determine someone's true intent by creating a shield of irony that bad actors can hide behind. Viewing the culture of violence in these networks as merely the result of terminally online teens being edgy can delay effective intervention and allow abuse to escalate unchecked.

X Misconception: this is an online problem

The harm these networks cause does not remain online. Unfortunately, even brief involvement can have drastic consequences for young people, who in some cases have attempted self-harm or suicide shortly after contact. For example, one 13-year-old took his own life only hours after being added to a livestream with members of a network.²³ Further, these networks use sextortion to incite offline violence—specifically by attempting to blackmail victims into committing violent crimes against pets, family members, and local communities. **Timely communication between caregivers, schools, practitioners, and law enforcement is key to ensuring the safety of young people exposed to Com networks.**



What caregivers and practitioners should watch for

Online behaviors may include the following:

- Changes to online activity, increased time spent online, and new online friends or groups that take up a lot of time.
- Receiving anonymous gifts, including money, in-game currency, or other items.
- Interest in mass shootings, mass shooters, or other mass casualty events.
- Online use of suspicious slang or acronyms, such as the following:
 - "LMIRL/MIRL" ("let's meet in real life")
 - "S2R" ("send to receive"), "WTTP" ("want to trade pictures?"), "GNOC" ("get naked on cam"), and "NP4NP" ("naked pic for naked pic")
 - "POS" ("parent over shoulder"), "PIR" ("parent in room"), and "P911" ("parent alert")

Offline behaviors may include the following:

- Sudden changes in behavior, appearance, and eating or sleeping habits.
- Isolation or withdrawal from activities or social and family relationships.
- Fresh cuts, scratches, bruises, burns, or wounds, often appearing in patterns or forming words or symbols.
- The wearing of long sleeves or pants in hot weather.
- Writing or drawings in blood or what appears to be blood.
- Sudden suicidal ideation or threats of self-harm.
- Changes in the behavior or health of family pets, including fear of the young person, wounds, or suspicious deaths.
- Law enforcement being called to the home under false pretenses (known as *swatting*).

Resources

If you are worried about someone who might harm themselves or others, connect the person with mental health resources. If there is an immediate life-threatening emergency, call 911.

- Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force: <https://www.icactaskforce.org/internetsafety>
- The Center for Internet and Technology Addiction: <https://virtual-addiction.com/>
- National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: <https://988lifeline.org/>
- The National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Helpline: www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline
- The Victim Connect Resource Center: <https://victimconnect.org>
- FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center: <https://www.ic3.gov/>
- FBI Field Offices: <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices>
- Victim-centric resource on the 764 network: <https://www.isdglobal.org/publication/networks-of-harm-a-victim-centric-information-resource-on-the-764-sex-tortion-network-2/>
- NCMEC's free Take It Down service, which helps minor victims, even if they are now adults, remove or stop the online sharing of nude or sexually explicit online content: <https://takeitdown.ncmec.org/>
- Warning signs and advice for caregivers: <https://teentips.co.uk/news/warning-about-the-764-movement-online-what-every-parent-needs-to-know/>
- LearnSafe's article "Grooming in Kids' Games: What's New, What It Looks Like, and How to Stop It": <https://learnsafe.com/grooming-in-kids-games/>

- Sample parental communications on 764: <https://berlincentral.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/764-Parent-Communication-.pdf>

Note: Many of these resources use 764 and *The Com* interchangeably. Despite such inaccuracies, these resources provide useful suggestions on best practices for caregivers, young people, and schools.

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