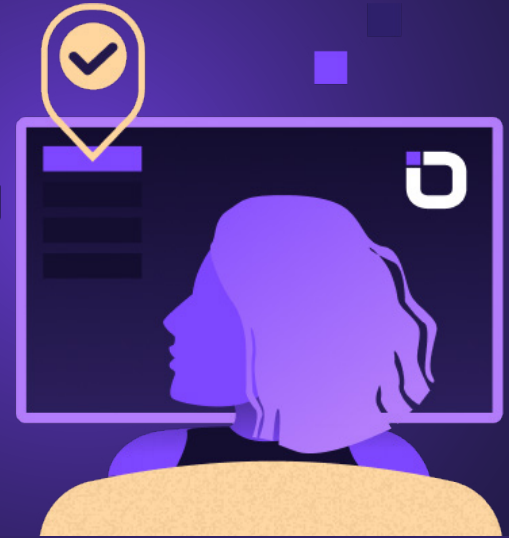


10 Considerations for Effective Safety and Reporting Tools for Youth

Youth who experience an unwanted sexual encounter online, and choose to disclose it, are far more likely to use online safety tools rather than seek support from a parent or trusted caregiver.

In fact, a young person reporting to a platform may be the only time they signal that something bad is happening to them. This underscores the critical need for platforms to design simple and easy-to-use safety tools.



THORN'S RESEARCH FOUND:



86% of minors

used a safety tool as part of their response to an unwanted sexual interaction, while only 47% sought support offline.¹



70% of minors

prefer to use the blocking tool, while 52% prefer to report, and 22% prefer to mute.²



49% of minors

wanted information on protecting themselves from risky sexual advances; 54% wanted more guidance on blocking; 53% wanted more on reporting.³

1 Thorn. (2023). [Youth Perspectives on Online Safety, 2022: an Annual Report of Youth Attitudes and Experiences](#) Fig 19, pg. 20
 2 Thorn. (2023). [Youth Perspectives on Online Safety, 2022: an Annual Report of Youth Attitudes and Experiences](#) Fig 20, pg. 21
 3 Thorn. (2023). [Youth Perspectives on Online Safety, 2022: an Annual Report of Youth Attitudes and Experiences](#) Fig 23, pg. 22

Designing effective safety tools for youth

While the solutions for accessible and easy-to-understand safety features will differ by platform, these 10 considerations will help ensure your entire user experience supports youth as they navigate stressful situations:

- 1 Incorporate youth feedback in the design process** to ensure features support kids' help-seeking behaviors.
- 2 Explain where to find the safety tools and how to use them.** E.g., consider having users complete a tutorial as part of platform onboarding.
- 3 Clarify how the process works** so that users making the report understand what will happen to them and to the problematic user.
- 4 Use accessible and trauma-informed language** in safety flows, such as in the reporting categories.
- 5 In the reporting categories, provide descriptive subcategories,** and allow for multiple selections.
- 6 Provide in-line policy resources,** rather than linking to long and dense community standards.
- 7 Allow users to check the status of their report,** and offer additional suggestions, such as turning off the ability for a profile to be "recommended."
- 8 Confirm a report was received,** and explain what happens next – e.g., a follow-up in 24 hours, a review by a human moderator, etc.
- 9 Whether or not submission is deemed actionable, articulate the outcome** in a transparency report, and offer further support resources.
 - When a submission is deemed non-actionable, it communicates that the child's situation isn't important, discouraging future disclosures.
- 10 Create a platform safety center** with prevention resources. Consider adding youth-focused content from [NoFilter](#), and tips from [Thorn for Parents](#).

Cross-platform consistency is crucial

Safety tools and processes vary from platform to platform, and sometimes even across product suites. Building cross-platform consistency enhances a child's ability to act quickly.

Safety tools should evolve

Child sexual perpetrators and bad actors continue to adjust their tactics, and kids' online behaviors shift over time. Safety tools need to keep pace, evolving as new threats emerge.

Thorn's child safety advisory services can help

[Our team of experts offers guidance to platforms](#) on developing child safety policies, on-platform interventions, and prevention strategies.

Together, we can build a safer internet.