

CHILD SAFETY NEWSLETTER



That Photo Knows Where Your Child Is

A child posts a photo from outside their school. They are sharing a moment, not their location. But the photo might be doing both. Every photo taken on a smartphone can carry hidden location data. In most cases, that information includes the exact GPS coordinates of where the photo was taken. Your home. Your child's school. The park they go to every Saturday.

Even when photos have had their location data removed, they are not fully private. AI tools can now analyze a photo's background by reading street signs, school uniforms, local landmarks, and architectural details to identify a location.



Predators and traffickers use these tools to find children. A single photo, posted publicly, can become a map.

Did You Know?

73%

of apps used by children share or sell the personal data, including location information.

(Common Sense Media, 2023)

Adjusting photo settings and reviewing what backgrounds reveal takes only minutes.

To reduce XMP metadata in photos:

- Open your **Camera Settings**.
- Turn off **Location/Geotagging**.
- Turn off any **Watermark** or **Device Info** options.
- To remove metadata from *existing* photos, use a **metadata remover** app before sharing.



CHILD SAFETY NEWSLETTER

by Compass Abuse Prevention Services®

How AI Finds Location

Understanding how AI identifies location helps us teach children and families how to stay safe.

Most smartphones automatically embed the following (called **EXIF metadata**) in every photo: GPS coordinates, device type, date, and time. This information is invisible to the eye but readable by any app or website that receives the image. Some social media platforms strip this data. However, many do not.

Even with metadata stripped away, AI tools can analyze a photo and cross-reference the visual information with satellite imagery to identify a location. Think about that town bridge near your local park.



Before Your Next Event

Take a few minutes of preparation for photos before an event. Ask yourself:

- **Do the children I work with have a signed photo release on file with the parish?** If you are unsure, check with your program coordinator **before** the event, not after.
- **Does your parish or diocese have a social media policy?** If you have not read it recently, find it and read it.
- **Are you using any app, platform, or design tool to store or share event photos?** Check whether that tool keeps the images, trains on them, or shares them with third parties.

Words That Work!

"Before I take any photos today, I want to ask your permission. If you don't want to be in a photo, just let me know and I'll make sure you're not included."

"We don't share where we are while we're still here. That goes for everyone, including me."

"If you ever see a photo of yourself that you didn't agree to, come tell me. That matters."

"The astute see danger and hide; the naive continue on and pay the penalty."

PROVERBS 22:3 (NABRE)

