



**Warren C. Evans**  
**Sheriff**

# News Release

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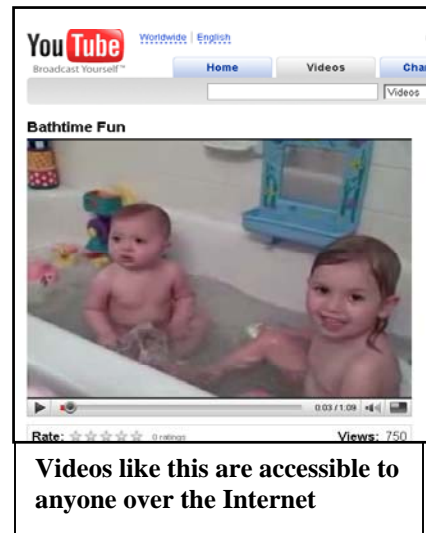
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## Sheriff warns parents about posting videos of children on Internet sites such as YouTube

- *Content may be innocent but could attract pedophiles, Evans says*

To a proud parent it may seem innocent enough: Your child is doing something *completely* adorable while taking a bath or while in their "birthday suit," so you take some video and post it online to share it with the world. No big deal, right? Not so fast, according to Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans, who says that there are a lot of concerns - and even potential risks - that parents might not be considering.

"Not everyone who can access these videos is a model citizen," Evans said. "The Internet is a big candy store for pedophiles and posting nude or semi-nude videos of your children can give them something that may cause them to become fixated on your child."



Recently, an individual came to Evans with concerns about this issue when she learned that a co-worker had noticed a strange phenomenon: Of the videos she had posted of her child on YouTube, the one that had been viewed a disproportionately larger number of times was the one that suggested the child may have been partially nude (which he wasn't).

"That set off alarm bells, as it should have with any good parent," Evans said. "We did some quick searches online and it is apparent that these types of videos are being viewed by a large number of people. That suggests to me that people are searching them out, rather than simply stumbling upon them. Unfortunately, it's only safe to assume that some of these individuals are pedophiles."

Besides the obvious feeling of creepiness that any mom or dad would feel about their child being viewed in an impure way, Evans said that parents inadvertently may be giving these video voyeurs clues on how to find a child on whom they have become fixated. With that in mind, Evans is providing parents some practical tips to help keep their kids safe:

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**1. A child with no name.** Keep your child's name a secret. If you have a video of your child on YouTube, don't include his or her name in the file name or the related video summary information that you provide when posting a video. Also, don't add titles that appear during the video that include your child's name. "An identity is the first, most important clue someone needs to find someone else," Evans said.

**2. Live in Anywhere, USA.** Never put up any video of your child that has information in it as to where you or they live (name of the town, child's school name, etc.)

**3. Restrict Access:** Videos on YouTube don't have to be publicly viewable. If you want to share them with friends and family in an online format, there is a way that you can YouTube it, but have it accessible only to those you personally invite to view it and who have a direct link or password to access it.

**4. Kids post videos, too.** As your children get older and tech savvy, they will be able to post videos as well. Parents need to scrutinize any videos their children are posting online and make sure they do not contain any images or information that could put them at risk. Evans pointed out that within just a few minutes, one of his officers was able to identify by name, city and the school she attends, a high school girl who had posted a suggestive video of her and a friend dancing in her home.

"That's all the information a predator needs to find someone they've become fascinated with," Evans said. "The bottom line is that parents need to use good judgment when posting videos of their kids online and they need to screen any videos that their older kids may be posting online. Don't your child's safety to chance."