

**How to respond:**

**Why it matters:**

**Background:**

**The Dark Web**

The dark web is used for facilitating serious crimes. It is also used by predators to persuade vulnerable, often isolated individuals to engage in sexual activity, which can then be used to blackmail them. It is also used by radicalisers to recruit for an encourage terrorism.

**Types of abuse:**

It is not illegal to use the dark web. In many countries it is used by dissidents, journalists and whistle-blowers to champion legitimate groups and ideas which may be censured in repressive regimes. The anonymity it offers can therefore be legitimate.

**Key issues:**

Be careful not to overreact. Consider the guidance at 7 and technical solutions.

Does the person understand their own vulnerability in that environment to exploitation, fraud, social media blackmail or radicalisation?

Does not require any particular skill or equipment. It is typically achieved through the ‘Onion Router’ or TOR, the icon of which is a stylised onion, the layers of which symbolise the levels of security

**Access:**

**What to do?**

Consider contacting CEOP; report hidden sites, they can be removed: advice and counselling for those who may be affected.

[CEOP Safety Centre](https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/)

Those accessing the dark web can be exposed to criminality; disturbing and illegal imagery. It also enables the purchase of illegal items such as drugs, firearms and extreme pornography. Predators use the dark Web to groom/recruit the vulnerable.

Developed by the American Military in the 1990s as post nuclear attack network; a secure and anonymous method of accessing ‘hidden’ internet sites and exchanging material, ’peer to peer’. Encryption makes IP addresses extremely difficult to trace