



The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) is warning the public about the continued increase in reports about scams where victims are targeted on WhatsApp by criminals pretending to be someone they know – typically their children.

**Between 3rd February 2022 and 21st June 2022, there have been a total of 1235 reports made to Action Fraud linked to this scam, with total reported losses exceeding £1.5mn.**

Criminals will usually begin the conversation with “Hello Mum” or “Hello Dad” and will say that they are texting from a new mobile number as their phone was lost or damaged. They will then ask for money to purchase a new one, or claim that they need money urgently to pay a bill

The criminal will provide bank details for the payment to be made to, with some coming back with further demands for money.

**Detective Chief Inspector Craig Mullish, from the City of London Police, said:**

*“If you receive a message like this from a friend or family member, don’t send any money until you’ve had a chance to call them and confirm their identity. Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.”*

**How to protect yourself:**

- **STOP. THINK. CALL.** If a family member or friend makes an unusual request on WhatsApp, always call the person to confirm their identity.
- You can report spam messages or block a sender within WhatsApp. Press and hold on the message bubble, select ‘Report’ and then follow the instructions.
- **Never share your account’s activation code (that’s the 6 digit code you receive via SMS**