Children acting cute can invite criminal paedophile

KUALA LUMPUR (June 17, 2013): Children who put on a cute face and affectionate pose when taking photographs to be downloaded to the social networking site such as Facebook can invite criminal paedophilia.

A psychologist with the Educational Psychology and Counselling Department of the University of Malaya, Prof Madya Dr Mariani Mohd Nor said many children under 13 years of age, especially in primary school, now owned a Facebook account and enjoyed downloading their pictures in various action and style without realising that they could be observed by paedophiles.

"All (paedophile crimes) this not just the child's body, other parts too, sometimes the facial mimic, lip style, camera looking style can also spur the paedophiles."

"Not only girls, but boys with a cute face and baby-face are also prone to attacks by paedophiles," he said.

People suffering from paedophilia refers to those who have psychological problems and the tendency of sex crimes against children and these people usually act brutally against the victim in order to achieve satisfaction.

Dr Mariani said most of the children were now also seen to be racing among their peers to gain popularity by downloading a lot of pictures to get the highest 'like' ratings.

"They (boys and girls) want to be popular, apart from the Facebook, there is also rivalry in the YouTube by downloading photos and videos to get the highest hits, while the outcome is not just gaining popularity but also affecting personal safety," she said.

She said the paedophilia threat was always present especially in the borderless world of information technology that allowed the people to look for their victims through the internet, so continuous monitoring by parents was important.

Meanwhile, Head of Strategic Communications of the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) Sheikh Raffie Abd Rahman said the use of the Internet, particularly the social networking site, Facebook, was actually limited to adolescents aged 14 years and above.

He said, however, the easy Facebook access enabled many children to falsify their age to gain access using the largest social networking site.

"This is where the important role of the parent comes in, they need to monitor their children, especially on the use of social websites.. children under 14 years old should not use social networking sites, make sure they do not interact with strangers in cyberspace," he said.

He said the Commission strived to implement programs of education and awareness about the safe use of the internet to curb its abuse that could invite a variety of threats including criminal paedophilia.

Until now, in Malaysia no cases of pedophilia had been recorded although a few cases involving rape and murder of children had been reported.

"Paedophilia patients are categorised as those who commit acts of rape on children several times, but if they only commit the crime once, it is not categorised as paedophilia," said Investigation Division of Sexual, Abuse and Children (D11) Assistant Director ACP Hamidah Yunos. – Bernama

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