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Be weary of scams targeted at grandparents: Dufferin OPP

The Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is warning the public that there has been an increase in reports of emergency/grandparent scams. The scammers target vulnerable persons and seniors by playing upon their emotions and fear of a loved one being hurt or in trouble.

In the typical emergency scam, the victim will receive a frantic phone call from someone claiming to be a grandchild or loved one. The caller will explain that they are involved in some sort of mishap like a car accident or are having trouble returning from a foreign country and need money right away. The scammer will often insist that the victim does not tell anyone. The call could also involve someone claiming to be a law enforcement official, lawyer, or bailiff.

Be careful what you post online. Scammers can use details shared on social media platforms and dating sites. They can search your online accounts to find real names, real interests, real phone numbers and when you are going to be home or away.

Be aware of some warning signs:

? Urgency ? The scammer always makes the request sound very urgent, which may cause the victim to not verify the story.

? Fear ? The scammer plays on the victim's emotions by generating a sense of fear. For instance, they may say, ?I am scared, and I need help from you.?

? Secrecy ? The scammer pleads with the victim not to tell anyone about the situation, such as, ?Please don't tell Dad, he would be so mad.?

? Request for Money ? Money can be requested by money transfer or in some cases the scammer sends someone to your home to pick up the payment.

To avoid becoming a victim, check with another family member or trusted friend to verify the information before sending money or providing credit card information by phone or e-mail.

If you or someone you know may have been the victim of an ?emergency' scam, or any other scam report it to the OPP at 1-888-310-1122 and to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) at www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca.