



November 19, 2013

Telephone Scams

South Bethany Police would like to alert residences to the possibility of telephone scams in the area. The latest scam reported is known as "The Grandparent Scam." This scam has actually been around for years. The FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center has been receiving reports of this particular scam since 2008. Thanks to the internet and social networking sites, a criminal can sometimes obtain personal information about their targets, which can make the impersonations even more believable. As an example of this scam, a grandson may mention on his social networking site that he is a photographer who often travels to Mexico. When contacting the grandson, the impersonator will say he is calling from Mexico, and someone has stolen his camera equipment and passport.

Common Scenarios:

The person calling claims to be traveling in a foreign country and has gotten into a bad situation such as being arrested for drugs, getting into a car accident, or being mugged...and needs money wired ASAP. And the caller does not want his or her parents told.

Sometimes, instead of the "grandchild" making the phone call, the criminal pretends to be an arresting police officer, lawyer, doctor, or some other person. The phony grandchild may talk first and then hand the phone over to an accomplice. While it is commonly called "The Grandparent Scam", criminals may also claim to be a family friend, niece, nephew, or any other family member.

Military families are also victimized when the target is advised that a problem came up during military leave and the soldier needs money.

What can you do?

Resist pressure to act quickly even though we all would like to help a family member in need

Try to contact your grandchild or other family member to verify if this is a legitimate call

NEVER wire money based on a request made over the phone or in an e-mail...especially overseas Wiring money is like giving cash - once you send it, you cannot get it back!

NEVER give personal information to an unsolicited caller

Additional Information

You can visit the following websites for additional information and to make a report:

www.fbi.gov Federal Bureau of Investigation

File a complaint with IC3 www.ftc.gov Federal Trade Commission

Consumer Protection - File a Complaint

www.donotcall.gov