Detecting online child grooming for sexual purposes

Who?

Microsoft and the tech industry, specifically Kik, The Meet Group, Roblox and Xbox.

What?

Creating and making freely available a new “technique” for detecting, addressing and reporting potential instances of child online grooming for sexual purposes.

Where?

Online services offering chat can use the tool to identify potentially problematic conversations for later human review.

When?

Since November 2018 when we held our “360” cross-industry hackathon at Microsoft HQ in Redmond, WA, USA.

Why?

To protect our customers and the integrity of our services by identifying and driving from our platforms predators who target children for sexual exploitation and abuse, and to report offenders to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

How it works

Building on a Microsoft patent, the technique is applied to historical text-based chat conversations. It evaluates and rates a series of characteristics in the conversations and assigns an overall probability rating. Rating can then be used as a determinant, set by individual companies, as to when flagged conversations should be sent to human moderators for review.

What we plan to deliver


When we plan to deliver

A common set of threat dimensions to represent the risk of sexual grooming in chat.

A common representation of conversations leveraging “regex” rules.

Algorithms focused on identifying risk in a conversation and the possible ages of the participants.