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## Ashleigh Hall: 'one mistake' cost teenager her life

Ashleigh Hall told her mother she was going to sleep at a friend's house when she arranged a secret rendezvous with a stranger posing as a teenage boy on an internet social networking site.



Ashleigh Michelle Hall, whose body was found on a farm track near Sedgefield, Durham



By **Paul Stokes**  
 1:30PM GMT 08 Mar 2010

Within hours she had been kidnapped, raped and killed by Peter Chapman who dumped her body in a field close to a Little Chef restaurant on the outskirts of Sedgefield, Co Durham.

Her mother Andrea said: "She wasn't a bad kid, she wasn't naughty. She made one mistake and paid for it with her life."

Ashleigh, 17, was in her final year of a child care course at Darlington College and was aiming for a career as a child minder or nursery nurse.

She was well-liked by her peers and, in common with other teenagers, her mobile phone and the internet were major features of her everyday life.

Mrs Hall, 39, has urged the operators of Facebook and other social networking sites to help safeguard against perverts targeting vulnerable youngsters online.

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She said: "I can't blame the internet but it is about time that somebody looked at ways of introducing controls which stop people putting up false pictures and false information.

"I brought her up not to talk to strangers and that applied to the internet as well. She said she would never add a stranger as a friend on Facebook.

"She had about 400 friends on Facebook, but she knew every single one

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of them. We can't imagine how she got to be friends with someone she didn't know."

Mrs Hall, from Darlington, Co Durham, has three other daughters Olivia, six, Ellie, four, and Evie, one.

Ashleigh was in a good mood and had spent the Sunday evening on the computer "chatting" on the internet through MSN.

Mrs Hall said: "At about 7.30pm she asked if she could sleep at a friend's house. It was a bit last-minute but I said 'Yes, okay, as long as you are home by 10.30 the next morning.

"She threw some clothes in a bag and went downstairs. I was upstairs putting the young ones to bed. Ashleigh opened the door and shouted: 'See you tomorrow mum'.

"I shouted to her to make sure she was home by 10.30. She said 'I will' and that was it. I never saw her again."

When she failed return the net morning her mother called her phone at least 30 times throughout the day without reply.

Mrs Hall said: "One of her friends told us Ashleigh had been talking to a boy. I went on to my Facebook account and looked at Ashleigh's page and saw a boy who said he was 17 who was not linked to any of her other friends.

"That made me suspicious straightaway. I asked her friends about him but nobody knew if she had been talking to him or texting him. There were no messages from him on her page but she might have been messaging him in private."

She believed she could trust Ashleigh because she had always been a sensible, level-headed girl, but her fears grew when a man's voice eventually answered her phone at around 8pm.

Ashleigh was a former brownie and guide, loved animals and had pet hamsters and goldfish.

Her mother added: said: "She was a typical teenager and teenagers will explore the world. You can't watch over them 24 hours a day.

"It's not Ashleigh's fault what happened. All we can do as parents is try to and get across to them that there are two sides to the internet."



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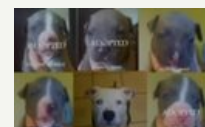
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