

PRESS RELEASE

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On behalf of:



How To Avoid The Love Rats

Introductions Agency RSVP today offered some words of reassurance to single people concerned by ITV Tonight's two-part investigation into the perils of internet dating - To Catch A Love Rat (shown 11 and 15 February). The programme follows the attempts of reporter Morland Sanders to track down a Nigerian conman who poses on a dating site as an eligible American father of one (using a completely false identity and images). Inevitably, after a sequence of loving email exchanges, the fraudster's 'son' has to go into hospital for which he needs £300.

RSVP Managing Director, Anne Stringer, said: "whilst I think the idea of the programme is great, I think it's a pity they've not highlighted the fact that men are as much at risk as women from internet dating scammers. Most women I meet already know that internet dating can be a high-risk alternative. But many men are still blissfully unaware of the risks it can pose."

Men at Risk

Anne believes that men are especially at risk as:

1. They're generally very proud of their (especially material) achievements and will tend to advertise those in their online profiles. These profiles are public property and visible from any browser in the world. Demonstrations of material wealth act like a magnet to internet dating scammers, especially from abroad.
2. The police often say about internet fraud that if something appears too good to be true, it usually is. And exactly the same rules apply in dating. Men aren't always adept at telling when something is too good to be true.

The consequences can be dire: requests for money (such as happened in the Tonight investigation) are at one end of the spectrum. At the other end lies the not uncommon possibility of a speedy marriage, followed by an equally speedy divorce and a claim for half of everything you advertised so thoroughly on the dating site.

Safe Dating

"But," continues Anne, "it is entirely possible to date safely in the UK and not to have to worry about being defrauded or worse. You just have to be prepared to pay a reasonable price for a decent service. I've now talked to so many people who are disillusioned with internet dating. Yes, it's cheap but there are good reasons for that, the principal one being that safety and security are not the site owner's concern. As a direct consequence:

1. People aren't always who they say they are.
2. A third of internet daters *admit* to lying in their profile.
3. Many internet daters aren't even single.

My advice to internet daters is to get out from behind their computers, join a decent proper agency like RSVP and *meet* people (rather than emailing them). We meet everyone who joins, we take our own photographs, we inspect identification, so we know who our members are and where they live."

Anne concludes: "like most things in life, you get what you pay for. If you want to go dating on the cheap and you're happy with the risks, that's fine. But, if you're willing to pay a fair price for a good service, you can stop worrying about all those risks and get out there and enjoy yourself."

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

RSVP Introductions was established in 1992 and is owned today by husband and wife team Anne and Roland Stringer. They aim to provide single, professional people with everything they need to find themselves a happy, loving relationship. As well as introductions, RSVP also provide other tools to increase their members' chances: social events, personal development workshops, life coaching and more. RSVP Introductions currently operate in the following counties:

Bedfordshire	London
Buckinghamshire	Northamptonshire
Cambridgeshire	Nottinghamshire
Derbyshire	Oxfordshire
Essex	Staffordshire
Hertfordshire	Warwickshire
Leicestershire	West Midlands
Lincolnshire	Worcestershire

For more information about RSVP Introductions, visit their website at www.rsvpintroductions.co.uk.

Please contact Jayna Makwana on the contact details below for press enquires, case studies, interviews etc.