

Phone Scams

By

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While this doesn't really have anything to do with my usual subject—computers—I felt that it was something you should know about. I've heard of this scam, but had never actually experienced it. This is how it goes:

You get a call from a young man who says something like "Hello? Grandpa?" He then asks "Do you know who this is?" You, of course, say the name of one of your grandsons. Hint—this is where you hang up. If you don't, you'll hear a great sob story including "don't tell my mom about this" and it ends with a request that you send him money to bail him out of a really big mess.

I started answering the question then I stopped—I suddenly remembered the scam. In the first place, our only grandson who is not a little kid doesn't call me Grandpa. Then, listening to the sob story, which included stuff about drugs, auto accidents, etc I finally got tired of it and hung up.

Your first inclination as grandparents is a desire to help. Perhaps the first thing to do is ask the caller's name—not give him a name. Because they don't know you, they probably won't know a name to give you. If the name is correct, perhaps you should say you're going to check with their parents. This will should end the conversation!