

This guide is for anyone who wants to support someone who is experiencing image-based abuse.

Family, friends and bystanders

In this guide:

- What is image-based abuse?
- How to report image-based abuse
- Are you being blackmailed or threatened?
- Get help and support



What is image-based abuse?

Image-based abuse is when someone shares, or threatens to share, an intimate photo or video online of you without your consent.

It is also image-based abuse when someone shares an image or video of a person without religious or cultural attire (such as a niqab or turban) they would normally wear in public, without the permission of the person.

The images can be real photos or videos, or ones that have been changed or altered, for example, Photoshopped.

It is also image-based abuse if someone threatens to share an intimate image of you.



Examples of image-based abuse include:

- Your ex-partner sharing an intimate image of you on Facebook without your consent.
- Someone threatening to share a naked picture of you that you sent them on Grindr.
- An anonymous account threatening to share an intimate image of you on a website or porn site.

What are the impacts of image-based abuse?

For every person targeted by image-based abuse, the experience is different. People who have experienced image-based abuse report feeling humiliated, embarrassed, annoyed, overwhelmed, depressed or completely devastated. For those targeted, it can be terrifying to discover their intimate image has been shared without their consent. Even more distressing can be the knowledge that other people, such as their friends, family or work colleagues, may see this image. It can be alarming to learn that they have no control over who the image is shared with.

How do I support someone this has happened to?

For many, the thought that friends and family might see their intimate image can be very upsetting. If you have already seen this image by the time you talk with the person affected, it is important to reassure them that they can talk to you about how they are feeling and that you don't think any less of them or blame them for what has happened.

People who have experienced image-based abuse are not to blame. Everybody has the right to live without online abuse or the threat of abuse. Some people hold out-dated attitudes that blame the victims of image-based abuse, when the blame should fall solely upon anyone who has shared an image of someone without their consent. While the person you are trying to help may have consented to share an intimate image with one person, or to have one taken, this does not mean they consented to share it with anyone else.

Support that is unconditional, focuses on the person's experience and does not blame them, is the most useful.

One of the most important things you can tell your friend or family member is to remember that it is not their fault and they are not alone.



What if this has happened to my child?

If your child's intimate photo, or an intimate photo of a kid you know has been posted online, here are some ways to support and help them:

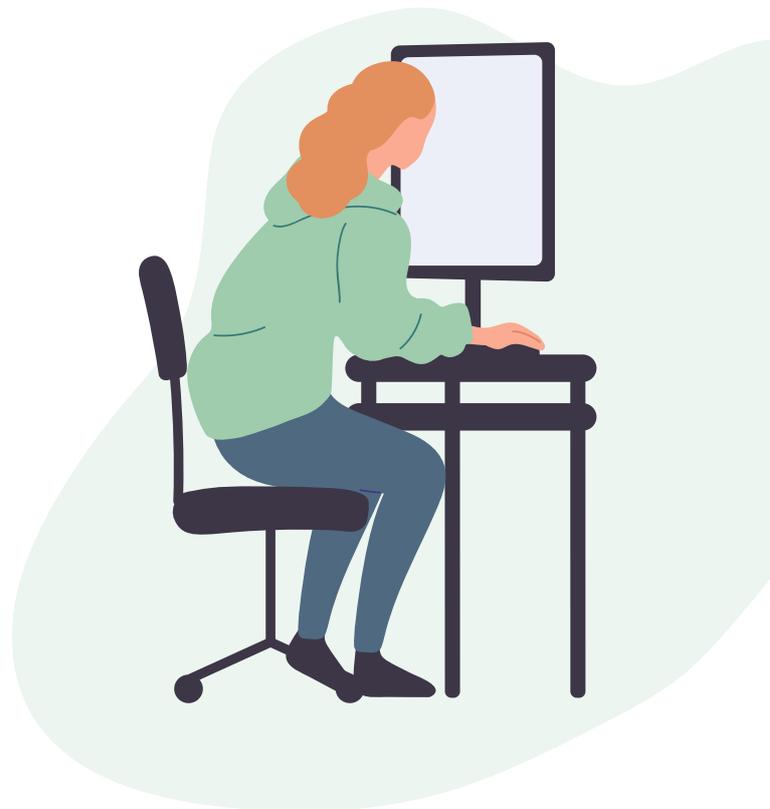
- Make sure they are safe and are not at risk of harming themselves. If they are at risk of immediate harm call Triple Zero (000). Encourage them to contact [Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au).
- Take a deep breath — remember that kids are growing up in a world that is different to ours.
- The best thing you can do is support and reassure them.
- Never blame or shame them for what they have experienced. Reassure your child that you will always support and love them. This is important and will help to protect their mental health.
- Ask the child what they would say if this happened to their close friend, and help them to say those same kind, caring words to themselves.
- Work through the steps outlined above to report the image to eSafety.
- You can seek advice and support through [Parentline](https://www.parentline.com.au) and through our online resources for [parents and carers](#). Those resources help parents learn about online risks and topics such as sending nudes, sexting and 'hard-to-have' conversations.
- Show them the advice for [kids](#) and [young people](#) on our website.

What if an image of someone I know has been shared without their consent?

Make sure they feel supported and let them know it's not their fault.

If they are experiencing image-based abuse as part of an abusive relationship, encourage them to contact [1800Respect](https://www.1800respect.org.au) for counselling support and safety planning.

Encourage them to report the image-based abuse to eSafety. We can help to get the intimate images or video removed and, in some cases, take action against the person who shared it.



How to report image-based abuse

You can report image-based abuse to eSafety. We can help to get the intimate images or video removed and, in some cases, take action against the person who shared it.

Follow these steps to make a report:

1 Learn more about image-based abuse and how to get help and support

We offer detailed advice on [image-based abuse](#), including resources and support for anyone who has experienced image-based abuse, and their friends and family.

2 Collect evidence and information

To make a report to eSafety, you will need to collect evidence such as screenshots of what has been happening. Read more about how to [collect evidence](#).

3 Make an image-based abuse report to eSafety

Once you have collected relevant evidence and information, you can [start your report](#).

Are you being blackmailed or threatened?

If someone is threatening to share your intimate images unless you give into their demands, help is available.

Do not give them any money or bitcoin — paying a blackmailer will only result in more demands for payment.

Follow these steps:

1 Stop all contact with the blackmailer.

2 Take screenshots of the threats and then block the user.

3 Read our advice on how to deal with [sexual extortion](#).

How can I help stop image-based abuse?

- Understand that sharing any intimate image without consent is a breach of trust. There are no excuses. It doesn't matter if the person feels hurt after a relationship break-up, or if they thought it would be funny— it is never OK to share intimate images without the consent of the person in it.
- Don't share intimate images of other people, even if you think the person in the image might be OK with it.
- If someone has sent you intimate images of another person, delete the image and tell the sender that sharing intimate images without consent isn't OK.
- Stand up for the person in the image by not shaming or blaming them.
- Call out bad behaviour if people are talking about sharing intimate images without consent.
- Support the person in the image. Reassure them that they have done nothing wrong and direct them to the [image-based abuse](#) section of our website for support.

Where can I get help and support?

There are specialist services who can provide help and support free of charge.

Kids Helpline

5 to 25 year olds. All issues. Phone counselling available all day, every day. Online chat available 8am to 12am EST daily.

Phone: 1800 55 1800

Web: kidshelpline.com.au

Lifeline

All ages. All issues. Phone counselling available all day, every day. Online chat available 7pm to 4am AEST daily.

Phone: 13 11 14

Web: lifeline.org.au

Help in languages other than English

Call the [Translating and Interpreting Service](#) on 131 450 and ask them to contact one of the helplines above for you.

You can also call the [Translating and Interpreting Service](#) on 131 450, once you have made a report to us and we have given you a phone number to contact us on.

Guides on [how to deal with image-based abuse are available in 12 other languages](#), - Arabic, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Tamil, Thai, Persian, Filipino, Hindi, Spanish, Punjabi, and Karen.

If you are deaf or have a hearing impairment

Contact [Speak and Listen](#) (relay call options) on 1300 555 727 and ask them to contact a helpline for you, or to speak to us once you have made a report.