

Parents and carers

Sexual extortion: What parents and carers need to know

Sexual extortion, sometimes called 'sextortion', is a form of blackmail where someone threatens to share a nude, sexual image or video of someone unless the person gives into their demands. There are two primary forms of sexual extortion.

- 1. Financial sexual extortion:** This occurs when a victim is blackmailed or manipulated into sending sexually explicit content of themselves to the perpetrator, who then threatens to share the content unless a sum of money is paid.
- 2. Non-financial sexual extortion:** This occurs when a victim is blackmailed or manipulated into doing a specific act for the perpetrator, such as performing sexual acts, or sending more sexual images.

Understanding the gendered dynamics of sexual extortion

Sexual extortion affects young people differently based on gender, with distinct patterns in how and why they are targeted.

Young men and boys

- are more likely to be targeted for **financial sexual extortion**
- are typically approached by **someone they don't know**
- often have perpetrators targeting them who are part of **overseas criminal syndicates** using fake identities to manipulate and blackmail.

Young women and girls

- are more likely to be targeted for **non-financial sexual extortion**, such as demands for more intimate or explicit material
- have perpetrators which they may **know personally**, such as a peer or ex-partner or **someone they've only met online**. Often they're posing as a friend or romantic interest.



How do young people meet these online perpetrators

- **Nearly 2 in 3 adolescents** who experienced sexual extortion said the perpetrator was **someone they met online** – someone they had **never met in person**.
- In **almost all cases**, the **perpetrator initiated contact**.
- There were some common platforms where these initial contacts occurred: Snapchat and Instagram.

The perpetrators often ask young people to **move their conversation** to another platform or service. For example, they may meet the young person on Instagram and request that the conversation move to another platform like Snapchat or WhatsApp.

Important note: These platforms are not necessarily more dangerous than others. Perpetrators tend to use **whatever platforms young people are using**.

Talking to young people about sexual extortion

When talking to young people about sexual extortion remember to:

- **Stay calm:** being angry will only add to their stress. Remember that young people are growing up in a world that's very different from their parents and carers.
- **Reassure them** that you will continue to support and love them – this is important for their mental health.
- **Believe them** and remind them the situation is not their fault.
- **Focus on taking action** – know what can be reported and where you can get help.

Reporting image-based abuse

Image-based abuse is when someone shares, or threatens to share, an intimate image or video of a person without their consent.

- [Report image-based abuse](#)
- [Report forms](#)
- [How to collect evidence](#)

Resources

- [Dealing with sexual extortion | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Lifting the veil on sextortion | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Sexual extortion of Australian adolescents: Results from a national survey | Australian Institute of Criminology](#)
- [The impacts of sexual extortion on minors: A systematic review | Australian Institute of Criminology](#)

Image-based abuse

- [Revenge porn or image-based abuse | Getting help](#)
- [Image-based abuse quick guide](#)
- [What to do if you shared someone's intimate image or video](#)
- [Managing the impacts of image-based abuse](#)

Online tools

Find out how to prevent the intimate images or videos being shared elsewhere. If the person is under 18, use [Take It Down](#)

eSafety Parents and Carers

- [Parents](#)
- [The hard-to-have conversations](#)
- [Protecting children from sexual abuse online](#)
- [Talking about online child sexual abuse with 13 to 18 year olds](#)
- [The eSafety Guide](#) – overview of over 200 games, apps and social networking platforms.
- [Webinars for parents and carers](#)

The Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE)

The ACCCE is an arm of the Australian Federal Police responsible for taking reports of Online Child Sexual Exploitation. Reporting to the ACCCE is **required** because:

- image-based abuse of young people is considered child sexual exploitation and is a **federal offence**
- it helps bring perpetrators to justice
- it ensures victims receive appropriate support.

[Report abuse | ACCCE](#)

Last updated: June 2025