

Sextortion

Sextortion is a serious issue that can happen to anyone, but especially to children and adolescents who spend a lot of time online. It is when someone threatens to share intimate photos or videos of them, or harm them or their loved ones, unless they do what the perpetrator wants. Sextortion can be devastating and make the victim feel scared, ashamed and alone. However, it's important to remember for them to know they are not to blame and that help is available. Talking about sextortion can help your child understand what it is, how to protect themselves and what to do if they are targeted.

Empower confidence.
Start the conversation using these strategies:

- 1.** Explain what sextortion is and how it works.
- 2.** Emphasise that sextortion is a form of exploitation and abuse, and it is not their fault.
- 3.** Discuss the dangers of sharing personal or intimate information online.
- 4.** Teach them how to recognise potential red flags and warning signs.
- 5.** Encourage them to talk to a trusted adult if they feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- 6.** Explain the importance of being cautious with online strangers and not accepting friend requests from people they don't know.
- 7.** Discuss the risks of using public Wi-Fi and advise them to avoid sensitive activities when using it.
- 8.** Teach them to be mindful of the information they post on social media and the internet.
- 9.** Explain that they have the right to feel safe and secure, and that help is available if they are targeted.
- 10.** Encourage open communication and offer ongoing support and resources as required.



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What to do if your child is a victim:

- 1.** Reassure your child that speaking up and reporting it to the police is the right thing to do, and they will not get into any trouble.
- 2.** Avoid sending more images and avoid paying more or any money.
- 3.** Collect as much evidence as you can – take screenshots, account details, anything that you can find.
- 4.** Do not engage with the suspect, but log off and walk away.
- 5.** Leave all accounts as they are. DO NOT shut your child's account down
- 6.** Don't allow your child to blame themselves as they will be feeling distressed enough. learn healthy coping strategies.
- 7.** Change all passwords on all accounts and ensure they are set to private.
- 8.** Delete any contacts who are not personally known to your child – no friends of friends and definitely no randoms.
- 9.** Report all of this to your local police station.