

# SEXTORTION

## Children, Tweens, and Teens

Extortion is obtaining something, especially money, through force or threats. Sextortion happens when a child is coerced to send nude or sexual images of themselves to someone. Many times this someone is pretending to be a peer of the child. The child is then blackmailed by the predator demanding additional sexual content or money with the threat of sharing the images of them with friends, family or their communities. **Sextortion is a form of sexual exploitation and it is a crime.**

### Types of Sextortion

**TRADITIONAL SEXTORTION** Demanding additional sexual imagery

**FINANCIAL SEXTORTION** Demanding money or gift cards

### Motivations of the Perpetrator

Financial Gain

Possibly part of a sex trafficking ring

Repeating past sexual trauma

Being pressured themselves by a pimp

Fulfilling the demand for pornographic content

Need Power or Control

Sexual Gratification



### Key elements to consider

- **Intention:** The coercing is a deliberate attempt to extract content or money.
- **Impact:** The victim is harmed, humiliated and terrified of the content being released to the public.
- **Repeated:** The offender continues the coercion, even if money is paid.
- **Power Imbalance:** The offender is the one who holds the power. The victim feels terrified, powerless and stuck.

### Unique Characteristics

- Teen boys ages 14-17 are most at risk, but anyone can be at risk of sextortion.
- Financial sextortion is a viral scam that has training manuals circulating on social media platforms.
- The offenders may be someone the victim knows or the victim may be a target of these viral scams.
- Offenders gain trust, then typically move quickly to the demands and threats.
- Content can be easily spread to phone contacts, social media followers, or pornography websites.
- Revenge porn can be used against the victim, so be aware of what you share with current partners.
- Hard to track down offenders due to anonymity (the victim cannot identify the offender).
- Nudify apps make AI-generated explicit images easy, where the victim never has to send the image yet is still blackmailed.

### Impact on the Victim

- **Psychological:** The victim feels overwhelming pressure to provide something against their will or means causing emotional distress, intense fear and anxiety, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.
- **Physical:** Sleep disturbances, self harm, and in worse case scenarios can lead to suicide.
- **Academic:** Lower attendance, lower grades, lack of attention, hiding and pulling away from activities and friendships.

Visit [parentssos.org](https://parentssos.org) and [dauidslegacy.org](https://dauidslegacy.org) for more resources.

# PREVENTION & MITIGATION

## Ongoing Discussions

- Have open, normal, safe and ongoing conversations about healthy sexual age-appropriate relationships, so when your child is pursued by a secretive or unhealthy situation they know the difference.
- Talk to your children about tricky adults online and give them language options to refuse when asked to participate in this kind of activity.
- Role-play tricky scenarios where someone may ask them sensitive information.
- Tell your children about the Sextortion Scam in an age-appropriate way so they can be ready to talk to a safe adult if they get approached.

## Conversation Starters

Make your children aware of what sextortion is, how it works and that it is a crime. Be the safe place for your kids. Let them know that even if they make a mistake, they can still come to you and you can help them. It's not a child's fault, but it is important to be aware of it.

Are your social media accounts set to private?

Has someone ever asked you to send them money?

What would you do if anyone sent you pictures or asked you to send pictures of yourself that make you feel uncomfortable?

Do you communicate with people online that you don't know?

*Between 2021 and 2023, the number of online enticement reports increased by 323%.*

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)

## Boundaries & Limits

- Model healthy phone habits and spend family time together.
- No devices in bedrooms at night. Have an overnight charging area for devices outside of the bedroom. Just as our phones need to recharge, so do we.
- Turn off any chat features on apps for young children.
- Set expectations for phone use with a technology contract and screen time settings.

## Parental Supervision

- Actively and openly participate in your children's activity on their devices.
- Use monitoring or filtering parental control features on children's devices.
- Stay on top of screen time settings as children get older and adapt with their age.
- Use the App Store to research the apps they use.
- Block or make sure they get permission before downloading new apps.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO TELL CONGRESS TO PASS THE KIDS ONLINE SAFETY ACT.

## ACTION STEPS IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING SEXTORTED

- 1 Communicate to your child that they can come to you no matter what and you will help them. Be their safe place.
- 2 Don't delete anything. Take screenshots of messages, threats, and connected accounts.
- 3 Report to [report.cybertip.org](https://report.cybertip.org) and your local law enforcement.
- 4 Have content removed from circulation by contacting [takeitdown.ncmec.org](https://takeitdown.ncmec.org).
- 5 Make sure your child has professional emotional support.

