

Sextortion



What is Sextortion?

Sexual extortion or 'sextortion' is a form of blackmail that usually originates via dating apps or social networking site. It involves criminals using fake profiles to pose as someone charming and flirtatious to manipulate their targets into sharing nude images or videos of themselves.

Then, they threaten to share the compromising material unless the person complies with their demands. These criminals are increasingly targeting people, especially young men.

If a young person has been targeted, reassure them that it's not their fault, there is help available, and you can help make a report. These criminals are practised in the art of manipulation and know how to isolate, shame and corner young people.

We encourage parents and carers to play an active role in their child's online life. Having conversations, being curious and getting involved can help anticipate when they might need support and advice. We have resources to help start conversations about these topics, read our advice on how to chat with them about sending nudes and sexting.

Here's what parents and their child can do:

1. **Cease all communication with the blackmailer** – Stop all contact and do not pay the blackmailer or provide any more intimate content.
2. **Seek additional support** – If your child needs further support, you can contact Lifeline or Kids Helpline 24/7 for immediate assistance.
3. **Report the incident** – If they're under 18, report it to the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation. If they're over 18, report it to the platforms where the blackmailer contacted them. If their intimate image or video is shared, or the platform doesn't help, report the crime to eSafety.



Support for Australian families around distressing events and content online

Online spaces should be safe for everyone. But when children and young people see violent or distressing material, it is important the adults around them know how to provide the right support to minimise the harm.

Tips on how to deal with violent and distressing content

- **Don't share it further** – even if your intention is to help or raise awareness, you may cause distress to others.
- **Report it to the platform** to help get the material removed quickly.
- **If the material is not removed, you can report it to eSafety**. eSafety can notify the platform to either remove the content or block access from within Australia. Your actions could protect you and others from seeing that content again.

On the eSafety website there is support for dealing with distressing content, including content for primary-school aged children and teenagers. Parents and carers might also find our help with parental controls useful.

Help children, young people and families to get harmful content removed from online platforms

The quickest way to have cyberbullying messages, violent or sexual material, illegal activity, or unwanted contact removed from the internet is to report directly to the social media service or platform where the incident occurred.

Young people may need the support of an adult to make a report to a platform, so here are the steps you can take:

1. Collect evidence before reporting to the social media service or taking other action. Take screenshots showing what has been happening and for how long.
2. Report to the social media service, game, app, or website where the incident occurred. Use our eSafety Guide to help find the appropriate links for each service.
3. After you report abusive content to a service or platform, they may immediately remove the content. They may also block the person who



posted it or delete their account. In the case of illegal content, the service may also refer the matter to the police.

If the above process doesn't get you the support you need, [eSafety can help](#). Our advice can help with when to go to the police and counselling services for children, young people and parents and carers.