



ONLINE SEXUAL HARASSMENT: GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

**IF YOU EXPERIENCE *ANY FORM* OF ONLINE
SEXUAL HARASSMENT:**

- **KNOW IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT AND YOU ARE NOT IN TROUBLE**
- **SPEAK TO AN ADULT OR FRIEND THAT YOU TRUST - YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SUFFER IN SILENCE**
- **SPEAK TO SOMEONE ANONYMOUSLY VIA ONE OF THE HELPLINES BELOW**
- **CHECK OUT THE GRAPHIC BELOW FOR MORE OPTIONS AND BYSTANDER BEST-PRACTICE**

ONLINE SEXUAL HARASSMENT FALLS INTO 3 MAIN CATEGORIES.

RECEIVING UNWANTED SEXUAL CONTENT ONLINE.

- SOMEONE SENDS YOU A SEXUAL IMAGE, VIDEO OR MESSAGE THAT YOU DIDN'T ASK FOR OR WANT.
- SOMEONE SHOWS YOU PORN THAT YOU DIDN'T ASK TO SEE.

TAKING OR SHARING SEXUAL CONTENT OF SOMEONE WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION.

- SOMEONE SHARES YOUR NUDES OR SHOWS THEM TO OTHER PEOPLE WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT.
- SOMEONE MADE A SEXUAL IMAGE OR VIDEO OF YOU WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT, FOR EXAMPLE TAKING A PICTURE UP YOUR SKIRT WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT.
- IF SOMEONE DOES ANY OF THESE THINGS WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION, THIS IS IMAGE-BASED SEXUAL ABUSE.

SEXUAL COERCION, THREATS OR INTIMIDATION ONLINE.

- SOMEONE THREATENS TO SHARE A SEXUAL IMAGE OF YOU.
- SOMEONE OUTS OR THREATENS TO OUT YOUR GENDER OR SEXUALITY ONLINE.
- SOMEONE IS PRESSURING YOU ONLINE TO DO SOMETHING SEXUAL.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

Unsolicited sexual images (particularly dick pics) are very common on apps like Instagram and Snapchat. If someone is sending you unwanted sexual images, messages or videos online, this is sexual harassment and you don't have to put up with it.

If someone over 18 is sending you sexual content and you are under 16, what they are doing is against the law - it's a sexual offence.

If someone takes or shares sexual images of you without your consent, this is a crime and is abusive behaviour. It is not your fault.

If you're under 18, a sexual image or video of you is child sexual abuse material, which is illegal. However, this doesn't automatically mean that you will get in trouble for sending it. There is something called Outcome 21, which means that the police can choose not to take action if they don't think it's in your interest to do so.

Sometimes we're told that our nudes will "be on the internet for the rest of our life", but this isn't the case. Since it is considered child sexual abuse material, there are several organisations which work to get these images taken down. (Read on for more.)

You have the human right to live safely, free from degrading treatment. You also have a right to respect for your private and family life. These rights apply no matter who you are.

If someone is blackmailing you online, is sending you unwanted sexual advances online or is stalking you online, you don't have to put up with it. That person may also be breaking multiple laws.

It's a sexual offence to cause someone to engage in sexual activity without their consent, no matter what age they are.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

1. REPORT OR BLOCK VIA THE APP

Apps have built-in reporting tools. You can use these to block or report the user, message or image to the social media platform - see how here. You could also mute someone if the app allows you to, and check your privacy settings to change who can see and contact you. For information on how to report to an app, you can visit Report Harmful Content via this link. If you select the relevant platform, click on the option that says you haven't reported it yet, and then they will provide you with instructions.

A NOTE ON REPORTING TO APPS:

Apps can be quite slow to remove content or users. The key is mass reporting - if you can, get all of your friends to report the post or user. The more reports the app gets, the more likely they are to remove the image or deactivate the account.

2. REPORT TO AN E-SAFETY PLATFORM

There are 3 main e-safety sites dedicated to keeping young people safe online. If you start reporting to one and it turns out they are not best-placed to help you, don't worry - they will just redirect you to one of the other two.

INTERNET WATCH FOUNDATION

You can report:

- Sexual images of children online

To the Internet Watch Foundation using [this link](#). The IWF removes the images from the internet, and can also stop them from being re-uploaded.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The IWF may not be able to help if your nudes are being shared through an app or privately. For example, if they are being shared via Snapchat, Whatsapp or someone has them stored on their personal device.
- If you wanted to report nudes shared on Instagram to the IWF, you may need to use the desktop version when you report.
- If the IWF cannot help with your situation, they will redirect you to CEOP.

CEOP (CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ONLINE PROTECTION COMMAND)

You can report:

- Online sexual abuse and grooming

To CEOP using [this link](#). The reporting tool is very easy to use.

Once you leave your details, a Child Protection Advisor will work with you to make a plan to keep you safe.

[Visit their website](#) to find out more about the process.

REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

You can report:

- Threats
- Bullying and harassment
- Pornographic content
- Unwanted sexual advances

To Report Harmful Content via [this link](#). The page also contains advice, including how to report to different apps.

3. REPORT OFFLINE

- If you experience anything online that makes you feel uncomfortable, angry, upset, weird - speak to someone that you trust. It is not your fault and you do not have to suffer in silence.
- Under 18s can phone **Childline** for free from any phone on **0800 11 11**.
- If you think someone has committed a crime, and you felt safe and able to do so, you could report it to the police. If it's a non-emergency, you can call **101** to speak to your local police. If it's an emergency phone **999**.

IF WE SEE OR HEAR SOMEONE EXPERIENCING ONLINE HARASSMENT, THERE ARE STEPS WE CAN TAKE AS A BYSTANDER TO HELP PREVENT FURTHER SUFFERING TO THE VICTIM:

1. If anyone tries to show you a nude of someone else, remember that you don't have to look at it or share it with others
2. If someone is harassing another person online, don't join in with the harassment, or like offensive comments or posts
3. If it's helpful to the victim, report any images, comments or the user who is doing the harassment
4. If someone tells you they are experiencing online sexual harassment, believe them and take it seriously
5. Don't slut-shame or victim-blame someone who experiences online sexual harassment - tell them it's not their fault
6. If you can, and it is safe for you and the victim, call out people who are harassing others online. Tell them that what they are doing is harassment, and it's not okay.

IF YOU DECIDE TO TELL SOMEONE AT SCHOOL THAT YOU'VE EXPERIENCED ONLINE SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

- You can request that staff do not see the image, film or message
- Staff will always follow safeguarding procedures designed to protect your safety and right to privacy
- You have the right to an input over how incidents of online sexual harassment are managed if you are the victim
- Even if an incident takes place outside of school a pupil who commits online sexual harassment could still face consequences in school.

IF YOU'RE OVER 18 AND SOMEONE SHARES YOUR NUDES WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT:

You can contact the [Revenge Porn Helpline](#). It is still image-based sexual abuse and illegal.

ONLINE SEXUAL HARASSMENT:
GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

SEXPLAIN, 2020

w: sexplain.org.uk

@SexplainUK

e: info@sexplainuk.org

