



RESPONSE GUIDE

MY CHILD WAS SEXTORTED - WHAT NOW?

Did you find this resource and your child isn't a victim of sextortion?

There's now no reason to wait until something like this has happened to speak to your child about sextortion. Refer to our Reel Insight Corner within this resource or our Sextortion Prevention Guide to learn how to address sextortion within your household.

WHAT IS SEXTORTION?

When a person threatens, manipulates, or coerces a child after acquiring sexual imagery (or videos) of the child. The offender typically threatens to release the imagery of the child unless the child creates more imagery or sends money. Children are then coerced by the offender to comply with the demands, perhaps over and over again, and manipulated by the threats received.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AS A PARENT?

- Understandably, you may experience a wide spectrum of reflexive emotions that can be difficult to lay aside. Regardless, as your child's primary advocate, it's crucial to exercise empathy and remain calm.
- We encourage parents and guardians to avoid focusing on the child's involuntary or voluntary involvement.
- Instead, remember that your child is a victim who has been placed in a scary and compromising situation. His or her emotional and physical safety is paramount.
- Stop communication with the offender and notify appropriate authorities.
- Let them know you have steps you can take to stop the abuse, options to take down their pictures if they were shared, and can seek help for them.
- Do not allow yourself or your child to be fooled or intimidated by false information and threats — especially those that often turn out to be empty.
- Blocking a social media account will not automatically disseminate imagery. Make a report to both social media platforms and local, state, or federal law enforcement.

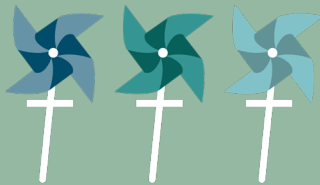
Let your child know you are glad they asked for help and don't demand information from your child. Refer to our [W Method](#) for what questions to ask.

CATFISH CORNER: REEL INSIGHTS

- Believe it or not, it is common for children to take and send nude imagery, even if they've been told not to.
- Any child can be targeted in a financial sextortion scheme, regardless of age, race, gender, socioeconomic status, or family dynamic.
- Sextortion and exploitation occurs most often on applications and websites that are most commonly used by children.
- Children sometimes deny claims that they took or sent nude images - even if confronted with the actual imagery.
- Many kids have reported they know they've had interactions — even of a sexual nature — with someone over the age of 18.
- A helpful way to deter children from sharing sexual imagery is to discuss what they have to lose when nude images are shared: academic careers, sports affiliations, future job opportunities, and even future relationships are just some of the areas that can be seriously impacted by the publication of sexual imagery.
- After discussing negative consequences of sharing explicit content, remind your child that your willingness to help and support them is not conditional and will remain should they have something to disclose in the future.

HOW CAN I HELP AND SUPPORT MY CHILD?

- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has a tool to retrieve and get rid of sexual imagery and videos of children called “[Take It Down](#).” Please refer to their website for details and what platforms participate in this resource.
- Seek their best interest when deciding next steps for internet access and a personal device. Let your child be a part of this conversation as you work to build back trust between each other and establish responsible use of the internet.
- Work together with your child to determine which applications they will download and use. Encourage your child to show you the “ins and outs” of the applications they want. This can inform your decision in either disallowing or allowing an app, and feeling confident in asking questions in the future and understanding their online activity. This proactive approach ensures your child’s online activity has boundaries and fosters ongoing conversations about their internet and application use.
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children also has a free peer support service called Team Hope. Calling **866-305-4673** will allow you to be connected with a trained volunteer with a shared experience to receive phone based encouragement, support and crisis intervention.
- The key to both prevention and response is one and the same: an open line of communication between parents and their kids, where both parties can speak candidly about the challenges of living in a society that depends on technology and online social connectivity.



WHAT COULD HAPPEN AFTER I MAKE A REPORT TO LAW ENFORCEMENT?

Each case will have its own course of action depending on the circumstances. We want you to feel prepared for possible outcomes. Since each case is unique and not concrete, we suggest you take control of the two things in your power - resources and restoration.

1

The agency you report to will review the initial evidence.

2

Depending on available evidence, your child may complete a forensic interview with your local Child Advocacy Center or the agency that hosts forensic interviews. A forensic interview gives an opportunity for a child to disclose about abuse or neglect they have suffered from or witnessed in a neutral and developmentally appropriate setting.

3

Depending on available leads for a detective to investigate, the case may be closed before or after your child is interviewed. This could be due to inability to track the suspect, only one image being sent, evidence being destroyed, or a host of other variables out of your control.

4

Your assigned detective or victim’s advocate can come alongside you as you navigate the investigation, available resources, and address case specific questions.

Justice may not always involve legal action. You and your child have the ability to ensure justice through personal development and meaningful connection. Consider therapy, seeking support from the community or family, recognizing resilience over mistakes, and fostering open and safe communication with your child to facilitate restoration and healing.

MEET THE AUTHORS



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Prevention Starts With Parents

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