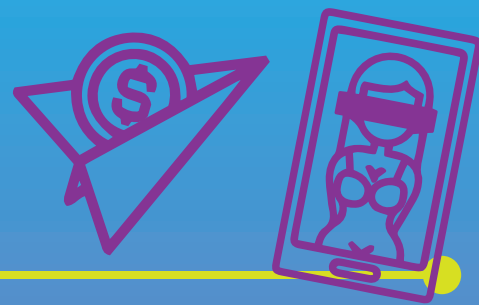


# SEXTORTION

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



### What is SEXTORTION?

Sextortion is a form of blackmail where someone **threatens** to expose sexual images or videos of another person to **pressure** them into providing additional images, sex, money, or other favours.

### Who does sextortion affect?

Research suggests that:



Boys are more likely to be extorted for **money** and girls are more likely to be extorted for **more images**.<sup>1</sup>



There is a **higher prevalence** of sextortion among **LGBTQ+ youth**.<sup>2,3</sup>

According to *Cybertip.ca*:



Reports of financial sextortion have **increased** by 150% since 2022.<sup>4</sup>



**90%** of financial sextortion victims who reported to Cybertip in 2023 were male.<sup>1</sup>

### What are the impacts of sextortion?

Sextortion is a harm that is committed online, but it is important to recognize that it can result in serious negative impacts both online and offline.

Experiencing sextortion can increase the risk of negative mental health outcomes, including **stress**, **anxiety**, **self-blame**, **depression**, and **isolation**.<sup>5,6</sup>

1. Cybertip. (2024). Online harms: Sextortion. <https://www.cybertip.ca/en/online-harms/sextortion/>
2. Patchin, J.W., & Hinduja, S. (2020). Sextortion among adolescents: Results from a national survey of U.S. youth. *Sexual Abuse*, 32(1), 30–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1079063218800469>
3. Gámez-Guadix, M., & Incera, D. (2021). Homophobia is online: Sexual victimization and risks on the internet and mental health among bisexual, homosexual, pansexual, asexual, and queer adolescents. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 119, Article 106728. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106728>
4. Public Safety Canada. (2023). About online child sexual exploitation. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrngcrm/chld-sxl-xplftn-nt rnt/abt-nln-chld-sxl-xplftn-en.aspx>
5. O'Malley, R.L. (2023). Short-term and long-term impacts of financial sextortion on victim's mental well-being. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(13-14), 8563–8592. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605231156416>
6. Cross, C., Holt, K., & O'Malley, R.L. (2023). "If U don't pay they will share the pics": Exploring sextortion in the context of romance fraud. *Victims & Offenders*, 18(7), 1194–1215. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2022.2075064>

### What should I do if I am being sextorted?

**Stop communicating** with the person who is threatening you. We know this can be really hard, but research shows it can help.

**Reach out to a trusted adult** or contact **NeedHelpNow.ca** to get confidential support.

**Do not comply** with any threats, send any money, or send more images.

- Remember that if you agree to an extorter's demands, this often leads to more demands.

**Deactivate your accounts**, but do not delete your social media account or images because **you may need this as evidence of what happened**.

- Take screenshots of the messages you received and/or exchanged with the offender and their profile, including their username.



If you have experienced or are experiencing sextortion, please know **YOU ARE NOT ALONE** and there are resources available to you if you need help:

**NeedHelpNow.ca** provides information on emotional support, reporting, helping a friend, and can help connect you with support services in your area (e.g., counselling, peer support, therapy).

**Project Arachnid** is a tool that helps victims have their images removed if they are shared publicly.

**Kids Help Phone** (1-800-668-6868) can provide urgent emotional support and help you navigate whatever you are experiencing.

### LEARN MORE

About SEXTORTION from the **Canadian Centre for Child Protection**



About ONLINE HARMS and SAFETY from **Digitally Informed Youth**



LEARN MORE AND  
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