

### **Latest data shows almost a third of young people have received nudes and are mostly being sent them by strangers**

Latest data from a survey of more than 4,000 young people between the ages of 14 and 18 reveal that almost a third (31%, 1,304 respondents) had received a nude video or photo. Of these 1,304 respondents, well over half (60%, 786 respondents) had received a nude from a stranger.

With regard to pornography, four in 10 (40%, 1,622 respondents) had viewed it. The average age of first viewing porn was 12 years. Almost a third (32%, 382 respondents) though had first viewed porn aged 11 or younger, with the youngest reported age being only 3 years.

Of those who said they had viewed porn, 64% (1,034 respondents) went on to view it again. Concerningly, almost one in five of respondents who went on to view porn again reported having a porn habit (19%, 195 respondents) and more than one in 10 of them (13%, 133 respondents) reported having a porn addiction.

*It is impossible to tackle the embedded behaviours of sexual harassment without talking about the harmful impact pornography is having on children and young people.*

*I'm thrilled that schools in Hertfordshire are working together as frontrunners across their communities, alongside students' parents, to help children thrive in healthy relationships online and offline.*

Helen Roberts, Dignify CEO/Founder

These findings are based on data collected from 10 secondary schools in South West Hertfordshire who participated in the Dignify School Survey between November 2022 and January 2023.

The Dignify School Survey service is available for secondary schools nationally, to enable them to understand students' experiences of sexually harmful behaviours and how best to support them.

Please visit [www.dignify.org](http://www.dignify.org) or email [research@dignify.org](mailto:research@dignify.org) for more information on the Dignify School Survey.

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#### **Notes to editors**

Dignify is a charity (registered charity no. 1192067) that is working towards a future where children and young people are free from the sexual objectification and abuse that porn can normalise. We do this by working with [schools](#), [parents/carers](#) as well as children and young people themselves to champion healthy relationships and provide education on the harmful impact of porn.

For more information on the Dignify School Survey, email Helen Brewis at [research@dignify.org](mailto:research@dignify.org).

For more information on our wider work, email [letstalk@dignify.org](mailto:letstalk@dignify.org).

## Dignify School Survey: Key statistics from South West Hertfordshire



### Background

The Dignify School Survey is an online survey for Years 10 to 13. It provides schools with an audit of the sexually harmful behaviours happening among their student body, a deeper understanding of their students' use of social media, their exposure to nudes and pornography, and an overall assessment of students' wellbeing.

The findings detailed in the rest of this document are based on data collected from 10 secondary schools in South West Hertfordshire who participated in the Dignify School Survey between November 2022 and January 2023. This provided a sample of 4,649 students across Years 10 to 13. The sample was 49% female (2,277 respondents), 48% male (2,243) and 3% other gender (129 respondents).

This group of schools are leading the way in tackling the issues raised by Ofsted in their [2021 review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges](#) by using the Dignify School Survey to gain a clearer picture of these issues in their schools and then acting on the recommendations made to implement improvements. We are incredibly grateful to them for working with us to develop and fine-tune the Dignify School Survey.

### Social media

The vast majority (96%, 4,303 respondents) used social media at least daily, with 29% (1,298 respondents) using it several times an hour. Most (92%, 4,089 respondents) used a mobile phone to access social media.

The most popular social media platforms, based on students' self-reporting, were:

- YouTube (92%, 4,102 respondents);
- WhatsApp (91%, 4,083 respondents);
- Snapchat (83%, 3,741 respondents);
- Instagram (80%, 3,586 respondents);
- TikTok (77%, 3,438 respondents).

In general, the findings show that social media had a positive impact on many respondents, particularly in terms of engaging with friends:

- 64% (2,870 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that social media made them feel more connected to friends;
- 45% (2,036 respondents) reported that social media made them feel they have friends to support them.

However, views were more mixed when students were asked if what they see on social media makes them compare themselves to others:

- 38% (1,708 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that social media made them compare themselves to others;
- 50% of female respondents (1,106) versus 25% of male respondents (547) agreed or strongly agreed that social media makes them compare themselves to others.

### Sexual harassment

Half the sample (50%, 1,886 respondents) reported that they observed sexual comments, jokes or remarks at least weekly at school. Just over a quarter (27%, 1,009 respondents) observed sexually worded text or social media messages being sent at school at least weekly and 23% (886 respondents) observed rumours or comments about someone's sexual activity at school at least weekly.

## **Nude sharing**

Almost a third (31%, 1,304 respondents) had received a nude. By gender, 37% of female respondents (785), 24% of male respondents (471) and 41% of respondents who identified as other for gender (48) had received a nude.

Of the 1,304 students who had received a nude, 60% (786 respondents) had received them from a stranger. By gender, 72% of female respondents (569), 39% of male respondents (185) and 67% of respondents who identified as other for gender (32) had received a nude from a stranger.

With regard to students sending nudes, 9% (357 respondents) had done so. Of those who had sent a nude, 21% (75 respondents) had sent a nude to a stranger. By gender, 19% of female respondents (35) had sent a nude to a stranger, compared with 17% (25 respondents) of males and 58% (15 respondents) who identified as other for gender.

## **Perceptions of porn**

Almost half the students (45%, 1,824 respondents) thought people are quite likely or very likely to act out what they have seen in porn. The same percentage of students (45%, 1,809 respondents) thought people who view porn regularly are quite likely or very likely to objectify others.

## **Experiences of porn**

Four in 10 students (40%, 1,622 respondents) had viewed pornography either intentionally or accidentally. The average age at which respondents had first viewed porn was 12 years. The average age by gender was 12.2 years for female students, 12.1 years for male students and 10.3 years for students who identified as other for gender. Almost a third (32%, 382 respondents) had first viewed porn aged 11 or younger, with the youngest reported age being only 3 years.

Of the 1,181 respondents who answered the question, the main reasons reported for first having viewed porn were curiosity (54%, 639 respondents), because someone else had showed them porn (29%, 338 respondents) or by accident (29%, 337 respondents).

Of those who said they had viewed porn, 64% (1,034 respondents) went on to view it again. The main reasons they cited for viewing porn again were personal enjoyment (58%, 598 respondents), continued curiosity (36%, 372 respondents) and to learn more about sex (22%, 232 respondents).

Concerningly, almost one in five of those who had viewed porn again reported having a porn habit (19%, 195 respondents) and more than one in 10 of them (13%, 133 respondents) reported having a porn addiction. Also of note, 15% of those who had viewed porn again had come across it again by accident (150) or because it had popped up on their social media feed (14%, 148 respondents).

The majority (92%, 851 respondents) viewed porn at home and most (84%, 775 respondents) watched porn on a mobile phone.

## **Relationships and sex education**

School was the main source of sex education reported (66%, 2,581 respondents). This was followed by friends (35%, 1,360 respondents), non-porn Internet sites (31%, 1,224 respondents), and TV (27%, 1,035 respondents). Only 24% (954 respondents) reported getting sex education from a parent or carer.