



SEXTORTION

The term “Sextortion” is a combination of two words: Sex and Extortion. In essence, it is blackmail or exploitation using an image, video or livestreaming. Teenagers are especially vulnerable to becoming victims of sextortion as they spend a lot of time online, and mass audience live streaming technology such as Tik Tok, Roblox, Fortnite, Discord etc. connects them to millions of people they have never met.

Often, online encounters are difficult to determine if the individual you are interacting with is a good person or a predator. Many people are even more vulnerable because of their belief that “It won’t happen to me” or “I will know when I am being catfished”. The reality is that thousands of people are being blackmailed either for more photos, a meet up with the predator, or excessive pressure to payout thousands of dollars so the ill-gotten photos are not shared online, with friends and family or sold into global pornography sites.

Here are some tips to discuss with your family to help determine if you are about to be sextorted.

- 1.) The predator will request that you change apps or that you move to another site. If you are on a dating site, they ask you to chat offline. If you are on Tik Tok, they may ask you to go to Instagram and send more photos. The predator’s goal is to try to verify that you are not undercover law enforcement and see if you are willing to follow a new acquaintance to another site. This suggests that you might be easy to persuade or be “groomed” for exploitation.
- 2.) The predator will ask you not to tell anyone. “It is our little secret”. By keeping the new relationship, a secret, the predator has more ability to control their victim. This request should be a huge red flag, that the predator is going to ask you to do something that you will not be proud to show to everybody.
- 3.) The predator asks all the questions, and the victim is providing all the answers. That gives the predator leverage as they know more about the victim than the victim knows about them.
- 4.) The predator starts sending illicit photos or videos and will request the victim to send them images in return. Or they may suggest that the victim do sexual

activities through live streaming. This is common in video game chat rooms that can be recorded.

- 5.) The predator starts making demands, such as creating illicit photos, meeting up, sending money. This should be an immediate indicator that you need to stop all communication and notify parents and law enforcement.

If you or someone you know is in danger of being blackmailed by online activity, follow these steps:

Stop ALL communication with the predator IMMEDIATELY.

Do NOT alert the predator that you know they are up to no good and that you are going to share the information with law enforcement.

Do NOT delete the communication but rather screen shot it as it is evidence to be given to law enforcement. Take those images with you when you contact Law Enforcement.

NEVER send money to someone you meet online. The blackmail is endless and you will never be able to send them enough money to make them stop the extortion.

NEVER meet up with someone you met online, especially if they are beginning to blackmail you. There have been many cases of kidnapping, rape and murder when victims have met with the predator and tried to negotiate the return of the images.

Contact law enforcement. If the victim is a minor, the parents and the victim should contact your local law enforcement and ask for the Cyber Crimes Unit.

If you have been a victim of sextortion, please seek counseling. The uncertainty of the situation will create fears, and anxiety. It is important to work through the situation and working with law enforcement develop a strategy that will protect the victim and help law enforcement to identify the predator. Do not panic. Do not runaway or hurt yourself. Reach and seek help. Most likely you are not their own victim and by reporting it to authorities you may be able to help others who are being blackmailed.

If it is an emergency: Call 911 immediately.

For Non-Emergency Reporting:

Call your local Police Department and ask for Cyber Crimes

You may report non-emergency information at

1-888-373-7888 National Reporting Hotline