



### **Sextortion of Children and Youth is on the Rise**

Never heard of sextortion? You are not alone. Sextortion is extortion (or blackmail) that are threats that end with you sending sexual images and/or videos of yourself through social media to the extortioner. If their demands are not met, the images are often shared or threatened to be shared through social media platforms. Typically, these demands are for more sexual images or money and the extortionists are very skilled and persistent in achieving their goals.

Many parents will state that they have had the 'online safety talk' with their child or that they trust their child to make good choices around online use. Unfortunately, the tactics of the sextorter have accounted for this and they have found alternate routes to gain access to children.

Sextortion can occur in numerous ways. For example, one type of sextortion is convincing the youth to send sexual images of themselves to the sextorter. Sextorters will use gifts, money, encouragement, acceptance, and fake relationships to encourage a youth to send a sexual image. Once the image is received the sextorter will continue to demand more images by threatening to share their photo with the public, their families, schools, or communities. The sextorter will often overwhelm the youth by creating different personas online to give the impression that the image has already been shared and they will demand more money/images to stop the sharing the images. These images are then sold for money, used in other sextortion schemes, or utilized for the sextortionist's own purposes.

If your child doesn't share an image they are safe, right? Sadly, no. The most recent wave of sextortion does not even require the youth to have any prior contact. These sextortionists will utilize any online facial photo of the youth and digitally alter it to appear that it is a nude photo of them or add it into a collage of photos with the youth's face and nudes to insinuate that all the photos are of the youth. They will then threaten to distribute the photos unless a 'ransom' is paid. These are often smaller sums of money or gift cards that youth may be able to access. Sextortionists rely on reaching out to large volumes of youth in hopes that some will pay.

Cybertip.ca has received over 1700 reports of sextortion in the last six months with 91% of sextortion victims being male.

What can be done? We recommend opening up the conversation about this with your children. The vast majority of sextortion occurs on commonly used apps like Instagram and Snapchat. The odds are high that your child will have someone reach out to them for extortion purposes. Keeping an open dialogue around these concerns will help them understand that it is not their fault. They need to know that their trusted adults are willing to help and will allow them to feel safe to talk about it. It is important to stop communicating with the extorter, do not pay money, send additional photos and to report these incidences to Cybertip.ca who will assist you in this process. Do not delete messages or information about the extorter but do take screenshots and deactivate your account.

Above all, remember that our children have not asked for this, their space has been invaded by criminals driven by bad intentions. If our children feel that we understand the challenges they are facing and can come to us without blame or judgement, we will be able to keep them safer, which is our ultimate goal.

### Source:

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INTERLAKE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION EDUCATORS



### More Resources:

**If an emergency: RCMP 911**

**Cybertip.ca**

Website: [www.cybertip.ca/en/](http://www.cybertip.ca/en/)

**Canadian Centre for Child Protection**

Phone: 204-560-2083

Website: [www.protectchildren.ca/en/](http://www.protectchildren.ca/en/)

**Protect Kids Online**

Website: [www.protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/](http://www.protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/)

**Need Help Now**

How to remove pictures from the internet

Website: [www.needhelpnow.ca/app/en/](http://www.needhelpnow.ca/app/en/)

**Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre**

Website: <https://survivors-hope.ca/>

**RCMP Non-emergency line**

Find your local non-emergency line Website:  
<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/detach/en/find/MB>

**CFS:** If you think a child is being harmed or neglected, contact 1-866-345-9241.

**Tracia's Trust:** Manitoba Sexual Exploitation Strategy Website:

[www.gov.mb.ca/fs/traciastrust/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/traciastrust/index.html)

**Or call Your Child's School**