

Australian
Centre to Counter
Child Exploitation

Meta partners with AFP-led ACCCE and Kids Helpline to address sextortion risks for young people

Australia, embargoed until 12:01am AEDT 9 November | 11:01pm QLD 8 November 2023: Meta is partnering with the Australian Federal Police-led Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE), Kids Helpline and US-based organisation NoFiltr, to launch today a community service announcement to inform young people about the dangers of online sextortion.

Sextortion is a form of online blackmail where someone tricks a person into sending sexual images and then threatens to share them unless their demands are met, usually for financial payment, more images or sexual favours. It is a growing trend targeting young Australians.

To help raise awareness of this issue amongst young Australians, the initiative includes new educational assets encouraging preventative behaviours online, including the signs to look out for, where to report and where to seek support if it does happen to them.

The initiative include assets developed by No Filtr, a US-based non-for-profit youth prevention program that partners with organisations from across the world to help prevent the spread of child abuse material online. The assets include;

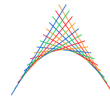
- Educational videos shared across social media outlining how users can report sextortion and get support from family or friends, law enforcement and Kids Helpline.
- An educational sextortion [quiz](#) to encourage young people to test their knowledge on sextortion and get further information
- Ads promoting the videos and quiz across social media.

It comes after the ACCCE experienced a 60 per cent increase in reports of sextortion of young Australians in December 2022. Investigators anticipate an increase in reports leading into the December school holiday period again this year.

The latest data shows ACCCE receives about 300 reports of sextortion of under 18s each month, and that only one in 10 report it.

Speaking on the partnership, AFP Acting Commander ACCCE and Human Exploitation Frank Rayner said, “the new initiative is an important step in raising awareness of sextortion by speaking directly to our younger generation.

“As well as encouraging conversation and raising awareness, we hope this helps young people recognise, understand and protect themselves from sextortion, and to know where to report and seek support,” said Acting Commander Rayner.



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“We all need to be aware that sextortion does exist and education is key to protecting ourselves”.

yourtown CEO Tracy Adams said, “Kids Helpline, a service of yourtown, is proud to support the AFP-led ACCCE awareness campaign and to work collaboratively as a whole-of-sector response to stop the spread of sextortion images on social media platforms.

“If your child is or has been a victim, it is important to stay calm and reassure them that it’s not their fault and that there is help available through Kids Helpline, who work in partnership with the AFP-led Australian Centre to counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE), police and the eSafety Commissioner,” continued Ms Adams.

Kids Helpline reports the current target for sextortion appears to be young males between the ages of 14 – 19. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, children and young people can choose to contact Kids Helpline by telephone, WebChat or email counselling when they need to talk through issues including online safety concerns.

Results from 1st July 2017 to 30th June 2023, identify that 431 sextortion-based contacts were made to Kids Helpline. However, of these 431 contacts, 287 or 66 per cent of these contacts, has occurred over the past 12 months between July 2022 and June 2023.

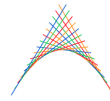
yourtown CEO Ms Adams said that a whole-of-community response is crucial to protect children. This importantly includes increased awareness and education aimed at preventing online extortion from happening in the first place. Kids Helpline provides reputable information on sextortion to help keep young people safe.

Meta’s Regional Policy Director, Mia Garlick, said, “We’re proud to support the AFP-led ACCCE and Kids Helpline in raising awareness of these important tools and services available should young Australians be concerned about sextortion or non-consensual sharing of images online.

“We know the spread of intimate images can be an extremely traumatic experience for young people, and we want them to know that it does not matter what personal circumstances you are in – this can happen to anyone and most importantly – help is available.

“We are committed to working with the broader industry to ensure we can help educate young people about the risk of sharing these images and to stop the spread of these images on our platforms.”

In collaboration with today’s announcement, Meta has created dedicated products to stop the spread of intimate images online, including [Take It Down](#), a first-of-its-kind global platform that people can use to proactively prevent intimate images of minors from spreading online.



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Take It Down enables people to generate a hash of the intimate images or videos privately and directly from their own devices, without having to upload their images or videos to the platform.

The platform means Facebook and Instagram can now use those hashes to scan and see if images or videos that match are coming onto their platforms. From there, Meta can remove images or videos that match that hash, stopping the spread of that content in its tracks.

The PSA will run from 6 November to 14 December across Facebook, Instagram directing young people to [acce.gov.au/sextortionhelp](https://www.acce.gov.au/sextortionhelp) and [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

For media inquiries, please contact:

Meta

Gina Murphy

APAC Communications

Email: ginamurphy@meta.com / press@meta.com

yourtown

Maree Reason-Cain

Corporate Affairs & Media Advisor,

Mobile: 0423 843 786

Email: mreason-cain@yourtown.com.au

About Meta:

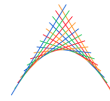
Meta builds technologies that help people connect, find communities, and grow businesses. When Facebook launched in 2004, it changed the way people connect. Apps like Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp further empowered billions around the world. Now, Meta is moving beyond 2D screens toward immersive experiences like augmented and virtual reality to help build the next evolution in social technology.

About Meta's Support Tools for young people:

To support the safety of teens and families, Meta has launched [more than 30 tools](#), including [supervision tools](#) for parents and [age-verification technology](#) that helps teens have age-appropriate experiences online. There are more resources for parents so they can talk to their teens about how to be safe online in Meta's [Safety Center](#) and [Family Center](#).

About Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE):

The AFP and its partners are committed to stopping child exploitation and abuse, and the ACCCE is driving a collaborative national approach to combatting child abuse.



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The ACCCE brings together specialist expertise and skills in a central hub, supporting investigations into online child sexual exploitation and developing prevention strategies focused on creating a safer online environment.

Tips from the AFP-led Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) on how to respond and report sextortion:

- The most important thing is that you are safe. If you are worried about what to do next, contact the ACCCE and reach out to Kids Helpline for support.
- Take screenshots of the chat, report to the platform and block them straight away.
- Make a report to the ACCCE at www.acce.gov.au/report
- Avoid sending any more money, images or videos – even if they are threatening you.
- We are finding that once you have complied with their demands there is nothing preventing them targeting you again.

About Kids Helpline:

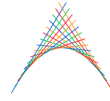
Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private, and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. Kids Helpline's professional counsellors are available anytime and anywhere to help young people with their concerns, no matter how big or small.

Tips from Kids Helpline on how to get support:

If you're being sextorted, here's what you should do:

- know that it's not your fault - even if you shared the intimate images or videos voluntarily with them in the first place. Sextortion can happen to anyone and no one deserves to be abused
- do not send money, or more images/videos
- do not keep chatting/responding to them
- take screenshots/photos of the conversation (don't take photos/screenshots of the nudes/explicit videos themselves as this can be an offence if the person in them is under the age of 18)
- keep a record of any social media details, such as account profiles, usernames, URLs, etc
- cut off all contact and block them (only after you've taken screenshots)
- tell a trustworthy adult
- get in touch with Kids Helpline
- Report it – to the platform/app/site, ACCE (for under 18's) or Report Cyber if you are over 18. The office of the eSafety Commission also have some great resources as do Kids Helpline - <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/sextortion-what-it-and-what-do-about-it>

About No Filtr:



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As the youth prevention program within Thorn, our promise at NoFiltr is to foster a community that inspires open and honest dialogue, to operate without judgement or prejudice, and to empower young people with practical knowledge they can use in their day-to-day lives.