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Understanding sextortion Sextortion is a type of blackmail in which an individual manipulates or threatens to distribute explicit or intimate material (such as explicit sexual images or videos) of the victim unless certain demands are met. Criminals often target individuals through online platforms, social media, or dating apps. They may establish trust and rapport, leading victims to share intimate content willingly or unknowingly through webcam sessions or private messages. Sextortion can cause significant emotional distress, feelings of shame, fear, and anxiety. It's crucial to remember that victims are never at fault, and support is available to help cope with the aftermath. Recognising sextortion warning signs Be vigilant for potential red flags indicating sextortion attempts, such as receiving unsolicited explicit content, sudden or relentless requests for intimate images, or persistent demands for personal information. Threatening language around the loss of viewers or followers on social media if demands are not met or images and videos are not sent. Recognising your child, or a child you know, may be a victim of sextortion It's important to note that every child may react differently when being sexually extorted, and the signs may vary depending on their personality, age, and other factors. However, here are some potential changes in behaviour that could indicate a child is being sexually extorted. Emotional distress: The child may display signs of increased anxiety, fear, or mood swings. They may appear withdrawn, depressed, or easily agitated. Social withdrawal: The child might start avoiding social interactions or spending less time with friends and family. They may become isolated and reluctant to participate in activities they used to enjoy. Change in online behaviour: If a child is being sexually extorted, they may exhibit specific alterations in their online activities, such as spending excessive amounts of time online, becoming secretive about their online interactions, suddenly avoiding or deleting social media accounts. Unusual behaviour with money, gift vouchers, online currencies etc.: The child is spending more money than usual or has less money than you would expect. They may steal money from you or other family members. Unusual secrecy: The child may become unusually secretive about their personal life, activities, or online interactions. They might express reluctance or defensiveness when questioned about their online behaviour or communication. Sudden drop in academic performance: Sextortion can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, which may lead to a decline in their academic performance. They may struggle with concentration, lose interest in schoolwork, or show signs of distress during school hours. Change in attitude to school: They may see school as their safe place and enjoy the break from devices if the perpetrator/extortionist is outside the school community. Sleep disturbances: Sextortion can cause significant stress and anxiety, leading to changes in sleep patterns. The child may experience difficulties falling asleep, frequent nightmares, or increased night-time awakenings. Avoidance of electronic devices: If a child is being sexually extorted, they might display an unusual aversion to using electronic devices or express discomfort when receiving messages or calls. They may try to limit their online presence or avoid using specific apps or platforms altogether. Self-harm or suicidal ideation: The child might exhibit signs of self-harm, suicidal thoughts or express feelings of hopelessness. These signs should be taken extremely seriously, and immediate professional help should be sought (see Help and support below). It's important to remember that these behavioural changes could indicate various issues, not just sextortion. If you notice any significant and persistent changes in a child's behaviour, it is crucial to approach the situation with sensitivity, open communication and seek professional help if necessary. What to do if you are a victim of sextortion This is not your fault and there is nothing to be ashamed or embarrassed about. It may make you feel upset and helpless, but support is available from trusted, non-judgemental and understanding people and organisations (See Help and support). Stay calm and reach out for help. Ask for assistance from a trusted adult or support helpline immediately. Preserve evidence if possible: Save messages and record any communication related to the incident. This evidence can be valuable for legal purposes and reporting the crime. Stop all communication: Discontinue any interaction with the perpetrator and block them on all platforms to prevent further manipulation or harassment. Report the incident: Contact your local police and provide them with the evidence and details of the sextortion incident. They can guide you on the necessary steps to take. Report Remove: If you or your child are under 18, images and videos can be submitted to Report Remove - an online tool developed by the IWF and Childline/NSPCC to help young people in the UK to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves in an effort to have them removed from the internet. Inform parents or a trusted adult: Share the situation with a responsible adult who can provide support, help in reporting the crime, and assist in navigating the emotional challenges that may arise. Seek professional help: Reach out to counsellors, therapists, or support organisations specialising in cybercrime or victim support (See Help and support). They can offer guidance and help you cope with the emotional impact of being sexually extorted. Alert relevant platforms: Report the offender and the incident to the platform or website where the initial contact or harassment occurred. They can take necessary action to prevent others from becoming victims. Be cautious of re-victimisation: Offenders can be persistent. Despite all attempts to avoid, block and secure your personal information and online presence, they may still manage to contact you. They can be very determined. Again, this is not your fault. Try to ignore and continue to report. Protecting yourself or your child from sextortion Practice online safety: Be cautious about the personal information you share online, understand privacy settings, and regularly review your social media account's security measures. The National Cyber Security Centre offers helpful guidance. Strengthen passwords: Use strong, unique passwords for each online account, and consider utilising password managers for added security. Enable two-factor authentication: Activate this feature whenever available, as it adds an extra layer of protection to your online accounts. Trust your instincts: If someone online makes you uncomfortable or tries to pressure you into sharing explicit content, remember that you have the right to say no and stop any contact. Non-physical forms of coercion to extort sexual favors from the victim A mockup example of a sextortion text message. After obtaining naked photographs or videos of the victim, the scammer then threatens the publication of these pictures or to send them to close friends and family members. A demand of money is then made, though usually the scam is either a bluff (e.g. the scammer never intended to publish them) or the pictures/videos are published regardless even if the money is sent.[1] Sextortion (a portmanteau of sex and extortion) employs non-physical forms of coercion to extort sexual favors from the victim. Sextortion refers to the broad category of sexual exploitation in which abuse of power is the means of coercion, as well as to the category of sexual exploitation in which threatened release of sexual images or information is the means of coercion.[2] As used to describe an abuse of power, sextortion is a form of corruption[3] in which people entrusted with power – such as government officials, judges, educators, law enforcement personnel, and employers – seek to extort sexual favors in exchange for something within their authority to grant or withhold.[4][5][6][7][8] Examples of such abuses of power include: government officials who request sexual favors to obtain licenses or permits.[9][10] teachers who trade good grades for sex with students.[11][12] and employers who make providing sexual favors a condition of obtaining a job or getting promoted.[citation needed]. A Transparency International report on sextortion noted some challenges in prosecuting sextortion under existing anti-corruption and gender-based violence legal frameworks.[13] Sextortion also refers to a form of blackmail in which sexual information or images are used to extort money or sexual favors from the victim.[14][15] Social media and text messages are often the source of the sexual material and the threatened means of sharing it with others. An example of this type of sextortion is where people are extorted with a nude image of themselves they shared on the Internet through sexting. They are later coerced into giving money, or performing sexual acts with the person doing the extorting or are coerced into posing or performing sexually on camera, thus producing hardcore pornography.[16][15] This method of blackmail is also frequently used to ask for LGBT people who keep their true sexual orientation private.[17] A video highlighting the dangers of sextortion has been released by the National Crime Agency[18] in the UK to educate people, especially given the fact that blackmail of a sexual nature may cause humiliation to a sufficient extent to cause the victim to take their own life.[19] In addition to other efforts to educate the public on the risks of sextortion,[20] See also: Cybersex trafficking Sextortion using webcam content is concerning, especially for those who use them for flirting and cybersex.[20][19] Often this involves a cybercriminal posing as someone else – such as an attractive person – initiating communication of a sexual nature with the victim (about 95% of victims are male).[19] Often, the cybercriminal simply shows the victim a pre-recorded video of a performer from a cybersex webcam site which they are sufficiently familiar with, then messages the victim at points in the video where the performer appears to be typing on the keyboard, to give the illusion that the performer in the video is messaging them.[21] The victim is then persuaded to undress in front of a webcam, and may also be persuaded to engage in sexual behaviour, such as masturbation.[21] The video is recorded by the cybercriminal, who then reveals their true intent and demands money or other services (such as more explicit images of the victim, in cases of online predation), and threatening to publicly release the video to video services like YouTube and send it to family members and friends of the victim if they do not comply. Sometimes threats to make false allegations of paedophilia against the victim are made as well.[21] This is known as webcam blackmail.[22] An increase in webcam blackmails have been reported, and it affects both young and old, male and female alike.[23][24] Webcam blackmail is also connected with webcam trolling.[25] An early use of the term appears in print in 1950 in California.[26] Since early 2009, The Institute for Responsible Online and Cell-Phone Communication (irow2.org) began warning the public about the trend of "Sextortion" via live events and websites including www.sextortion.org. This is a trend that grew based on the birth and growth of the trend known as "sexting" whereby compromising images and videos were being shared by individuals without a real understanding of the short and long term consequences of sharing "private" content on digital tools designed for sharing. In 2009, the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), in partnership with the Association of Women Judges in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippine Women Judges Association, and the Tanzania Women Judges Association, and with funding from the Government of the Netherlands, launched a three-year program on "Stopping the Abuse of Power through Sexual Exploitation: Naming, Shaming, and Ending Sextortion." [27] Presentations on sextortion were made to judges attending the 2010[28] and 2012 Biennial World Conferences of the IAWJ[29][30] and to NGOs attending the 2011[31] and 2012 meetings of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.[4] There are also scientific studies describing the prevalence of sextortion in Europe, etc. in the Czech Republic (2017).[32] In China, there are cases of sextortion as part of predatory lending to students.[33] In 2022, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection noted a tripling of cases compared to previous years and a change away from female victims being sextorted for images towards young male victims being sextorted for money.[15] In 2023, the U.S. saw a 150% rise in sextortion attempts according to data by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). [34][35] "Special Agent Nicolas Savage discusses 'sextortion' and the dangers kids face online." A speech by Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent Nicolas Savage on "sextortion" (extorting sexual images) and other hazards that children using the internet may face: Problems playing this video? See media help. Incidents of sextortion have been prosecuted under various criminal statutes, including as extortion,[36][37][38] bribery,[39] breach of trust,[40] corruption,[41] sexual coercion,[37][42] sexual exploitation,[16] sexual assault,[38] child pornography,[38][43] and computer hacking and wiretapping.[44] This article contains promotional content. Please help improve it by removing promotional language and inappropriate external links, and by adding encyclopedic text written from a neutral point of view. (May 2020) (Learn how and when to remove this message) Anthony Stancl of Wisconsin, then 18, received 15 years in prison in February 2010 after he posed as a girl on Facebook to trick male high school classmates into sending him nude cell phone photos, which he then used to extort them for homosexual sex.[38] Jonathan Vance of Auburn, Alabama, was sentenced to 18 years in prison in April 2010 after sending threatening e-mails on Facebook and MySpace extorting nude photos from more than 50 women in three states.[16] Luis Mijangos was sentenced to six years in prison in September 2011 for hacking into dozens of computers, stealing personal information and demanding naked images from female victims in exchange for not releasing the stolen information. Forty-four of the victims were under age 18.[45] Isaac Baichu, a federal immigration officer in New York, was sentenced to 1+1/2 to 4+1/2 years in prison in July 2010 after demanding sex from a 22-year-old Colombian woman in exchange for a green card.[42] Steve Ellis, an immigration adjudicator in Toronto, was sentenced to 18 months in jail in July 2010 after telling a South Korean woman he would approve her refugee claim in exchange for sex.[40] Michael Ngilangwa, a secondary school teacher in Tanzania, was sentenced to pay a fine or serve one year in prison in June 2011 after demanding sexual favors from his student in exchange for favorable exam results.[41] Christopher Patrick Gunn, 31, of Montgomery, Alabama was indicted for using fake Facebook profiles to extort nude photos and videos from underage girls in numerous states.[43] He got 35 years in federal prison after being convicted.[46] In May 2010, the police of the Basque Country in Spain arrested a 24-year-old man accused of blackmailing a woman he met on an online chatroom and threatening to distribute nude photographs of her from her webcam.[47] A video of the former Chinese Communist Party official Lei Zhengfu having sex with a woman was a part of a sextortion plot by a criminal gang.[48][49]He was dismissed from his position as Chinese Communist Party Committee Secretary of Beihai, Chongqing and detained by the police a few days after. Additionally, the Party expelled him in early May. Subsequently, he was given a 13 year prison sentence for bribery.[50] Aydin Coban was jailed for 6 years for the suicide of Amanda Todd.[51] In 2013, Daniel Perry committed suicide hours after falling victim to webcam blackmail.[52] Anton Martynenko was sentenced to 38 years in a federal prison, after victimizing over 155 teenage boys by making around 50 fake accounts on Facebook, often those of young women, to convince the victims to send him nude photos.[53] The accounts were also used to spread the explicit photos and videos of the victims to their high school classmates, with one boy's photos being sold on the dark web. In addition, three boys were blackmailed into meeting up with Martynenko and performing sex acts with him; two of the victims later committed suicide. Martynenko is considered the largest producer of child pornography in Minnesota history.[54] Jared Abrahams was sentenced to 18 months in jail[55] after using Google Dorking [56] to commit sextortion crimes against Miss Teen USA Cassidy Wolf along with around 150 other women. Main article: United States v. Ogoshi Samuel Ogoshi, 22, Samson Ogoshi, 20, and Ezekiel Ejehem Robert, 19, who are residents of Lagos, Nigeria reportedly targeted hundreds of teenagers and adults in the United States posing as young women whose accounts had been hacked on Instagram. The three men would reportedly ask for nude pictures and then threaten to release the photos unless the victim paid them money. One victim, Jordan DeMay, 17, of Michigan, committed suicide after they threatened to release a nude photo of him if he failed to pay them \$1,000 US, prompting the United States to file the proper motions to extradite them. Their cases are pending and they face over thirty years in prison if convicted.[57][58] It was reported in August 2023 that Samuel and Samson Ogoshi, brothers, had been extradited to the United States and had gone before a federal judge in Grand Rapids, Michigan.[59] The Ogoshi brothers pled guilty to sexually extorting teenage boys and young men in April 2024, and were sentenced to 17.5 years in prison in September 2024.[60][61] U.S. attorney for the Western District of Michigan Mark Totten stated: "[The] guilty pleas represent an extraordinary success in the prosecution of international sex crimes. These convictions will send a message to criminals in Nigeria and every corner of the globe: working with our partners both here and overseas, we can find you and we can bring you to justice." [62] Ruben Oswaldo Yeverino Rosales was sentenced to 34 years for extorting over 100 victims [63] Advance-fee scam – Type of confidence trick fraud Pig butchering scam – Type of investment fraud Romance scam – Confidence trick using romantic intentions Cybercrime – Type of crime based in computer networks Internet fraud – Fraud or deception using the Internet Phishing – Form of social engineering Social engineering (security) – Psychological manipulation of people into performing actions or divulging confidential information Cryptocurrency and crime High-yield investment program – Type of Ponzi scheme Pump and dump – Form of securities fraud ^ Nir, Sarah Maslin (15 May 2024). "What to do if You Are Threatened with Sextortion". The New York Times. ^ De la Cerna, Madrilena (April 15, 2012). "Sextortion". Cebu Daily News. Retrieved 2012-10-05. ^ "How to curb sextortion, violence against women – Amaechi". Punch. Nigeria. July 2, 2012. Archived from the original on August 6, 2012. Retrieved 2012-10-05. 'Sextortion is the currency of corruption and eats the fabric of society and it is in all sectors of the society.' [Justice Binta Nyako] said. ^ a b "CSW Wraps up Second Week of Work". School Sisters of Notre Dame. March 9, 2012. Retrieved 2012-10-05. ^ "11th Biennial World Conference of the IAWJ, London 2012, Keeping Safe – Keeping Well" (PDF). Provincial Judges' Journal. 35 (1). The Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges: 58. Summer 2012. Retrieved 2012-10-05. Sextortion is a form of sexual exploitation and corruption that occurs when people in positions of authority – whether government officials, judges, educators, law enforcement personnel, or employers – seek to extort sexual favours in exchange for something within their power to grant or withhold.[permanent dead link] ^ Mayol, Ador Vincent; Matus, Carmel Loise (March 4, 2011). "Lady judges, 'End sextortion'". Cebu Daily News. Archived from the original on May 12, 2012. Retrieved 2012-01-05. When a boss asks an employee to have sex with him in exchange for a job promotion, that's 'sextortion', a female magistrate said yesterday. So is a teacher seeking sexual favours from a student seeking better grades. ^ Soyngbye, Anthonia (July 4, 2012). "Sextortion: Checkmating this new alias for bribe in Nigeria". Daily Independent. Nigeria. Archived from the original on December 24, 2012. Retrieved 2012-10-05. Sextortion _ is basically about an element of abuse of power by somebody entrusted with authority and somebody who is seeking either an advantage or justice from that person who holds the clout. And sadly, it is in all spheres of life – the judiciary, executive, legislator, media, police, army and indeed, every sector of the Nigerian life. ^ Jundu, Hon. Fakhri A.R. (December 2, 2010). "ILO – Speech by Hon. Fakhri A. R. Jundu, Principal Judge". Judiciary.go.tz. Retrieved 2012-10-05. Another global plight ... is the one dubbed 'Sextortion' ... [t]hese harassers insist on sexual favours in exchange for benefits they can dispense because of their positions in hierarchies including getting or keeping a job, favourable cards, recommendations, credentials, projects, promotion, orders, and other types of opportunities.[permanent dead link] ^ Ozler, Berk (February 16, 2012). "When it comes to female education, have we gotten it all backwards?". Blogs.worldbank.com. Archived from the original on February 10, 2013. Retrieved 2012-10-05. Mary Hallward-Driemeier ... quantified [the] stories we all heard working in Africa: running a small business as a woman is also treacherous business. Many say they had to exchange sex with a person of authority (person in charge of a permit, border police, etc.) or a supplier in order to be able to go about their business. ^ "2012 State of the Field in Youth Economic Opportunities – A Guide for Policymaking, Policymaking, and Partnership Building" (PDF). Making Cities International. 2012. p. 84. "Sextortion," researched by Mary Hallward Driemeier, Lead Economist for Financial and Private Sector Development at the World Bank Group, is where sexual favors are traded instead of money for routine business dealings.[permanent dead link] ^ Fatorechili, Cleó (February 27, 2011). "Time to Drag Sextortion into the Light". Inter Press Service. Retrieved 2012-10-05. In their 2010 book "Half the Sky", Pulitzer Prize winners Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn write about a disturbing but not uncommon problem in Southern Africa – male teachers who trade good grades for sex with students. There's a word for this – 'sextortion'. ^ Kuleynya, Joke (June 28, 2012). "How randy judge killed five women, wife, by Justice Nyako". The Nation. Nigeria. Retrieved 2012-10-05. It is no longer a hidden complaint how students complain about lecturers demanding for sex for them to get good grades. So, if these instances are something that have been with us, then sextortion is also an age-long problem within our society. ^ [permanent dead link] ^ "Breaking the Silence around Sextortion: The Links between Power, Sex, ...". Transparency.org. 2020-03-05. Retrieved 2024-06-20. ^ "Understanding Sextortion: More Than Just Blackmail". 2024-06-28. Sextortion is a form of blackmail where perpetrators threaten to reveal intimate images or videos unless the victim complies with their demands. This heinous act not only violates privacy but also leaves victims feeling vulnerable and powerless. ^ a b c Sarah, Petz (4 August 2022). "Teen boys make up majority of victims of recently reported sextortion crimes, new data shows". CBC. ^ a b c "Feds: online 'sextortion' of teens on the rise". Associated Press. August 24, 2010. Archived from the original on August 17, 2010. Retrieved 2010-08-14. A stranger said he had captured her image on the webcam and would post the pictures to her MySpace friends unless she posed for more explicit pictures and videos for him. On at least two occasions, the teen did what her blackmailer demanded. Finally, police and federal authorities became involved and indicted a 19-year-old Maryland man in June on charges of sexual exploitation. ... One federal affidavit includes a special term for the crime: sextortion. ^ "SEXTORTION DILEMMA – BARING 'PLOT' WOULD EXPOSE GAY LIFE: MCG". 15 September 2006. Retrieved 2019-09-10. ^ "Sextortion": NCA releases awareness video". BBC News. 30 November 2016. Retrieved 12 March 2017. ^ a b c "Webcam blackmail cases have doubled, police say". BBC News. 30 November 2016. Retrieved 12 March 2017. ^ a b "Sextortion (webcam blackmail)". Archived from the original on August 21, 2019. Retrieved October 6, 2019. ^ a b c "The Skype sex scam - a fortune built on shame". BBC News. 23 November 2016. Retrieved 12 March 2017. ^ "Blacked Mail: Federal Targets Pornography Charges". FBI.gov. Archived from the original on 2013-06-20. Retrieved 2012-04-29. () ^ Ritchie, Greg (September 1, 2011). "Luis Mijangos Sentenced To 6 Years For 'Sextortion'". Associated Press. Retrieved 2013-11-13. ^ "Beware of Webcam Blackmail". GetSafeOnline.org. Retrieved 15 September 2012. ^ Kopecky, Kamil; Sozkořková, René (May 2017). "Cyberbullying, cyber aggression and their impact on the victim – The teacher". Telematics and Informatics. 34 (2): 506–517. doi:10.1016/j.tele.2016.08.014. ISSN 0736-5853. ^ "Sextortion Charges To Come Up Next Week". Los Angeles Times. April 5, 1950. ^ "Stopping the Abuse of Power through Sexual Exploitation: Naming, Shaming and Ending Sextortion - Toolkit" (PDF). International Association of Women Judges. 2012. p. 5. Retrieved 2012-10-05.[permanent dead link] ^ "10th Biennial International Conference: 'Judicial Challenges in a Changing World'". 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Retrieved from " [Children] [Parents] [Professionals] Globally, there has been an increase in reporting of young people and adults being forced into paying money or meeting another financial demand (such as purchasing a pre-paid gift card) after an offender has threatened to release sexual/intended images of them. This is called 'Financially Motivated Sexual Extortion', a type of online blackmail often referred to as 'sextortion'. Victims of any age are potential targets, however teenage males aged 14-17 and male adults aged 18-30 are particularly at risk. This crime is usually carried out by organised criminal gangs, often based overseas, who are typically motivated by financial gain. What it looks like? You may be contacted by an online account you don't know, or a hacked account of someone you do know where the communication feels unfamiliar quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing an image first moved from a chat on social media, an online platform or game to a private platform such as an end-to-end encrypted messaging app, manipulated or pressured into taking nude or semi-nude photos or videos told you have been hacked and the offender has access to your images, personal information and contacts (whether this is true or not) blackmailed into sending money or meeting another financial demand (such as purchasing a pre-paid gift card) after sharing an image, or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated/AI-generated images of you to make the threat of sharing them wider Ways to protect yourself and your family Review your privacy settings and make sure you have the highest level of privacy on your accounts so that people you don't know can't contact you or see your friends/followers. Be aware of the warning signs of an online blackmail attempt. If you are contacted by someone you don't know or an account you do not and the conversation seems out of character (for example, it quickly becomes sexually explicit), end it and block them. Take a look at NCSC's advice on spotting and reporting fake accounts. If you are a parent, have frequent, open and non-judgemental conversations with your child about relationships, sex and being online to build trust. Make them aware of the reporting routes available so that you can support them if something happens to them online. Find out more about how to do this on the CEOP Education website. What to do if you have been a victim If this has happened to you, you may be feeling distressed or blame yourself. Remember you have been tricked or deceived, it is not your fault and the most important thing you can do is get help. Pause Stop all communication with the offender immediately and block them on all platforms. You may be tempted to pay, but there is no guarantee that this will stop the threats. The offender's motive is to get money, once you have shown you can pay, they will likely ask for more and the blackmail may continue. If you have paid, don't panic but don't pay anything more. Try not to delete anything that could be used as evidence such as messages, images and bank account details. Deactivate your social media account rather than delete it as it allows data to be retrieved if your images have been shared online, collect URLs and links if you can as you may need to share these with law enforcement or when using any of the reporting functions listed below. Do not share these links with anyone else. Report (adults) Report the incident to your local police force by calling 101 or 999 if you feel you are at immediate risk of harm. Report it to the social media platform you've been contacted on. You can also use Stop NCII (Non-Consensual Intimate Image Abuse), a free tool to help detect and remove images from being shared online. Report (under 18s) If you are under 18, speak to a trusted adult about what has happened to you. They will help you to report the incident to your local police force by calling 101 or 999 if you feel you are at immediate risk of harm. Or if you do not have a trusted adult, you can report to NCA's CEOP Safety Centre www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre. You should also be supported to: Use Report Remove, a tool from Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation, to remove images that have been shared or might be shared. Use Take It Down, a tool from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to remove or stop the online sharing of images or videos. Report the incident directly to the platform or app that it occurred on For further advice, visit CEOP Education's parents and carers or teens websites. Get help We understand you may find it difficult to report this type of crime to us, so it may help you to talk to someone first. Some of our partners can offer you support. If you are in severe distress and thinking about harming yourself, call 999 immediately. The NHS also has help and support information for anyone with suicidal thoughts. You do not have to struggle with difficult feelings alone. Let family or friends know how you are feeling. They may be able to offer support and help keep you safe. We understand the impact that this type of crime can have. The following organisations are available for further advice and support: For children under 18 Childline – free, confidential support online and over the phone for young people under 19. Young Minds – a mental health charity for children and young people, offering advice and information. For adults over 18 Your local police force website. Revenge porn helpline – free, confidential help and support for adult victims of intimate image abuse living in the UK. Samaritans – free, confidential listening service for any issue, with no pressure or judgement. More help Papyrus – advice and support for young people experiencing suicidal thoughts. Their HOPELINE247 service is available to anyone under 35, 24/7 every day of the year – 0800 068 4141. National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) – for advice on protecting your data online and help if you've been a victim of a phishing or hacking incident Action Fraud – report to Action Fraud if you think you have been a victim of romance fraud. This is where a partner you met online might be trying to get money from you but you aren't being threatened or extorted. Financially motivated sexual extortion is a type of online blackmail, often referred to as 'sextortion'. This type of crime involves an adult offender threatening to release nude or semi-nude images and/or videos of an individual, unless they pay money, meet another financial demand (for example, purchasing a pre-paid gift card). Victims of any age and gender can be targeted. Children and young people are never to blame if they have been targeted. If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 Remember: If your child has sent a nude or semi-nude image or video of themselves and is concerned that this has been or may be shared online, you can take these 3 steps to try and support them in getting it removed: Use Report Remove, a tool from Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation. Your child can use this to remove images that have been shared or might be shared. Use Take It Down, a tool from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Your child can use this to remove or stop the online sharing of images or videos. Report directly to the platform or app that the incident has occurred on. For advice on how to report to major social media platforms, visit Internet Matters. Remember: If you have sent a nude or semi-nude image or video of yourself and are concerned that this has been or may be shared online, you can take these 3 steps to try and get it removed: Use Report Remove, a tool from Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation. Your child can use this to remove images that have been shared or might be shared. Use Take It Down, a tool from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Your child can use this to remove or stop the online sharing of images or videos. Report directly to the platform or app that the incident has occurred on. For advice on how to report to major social media platforms, visit Internet Matters. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published a new report examining sextortion cases on SWGL's Revenge Porn Helpline from August. Snapchat has announced some new features aimed to support users against sextortion and other online harms. We have prepared a brand new online issue page to guide professionals, parents, carers, and young people through sextortion. The National Crime Agency has issued an alert to educational establishments across the UK about the rise in financially motivated... On Friday 16th May, Police Inspector, Mark Cananur joined us in the studio to talk about 'sextortion' with tips on how to keep your family safe onlineWith cases on the rise, the National Crime Agency has launched a new campaign to raise awareness and help families stay safe. Here's what every parent, grandparent and carer needs to know.Sextortion is a form of online blackmail. Criminals trick victims into sharing sexual images or videos of themselves, and then use those images to threaten, manipulate or extort the person, often demanding money or more explicit material.These crimes are frequently carried out by organised groups abroad, operating from call centres or using paid actors to pose as someone the victim may be romantically interested in.Many victims are coerced into performing sexual acts on webcam, unaware they are being recorded. The footage is then used to blackmail the victim, with threats to share it online or with their family and friends.It's easy to judge, but not all children are coerced. Many share images because they want to impress, flirt, or feel included.Sometimes they think they're in a trusting relationship. Others may feel peer pressure, or worry about being excluded if they don't join in.Regardless of the reason, a child is never to blame if they are blackmailed online.Marc recommends regular, non-judgemental conversations about online behaviour. You don't need to be an expert, just start with stories from the news, or ask what your child thinks.If your child is reluctant to open up, make sure they know what warning signs to look out for:Red Flags for Online BlackmailMoving too fast: Someone quickly forms a close 'connection'.Asking for personal details: Like where they live or go to school.Sending sexual images: Or asking for one in return.Pressure and anxiety: Making them feel shy or guilty."Even if your child doesn't open up straight away, giving them the tools to spot danger could protect them down the line." Marc says.Steps to Take if Your Child Is a VictimReassure them – let them know they've done the right thing by telling you – and it's not their fault.Don't respond to threats – stop all communication with the blackmailer.Block the account – on all platforms used by the blackmailer.Keep evidence – save screenshots, messages, or usernames that could help police.Report it: Police, external (101 or 999 in emergencies) CEOP, external (if the child is under 18)Use Report Remove, external by Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation for under-18s.A Morning Live viewer, Jane, emailed to say she received a threatening email claiming to have hacked her webcam while she visited adult websites – something she insists never happened. The sender demanded £1,400 in cryptocurrency.Marc reassures victims that this is a common scam."Scammers are banking on fear. It's incredibly unlikely that they'll have access to your device or any real evidence. If they did, they wouldn't waste time chasing small sums from ordinary people, they'd go after banks or big businesses."While it may feel real, especially when family members are mentioned, it's important not to panic.If you've been Targeted as an AdultDelete the Ad – Do not engage or respond.Report the scam – Forward the email to: report@phishing.gov.ukIf you've paid, report it to Police on 101 and contact your bank. Under the new Reimbursement Model, you may be entitled to get your money back. Share – copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt – remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution – You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. 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