

Sextortion: Teacher notes

It is important not to victim blame (even inadvertently) and make young people feel that if they have made a mistake, such as sharing an image of themselves, it is their own fault that they are facing the consequences.

Victim blaming can prevent children coming to adults for support.

Avoid words/phrases like:

“We all know that he shouldn’t have...”

“It is a really silly mistake...”

“Oh no...”

“Why would you...?”

Young people, just like adults have the right to the expectation that a private picture of themselves should stay private.



Do Now:

1. What does the word harassment mean?
2. List examples of sexual harassment

Stretch: What should you do if you have been sexually harassed?

Do Now:

1. What does the word harassment mean?

Unwanted behaviour which you find offensive or which makes you feel intimidated or humiliated.

2. List examples of sexual harassment

Someone making sexual comments, jokes or gestures, including jokes about sexuality, spreading sexual rumours about you, over-exaggerated, suggestive staring at your body, calling you names of a sexual nature , sending unwanted sexual emails, DMs or text messages, offering rewards in return for sexual favours, showing sexual photos or videos at school or work, lifting up your skirt or top or pulling down your trousers. It also includes flicking bra straps, someone exposing private parts of their body or touching themselves inappropriately in front of you, pressuring you to do sexual things that you don't want to do, unwanted touching or physical contact without your consent

Stretch: What should you do if you have been sexually harassed?

Ask the harasser to stop and make notes about what happened. Report the harassment.

Scenario



Read the scenario below.

John opens his laptop and sees he has a new DM,

He doesn't recognise the boy's name it's from but opens it anyway. He sees a few messages saying 'Hi' had been sent. He then notices that he has been sent a picture of **himself**. In the picture, he isn't wearing any clothes and is shown as if he were posing for the camera. John knows this wasn't him, but the picture looks so real.

The next message under the picture says, 'Nice pic, bet you wouldn't want me to let your friends and family know you are sending these to me though!'

Turn and Talk - What might be happening to John, how might he feel?

What happened in the scenario?

The picture John saw was probably created using AI.

The National Crime Agency recently issued warnings about a crime called **sextortion**.

'Sextortion' is a type of online blackmail.

It's when criminals threaten to share sexual pictures, videos, or information about you unless you pay money or do something else you don't want to.

Anyone can be a victim of sextortion. However, young people aged between 15 to 17, and adults aged under 30, are often most at risk.

John would likely feel extremely worried about the possible consequences if the picture was shared and what other people might think of him, he may worry his adults will be upset with him.

John decides to delete all of the messages and pretend it never happened, he thinks hopefully they will go away.

Turn and Talk: Why might this action not be the best thing to do?

It might be tempting to delete messages, but this isn't the best idea as it makes it harder for the crime to be investigated.

After deleting the messages, John receives a message saying 'You didn't think you'd get rid of me that easily did you? How about you transfer £100 into this account and I will disappear?'

Turn and Talk: What should John do now? Should he try to send the money?

John should not send any money as it is unlikely that this would be the final demand. If you send money, they will be aware you want to keep the photo hidden and will keep asking for more money. Sometimes people will claim to have hacked your accounts and found photos of you when they haven't.

If you face any concerning behaviour, you should always speak with a trusted adult.

Your adults main concern will be keeping you safe. Remember if this was to happen, it is the criminal who is at fault, not you.

What else should you do if you are targeted?

Stop all communication with the offender immediately. Don't pay any money or purchase requested items as there is no guarantee that this will stop there being further threats or demands.

Save the evidence:

1. Take screenshots
2. Save messages and images
3. Make a note of usernames, email addresses, phone numbers and bank account numbers
4. Collect url links to where your images or information are being shared online.

John tells his adults what has been happening, they are shocked but glad that he felt able to share the problem with them.

Turn and Talk: What do you think his adults could do to help?

To help with sextortion, John's adults could -

- Report to the police and / or CEOP [here](#).
- Use [Report Remove](#), from Childline which helps young people remove indecent images online.
- Use [Take it Down](#) to help prevent images being shared online.
- Report the incident to the app or platform on which it occurred.
- Support John with the likely impact the situation will have on his mental health.
- Let John's school know so they can work with other pupils.

What if the picture was real?

The image John was being blackmailed with was not a real image but sometimes people can be convinced to share real pictures and videos of themselves.

What has happened is **NOT** John's fault but there are things we can do online to make these situations less likely.

Turn and Talk: What could we do to reduce the risk of sextortion?

How can we reduce the risk?

1. Avoid talking and interacting with strangers online.
2. Be wary of people who have recently sent out lots of friend requests.
3. Try to keep profiles private, especially don't allow people to see your friend list.
4. Seek support from an adult if you become uncomfortable.
5. Remember that the person you speak with may not be who they say.
6. Never share nudes or sexual images of yourself.
7. Have restrictions on who can contact you on apps.
8. Avoid sharing personal information online this might include pictures of you in school uniform or at your front door.
9. End any chat that makes you uncomfortable straight away.
10. Report worrying interactions.
11. Use strong passwords.

It is never your fault, even if you have made a mistake and shared an image which is used against you, the fault lies with the other person who is breaking the law.

'It can happen to any child': parents of sextortion victim send out warning

Ros and Mark Dowey, whose son Murray took his life after being duped by criminals online, are calling for greater awareness and social media regulation

- [Teachers warned to be on lookout for victims of sextortion](#)



📷 'I don't want any other family to go through this.' Mark and Ros Dowey, whose son Murray died in December 2023. Photograph: Murdo MacLeod/The Guardian

Read this [article](#):

Who was at fault?

Who could have helped when Murray was targeted?

Looking out for the signs...

Possible signs of sextortion might include;

- Sudden changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn, anxious, or secretive.
- Regularly checking phone or social media
- Not wanting to discuss online activities or interactions with others.
- Less money in their account or asking for money often.
- Receiving messages from unknown individuals.
- Deleting social media accounts or creating new ones.
- A decline in academic performance or interest in other activities they used to enjoy.

Remember that these may also be warning signs of other online concerns.

Who can help?

Remember if you need further support in relation to this topic area please speak with a trusted adult at school or home.

You could also find more information and support at:

Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

Childline 0800 1111

So You Got Naked Online: www.swgfl.org.uk/resources/so-you-got-naked-online

