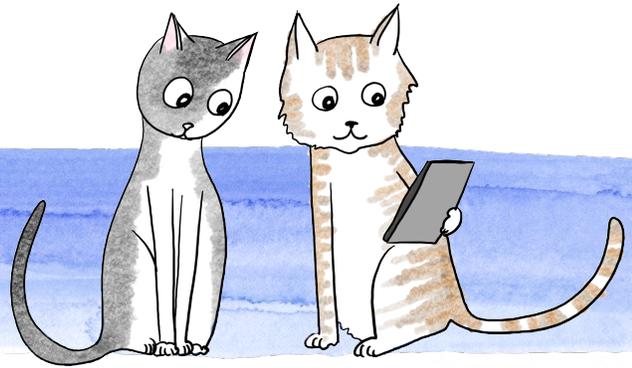


TALK ABOUT SEXTORTION.



“ MY MOM TOLD ME IT WOULDN'T BE THE END OF THE WORLD IF IT DID HAPPEN AND WE WOULD GET THROUGH IT.

- Female, 18, responding to Thorn survey

”

THIS IS HARD, BUT YOU'RE ALREADY DOING GREAT BY BEING HERE.

Your children are safer because of your support and guidance through all of life's challenges. **Safety in the digital age is new**, and chances are your children feel more comfortable navigating digital communities than you do, while knowing less than they need to stay safe. There are a few things you can do to help your child avoid getting into tricky, and sometimes dangerous, situations like sextortion.

YOUR NEXT STEPS

TALK ABOUT IT WITH YOUR CHILDREN, THEN TALK ABOUT IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS.

#1 TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY

Talking about sexting is an easy entry point, plus it is language kids get.

PRO TIP:

Sexting is sharing/receiving sexually explicit messages or nude/partially nude images usually via cellphones. Check out these conversation starters below and visit www.netsmartz.org/Sexting for more.

Has anyone ever sent you a sexual picture or sext? [You can probably just say sext if you're comfortable.]

Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to send a sexual picture or sext? [Explain that somebody trying to pressure them into sending intimate images isn't somebody they should trust.]

Do you think it is okay to forward sexual or embarrassing images? Why? [Emphasize the importance of not forwarding these images. It could be really hurtful for the person in the image, and your child could get in trouble for forwarding. Plus, nobody has the right to decide who should see someone else's body.]

THORN

www.stopsextortion.com

YOUR NEXT STEPS... CONTINUED

TALK ABOUT SEXTORTION AND THE COMMON WAYS IT HAPPENS

#2 BE THERE UNCONDITIONALLY

Kids experiencing sextortion are so scared of getting in trouble. They're worried about shaming their parents, that they'll get suspended from school, judged by friends or in trouble with the police. These fears can even be suggested by the abuser to maintain control over them, and sadly these things do happen. These fears keep kids silent, and that has led to terrible tragedies. Your fear and frustration is normal, but they need to know you'll always get through tough situations together. Even if you think they know you'll support them, having these conversations can make a big difference in them sharing their experiences with you when something feels off or goes wrong.

#3 KEEP LEARNING

Keeping up with the fast-paced changes in today's technology is hard. Download new apps and try them out. Ask your kid what their favorite apps are. The more you talk about this with your child, the easier it will be to understand if something bad is happening, and the easier it will be for them to share uncomfortable situations with you. Some of our favorite apps [www.common sense media.org/app-reviews] that kids are using today [October 2017] are musical.ly, Snapchat, Kik, WhatsApp and Instagram. These will definitely change, so ask your kids what is cool now! Go to the app store on your phone, search for them in the search bar and sign up.

PRO TIP:

Use them with your kids - ask them to show you how! Just know that if you follow their account, they may create a second account to post things they don't want you to see.

#4 SPREAD THE WORD

By educating each other, we create a stronger safety net for all of our children. Share our video with your kids and your friends. The more people know about some of the ways sextortion happens, the better equipped they'll be to handle these situations. You can also bring FOSI's "How To Be A Good Digital Parent" Program to your school [www.fosi.org/gdppresentation] and teach other parents [how to confidently navigate the web](#) with their kids [full toolkit provided].

#5 ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

We can all take small steps to push for a better future for our kids. Ask school officials if there are policies in place to address sextortion. If you want to go bigger, learn more about the revenge porn laws in your state [www.cagoldberglaw.com/states-with-revenge-porn-laws]. In many cases, these laws will cover sextortion as well. Don't see your state? Call your lawmaker and ask them to consider legislation. Follow these instructions [www.cybercivilrights.org/educate-lawmakers] to make a call today.