

Important Information and Resources on Sextortion Awareness and Prevention

Dear Parents and Guardians of Lordstown Schools,

As part of our ongoing commitment to student safety and well-being and partnership with the Ohio School Safety Center, we want to raise awareness about an increasingly concerning issue affecting young people nationwide: **Sextortion**.

Sextortion is a form of online exploitation where someone threatens to share explicit images of a person unless they provide more images, money, or other favors. These threats are often made through social media, gaming platforms, or messaging apps and can cause significant emotional distress and harm.

Some of the popular games, sites, or apps are: **Instagram, Snapchat, Roblox, Fortnite, Minecraft, Among Us, or any online media source that attracts our youth.**

If you search (Sextortion Victims in Ohio), you will read real stories of teenagers taking their own life as a result of sextortion.

Unfortunately, cases of sextortion targeting children and teenagers are rising across the country, and no community is immune. Perpetrators often pose as peers or friendly contacts to gain trust, only to use manipulation or threats to control their victims. In many cases, victims are too scared or ashamed to seek help and sometimes even consider suicide instead of seeking help from a trusted adult.

We are sharing this information with you because awareness is a powerful tool for prevention. Here are a few steps you can take to help protect your child:

1. **Talk Openly and Often:** Have age-appropriate conversations about online safety, trust, and the importance of **never sharing personal or explicit images or information online.**
2. **Monitor and Support:** Stay involved in your child's online activities, know which platforms they're using, and encourage open communication.
3. **Reassure Without Judgment:** Let your child know they can come to you or a trusted adult without fear of blame or punishment if they experience anything troubling online.

We also encourage you to explore the following resources:

- **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC):** <https://www.missingkids.org/>
- **Take It Down (Image Removal Service):** <https://takeitdown.ncmec.org/>
- **FBI Sextortion Awareness Video & Information:** <https://www.fbi.gov/sextortion>
- **Stop Sextortion Toolkit by Thorn:** <https://www.thorn.org/sextortion/>

Our school counselors and administrative team are here to support you and your child. If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Together, we can help protect our children and ensure they feel safe, supported, and empowered both in school and online.

Respectfully,



Greg Bonamase, Superintendent, Lordstown Schools



Dave Harrison Lordstown School Resource Officer