



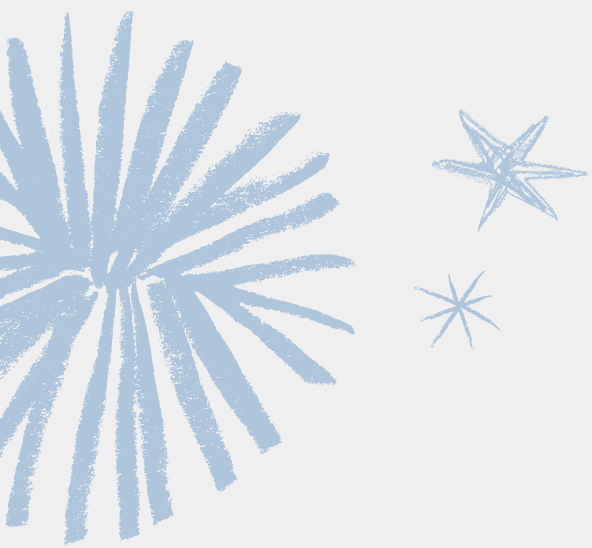
Internet Safety

Understanding the Dangers Online

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- 1 How Predators Find Victims
- 2 Cyberbullying
- 3 What is Sexting?
- 4 Understanding Sextortion
- 5 Potential Costs
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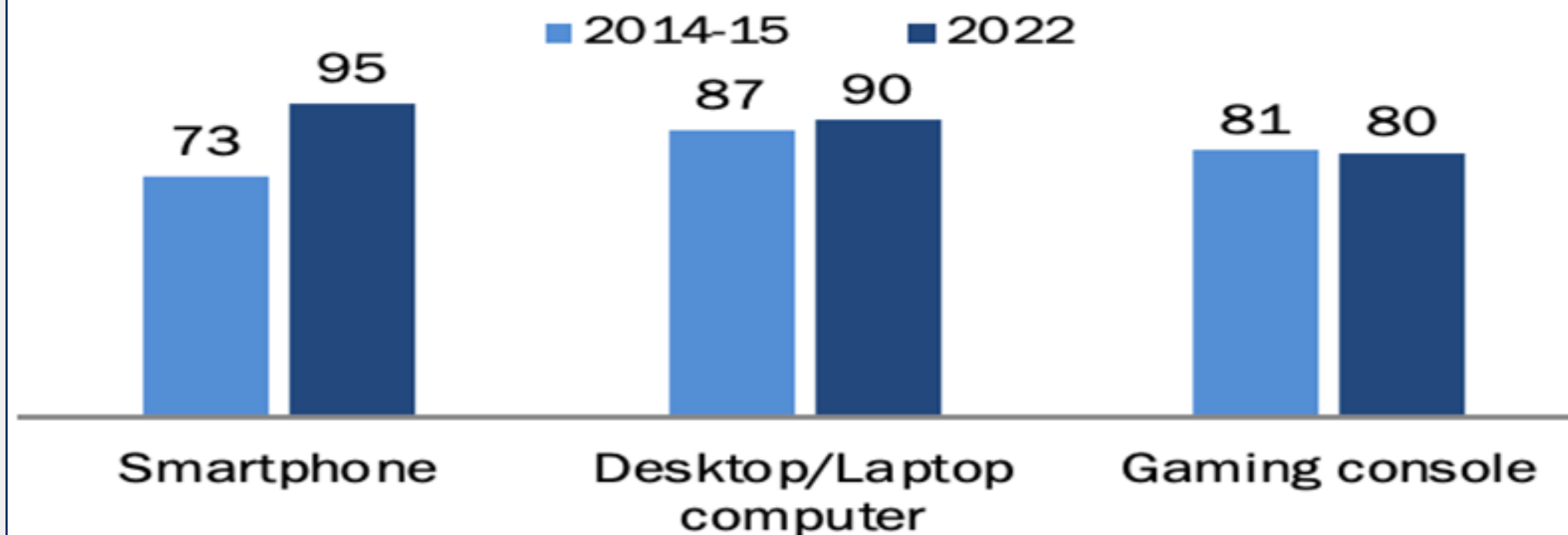
The Facts of Internet Safety

- **95%** of teens in the U.S. are online, and the vast majority access the internet on their mobile device. (Pew Research Center, 2018)
- **60%** of young people have witnessed online bullying. Most do **NOT** intervene. (Pew Research Center, 2022)
- **One in four** reported receiving an online solicitation to exchange sexual imagery, engage in sexual talk, or participate in a sexual interaction online in return for something of value while under the age of 18. (Thorn Report, April 2025)
- **Only one in ten** teen victims will inform a trusted adult of their online abuse. (Dosomething.org)

How Do Online Predators Find Victims?

Nearly all teens in 2022 have access to a smartphone, up from 73% in 2014-15

% of U.S. teens who say they have access to the following devices



Note: Teens refer to those ages 13 to 17. Those who did not give an answer are not shown. The 2022 question wording further clarified access at home.

Source: Survey conducted April 14-May 4, 2022.
"Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Online Gaming

- Screen names
- Chats

Social Media

- Profiles
- Status updates
- Location check-ins
- Photos featuring easily identifiable landmarks



Dangers of Social Media

- Account settings
 - Private vs. Public
 - Personal information
 - Links to other sites/platforms
- Photos
 - Geo-tagging
 - Location “indicators”
- Malware and phishing
 - Identity/information theft
 - Trojan software

The minimum age requirement is 13 years old for social media platforms, which is the standard set by the U.S. Federal law known as The Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (“COPPA”). “COPPA imposes certain requirements on operators of websites or online services that have actual knowledge that they are collecting personal information online from a child under 13 years of age.”

(www.ftc.gov)

Predator Tactics

- Catfishing: Pretending to be someone they are not online. This will make children let their guard down.
- Phishing Attacks: Sending malicious messages disguised as friend requests, knowing that a lot of children have a strong desire to build their follower or friend count.
- Data Mining: Researching targets and gathering information from public profiles on social media sites. The more personal information they can find, the more convincing they can make themselves seem to the eventual victim.
- Sextortion: The practice of extorting money or sexual favors from someone by threatening to reveal evidence (real or manufactured) of their sexual activity





Do Victims Respond to Predators?

- Almost **69%** of tweens and **91%** of teens encountered nudity or content of a sexual nature.
- **9.95%** of tweens and **20.54%** of teens encountered predatory behaviors from someone online.
- **40%** of kids in grades 4-8 reported they connected or chatted online with a stranger. Of those 40 percent:
 - **53%** revealed their phone number to a stranger
 - **15%** tried to meet with a stranger
 - **30%** texted a stranger from their phone
 - **6%** revealed their home address to a stranger

Source: enough.org



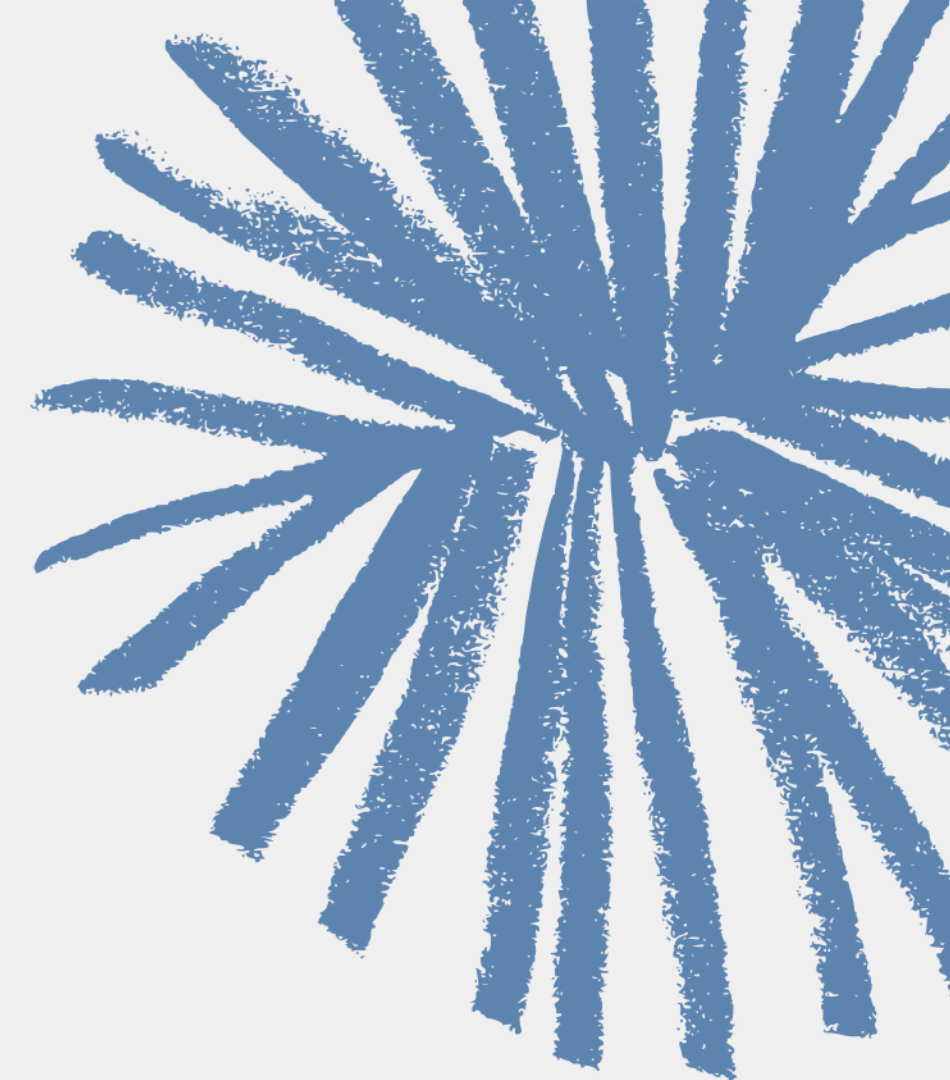
What is Cyberbullying?

- Bullying through internet applications and technologies such as instant messaging (IM), social network sites and cell phones.
- It can start easily – with a rumor, a photo, or a forwarded message – and just as easily spiral out of control.
- Victims can be anywhere, at anytime.



Common Forms of Cyberbullying

- Trolling/Rage-baiting: Sending or posting hostile messages intended to “inflame” the emotions of others.
- Identity Theft/Impersonation: Stealing someone’s password and/or hijacking their accounts to send or post humiliating information or photos.
- Deepfake: Doctoring digital images using AI-powered tools so that the main subject is placed in a bad light.
- Outing/Doxxing: The act of having personal information and/or images shared anonymously or non-anonymously online without their consent or prior knowledge.



Other Targeted Forms of Bullying



Disability

- Differently abled students are 2-3 times more likely to experience peer-on-peer harassment.
 - Directly impacts students' ability to navigate their already uniquely challenging educational endeavor.



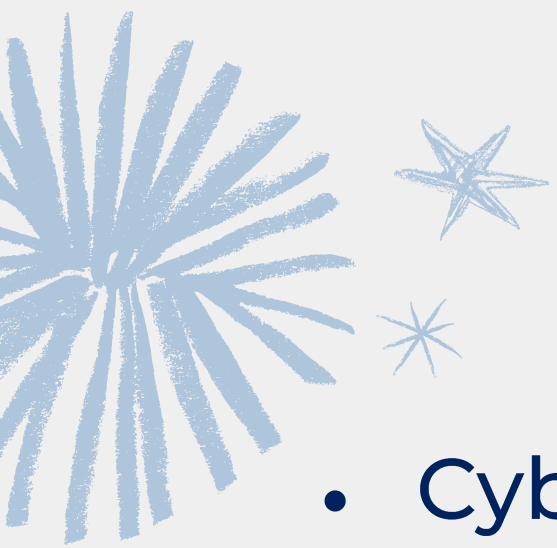
Race and/or Ethnicity

- In a study of over 96,000 schools, 23% of bullying allegations are *based on race or ethnicity*. (US Dept. of Education Office for Civil Rights)
- Currently, Asian-Americans report being bullied on the basis of race more than any other.
- However, Black students are found to be bullied generally more than any other race.



Gender and/or Sexual Orientation

- LGBTQ+ students are harassed at a *significantly* higher rate than straight cis-gender students.
 - 29% of transgender youth, 21% of gay and lesbian youth and 22% of bisexual youth have attempted suicide.

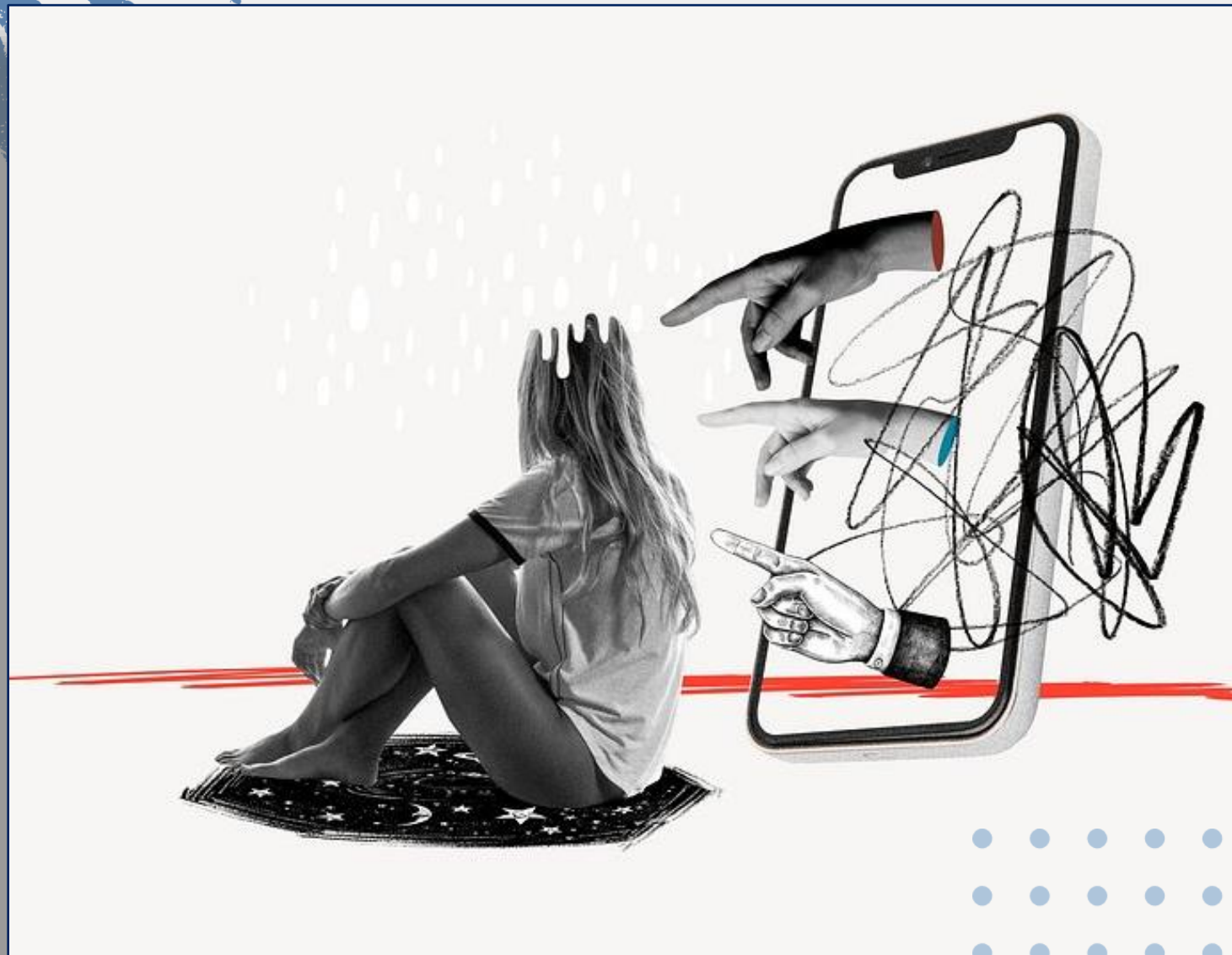


Cyberbully Facts

- Cyberbullying is widespread among U.S. teens and is linked to post-traumatic stress symptoms in middle and high school students. **1 in 10 U.S. teens have been cyberbullied.**
- Social media sites have made it increasingly easier for cyberbullying to occur. The most common social media networks for cyberbullying are:
 - **Facebook** (witnessing – 53% / experiencing – 50%)
 - **Instagram** (witnessing – 40% / experiencing – 30%)
 - **YouTube** (witnessing – 31% / experiencing – 27%)
 - **TikTok** (witnessing – 30% / experiencing – 23%)
 - **Twitter** (witnessing – 20% / experiencing – 18%)

(Source: enough.org/stats_cyberbullying)

Signs a Child Is a Cyberbullying Victim



- Appears *stressed* when receiving an email, instant message or text.
- Exhibits signs of *low self-esteem*, including depression and/or fear.
- Has *declining grades*.
- Sudden *loss of the desire* to be on the internet.



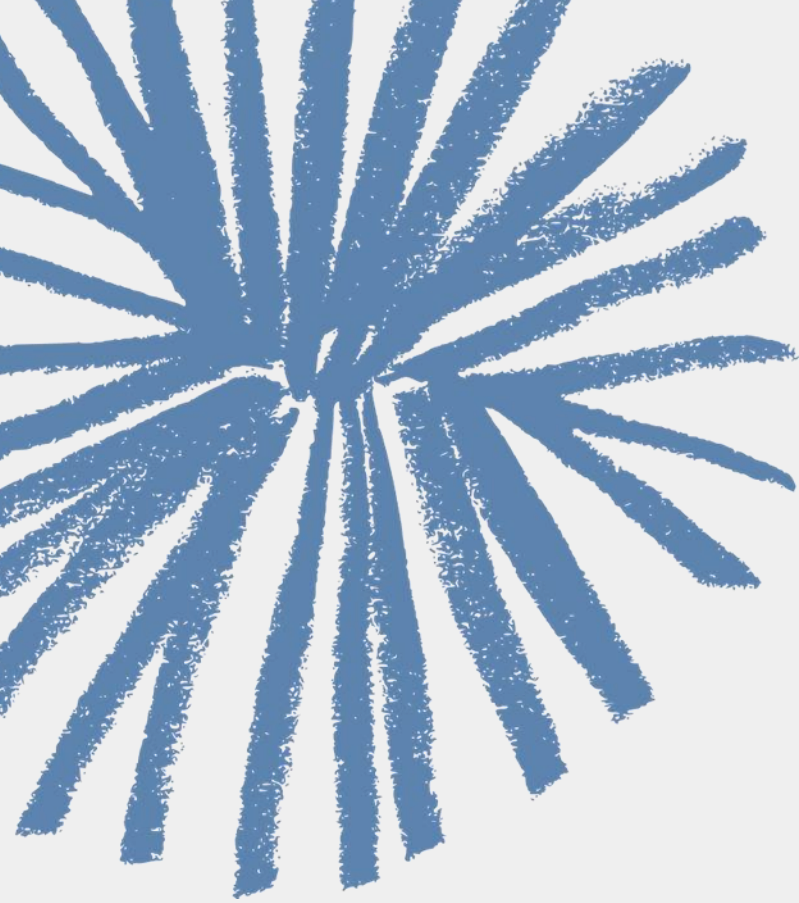
Report Cyberbullying

- Don't respond to and don't forward cyberbullying messages.
- Keep evidence of cyberbullying – print screenshots, emails and text messages. This evidence can be used to report:
 - To the school
 - To online platforms
 - To law enforcement*
- Block the person who is cyberbullying.

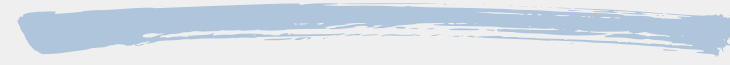
[Stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/
how-to-report](https://stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/how-to-report)

[Cybertipline.com](https://cybertipline.com)
1-800-THE-LOST

[Suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)



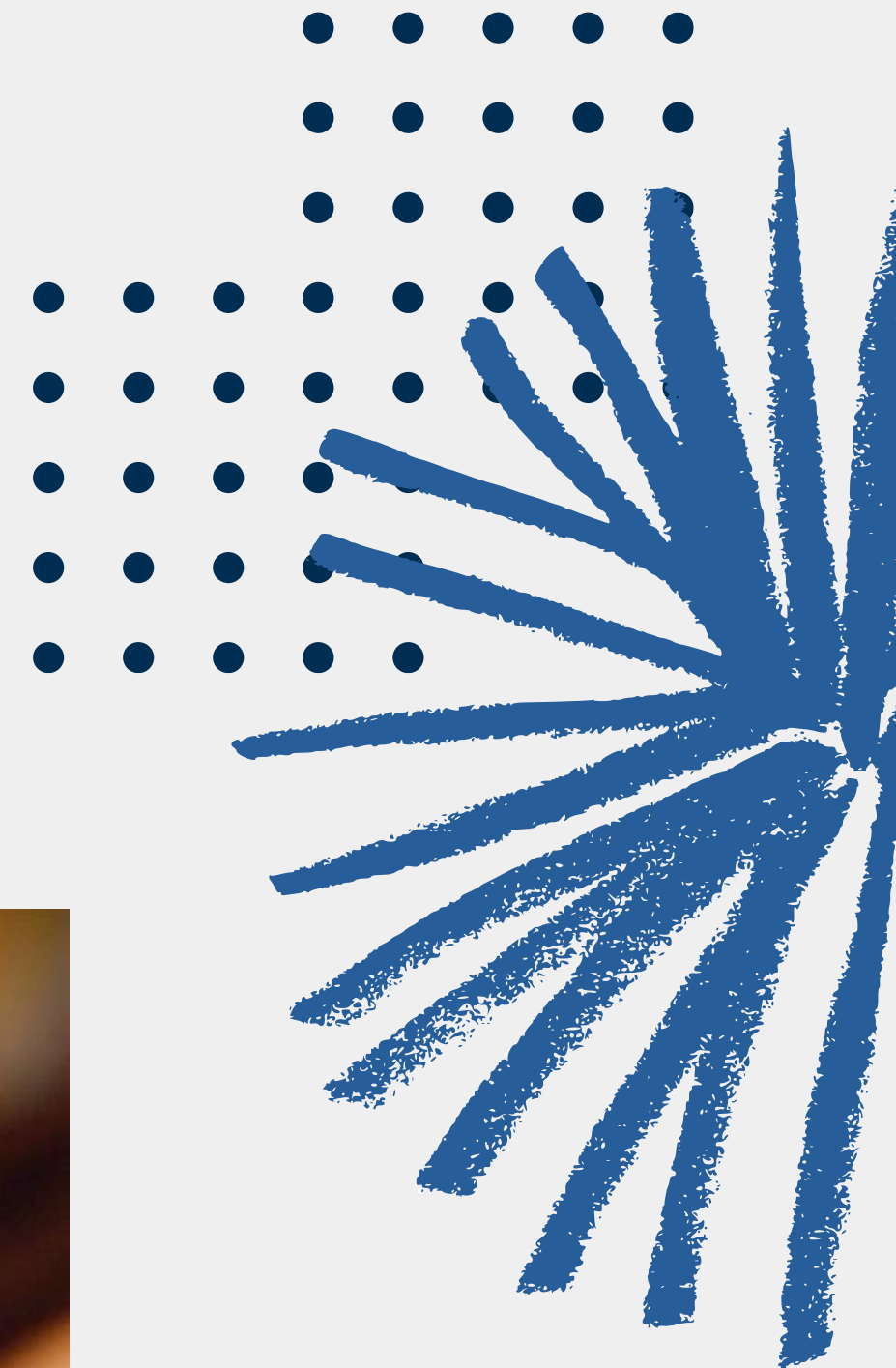
Sexting



What is Sexting?

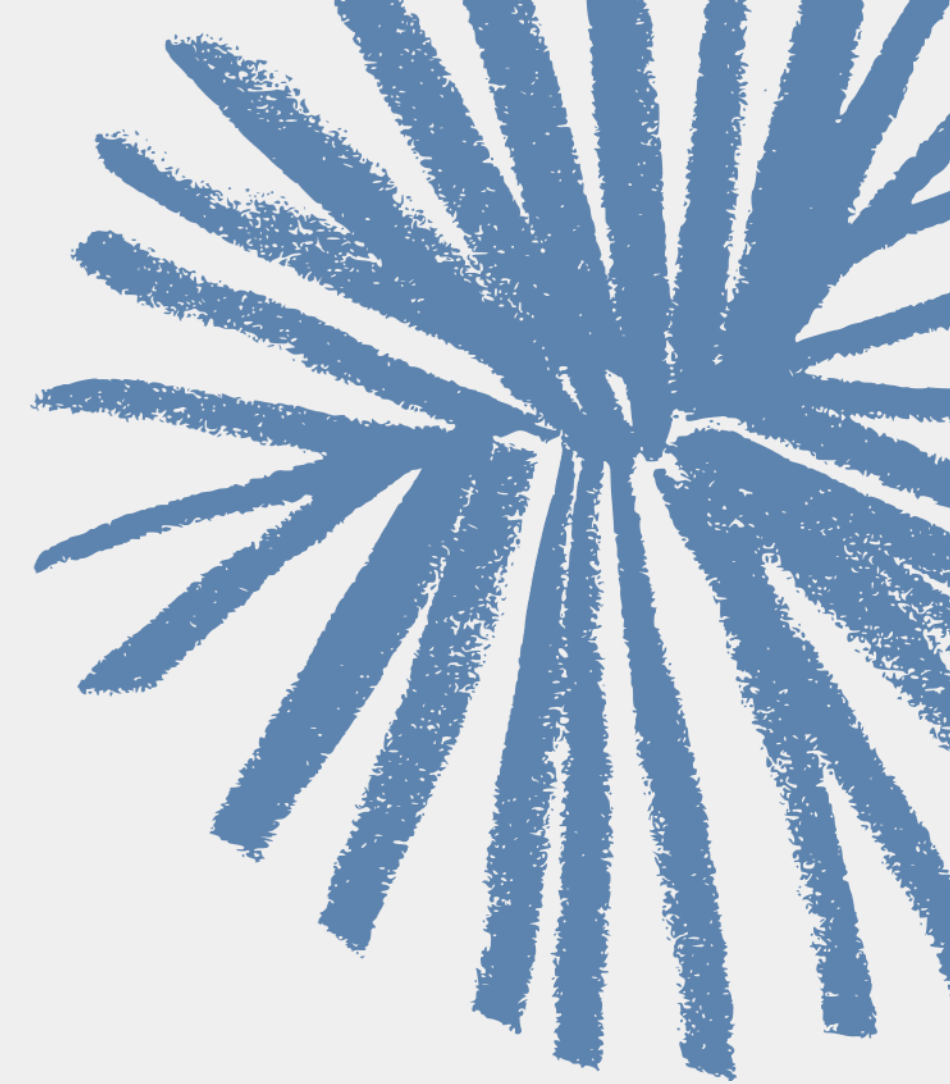
Sexting is:

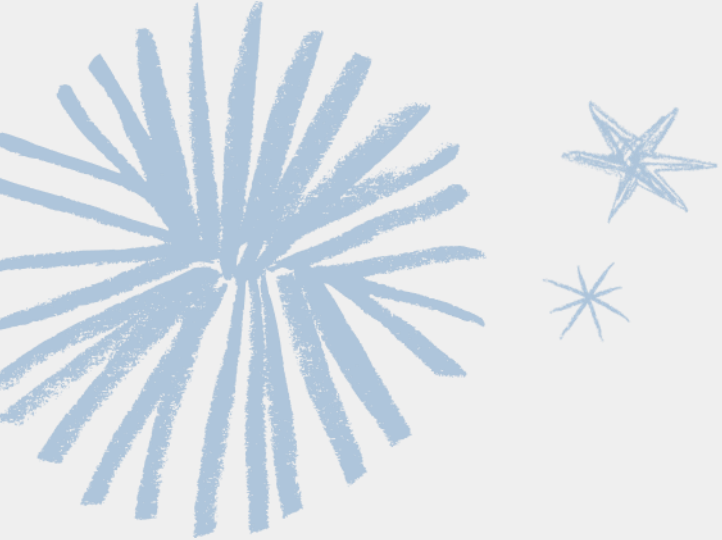
- Sending or receiving sexually suggestive or explicit texts, pictures, or videos via one's cell phone or other electronic means.
- Punishable by laws



What Makes Sexting Illegal?

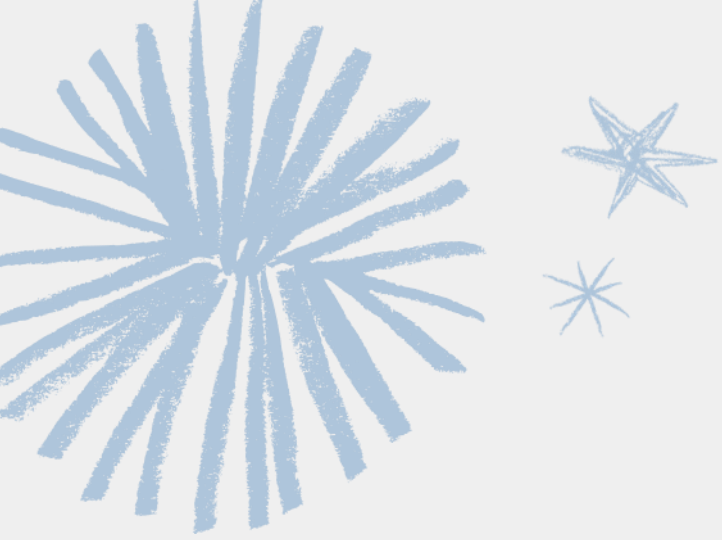
- Involves a person under the age of 18
- **TAKE** nude or partially nude photos or videos of yourself or someone else
- **SEND** nude photos or videos to someone else
- **POSSESS** nude photos or videos
- **VIEW** nude photos or videos
- **REQUEST** a nude photo or video from someone else





Ohio Sexting Laws

- It is a crime to create, reproduce, advertise, buy, sell, or possess any obscene material or sexual material involving a minor.
 - 2907.321 Pandering Obscenity Involving a Minor
 - 2907.322 Pandering Sexual-Oriented Matter Involving a Minor
- It is a crime to photograph, create or transfer an image of a nude minor and/or to possess or view such materials.
 - 2907.323 Illegal Use of a Minor in Nudity-Oriented Material
 - Ex.: Teen boys sharing nude or topless photos of teen girls.



Ohio Sexting Laws

- It is a crime to share with children any material that is considered obscene or harmful to juveniles.
 - 2907.31 Disseminating Matter Harmful to Juveniles
 - Ex.: Girl sends nude photos of herself to a boy.

****Additional Penalty:**

Sexual Offender Registration (2950.01)**



Sexting Facts

- 1 in 5 minors agree it's normal for people their age to share nudes with each other.
- 1 in 9 minors admit to having shared their own explicit imagery (SG-CSAM). *“self-generated child sexual abuse material”*
- Among minors who have shared their own SG-CSAM, 1 in 4 reported having done so with an adult.
- 10% of minors reported they'd reshared someone else's sexual images, yet nearly 16% reported they had seen non-consensually reshared intimate images of others.

(Source: Youth Perspectives on Online Safety, 2024)

What Should Your Child Do?

If they receive a text with a nude photo:

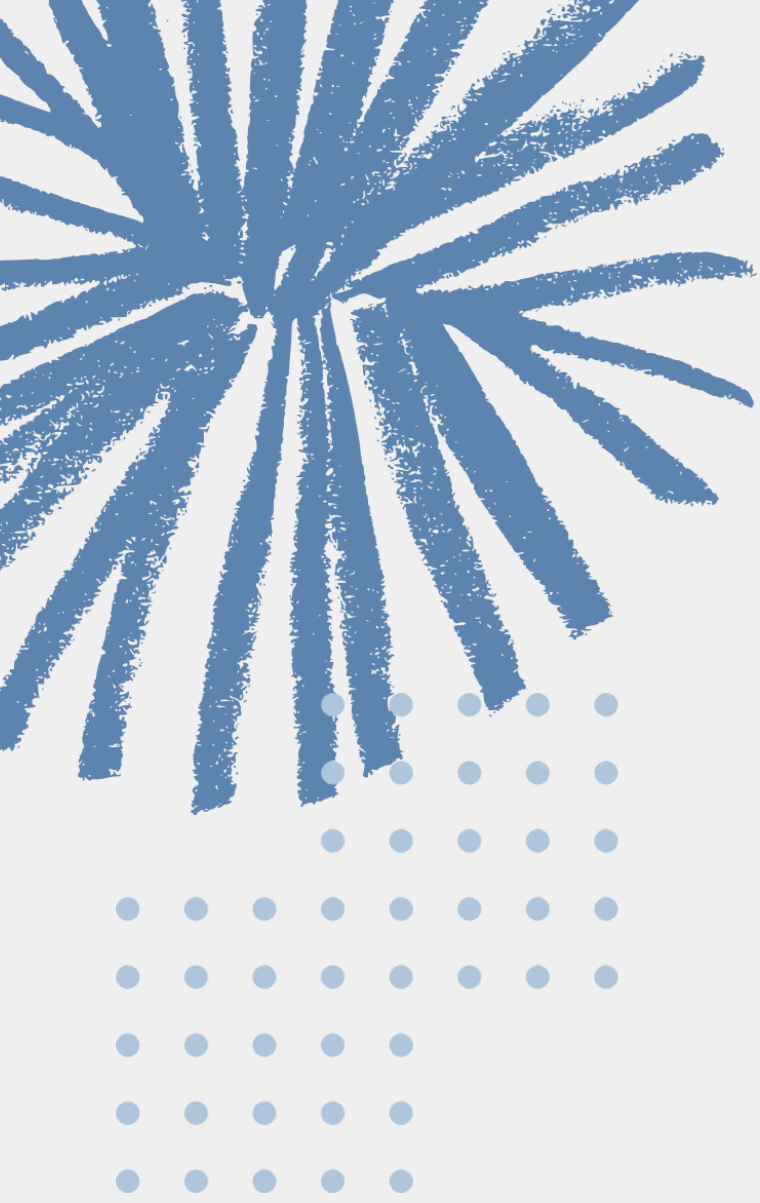
IMMEDIATELY notify a parent, a teacher, a trusted adult or the police.

- DO NOT resend the photo.
- DO NOT bring the photo/phone to school.
- DO NOT show the photo to anyone other than an adult who will help you report the photo to the police.



SEXTORTION

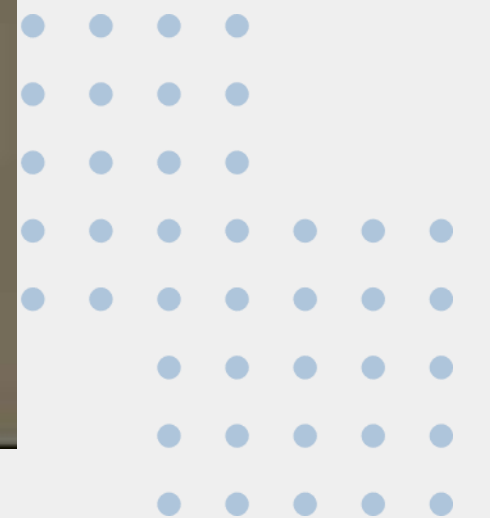


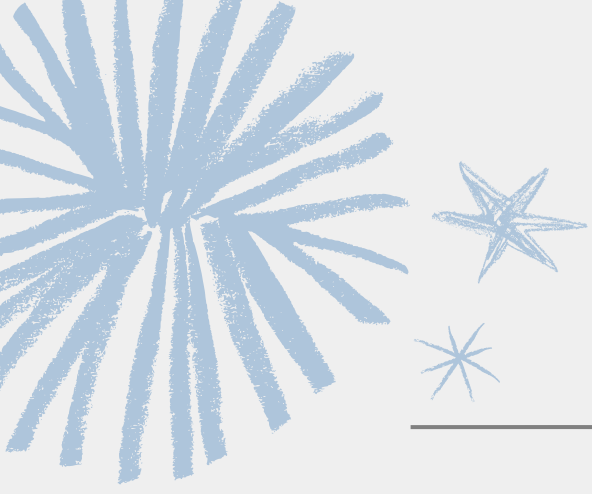


What is Sextortion?

- It is a *criminal act* by the perpetrator.
- It involves someone *bullying, coercing, or tricking* you into sending nude photos or videos.
- The perpetrator may also say they already have nude photos of you and will publish them if you don't send more nudes or money.
- In other instances, it may be a person you sexted with in the past who is now using those pictures or videos against you.

Sextortion: Braden Markus' Story





Local Examples of Sextortion

Sextortion case in Streetsboro, Ohio

- James Woods was a high school senior and track star in Streetsboro.
- Blackmailed by criminals who posed as a teenage girl on Instagram.
- Tricked into sending a compromising video, which was then used to demand money, threatening to send to his friends and family.
- Over 200 threatening messages were sent in less than 20 hours.
- James felt trapped and took his own life.
- Perpetrators are believed to be from the Ivory Coast and have not been caught.

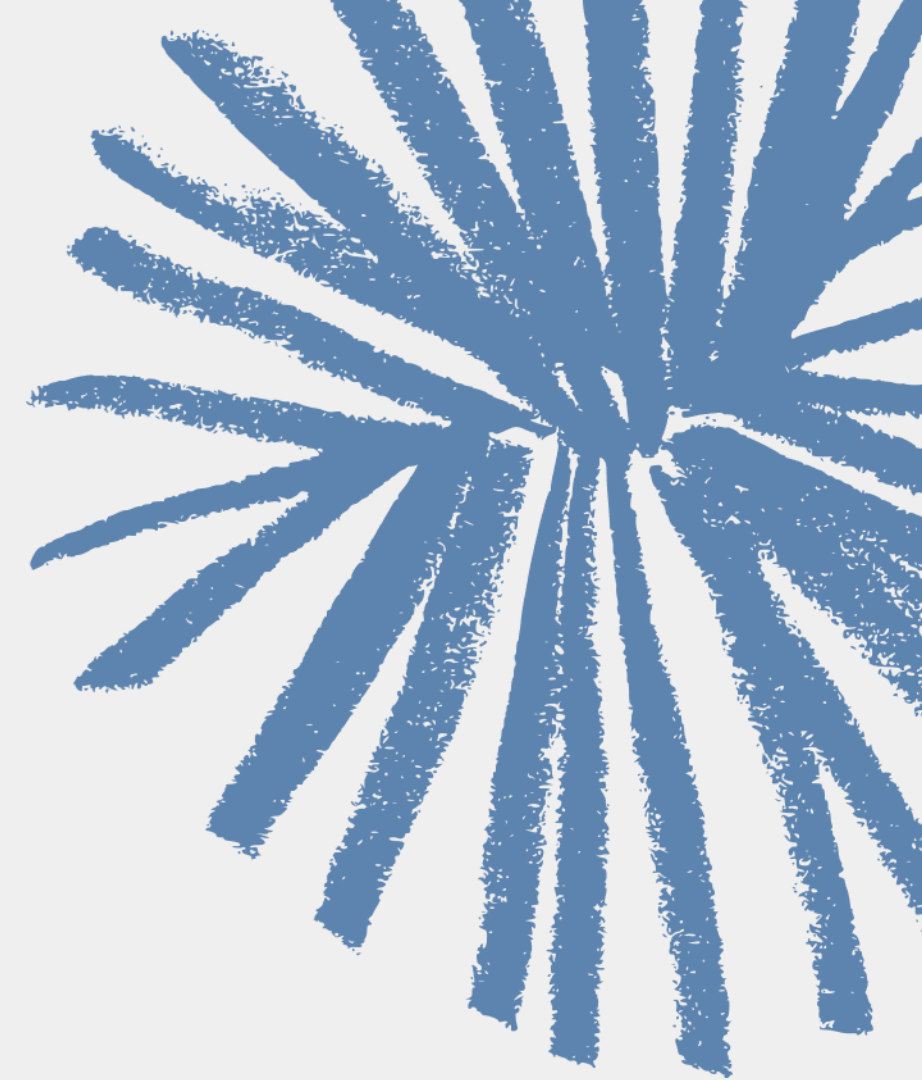
Sextortion case pending in Summit County Common Pleas Court

- Defendant is under the age of 18.
- Case began in Juvenile Court but was bound over to the adult felony court.
- Multiple victims, who are also minors.
- Engaged online through social media.
- Defendant used threats of violence to force additional images and videos.
- Defendant facing 49 felony charges.

Most Common Signs:

- You receive a friend request *from someone you don't know* personally
 - *Their profile doesn't have many friends or followers and does not have a lot of pictures or posts*
- The person you're talking to might *claim they don't have a working camera*, or they tell you to send nudes first.
- The conversation *moves fast*; they might ask you to change platforms to chat, and they might ask to be in a relationship.

DO NOT TRUST THIS!!!



What To Do

- ✓ Stop responding
- ✓ Take screenshots
- ✓ Report and block user
- ✓ Tell law enforcement

What NOT To Do

- ✓ Don't send more images
- ✓ Don't pay any money
- ✓ Don't respond to demands
- ✓ Don't continue the conversation



Even if you comply with demands, they may still carry out the threat.

Report to the CyberTipline:

www.cybertipline.org

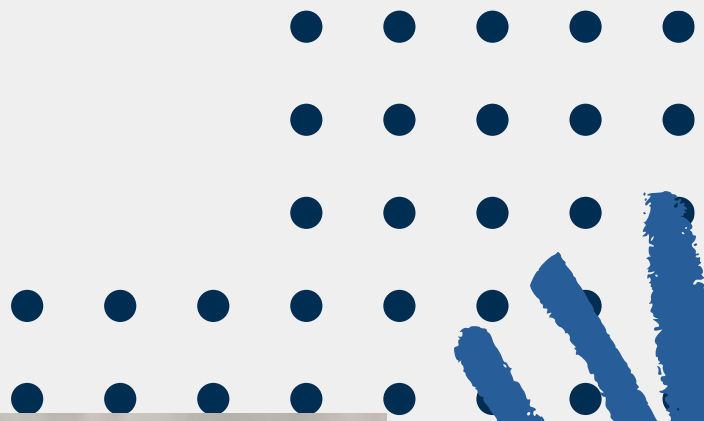


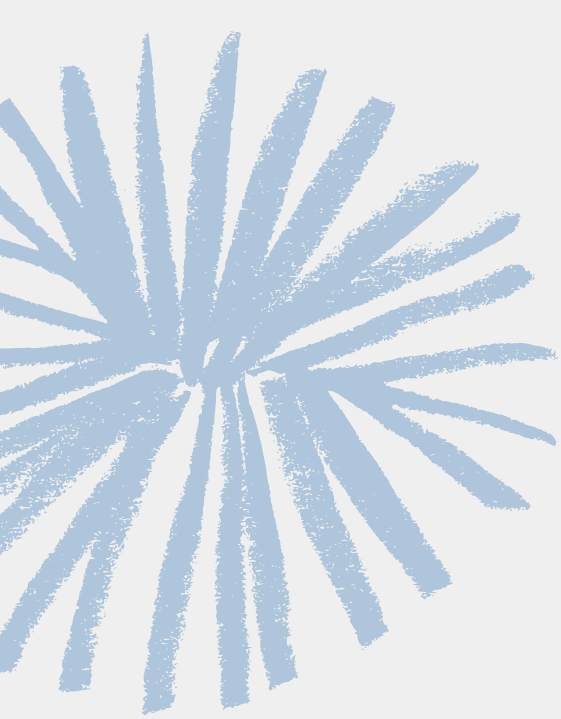
Know & Share the Warning Signs

- Large amounts of *time* online, especially at *night*.
- *Pornography* found on child's computer or cellphone.
- Child makes or receives phone calls/texts from someone *you do not know*.
- Child receives *unsolicited mail or gifts* from someone you do not know.
- Child actively *hides* what they're doing on the computer or cellphone.
- Child uses a *different* email account.

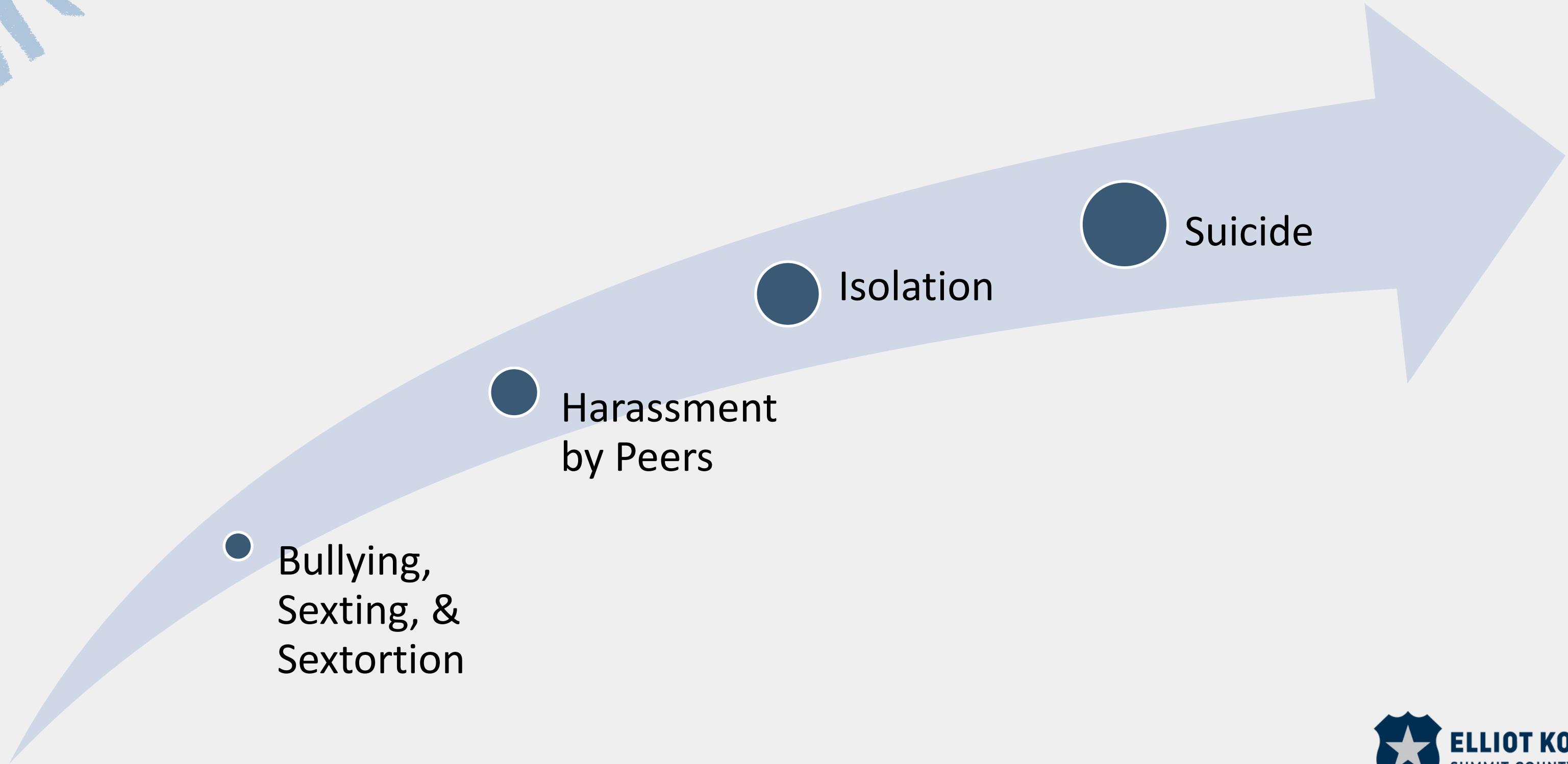
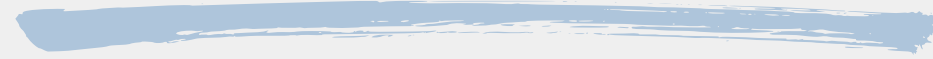


Potential Costs





Extreme Consequences



Bullying,
Sexting, &
Sextortion

Harassment
by Peers

Isolation

Suicide

Bullying, Sexting & Sextortion Suicides



Phoebe, 17, Mass.



Eric, 17, Ohio



Carl, 11 Florida



Jessica, 18, Ohio



Jadin, 15, Oregon



James, 17, Ohio



Hope, 13 Florida



Rebecca, 12 Florida



Criminal Consequences of Bullying



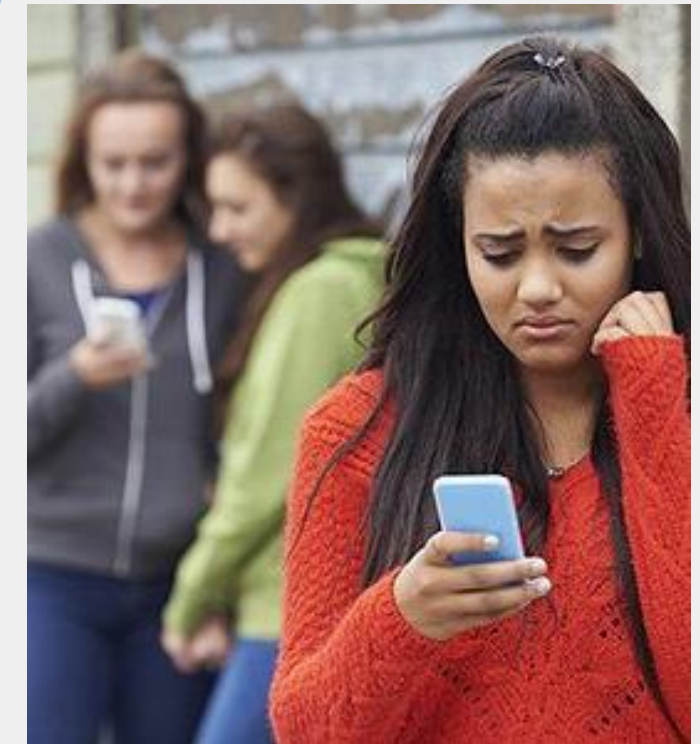
Menacing by
Stalking



Assault

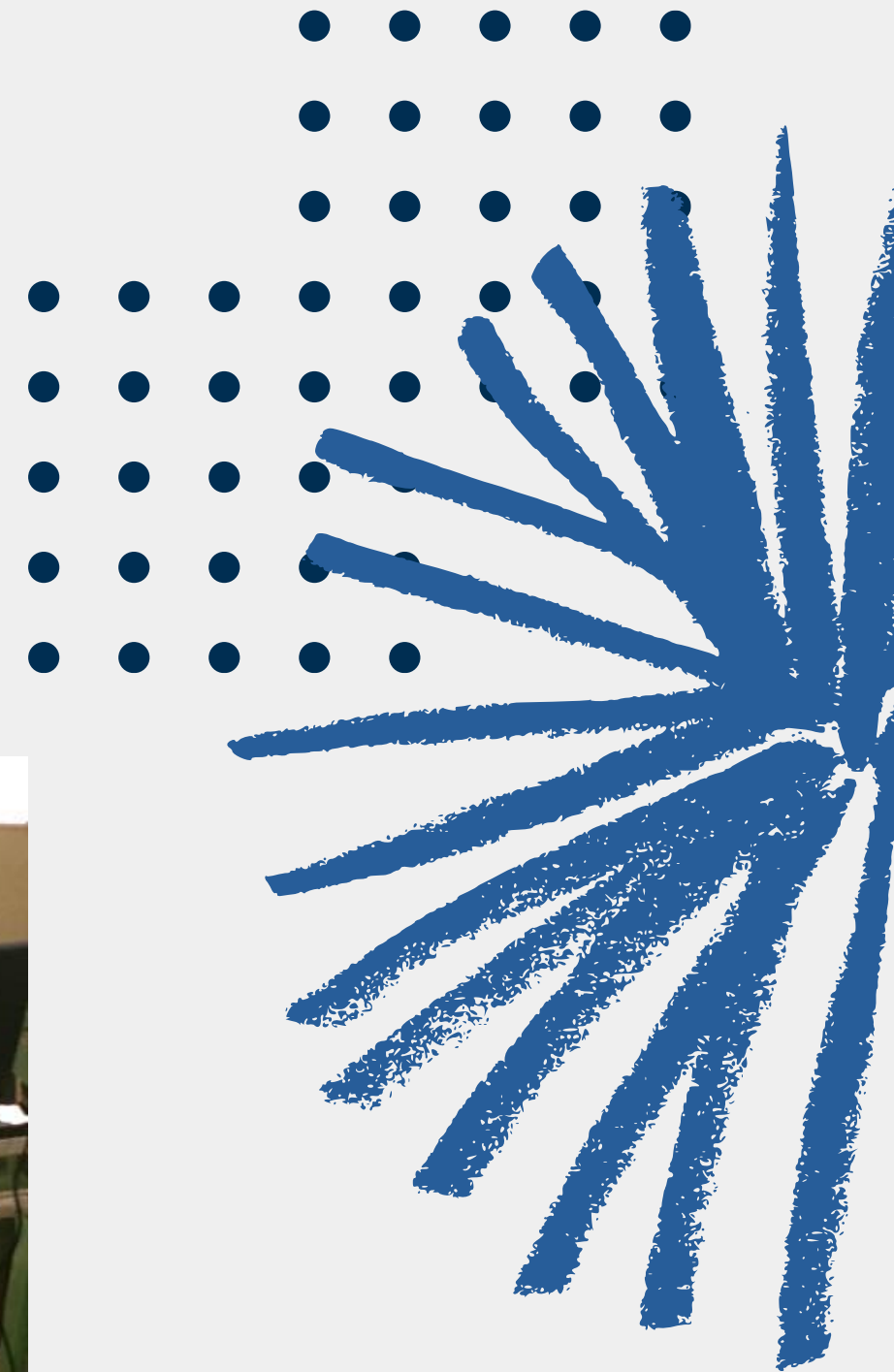


Stalking



Telecommunications
Harassment

How Can We Help?





Anti-Bullying Policy

The *Jessica Logan Act*, enacted after the death of Jessica Logan in 2008, requires each school board to establish a policy that prohibits harassment, intimidation, and bullying, and providing for the suspension of students who engage in online harassment and cyber- bullying.

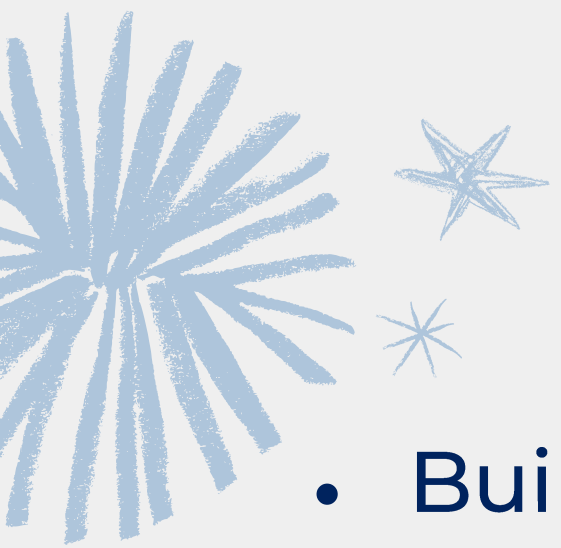


Online Child Safety Legislation

The *James T. Woods Act* is a trio of federal bills meant to update sentencing laws related to child sexual abuse material and address developments in online child exploitation. This legislative package advanced out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on Feb. 26, 2026.

- Sentencing Accountability for Exploitation Act (SAFE Act)
- Ending Coercion of Children and Harm Online Act (ECCHO Act)
- Stop Sextortion Act





Cyber Safety for Parents

- Build an atmosphere of trust and accountability by talking to your children regularly about their online activities and relationships.
- Encourage them to come to you or another trusted adult if someone does or says something online that makes them uncomfortable.
- Utilize parental controls, including age-appropriate filters, monitoring, and time management on your children's devices.
- Develop a list of family computer/internet rules.
- Restrict how much time children use their devices.
- Know your child's usernames and passwords.

Tips for Online Safety



General Safety Tips

- Practice good tech maintenance:
 - perform regular software updates,
 - use antivirus software, etc.
- Protect your passwords
- Learn about your privacy settings & review them often!



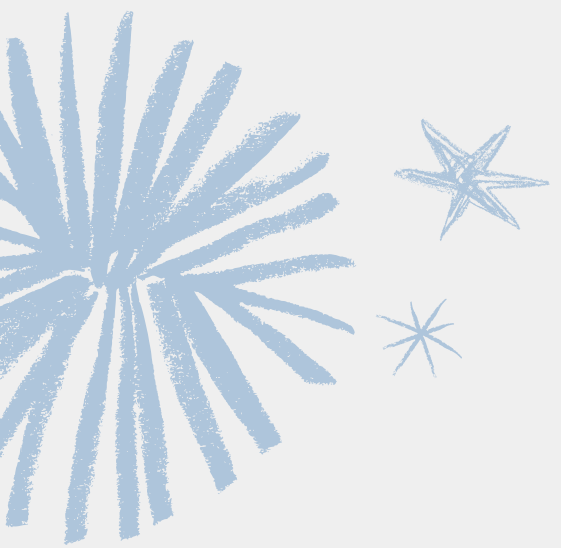
Social Media Tips

- Make sure your account is PRIVATE
- Make your screen name anonymous
- Keep your location private
- Be careful of what information you share in your profile
- Don't add people you don't know in person
- Don't send inappropriate snaps or messages



Communication Tips

- Don't open messages from someone you don't know
- If you open a message by mistake, do NOT click on links or download files
- Don't respond to a message asking for private information
- Don't send pictures of yourself or your family to anyone you don't know



How To Protect Children

- Be proactive and aware of what you and your child are doing online. Be a good role model when using technology!
- Don't share pictures of a child without strict privacy settings.
- Be careful of what children are wearing or background identifiers which might inform a predator of their location or school.
- Research new apps or games your child is wanting to use.
- Always listen to your gut feelings!

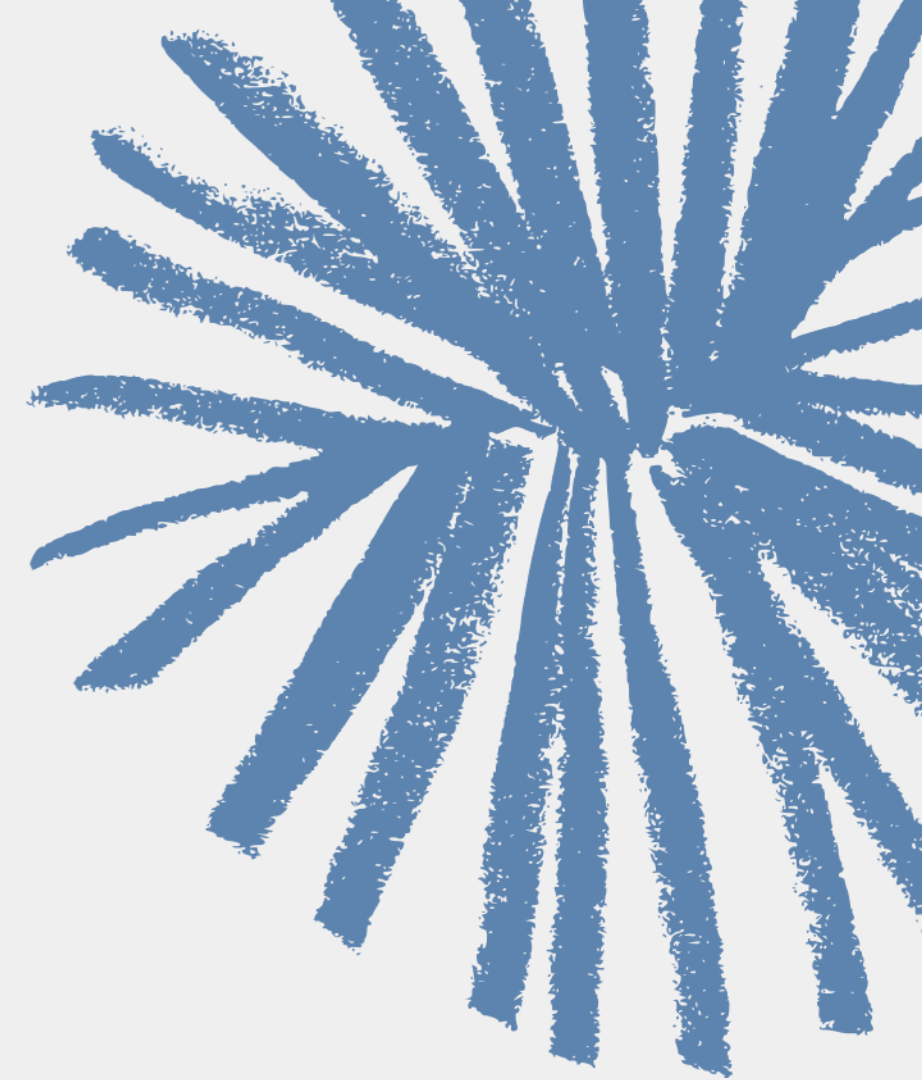
What Do You Do If You Are Notified as a “Trusted Adult”

- If a child tells you they have received harassing messages, do **NOT** delete the message.
- Do **NOT** show anyone the message other than law enforcement.
- Once the proper authorities are notified, request permission to delete your child’s account and open a new one.
- Help the child use the “block” or “ban” feature.



“Family Internet Rules”

- *Permission* is required to access the Internet.
- We only visit *age-appropriate* websites.
- We don't send photos or give out personal info without *permission*.
- We *tell our parents* of any inappropriate online messages or content we see.
- We *share an e-mail account* with our parents.
- We don't chat with people we *don't know* in person.
- We interact the same way on the Internet as we do in person – with *kindness and respect*.
- These rules apply to our home computer and *all other* computers we use.



Your Digital Footprint

When anything is sent digitally to anyone else:

- It is out of your hands. They now have control.
- They can save it or share it whenever they want.
- Even a private communication (email, text, IM, etc.) can be shared with other people who you *did not intend* to share it with.



Why Your Digital Footprint is Important



College Admissions

College admissions officers are reviewing applicants' social media profiles and posts to determine admission AND scholarship eligibility.



Employment

Employers are utilizing social media to screen candidates for open job positions. Some careers and/or employers continue to monitor current employees' social media activity & posts.



Armed Services

Social media activity can potentially prevent you from obtaining security clearances from any branch of military service, as well as advancement within that branch.



Privacy Risks

Personal details can be used for phishing, account takeovers, or scams. More information online increases the risk of data compromise, including identity theft and fraud.

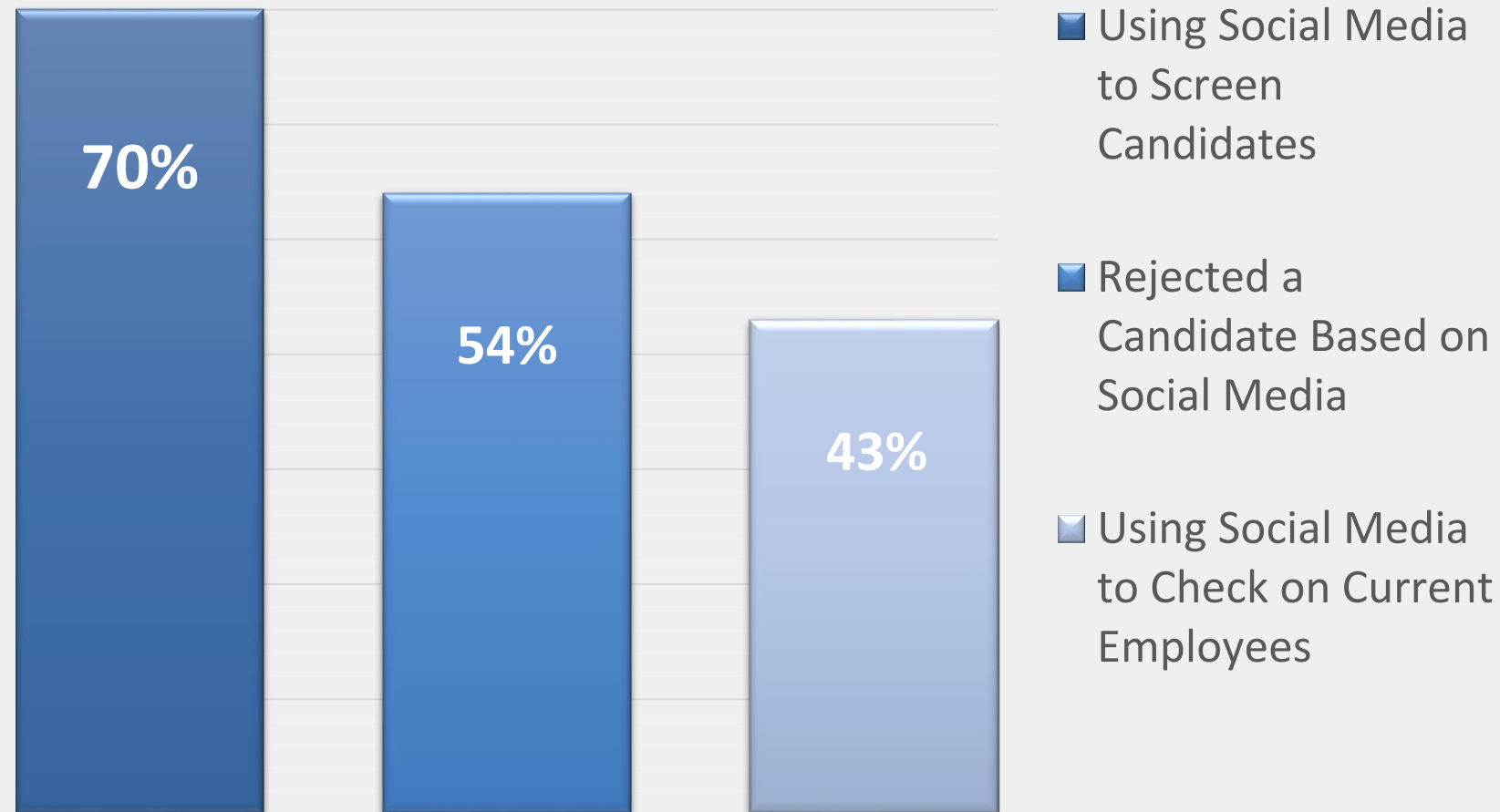


Reputation & Relationships

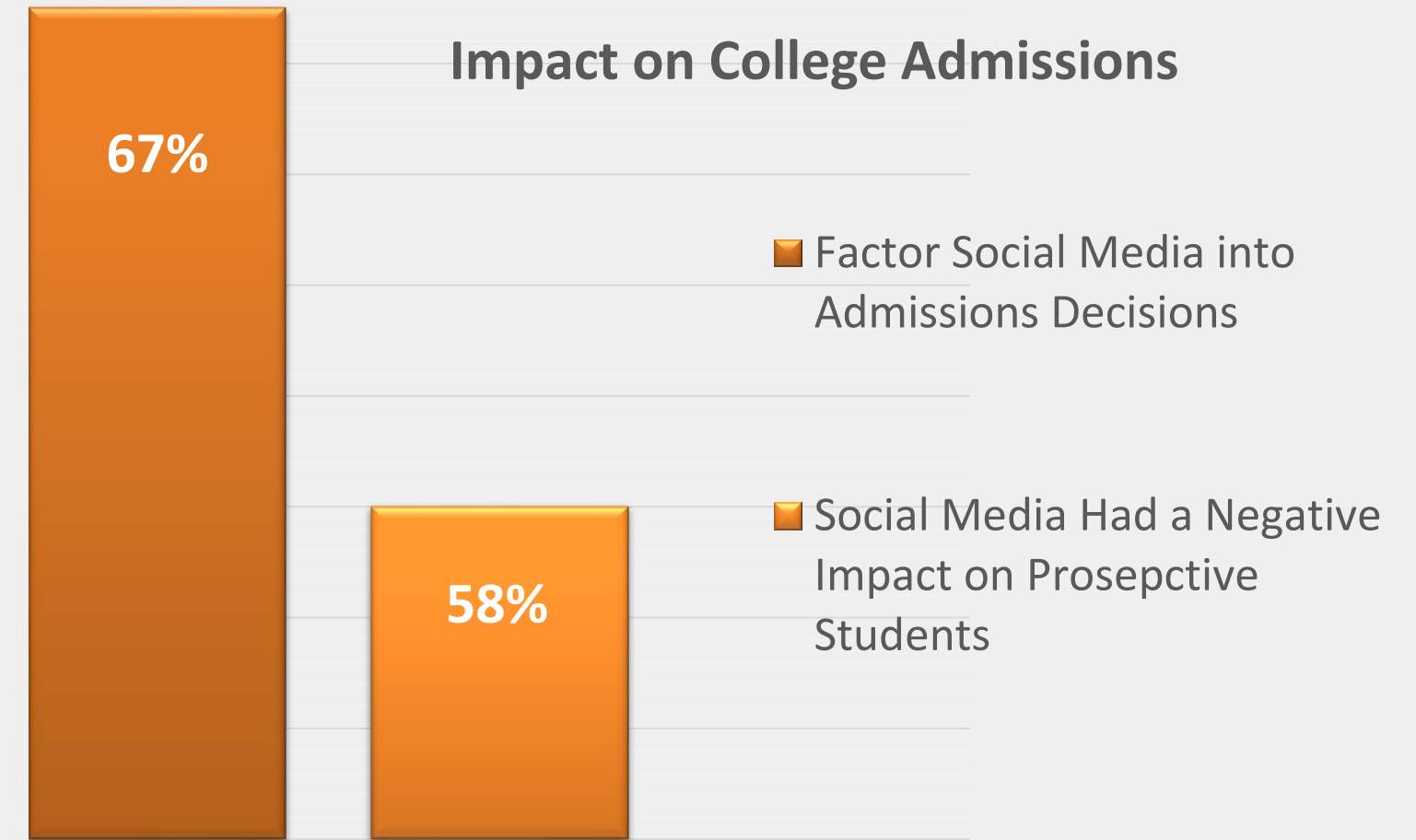
Past posts, photos, or comments can tarnish your image offline and damage personal relationships. What's online can be archived, copied, and shared indefinitely.

Think About Your Future

Impact on Employment



Impact on College Admissions



*In 2017, Harvard rescinded 10 acceptances due to concerns about sexually explicit memes and hate speech.

**In December 2020, a 3-second Snapchat video led a newly admitted student to withdraw from the University of Tennessee under pressure from admissions officers. In this case, the video was captured by a recipient and sent to others, eventually making its way to the University years after it was posted.



Contact Information

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