

We, the Prevention Through Education Team, do lots of work with schools in terms of online safety, and we have a particular passion for spreading awareness about the risks associated with the sharing of self-generated images. Hopefully, the information included here will help you to keep your children safe online.

Sharing images and videos online

Young people often share images or 'selfies' and there is potential for some of those to be nude or nearly nude images. Young people share 'nudes' for a number of reasons, and some situations are more risky than others. For information about the contexts in which images are shared and how best to respond, take a look at [nude selfies: a parents guide](#).

Recent reports highlight alarming statistics. The sharing of self-generated indecent imagery by children aged 7-10 years has increased hugely this year compared to last, whilst most indecent images found online picture those in the age group 11-13 years; read more about this [here](#).

Northumbria Police need young people to understand the risks involved in downloading or sharing indecent images of children. Since April 2021, our Prevention Through Education Advisers Nichola and Sean have taught 5996 secondary school-aged students in 49 schools on this topic. During our sessions, we learned:

- *Over half of students did **NOT** know it was illegal to post a 'nude' on the internet or to send one via messaging
- *The majority of students said there was **NO** safe way to send a 'nude'
- *Most students said they would **NOT** tell an adult at home if they received a 'nude' because they were embarrassed and were afraid that their parents/carers would take away their devices.

What does the law say?

It is against the law to download, make or share indecent images or videos if the person in them is under **18 years** or the person receiving them is under **18 years**, even if it is an image of you! Once these are sent you can never get them back and you risk potential criminal proceedings.

Please read on for how to start a conversation about this issue with your child, and for sources of support...

Steps you can take to help keep your child safer online

Have an ongoing conversation

Continue to talk about the apps, games and sites they like to use, what they like and don't like, and any concerns about being online.

Agree ground rules about how you use technology as a family.

Learn about the platforms and apps young people like to use.

Know how to use the tools, apps and settings that can help to keep young people safe.

Discuss with them when to unfollow, block or report. For help starting this conversation, read [having a conversation with your child](#).

Make sure they know where to go for support

Remind your child they can always speak to you or an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel worried or upset. Remind them that they won't be in trouble and at that you are there to help.

Visit [CEOP Education](#) for further information. Online abuse can also be reported via this site.

It's good to remind children and young people that [Childline](#) is also a valuable source of help and support.
