

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

HELP FOR DEALING WITH INTIMATE IMAGE ABUSE



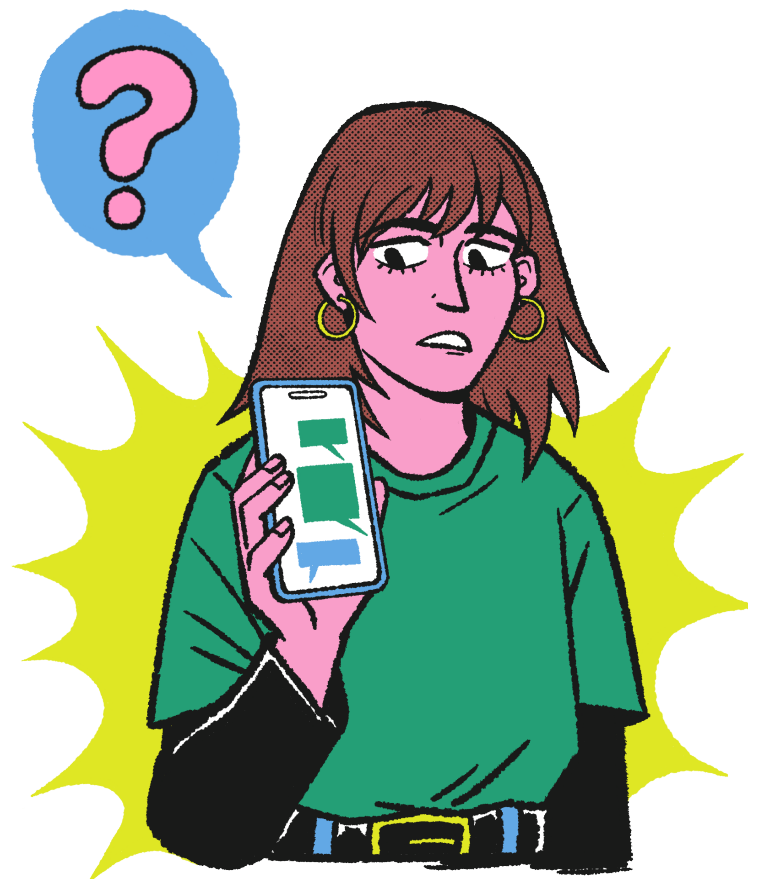


So...if you're reading this, it's probably not random, and it may be that you've got yourself into a tricky situation online, or you may know someone who's struggling with the same thing. If it's something to do with **intimate images** then you might be freaking out, which is totally understandable – but try not to. This guide is designed to help!

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD.

It might feel a bit like it though, particularly if you haven't told anyone yet. No one's expecting you to read this whole booklet from cover to cover, but if you keep reading, you should find a really easy-to-understand guide that can help you figure out the best pathway forward depending on what your situation (or your friend's situation) is.

The most important thing is that you know what your options are, and it's a really good idea to ask a trusted adult for help, or at least to let them know what's going on.



WHAT'S AN INTIMATE IMAGE?

So in Ireland, it is defined pretty simply like this:

"Any type of image of a person who is naked or engaged in a sexual act. It also includes any image claiming to be of an intimate part of a person's body or an image of underwear covering that part of their body."*

The big problem here is that any image like this of someone under 18 ('a minor') is **illegal**.

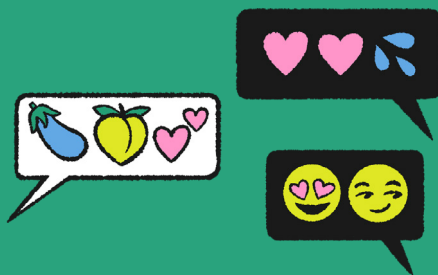
You may have sent an image like this of yourself to someone on purpose – or accidentally.

You might've been tricked into this situation when sexting, or you may have trusted someone that you sent an image to, and they're now using it against you. This is called sextortion.

You may also have come across an image of someone else like this online whether it's real or created by AI.

We should probably define a couple of other terms here that might be useful...

Sexting is the sending of intimate texts or images to another person as a way to feel closer to them or as a turn-on. There's many reasons why people sext and it can often be incident-free but can lead to difficulties too. For advice on sexting, have a look at page 8.



Sextortion is a type of online blackmail. It's when someone threatens to share sexual pictures, videos, or information about you unless you pay them money. They often use time pressure to make you panic and make the wrong decision quickly.



*www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/policy-information/intimate-image-abuse

A FEW IMPORTANT THINGS!

There's a few important things you should know first. If you come across the image on an app or platform, **if possible, always report it to the app or platform first.**

Don't be afraid, it's ok

You can get help, and the fact that you're reading this is a great starting point for that.



Reporting is anonymous

Whatever situation you are in, try not to worry about getting 'in trouble' Even if you need to provide a name or email when reporting something, it's only so you can receive the right support. Your privacy will always be protected.

You're not alone

This can happen to anyone for many different reasons and there are lots of people who can help.



'Coco's Law' is key*

Remember **in Ireland it's always illegal to send, receive or share any sexually explicit images, video or text of someone under 18 years of age.** Coco's Law passed in 2021 and is important if someone shares an intimate image without permission (regardless of age) – even if the person initially gave consent for the pictures to be taken. In other words:

1. It is illegal to share or publish intimate images of someone without consent and with the purpose of causing harm. This can lead to an unlimited fine and/or 7 years in prison.

*The full name of Coco's Law is the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act (2021)

2. It is illegal to share or publish intimate images of someone without consent even if there is no specific intention to cause harm. This can lead to a €5,000 fine and/or 12 months' imprisonment.

One report can make a difference

Never think that you're not important! Even one report can make a difference and you don't know how many other people might have reported the same person, or the same image.

There's always a way forward

Just like it says on the front cover of this booklet, it's not the end of the world, so try and stay calm: things will improve if you follow the right steps.

WHATS YOUR SITUATION?

There's so many different scenarios you might be caught up in, but here are the main ones:



If someone asks you for an image or is threatening or trying to scare you into sending one.



If someone threatens to share an intimate image of you or has already shared one.



If you have posted or sent an intimate image of yourself.

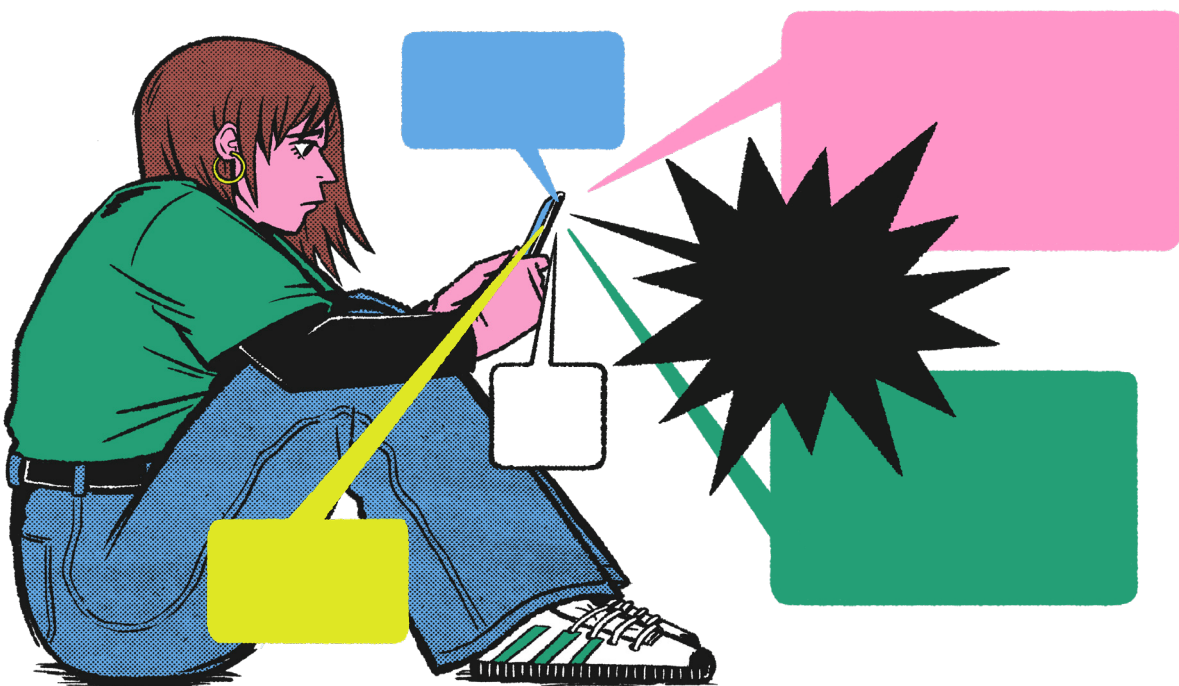


If you come across an image made with AI/ 'Nudification Apps'.*



If you receive an unwanted intimate image.

****It doesn't matter how the image is generated, it doesn't change anything.***





**SCENARIO 1:
IF SOMEONE ASKS YOU FOR AN
IMAGE OR IS TRYING TO SCARE
YOU INTO SENDING ONE.**

ADVICE:

It's always best to think carefully before sharing any intimate image — even with someone you trust. You should never feel pressured to share an image, and it's okay to say no. Think carefully about if a relationship changes (or ends), where that picture might end up. Whatever the reason given, never do this simply because you feel pressured, and never send it to a stranger. If a partner is insisting on this, ask yourself why, and remember if someone is worth your while, they will like you whether you send them sexts or not.

**SCENARIO 2:
IF SOMEONE THREATENS TO
SHARE AN INTIMATE IMAGE
OF YOU.**

ADVICE:

First of all, screenshot the account details and any messages, then block the person and set your accounts to private. Don't engage in any further communication with them. Don't panic or send them money: they are depending on you freaking out and doing something quickly and under pressure. This is just a tactic.

**SCENARIO 3:
IF SOMEONE HAS ALREADY
SHARED AN IMAGE OF YOU.**

ADVICE:

Don't engage in any further communication with the person and reach out immediately to **Hotline** (Irish Internet **Hotline**) for support with removal. You can make a report here.





**SCENARIO 4:
IF YOU HAVE POSTED OR
SENT AN INTIMATE IMAGE OF
YOURSELF.**

ADVICE:

Don't panic, but make a list of where, how and who you shared the image with. If you are under 18, ask for help from a trusted adult and go to **Take It Down** to start the process of trying to remove the images. If you are over 18, go to **StopNCII** for the same process.

**SCENARIO 5:
IF YOU COME ACROSS AN
INTIMATE IMAGE OF SOMEONE
ELSE.**

ADVICE:

Encourage them to report it themselves, as Hotline (Irish Internet Hotline) cannot act on another person's behalf.

**SCENARIO 6:
IF YOU COME ACROSS
AN INTIMATE IMAGE OF
SOMEONE MADE WITH AI OR
'NUDIFICATION' APPS.**

ADVICE:

You can still report this as it's illegal, regardless of how it was created. Deepfakes and nudified images can be created from very few images — sometimes just one.

**SCENARIO 7:
IF YOU RECEIVE AN UNWANTED
INTIMATE IMAGE.**

ADVICE:

This is also covered by Coco's Law so make a report to **Hotline.ie** or contact your local Gardaí station.



PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY

Knowing how to manage your own personal information is just as important as reading and filtering information online. Social media profiles can be one of the biggest sources of loss of privacy.

Some really simple steps you can take are:



Keep your accounts and passwords private.



Be very careful about accepting friends or followers you don't know offline.



Remember that once you put anything online - texts, posts, pictures or videos - you no longer have control over who sees it and where it ends up.



Limit the personal information you share online, including your image, and never click on suspicious links or offers that simply seem too good to be true (they're usually not true!).



POSITIVE DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

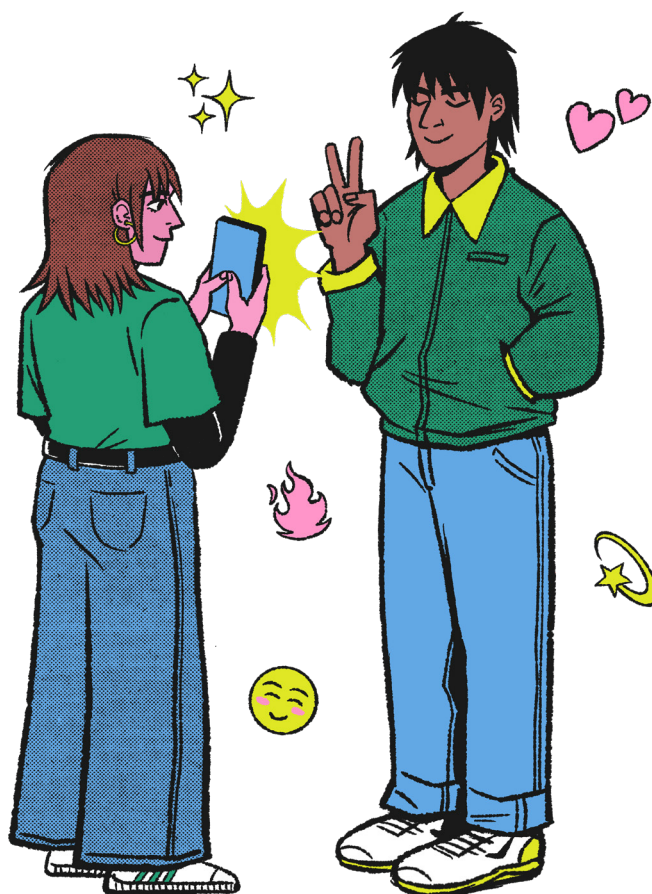
Your digital footprint is the trace you leave online and it can be really hard to erase. Anything you do online will contribute to your footprint, and even if you don't use your name, things can be traced back to your accounts. That's why it's really important to think about what you share online, and how long it will stay out there. If you wouldn't want to find it again in a year (or 5 or 10!) maybe don't post it in the first place. Remember as well, many prospective colleges or employers will look you up online when you apply for a position, so be confident that whatever people will find about you online is something you can be proud of and not something to embarrass you or impact your future opportunities.

Oh, and one more thing about sexting. It's a key part to protecting your privacy and your digital footprint for the future. What might seem okay and safe one day may not seem so the next, and relationships change, people move on and once you put an image out there – even if you've agreed some ground rules, or to delete images after a relationship finishes – you just never know where that image might end up. If you'd rather no one else ever sees an image, then probably one of the safest things to do is not to send it anywhere in the first place.

For more advice on sexting, Spunout has some great advice.

One final word!

Being online can be brilliant, but it can also be a tricky place and it's easy to get yourself into difficult situations. Intimate images are just one area where you might need help, but as we've said throughout, just remember **It's not the end of the world**. Most things can be sorted out, so don't panic and use this advice as a starting point to tackle the situation you're in, and if you're struggling, always reach out to a trusted adult for help. It's not always as bad as it might seem, and you will get it sorted.



If you need further help, here are some organisations that might be useful.



The Irish Internet Hotline is the Irish national reporting centre where members of the public can securely, anonymously, and confidentially report concerns in respect of illegal content online, especially child sexual abuse material (CSAM). The removal of child sexual abuse images and videos from the Internet is the core of our work.

hotline.ie



Since 2015, Ireland's online safety charity, CyberSafeKids, has been dedicated to equipping children and young people with the skills they need to thrive in a connected world while staying protected from the challenges and risks it can bring. They tirelessly promote digital literacy, resilience, and responsible online behaviour.

cybersafekids.ie



Take It Down is a free service to remove online explicit images/videos taken before 18, using a hash value, without sending the images.

takeitdown.ncmec.org



StopNCII.org is a free global tool designed to support victims of non-consensual intimate image abuse (NCIIA).

stopncii.org

spunout

Ireland's youth information and support platform.
spunout.ie



Belong To LGBTQ+
Youth Ireland

Ireland's LGBTQ+ youth organisation working for a society where we all belong. **belongto.org**

itm Irish Traveller
movement

Facilitating dialogue, meaningful participation, empowerment, and leadership for Young Travellers. **itmtrav.ie**



Coimisiún
na Meán

Ireland's media and online regulator. **cnam.ie**

ispcc

Protecting children through the Childline service, therapeutic support and digital mental health programmes. **ispcc.ie**



NPC

SUPPORTING PARENTS
SUPPORTING CHILDREN

An organisation for Irish parents of children in early, primary, and post-primary education.
npc.ie

webwise.ie

Providing information, advice and resources for schools, families and young people on online safety. **webwise.ie**

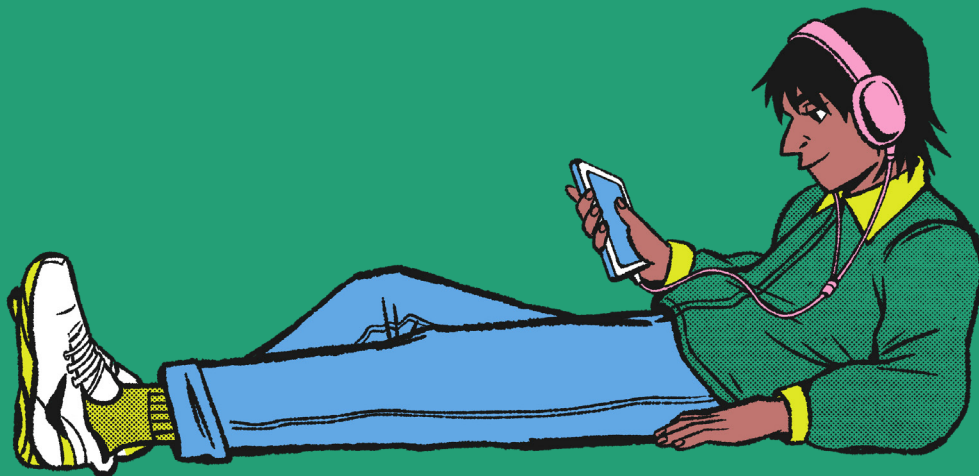
About this resource:

This guide was created as part of the ***It's Not The End Of The World*** campaign, aimed at supporting young people with advice and information around handling situations online involving intimate images.



Visit **cybersafekids.ie** and **hotline.ie** for more information.

You can contact An Garda Síochána, Ireland's Police Service at **garda.ie**.



Design and illustration by Fiona McDonnell

