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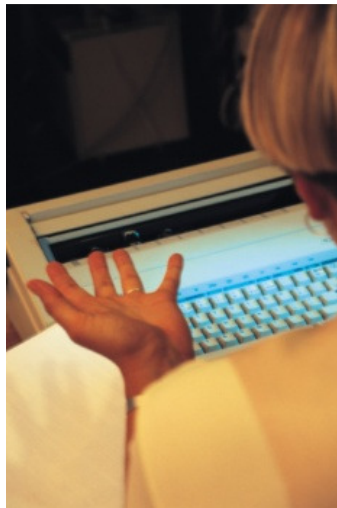
## Online 'Sextortion' of Teens Rising--Sexual Extortion--What is it and How to Prevent it?

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Online 'Sextortion' of teens is on the rise, according to Federal Authorities challenged with investigating this relatively new type of crime involving sexual extortion or sexual exploitation. With so many cases rising in the judicial system, Federal Authorities and Child Safety Advocates want to educate teens on the dangers of 'Sextortion' and how to stop it.

### **What is 'Sextortion' or Sexual Extortion/Exploitation?**



The name was derived from cases involving teenagers who take nude photos of themselves, in what appears to be fun and games or a consenting, harmless act.

They then send them via cell phone in a text message (sexting) or post them on video chat rooms in the act of having fun.

However, the nightmare ensues as the photos, that are literally impossible to remove off the internet, become a tool of exploitation or extortion.

Federal cases are popping up all over the country where a young teen sends a nude photo to a boyfriend or girlfriend meant to be "for your eyes only".

However, after "mad day" or a break up takes place, the sender is pressured into sending more explicit photos, or risk total exposure.

Faced with the embarrassment and pressure to comply, they fall victim to exploitation or Sexual exploitation, aka 'Sextortion'.

Federal Affidavits now refer to this practice by 'Sextortion', as the name is coined.

"Kids are putting their head in the lion's mouth every time they do this," said Parry Aftab, a lawyer and online child safety advocate.

Several cases have been adjudicated, recently. They involved a man who 'sextorted' over 50 women for more explicit acts by sending threatening emails to them.

Another case involved a young man who posed as a girl and tricked other young men into sending nude photos to him via email and or text. He made threats to expose them if they did not give in to requests for sex.

In both cases, each man was found guilty and sentenced to 18 and 15 years, respectively.

Federal Prosecutors believe 'Sextortion' or 'Sexual Black Mail' is on the rise among teens because they are more vulnerable and less likely to give in to threats.

Federal authorities and Child Safety Advocates fear that if nothing is done, these disturbing cases will continue to rise.

### **'Sextortion'--Tips on Preventing it**

1. 'Sextortion' is on the rise and difficult to detect, given the nature of how the photo made its way on the internet.
2. Do Not send any photos of yourself that could later come back to haunt you.
3. At the first sign of any threats, Authorities must be partnered with. The sooner the intervention, the sooner the offender can be identified and dealt with accordingly.
4. Trust no one, not even a relative with provocative photos of yourself.
5. Create a support system that you can rely on if you become a victim of 'Sextortion'.

'Sextortion' is on the rise among teens. Not only will it create an embarrassing situation based on bad choices, it can create a lifetime of scars, some that may never heal. It is important to understand the consequences of your behaviors before you partake in submitting any damaging photos of yourself.

Remember, 'Sextortion' does not have to be an end all be all. The choice is yours.

Source: [Chicago Times](#)

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