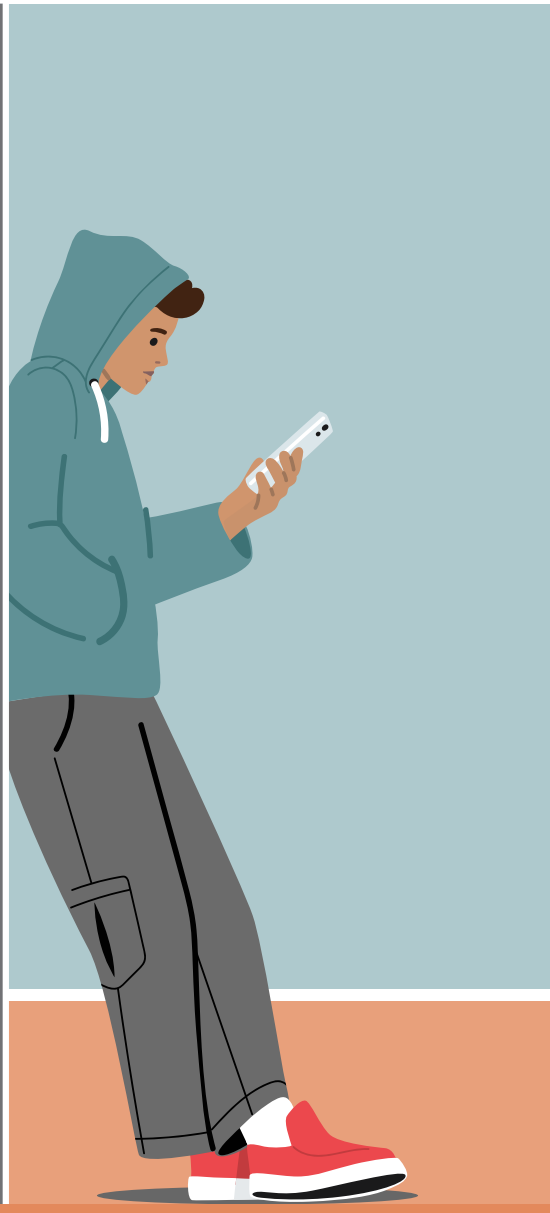
YOUTH NCDII: A GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

A resource guide for schools dealing with incidents of non-consensual distribution of intimate images



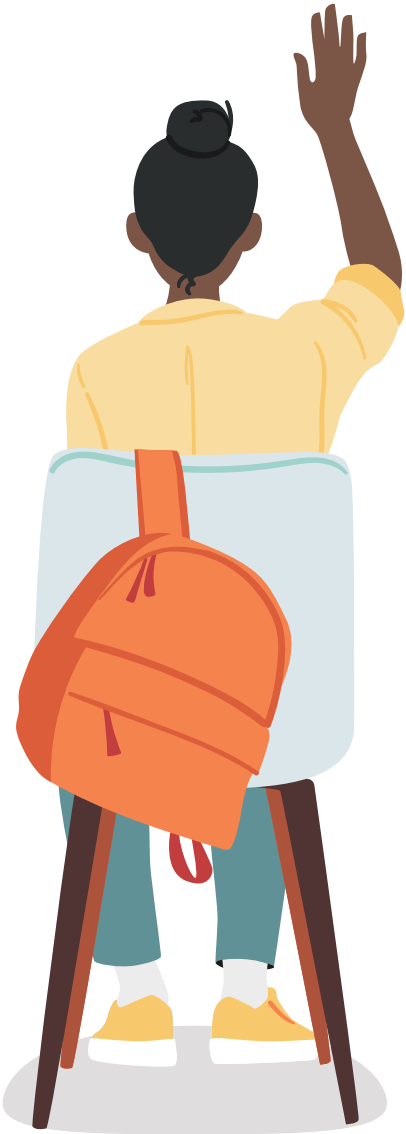
CANADIAN CENTRE *for* CHILD PROTECTION®
Helping families. Protecting children.

This guide is designed to assist school personnel in responding to non-consensual distribution of intimate images among youth. This includes school personnel supporting the affected youth, the acting-out youth, other youth that may be involved, and their families.

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The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) is a national charity dedicated to the personal safety of all children. The organization's goal is to reduce the sexual abuse and exploitation of children through programs, services, and resources for Canadian families, educators, child-serving organizations, law enforcement, and other parties. C3P also operates Cybertip.ca, Canada's tipline to report child sexual abuse and exploitation on the internet, and Project Arachnid, a web platform designed to detect known images of child sexual abuse and exploitation material (CSAEM) on the clear and dark web, and issue removal notices to industry.

ProtectChildren.ca



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This guide is intended to provide general information to assist a school in dealing with an incident of youth NCDII (non-consensual distribution of an intimate image). It does not constitute legal or other advice and should not be relied on for such purpose. Readers must continually assess all tips and information in light of their own circumstances, the age and maturity level of the children involved and/or affected, advice they may receive from police (if any), applicable policies or legislative duties, and any other relevant factors. Information is current as of February 2026.

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When a youth's sexual image or video ends up online, the primary focus of the affected youth is getting the content down. If you know of a youth that has been impacted by a sexual image or video being posted online, let them know they can find support and guidance on how to handle the situation at NeedHelpNow.ca.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) has helped thousands of children and families dealing with the non-consensual distribution of intimate images (NCDII). This behaviour is often referred to as "sharing nudes," which is generally defined as youth sending or sharing sexual images or videos online or electronically. This term does not fully capture the potential seriousness or complexity of some situations. When a sexual image or video is shared without consent, it can result in profound *emotional*, *physical*, and *social harm*. Like other forms of violence, NCDII can have lasting impacts on the well-being and safety of those involved.

Terms used in this guide include:

- **Affected youth:** The youth whose image or video has been shared by someone else, or there is a risk of it being shared.
- **Acting-out youth:** The youth who has shared an image or video of someone other than themselves, or has a copy of it.
- **Other involved youth:** Bystanders who received the shared image or video, whether by the acting-out youth or another peer.



PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

In an effort to assist schools in managing incidents of non-consensual producing or sharing of sexual images, C3P has developed this resource guide. It provides guidance for school personnel on supporting the affected youth, the acting-out youth, other involved youth, and their families. Schools have both a moral and legal responsibility to protect and support children in their development. The impacts associated with youth NCDII are often played out within the school environment, placing **school personnel in a strong position to respond and take appropriate action.**

This guide:



- Helps educate on the issue of youth NCDII.
- Offers a framework for dealing with incidents of youth NCDII.
- Focuses on steps that can help reduce the circulation of the affected youth's images or videos.
- Identifies ways to help minimize the negative impact on the youth and community when these incidents occur.
- Challenges the normalization of sharing intimate images and the misconception among youth who believe this is harmless activity.

Schools have a major role to play in this issue because:

- The problem often emerges within the school environment.
- Schools play a central role in supporting student health, wellness and safety, while also protecting them, raising awareness and shaping their values and beliefs.

Managing incidents of NCDII can be complex. C3P can assist you in working through considerations in your situation and answering any questions regarding the information and resources in this guide. Please contact C3P at **support@protectchildren.ca**.

WHAT IS NCDII:

NCDII refers to the sharing of an "intimate" image or video of another person without their consent. If the image or video involves someone under 18, it may be illegal to distribute regardless of whether or not consent was provided. Refer to the "Schedule of certain criminal offences" section for a list of criminal offences that may be relevant in situations involving NCDII of a person under the age of 18.

AI-generated sexual images of youth (deepfakes)

There is a growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) to create sexually explicit content involving youth. The availability of free applications online has made them more accessible to youth. The sexually explicit depictions of youth constitute a form of sexual exploitation, even when no physical contact has occurred. The production and circulation of AI-generated sexual deepfakes involving youth is deeply harmful — it violates the dignity, safety, and privacy of young people. Intervening quickly and addressing this issue is necessary to protect children.

If you are located in a province that has legislation mandating the reporting of child sexual abuse and exploitation material (still referred to in some provincial laws as "child pornography"), consultation should occur with legal counsel and potentially the school-based police officer. Refer to Cybertip.ca/duty_to_report for specific information on the legal duty to report listed by province/territory.

WHY YOUTH ARE VULNERABLE

Young people may produce and share intimate images for several reasons:

ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS OR SEXUAL EXPERIMENTATION

- During a relationship (online or offline), sexual images and videos may be produced and shared voluntarily between romantic partners or experimenting youth. These images and videos may also be misused and shared with others with or without the knowledge of the affected youth.
- After the breakdown of a relationship, these images and videos may be forwarded to others impulsively or with malicious intent (e.g., to embarrass/hurt the ex-partner or ex-friend).

COERCION

- Adolescents may be coerced into creating and/or sharing sexual images and videos as a joke, a dare, or a challenge, or under the guise of romance, etc. These images and videos may be circulated to others with or without the knowledge of the affected youth.
- Images and videos may be produced without the affected youth's knowledge, such as through AI, then shared or posted publicly (e.g., on social media like Instagram®, Snapchat®) to humiliate the youth or extort more imagery from them.

SOCIAL PRESSURE AND SOCIETAL NORMS

- Youth think that "everyone is doing it." However, this isn't necessarily the case. Sending sexual images or videos is less common than many people, including youth, think.
- Generally, girls feel pressured to send sexual images and videos, while boys feel pressure to ask for them and forward them. In both cases, these are harmful gender stereotypes that can lead to NCDII.
- Victim blaming is still prevalent. Some youth may feel it's the original sender's (the affected youth's) fault if the images or videos get forwarded or posted.
- Some social media platforms may give youth a false sense of security that images and videos they share are private or temporary (e.g., many youth believe their images are always only temporarily available on Snapchat, but there are ways they can be saved).

Note: Schools should separate the issue of youth NCDII from that of adults obtaining sexual content from youth or youth forwarding content that depicts a crime (e.g., a sexual assault). In these circumstances, the case should be immediately referred to local law enforcement, and where possible, to a specialized child exploitation unit.

DIMENSIONS OF YOUTH NCDII

Incidents of youth NCDII can vary significantly and each situation will present its own unique challenges and interventions.

There are three dimensions of youth NCDII that schools need to consider, including when dealing with real or AI-generated sexually explicit images (deepfakes):

1. NATURE: DEGREE OF SEXUAL EXPLICITNESS

OF CONCERN → → → → → → → → → → OF SERIOUS CONCERN

Youth clothed only in undergarments	Youth partially undressed	Youth semi-nude or nude	Youth is identifiable in a sexual act, either alone or with another youth

While this continuum serves as a general guideline for assessing the *nature* of any given sexual image or video, it is not designed to be prescriptive.

2. INTENT: IMPULSIVE VS. MALICIOUS INTENT

The *intent* behind the initial forwarding of the images or videos, as well as any continued sharing, is an important factor. Consider whether the behaviour involved poor judgment, impulsivity, difficulty with emotional regulation, coercion, bullying, social or peer pressure, sexual harassment or assault, or dating violence. It is important to distinguish between impulsive and malicious intent when addressing these incidents, as the action taken to address the situation should reflect these differences.

3. EXTENT: RANGE OF DISTRIBUTION

Another important consideration is the *extent* of the image or video distribution. Information about where the content has been posted and/or who has received it will help determine how widely it has been shared. The content may have been circulated within a peer group, or it may be broadly available online to a much larger audience.

Each of these dimensions can influence the impact on the youth involved, the intervention(s) by the school, and whether reporting to Cybertip.ca and/or police involvement is required.

ADDRESSING INCIDENTS OF YOUTH NCDII: DOS & DON'TS

DO

- Do protect the privacy of the affected youth as much as possible. Only involve people on a need-to-know basis.
- Do support the affected youth by checking in with the youth and their family to see how they are doing throughout the process.
- Do use your knowledge of the backgrounds of all youth involved (including cultural, disciplinary, etc.) when determining an appropriate course of action.
- Do remain objective by focusing on the facts. Personal feelings, biases, or opinions should not be a part of the complaint follow-up process.
- Do encourage confidentiality when speaking with the affected youth, acting-out youth, other involved youth, and their parents.
- Do support the affected youth by letting them know that they will get through this.
- Do consult with appropriate school personnel to determine the level and extent of support and safety planning that may be needed in the circumstances.
- Do carefully consider the steps you are able to take to limit further forwarding of content (e.g., temporarily confiscating mobile devices).
- Do report to police when the situation involves an adult, content that depicts a crime (e.g., sexual assault), or behaviour that is malicious in nature.
- Do consider any mandatory reporting obligations that you may have under applicable provincial legislation or your own policies.
- Do implement restorative practices to reintegrate the acting-out youth and acknowledge the harm experienced by the affected youth.
- Do implement prevention education in the school about youth NCDII.

DON'T

- Don't, if possible, view the images or videos in question or create your own copy.
- Don't be judgmental.
- Don't blame the affected youth for what has occurred.
- Don't minimize the potential impact on the affected youth. Bullying online and offline often ensues after the incidents of NCDII and this can further victimize the affected youth.
- Don't suspend the affected youth.
- Don't assume that a simple apology from the acting-out youth will address the situation.
- Don't treat the acting-out youth who forwarded the images or videos like an offender, but rather as a youth who has made a mistake that they need to make amends for. As appropriate, use restorative practices that focus on learning, accountability, and repairing harm that is centered on the needs and well-being of the affected youth.
- Don't make assumptions about the intent behind the behaviour of the acting-out youth or other youth involved. There is a big difference between being immature (upset and impulsive) versus being deliberate (angry with the intent to hurt).
- Don't treat the situation in isolation. The affected youth may be targeted by peers and subject to ongoing bullying or harassment.
- Don't assume that once police are involved there is nothing for the school to do. Also, if police decide to not intervene that **does not** mean that nothing wrong has occurred.
- Don't assume that because content is online there is nothing that can be done.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS OF NCDII ON YOUTH

Youth who have had a sexual image or video of themselves shared without their consent — whether posted online or forwarded directly to others — can experience significant distress. In addition to feeling violated, youth often experience fear and anxiety about how their peers, friends, family members, and other significant adults will react. The way people in their lives react to what has happened to them affects their healing process. A supportive, compassionate response can help a young person begin to cope and heal, while a negative or judgmental response can compound their distress and emotional harm.

Here are some key considerations for adults who are supporting youth who have experienced NCDII.

WHAT YOUTH IN CRISIS NEED FROM ADULTS

- To feel safe, supported and believed.
- To be met with empathy, not judgment.
- To understand that they are not to blame for what happened.
- A sense of control over what happens next.
- Hope for the future.
- A calm, grounded response from the adult.
- Concrete strategies for next steps.



POSSIBLE BEHAVIOURS YOUTH MIGHT DEMONSTRATE

Individuals respond to trauma in different ways, and not every youth who experiences online exploitation will show the same signs. The impact on an individual varies and is influenced by a number of factors, including their personality, temperament, neurological make-up, past experiences, family dynamics, the type of support network they have, and specifics related to the exploitation they experienced. **It is important for adults to not assume that a youth is fine because they do not demonstrate outward signs of distress.** Sometimes the effects are easily noticed and immediate; other times, they are subtle or delayed. Youth may not react in ways adults expect, which is why a sensitive, non-judgmental approach is important.

Common responses youth may display include:

- Feeling jumpy, nervous, or easily startled.
- Intrusive thoughts, sensations, memories or images of the traumatic experience.
- Feeling emotionally numb, frozen, or shut down.
- Pretending everything is okay even when it's not.
- Noticeable change in behaviour or seeming "off" or "out of sorts."
- Difficulty regulating emotions — sudden, intense mood swings such as uncontrollable laughing, crying, irritability, or anger.
- Trouble concentrating or learning new information.
- Decline in academic performance and/or reluctance or refusal to go to school.
- Sleep disturbances such as trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or nightmares.
- Difficulty trusting others or withdrawing from relationships.
- Substance misuse, self-harm (e.g., cutting), or disordered eating.
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities; increasingly isolating themselves.
- Sense of helplessness, hopelessness and/or presenting a negative world view.
- Insisting they are fine or acting as though nothing has happened.



If you are concerned the youth may be having suicidal thoughts, seek professional help immediately. You can also contact the suicide helpline in your community or take your child to the nearest hospital. Even if the threat doesn't appear imminent or you think the youth would never go that far, you need to act quickly and take all signs of suicidal behaviour seriously. Respect and acknowledge the youth's feelings — their emotions are very real. Encourage them to communicate with you and reinforce that you are there to listen, support, and help.



HOW ADULTS CAN INTERVENE SUPPORTIVELY

- Put the youth at ease by reassuring them you are here to help.
- Maintain a slow, calm, and gentle pace.
- Emphasize that their safety and wellness are your top priorities.
- Express that you care about them.
- Tell them you are sorry this has happened to them.
- Acknowledge and validate how difficult the situation is.
- Allow them to share what happened without interruptions or pressure to tell a detailed chronological narrative. Encourage them to describe the experience as if they are observing it like a movie to help reduce re-traumatization.
- Use open-ended prompts such as, “Tell me more about that” or “Tell me how you responded to that” statements.
- Listen without judgement or skepticism and provide positive reinforcement for their willingness to share.
- If their account is confusing, avoid immediately pressing for clarity.
- Be careful not to make promises you may not be able to keep.
- Focus on problem solving and clearly communicate that you are there to support them through the situation.

KEY STEPS FOR SCHOOLS

The following are some key steps for school personnel to consider when addressing incidents of youth NCDII.

PRELIMINARY STEPS

GOOD PRACTICE

In the course of following up on an incident, carefully handle any images or videos created. If content is on youth devices, it is best to quickly contain the spread of the material. Obtaining a description of the nature of the content is likely sufficient, and limiting the number of individuals who see the content is in the best interest of the youth. C3P can offer more information, email support@protectchildren.ca.

1. Speak with the affected youth

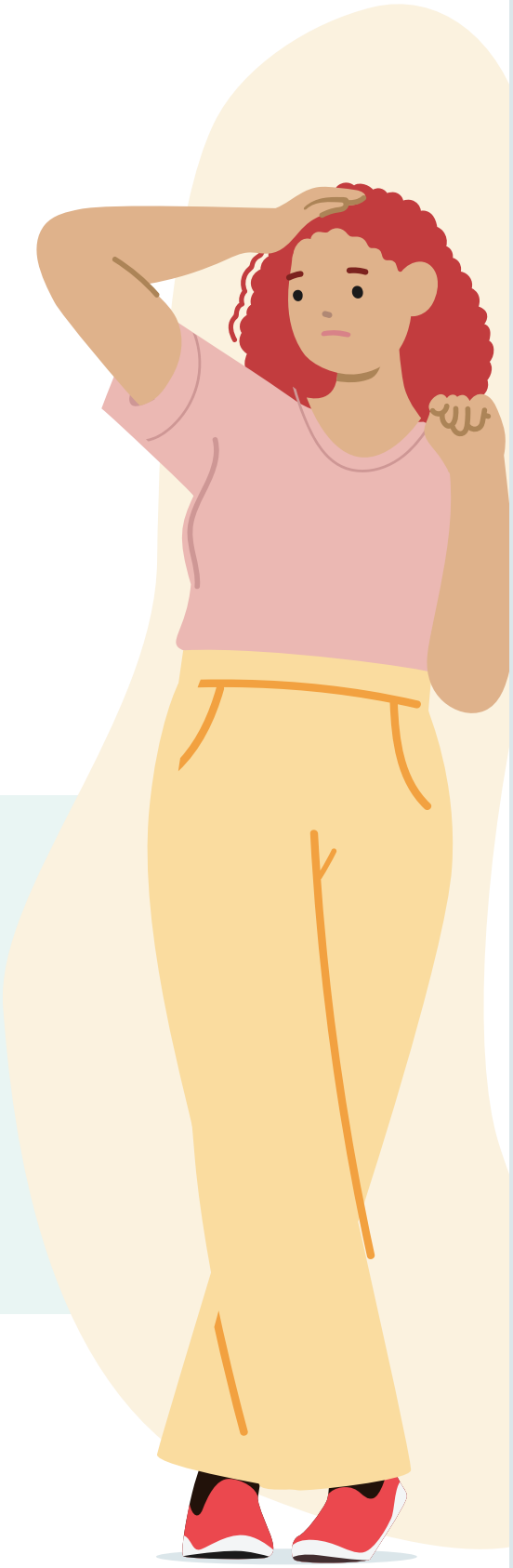
When becoming aware of concerns involving sexually explicit images or videos of a student — especially if the youth is unaware the issue has been reported — it is essential to approach the situation with sensitivity, empathy, and patience. A youth may feel humiliated, fearful, confused, and may even deny the incident, especially in the early stages.

Key considerations when first speaking with the affected youth:

- **Reassure them:** Emphasize that they are not alone. The goal is to help them and be sensitive to feelings of shame. Phrases such as "You're not alone," "This has happened to other youth too," or "You will get through this" can provide comfort and grounding.
- **Acknowledge the difficulty:** Recognize that it can be hard or upsetting to talk about the situation. Validating their feelings helps build trust and opens the door to honest conversation.
- **Clarify your role and next steps:** Be transparent about your responsibility and explain the steps you will take towards establishing safety and support. This may include notifying caregivers, connecting them with support services, or working with others to address and manage the images or videos content.



- **Start by calmly and compassionately speaking with them,** ensuring they feel heard and supported. Emphasize that they are not in trouble and validate that having an image or video shared of them is a serious violation of their privacy and trust.
- **Reassure them that their well-being is the top priority.** Gently guide the conversation toward steps you will take to deal with the situation. Consider the following:
  - Prioritize youth safety.
  - Assess the incident.
  - Gather and verify information.
  - Assess risk and, to extent possible, control further sharing of the image(s) and/or video(s).
  - Notify any relevant school staff who need to be involved.
  - Offer immediate supports and plan for affected youth.
  - Communicate with parents or caregiver.



Considerations of cultural diversity: Consider cultural and religious diversity and the important role it plays in how situations are perceived and addressed. When determining an appropriate course of action, consider the cultural background, religious beliefs, and family dynamics of the affected youth. These factors should be carefully assessed prior to contacting the family and should guide the approach taken when working with them toward a resolution. This sensitivity not only helps tailor the response appropriately, but can also highlight when additional supports may be necessary to ensure the youth and their family feel respected, heard, and supported.

2. Assess the incident

Ask questions in a non-judgmental, supportive way that helps you gain a better understanding of the incident. Focus on gathering only information that is necessary to understand the context — include the CONTENT, INTENT, EXTENT — specific to the situation.

Explore the INTENT and the EXTENT of the distribution with the affected youth

- In speaking with the affected youth, it is important to understand not just the facts of the situation, but how the youth is experiencing it emotionally. Ask open-ended and supportive questions to identify:
  - Their biggest fears: "What are you most worried about?", "Is there anything that feels especially scary or overwhelming right now?"
  - What would they like to see happen: "What would be most helpful to you right now?", "What do you hope I can do to support you through this?", "What do you want to see happen?"

If the youth's responses indicate emotional distress, ongoing safety concerns, or deeper underlying issues, consult with appropriate school-based professionals (e.g., school counsellor, school social worker, psychologist) to develop a coordinated and trauma-informed support plan.

- Explore how the content was shared, ask the youth — gently and without pressure — what they know about how the images or videos were shared and who may currently be in possession of the content. Identify whether the content was:
  - Sent directly (e.g., through text, messaging apps, email).
  - Uploaded to social media or online platforms.
  - Accessed by someone through hacked accounts.



- Identify key details about the content — when supporting the affected youth, gather essential context to better understand the situation and determine appropriate next steps. Questions may include:
  - **Who created the images or videos?** Was it the youth themselves, a peer, or someone else? Pay attention to signs that the content was AI-generated or was recorded surreptitiously. Understanding this can help reveal power dynamics or possible coercion.
  - **Who appears in the images or videos and what do they depict?** Inquire whether the youth is identifiable, if others are shown in the image and whether those individuals are identifiable, and the nature of what is depicted in the image. This helps assess potential harm, the urgency to contain the spread of the content, and who else may require support.
  - **When were the images or videos taken?** Try to establish a timeline. Knowing whether the incident is recent or happened some time ago can help clarify the context of the situation and guide considerations for next steps.

Listen for indicators of harmful dynamics

During conversations or disclosures, be alert for signs that the situation may involve:

- **Malicious intent** — Was the content created or shared to hurt, shame, or control the youth?
- **Coercion** — Was the youth pressured, threatened, or manipulated into participating?
- **Exploitation** — Are there elements of power imbalance or manipulation, including the possibility of an adult being involved?



Assess the relationship context

The following factors could make the situation exploitative and increase the seriousness of the situation:

- **Significant age difference** between the involved individuals.
- **Relationship of trust, authority, or dependency** — such as peer mentor, older student, caregiver, coach, etc.
- **Other vulnerabilities** — such as social isolation, a history of trauma, or known challenges with assertiveness or boundaries.
- **Other risks** — such as the youth met the person online.

Understanding these dynamics is essential to ensure the youth receives the appropriate protection and support.

At any time throughout the process you can reach out to C3P at **support@protectchildren.ca** for assistance.



GOOD PRACTICE

Consider the following strategies throughout the conversation with the affected youth:

- **Offer hope and reassurance:** Reinforce that they are *not alone*, there is help available to deal with the situation and they will get through it.
- **Highlight the importance of support networks:** Emphasize the important role of friends, family members, and other safe people in their close circle who can provide emotional and practical support.
- **Collaboratively develop a support plan:** Work together to identify specific individuals who can be part of their support system. Make a clear plan for when and how the person will contact these supports, ensuring they know who is in their circle of support.

3. Gather and verify information

Protect confidentiality while gathering information: If the affected youth chooses not to disclose any other names and you believe additional information is necessary, consider speaking with other youth involved who may have relevant information. Any such decision should be *purposeful*, *sensitive*, and *guided by professional judgment* — speaking to other youth on a need to know basis — in order to respect the affected youth's privacy.

When speaking with other youth

- **Protect privacy:** Hold conversations *individually* to maintain confidentiality.
- **Promote discretion and respect:** Emphasize the importance of discretion and encourage students to help restore the affected youth's privacy by *not discussing the situation with peers*.
- **Encourage emotional support:** Remind students that it's normal to feel *confused, uncomfortable,* or *distressed* after learning about such incidents. Encourage them to seek support from safe adults in their lives such as parents or other family members, school counsellors, or teachers if needed.



If school personnel, based upon the discussions previously outlined, feel that the activity may warrant police involvement (e.g., malicious intent, extortion, or harassment involved), it is strongly suggested to report it to Cybertip.ca or directly to police.

4. Speak with the acting-out youth

- Talk to the acting-out youth about the incident.
- Consider beginning the conversation with the acting-out youth with something like, "The reason you are here today is because it has come to our attention that you may have been involved in sharing/having an intimate image/video of another student. Please tell me about this." Be prepared for a range of responses — from full admission to denial. Regardless of the reaction, remain focused on gathering information to better understand what happened. Explore how the content was shared, ask the youth what they know about how the images or videos were shared and who may currently be in possession of the content. Identify whether the content was:
  - Sent directly (e.g., through text, messaging apps, email).
  - Uploaded to social media or online platforms.
  - Accessed by someone through hacked accounts.
- When were the images or videos shared? Try to establish a timeline. Knowing whether the incident is recent or happened some time ago can help clarify the context of the situation and guide considerations for steps that need to be taken.

Assess risk and control further sharing of the content

Consider temporarily confiscating the mobile devices of the acting-out youth and any other youth involved to limit any further sharing of the content and protect the affected youth from further harm. **Policies in schools will vary and appropriate consultation should occur in advance of this type of action.** The objective is to limit harm. Accessing the phone or viewing its contents is **not** recommended.

Considering reporting to police:

Police can be an important resource in dealing with incidents of youth NCDII. For example, a police officer can help convey the seriousness of the incident to the acting-out youth, the other involved youth, and/or their parents. For malicious incidents, officers may conduct an investigation to determine whether police action (e.g., formal warning, charges, etc.) is appropriate. Depending on the situation, the affected youth may feel safer as a result of police involvement.



IMPULSIVE INCIDENTS: NEXT STEPS

Connect with C3P

School personnel seeking more information may wish to connect with C3P at **support@protectchildren.ca** to discuss considerations regarding next steps in impulsive incidents. C3P can provide informational support for handling incidents involving youth and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. **Visit NeedHelpNow.ca for more information.**

1. Prepare for the conversation with the parents of the affected youth

Have the confirmed information available and understand what can be shared at this stage.

2. Make initial contact by phone

Call the parents or caregivers promptly to inform them that a sensitive matter involving their child has arisen and that a conversation is needed.

3. Arrange a private, in-person meeting

Whenever possible, schedule a meeting to discuss the details in-person in a confidential and supportive setting.

4. Share factual information only

Explain what is known without speculation, blame, or assumptions.

Consider the following key points:

- Inform the parents of the incident. Explain that their child appears to have been involved in an NCDII incident. Confirm if it has been established that their child has a copy or has shared the sexualized image(s) or video(s) in question.
- These are highly sensitive discussions that can be distressing for families. Where possible, offer reassuring context such as: "This type of activity is unfortunately not uncommon among youth, but there are steps we can take to address the situation."
- Emphasize that all content (e.g., images, videos, AI-generated media) that are sexual in nature should be deleted from all devices and online platforms.
    - **Exception:** In cases involving a police investigation, follow the direction of law enforcement regarding the handling of digital evidence.
- Encourage the parents to contact C3P for support at **support@protectchildren.ca** to learn more about how they can assist with removing images and videos from popular social media platforms.

5. Communicate with sensitivity and reassurance

Acknowledge the emotional impact of the situation and reassure parents that the school's priority is the safety and well-being of their child.

6. Explain next steps

Outline planned actions, available supports, and how the school will continue to manage the situation.

Maintain confidentiality

All discussions regarding the incident should remain confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis. Remind parents to respect the privacy of all youth involved, including the affected and acting out youth, to help limit further harm.

7. Seek ongoing support for all youth involved

- Involve key support staff such as guidance counsellors, school psychologists, and social workers to help address the emotional and psychological impacts of the incident.
- Closely monitor the youths' well-being, recognizing the potential impacts of these incidents, including bullying, cyberbullying, social isolation, and mental health concerns.
- Create support plans as needed to promote student well-being.



Managing peer reactions

Following an incident of youth NCDII, actively monitor peer interactions, particularly those of the affected youth. In the aftermath, they may be at increased risk of cyberbullying, verbal or physical bullying, harassment, or social exclusion.

This can leave a youth feeling isolated, ashamed, and helpless, and may intensify their feelings of shame, guilt, and humiliation. Early intervention by school staff is imperative to interrupt harmful behaviour, foster accountability, and take action to re-establish a sense of safety and security.

MALICIOUS INCIDENTS: SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

1. Report to police

If the school determines that the behaviour of the acting-out and/or other involved youth was malicious in nature (e.g., coercive, manipulative, or intentionally harmful), it must decide whether the situation requires escalation to the police. In some cases, the escalation to police will be clear. In other cases, the school may find it helpful to consult with a community/school-based police officer (when available) to better understand which actions may constitute criminal offences and what alternative responses might be appropriate.

Regardless of whether police become involved, it is essential for the school to take immediate steps to support the affected youth. This includes creating a safe, non-judgmental environment, validating their experience, and ensuring they have access to appropriate mental health and safety supports.

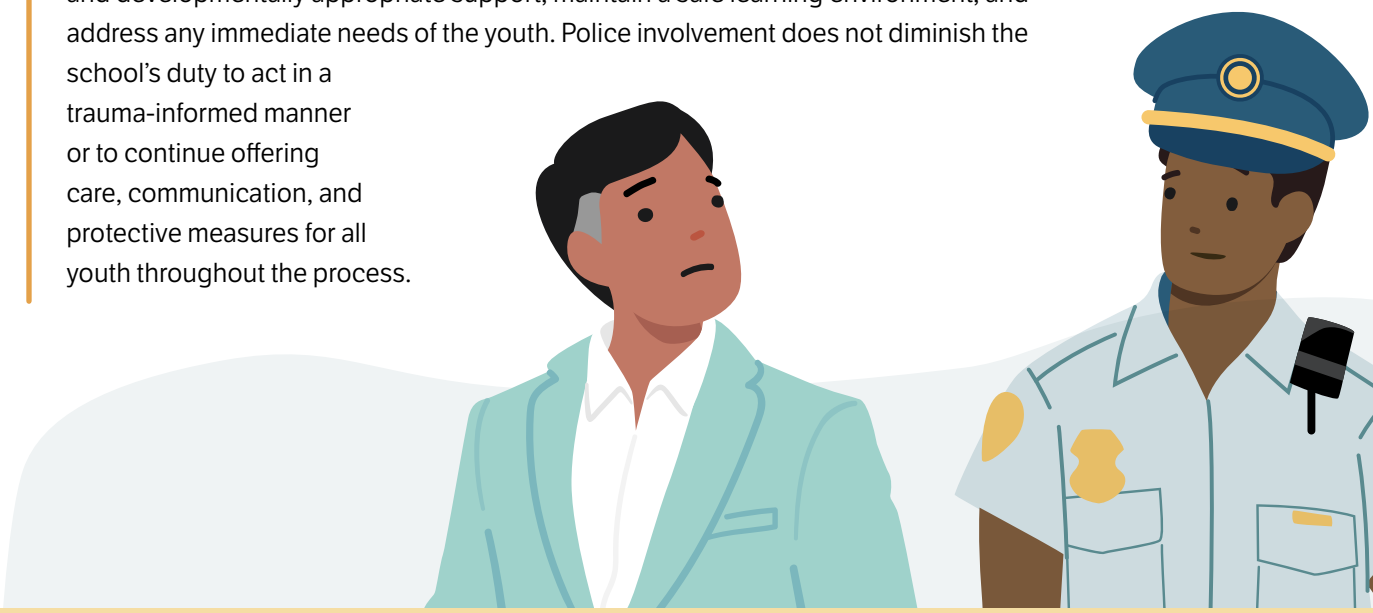
Schools should also act quickly to limit any further sharing or distribution of intimate images or videos, prioritizing the well-being, privacy, and dignity of the affected youth.

Note: In some situations, the affected youth, their family, or another individual may report the incident directly to police. In such cases, the ongoing school responsibilities below remain important.

2. Police involvement and ongoing school responsibilities

If the incident is reported to police, they will assess whether a criminal investigation is warranted. It's important to recognize that police investigations can take time. During this period, the school continues to hold responsibility for ensuring the ongoing safety, support, and well-being of all students involved.

While the police and school may be responding to different aspects of the same incident, their roles and responsibilities are distinct. The school's role is to provide timely, compassionate, and developmentally appropriate support; maintain a safe learning environment; and address any immediate needs of the youth. Police involvement does not diminish the school's duty to act in a trauma-informed manner or to continue offering care, communication, and protective measures for all youth throughout the process.



3. Moving forward with the acting-out youth and their family

If the school reports the incident to police, consult with the police to determine when, how, and by whom the parents of the acting-out youth will be notified and who should be involved in that discussion. If the incident is not reported to police, consider whether it would be helpful to involve the community/school-based police officer as part of an in-person meeting with the parents and the acting-out youth. The community/school-based police officer may be able to assist in conveying the serious nature of the incident. If the incident is reported to police by someone other than the school, police may contact the school for more information. Either way, review the ongoing school responsibilities above and consider any applicable school policies.

4. If police decide not to proceed

Not all matters that are reported to police will result in police action. If a matter has been referred to police, but police do not proceed with a criminal investigation/lay charges, review steps titled "Impulsive incidents: Next steps."

The school should communicate with the parents or caregivers of the affected youth, the acting-out youth, and any other involved youth to ensure transparency and to coordinate ongoing support.

Prioritizing the emotional safety and agency of the affected youth may include offering restorative approaches when appropriate, and only with the consent and readiness of the affected youth, ensuring they remain at the centre of the process. At the same time, the school remains responsible for safeguarding and supporting all students involved — including the acting-out youth — by ensuring clear expectations, appropriate interventions, and access to necessary supports.



SCHEDULE OF CERTAIN CRIMINAL OFFENCES

The following briefly describes certain criminal offences to help give you a general understanding of the type of behaviour that could be illegal and result in charges by police. The descriptions are NOT comprehensive, and the offences may change as the *Criminal Code* is amended from time to time.

ACTS THAT VIOLATE PRIVACY

- **Non-consensual distribution of intimate images:** Someone has a sexual/intimate picture/video of you:
    - that was created in private circumstances and you reasonably believed would be kept private, and
    - that person knowingly posts it online or shares it with someone else knowing that you would not consent to that (or being reckless about whether you would consent to it).
- **Voyeurism:** Secretly observing or recording a person who would reasonably expect their actions are private if that person is:
    - in a place where one might change or remove clothing, or engage in sexual activity (e.g., bedroom, bathroom, changing room, cabin, tent); or
    - all or partially naked or engaged in sexual activity at the time, and the purpose is to see or record them in such a state; or
    - where the observing or recording is done for a sexual reason.



ILLEGAL PICTURES AND VIDEOS

- **Child sexual abuse and exploitation material** is any naked or semi-naked sexual picture or video of a person under 18, or of a person under 18 engaging in a sex act. It is illegal to view, keep, send, post, or take such pictures or videos. This includes pictures or videos created using deepfake technology or artificial intelligence.



UNWANTED OR ILLEGAL SEXUAL CONTACT

- **Sexual assault** is any sexual contact **without lawful consent** (e.g., kissing or touching without permission). It is even more serious if violence or a weapon is involved or threatened, if more than one person commits the assault, and if during an assault, the non-consenting person is choked, suffocated or strangled.
- **Aggravated sexual assault** is a sexual assault where the person assaulted is seriously injured or whose life is put in danger from the assault.
- **Sexual interference** is any touching of a person under 16* for a sexual purpose. It includes indirect touching, and touching with an object.
- **Invitation to sexual touching** is encouraging a person under 16* to touch themselves or someone else for a sexual purpose (whether in person or online). It includes indirect touching, and touching with an object.
- **Sexual exploitation** is when a 16- or 17-year old is touched by or encouraged to touch themselves or any other person for a sexual purpose by a person who is:
    - In a position of trust or authority (e.g., parent, guardian, teacher, coach etc.) over the young person; or
    - A person upon whom the 16- or 17-year-old is dependent on in some way; or
    - Exploiting the young person in some way.

* For the offences of sexual interference and invitation to sexual touching, when both people are close enough in age, have lawfully consented, AND there is no exploitation, charges may not be laid. Refer to "What is the age of protection in Canada?" at the end of this schedule.



- **Online luring** is a situation where one person (typically an adult but not always) communicates with a young person through technology, like texting, direct messaging, or emailing, to make it easier to commit a specific sexual offence against that young person.

  An example of a communication that could qualify as online luring is if the person asks, hints at, or tries to convince the young person to create or send naked or semi-naked sexual pictures or videos.

With online luring, communications may not start out sexual. They may seem friendly or casual at first and then evolve into sexual subjects (e.g., the other person describing or sharing details of sexual acts or fantasies). The other person may also randomly send sexual pictures of themselves or other people. Common questions asked where it is an adult luring a youth can include: "Are you a virgin?", "What colour underwear are you wearing?", and "Are you okay with how old I am?"

- **Making sexually explicit material available to a person under 18** is showing or sending material like pornography to a child to make it easier to commit a sexual offence against the child.
- **Offences related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth.** It is an offence to exchange money or other things, like drugs, alcohol, or e-cigarette products, for any type of sexual activity with a person under 18, to advertise such exchange, or to live on the profits of a young person's sexual activity. This includes parents and guardians. It is also an offence to direct, control, or influence someone to engage in sexual activity in exchange for money or other things. In this context, sexual activity may include sexual activity over livestream or the supply of sexual images.

ACTS THAT MAKE OTHERS FEEL UNSAFE

- **Harassment** is doing or saying something that makes someone else scared for themselves or someone else (e.g., making threats, stalking, repeatedly texting/emailing, constantly following).
- **Blackmail (extortion)** is making threats or being violent without justification to try to obtain something or try to get a person to do something, like pay money, go on livestream, etc.
- **Uttering threats** is directly or indirectly threatening to hurt someone, damage their property, or hurt an animal.
- **Intimidation** is being violent or making threats of violence against a person, someone in the person's family, or the person's property in order to get a person to do something or stop doing something.
- **Counselling suicide** is encouraging another person to die by suicide.

ACTS THAT HURT THE REPUTATION OF ANOTHER PERSON

- **Defamatory libel** is publicly making statements about another person that are likely to hurt their reputation by exposing them to hate, contempt or ridicule (e.g., falsely posting online that another person is a racist), or that are designed to gravely insult the other person.
- **Pretending or claiming to be someone else** (living or dead) to benefit yourself or someone else, to hurt the person you are pretending to be, or to hurt another person.



WHAT IS THE AGE OF PROTECTION IN CANADA?

The age of protection (often referred to as the age of consent) refers to the age at which a person can legally consent to sexual activity.[1] The age of protection exists to protect young people from being sexually exploited or abused. It takes into account the inherent vulnerability of children and helps to protect children in situations that involve a power imbalance.

In Canada, the age of protection is generally 16 years old but some exceptions* apply. The table below sets out the age at which a person can legally give consent based on their age and the age of the other person.

Child's age	Can child consent to sexual activity?
Under 12 years old	**NO**. No person can engage in sexual activity with the child under any circumstance.
12 or 13 years old*	**Sometimes**. The age difference between the child and the other person must be **LESS THAN 2** years **AND** the relative positions of the parties must be such that the child is legally able to give consent.[2]
14 or 15 years old*	**Sometimes**. The age difference between the child and the other person must be **LESS THAN 5** years **AND** the relative positions of the parties must be such that the child is legally able to give consent.[2]
16 or 17 years old*	**Sometimes**. The relative positions of the parties must be such that the child is legally able to give consent. See below for situations when a 16 or 17-year-old child cannot give consent.

***Any child under 18 CANNOT legally consent to sexual activity:**

- If the other person is in a **position of trust or authority** over the child (e.g., coach, teacher, employer);
- If the child is **dependent** on the other person (e.g., for food, shelter); or
- If the relationship is **exploitative** of the child (e.g., trafficking the child).

Sexual activity in the above circumstances is **illegal, regardless of the age of the other person.**

1 The term sexual activity can refer to a range of activities, from sexual touching such as kissing and touching, to sexual intercourse.

2 Also, if the sexual activity involves a child under 16 and two or more other people, the use of a weapon against the child, threats to the child, or results in physical harm to the child, the child is unable to legally consent.

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION: ADDRESSING YOUTH NCDII IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Prevention education is a critical component in addressing youth NCDII. Effective, developmentally appropriate education is pivotal not only in reducing the likelihood of NCDII incidents but also in increasing the chances that young people will seek help if they are harmed or at risk.

Effective prevention education helps youth understand what NCDII is, how it occurs, why it is serious, and the emotional, social, and potential legal impacts on those involved. It also includes teaching youth where and how to access support. Providing structured opportunities to anticipate risky situations, practice safe responses, and rehearse help-seeking behaviours strengthens their readiness and safety in real life circumstances.

Best-practice skill-building includes promoting safe and healthy relationships grounded in care, respect, dignity, bodily autonomy, and consent, as well as understanding the significant harm associated with the non-consensual sharing of sexually explicit images. Through this learning, students develop resilience, critical thinking, and the ability to navigate digital and interpersonal situations safely.

In doing so, schools play an essential role in equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to thrive, stay connected, and become healthy, responsible citizens.



KIDS IN THE KNOW PERSONAL SAFETY PROGRAM FOR SCHOOLS



The **Kids in the Know** program is a national, interactive safety education program designed to help children and youth build personal safety skills and reduce their risk of victimization in both online and offline environments. The program is grounded in evidence-based best practices in prevention.

Program highlights

- **Ready-to-teach safety lessons for K–12** that help build resilience online and offline.
- **Curriculum-aligned** across all Canadian jurisdictions.
- **Focused on safety** including personal safety and online sexual exploitation.
- **Engaging and adaptable** lessons with skill-building and practice.
- **Community-based** program that includes take-home activities for parents and caregivers.

What students learn

Students develop important skills and knowledge to help them stay safe, build healthy relationships, and seek support when needed. Key topics include:

- **Healthy relationships** — understanding cooperation versus control.
- **Online safety** — focusing on content, contact, and conduct.
- **Understanding** personal boundaries, bodily autonomy and agency.
- **Building refusal skills**, practicing assertiveness, and using bystander strategies.
- **How to get help** — identifying safe adults and support pathways.
- **Building resiliency skills** — assertiveness, self-awareness, social-emotional competence, problem-solving, critical thinking, and making low-risk choices.
- **Recognizing and reporting** concerning experiences and behaviours to safe adults.
- **Understanding** that those who have experienced abuse are never to blame.
- **Strengthening communication** between parents and children about personal safety.

To learn more about program materials and access resources for educators and families, visit **KidsintheKnow.ca**.

THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR CHILD PROTECTION — INTERVENTION SERVICES

NeedHelpNow.ca

Support staff are available to help youth who have been impacted by the sharing of an intimate or sexual image or have been sexually victimized online.

Cybertip.ca

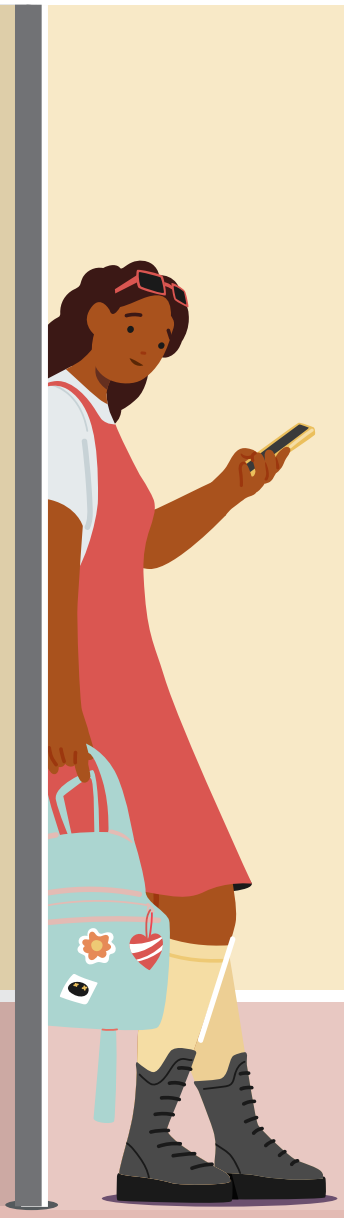
Canada's tipline for reporting the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Operated by C3P, the tipline launched September 26, 2002 as a pilot project in Manitoba. In May 2004, Cybertip.ca was adopted under the Government of Canada's *National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet*. Reports to Cybertip.ca may be shared with police or child protection services.

ProjectArachnid.ca

Project Arachnid is an innovative tool to remove sexual images of children on the internet. Launched in 2017, this victim-centred platform crawls the internet in search of child sexual abuse and exploitation material. When child sexual abuse and exploitation material or harmful abusive content is detected, a removal request is sent to the hosting provider. Project Arachnid processes thousands of images a second and is capable of detecting content at a pace that greatly exceeds traditional methods of identifying and addressing this harmful material.



APPENDIX: SHAREABLE RESOURCES



The following reproducible resources can be utilized by both schools and families who are dealing with incidents of youth NCDII.

STEPS TO ADDRESS AN INCIDENT OF YOUTH NCDII — FLOW CHART

DIMENSIONS OF YOUTH NCDII

There are three dimensions of youth non-consensual distribution of intimate images (NCDII) that schools need to consider, including real or artificial intelligence-generated (AI-generated) sexually explicit images (deepfakes):

- The **NATURE** of the images and videos (in terms of sexual explicitness);
- The **INTENT** behind its creation and distribution; and
- The **EXTENT** to which the images and videos have spread.

Each of these dimensions can influence the impact on the youth involved, the intervention(s) by the school, and whether police involvement is required.

Note: Schools should separate the issue of youth NCDII from that of adults obtaining sexual content from youth or youth forwarding content that depicts a crime (e.g., a sexual assault). **In these circumstances, the case should be immediately referred to local law enforcement, and where possible, to a specialized child exploitation unit.**

Do not actively seek out viewing the images and videos in question. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, parents/guardians should also be discouraged from doing so.

DEGREE OF SEXUAL EXPLICITNESS

OF CONCERN → → → → → → → → OF SERIOUS CONCERN			
Youth clothed only in undergarments	Youth partially undressed	Youth semi-nude or nude	Youth identifiable in a sexual act, either alone or with another youth

While this continuum serves as a general guideline for assessing the *nature* of any given sexual image or video, it is not designed to be prescriptive.

PRELIMINARY STEPS ON FIRST NOTIFICATION

STEP 1 Speak with the affected youth

Help the youth to feel safe, secure, and supported during the process. The initial interaction should aim to restore a sense of control and agency, helping the youth to take an active role in addressing what has happened.

When responding to the situation, focus on the impact it has had on the affected youth to prioritize student well-being, accountability and consent.

The goal is not only to resolve the immediate concern, but also to evaluate whether the youth is at any risk and to determine what supportive interventions may be needed.

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STEP 2 Assess the incident

Schools should assess the incident by asking questions in a non-judgmental, supportive way. Select and adapt the questions depending on who you are speaking with.

Explore the INTENT and the EXTENT of the distribution with the youth:

1. Ask open-ended and supportive questions to identify:
    - Their biggest fears: "What are you most worried about?", "Is there anything that feels especially scary or overwhelming right now?"
    - What would they like to see happen: "What would be most helpful to you right now?", "What do you hope I can do to support you through this?", "What do you want to see happen?"
2. Explore how the content was shared and who may currently possess the content.
3. Identify key details about the content. When supporting the affected youth, gather essential context to better understand the situation and determine appropriate next steps. Pay attention to signs that the content was AI-generated or was recorded surreptitiously. Understanding this can help reveal power dynamics or possible coercion. Questions may include:
    - "Who took the images or videos?" Pay attention to signs of content being AI-generated. Understanding this can help assess power dynamics or possible coercion.
    - "Who appears in the images or videos and what do they depict?" Inquire whether the youth is identifiable, if others are shown in the image and whether those individuals are identifiable.
    - "When were the images or videos taken?"

Listen for indicators of harmful dynamics

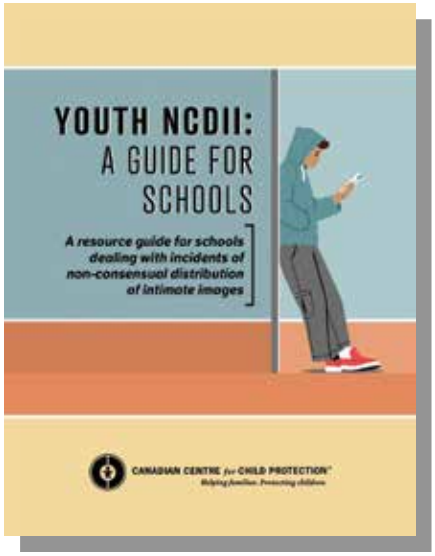
During conversations or disclosures, be alert for signs that the situation may involve things like malicious intent, coercion, or exploitation.

Evaluate whether any of the factors could make the situation exploitative or harmful (e.g., significant age difference, relationship of trust, authority, or dependency, etc.).

GOOD PRACTICE

STRATEGIES FOR THE CONVERSATION WITH THE AFFECTED YOUTH:

- **Offer hope and reassurance:** Reinforce that they are *not alone*, there is help available to deal with situation and they will get through it.
- **Highlight the importance of support networks:** Emphasize the important role of friends, family members, and other safe people in their close circle who can provide emotional and practical support.
- **Collaboratively develop a support plan:** Work together to identify specific individuals who can be part of their support system. Make a clear plan for when and how the person will contact these supports, ensuring they know who is in their circle of support.



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STEP 3 Gather and verify the information

Protect confidentiality while gathering information: If the affected youth chooses not to disclose any other names and you believe additional information is necessary, consider speaking with other youth involved who may have relevant information. Any such decision should be *purposeful, sensitive, and guided by professional judgment* — speaking to other youth on a need-to-know basis — in order to respect the affected youth's privacy.

When speaking with other youth

- **Protect privacy:** Hold conversations *individually* to maintain confidentiality.
- **Promote discretion and respect**: Emphasize the importance of discretion and encourage students to help restore the affected youth's privacy *by not discussing the situation with peers.*
- **Encourage emotional support:** Remind students that it's normal to feel *confused, uncomfortable, or distressed* after learning about such incidents. Encourage them to seek support from safe adults in their lives such as parents or other family members, school counsellors, or teachers if needed.

Prior to step 4

If school personnel, based upon the prior discussions, feel that the activity may warrant police involvement, it is strongly suggested to report it to **Cybertip.ca** or directly to police.

STEP 4 Speak with the acting-out youth

Consider beginning the conversation with the acting-out youth with something like, "The reason you are here today is because it has come to our attention that you may have been involved in sharing/having an intimate image/video of another student. Please tell me about this." Regardless of the reaction, remain focused on gathering information to better understand what happened.

Based on the information gathered in preliminary steps 1–4, school personnel are then in a position to determine whether the incident was based on an impulsive decision or involved malicious intent (e.g., power imbalance, coercive, surreptitious, and/or deceptive).

Reporting to police: For malicious incidents, police officers may conduct an investigation to determine whether police action (e.g., formal warning, charges, etc.) is appropriate. Depending on the situation, the affected youth may feel safer as a result of police involvement.

Maintain confidentiality

Maintain confidentiality of those involved by sharing information on a need-to-know basis and cautioning parents to respect the privacy of all of the youth involved to limit exposure and negative impacts.

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Impulsive incidents: Next steps

1. **Prepare for the conversation with the parents of the affected youth:** Have the confirmed information available and understand what can be shared at this stage.
2. **Make initial contact by phone:** Inform them that a sensitive matter involving their child has arisen and that a conversation is needed.
3. **Arrange a private, in-person meeting:** Schedule a meeting to discuss the details in-person in a confidential and supportive setting.
4. **Share factual information only:** Explain what is known so far without speculation, blame, or assumptions.

   Consider the following key points:

   - Where possible, offer reassuring context such as: "This type of activity is unfortunately not uncommon among youth, but there are steps we can take to address the situation."
   - Emphasize that all sexual content should be deleted from all devices and online platforms.
     Exception: In cases involving a police investigation, follow the direction of law enforcement regarding the handling of digital evidence.
   - Encourage the parents to contact C3P for support at **support@protectchildren.ca** to learn more about how they can assist with removing images and videos from popular social media platforms.
5. **Communicate with sensitivity and reassurance:** Acknowledge the emotional impact of the situation and reassure parents that the school's priority is the safety and well-being of their child.
6. **Explain next steps:** Outline planned actions, available supports, and how the school will continue to manage the situation.
7. **Seek ongoing support for all youth involved:** Involve key support staff (e.g., guidance counsellors, school psychologists, social workers) to help address the emotional and psychological impacts of the incident.

Malicious incidents: Suggested next steps

1. **Report to police:** If the school determines that the behaviour of the acting-out and/or other involved youth was malicious in nature (e.g., coercive, manipulative or intentionally harmful), it must decide whether the situation requires escalation to the police. Either way, it is essential for the school to take immediate steps to support the affected youth. Schools should also act quickly to limit any further sharing or distribution of intimate images or videos, prioritizing the well-being, privacy, and dignity of the affected youth.
2. **Police involvement and ongoing school responsibilities:** Determine the role of the school and police going forward. If the police proceed with an investigation, in tandem, the school should continue to ensure the well-being of all students involved and provide timely, compassionate, and developmentally appropriate support; maintain a safe learning environment; and address any immediate needs of the youth.
3. **Moving forward with the acting-out youth and their family:** Determine when, how, and by whom the parents of the acting-out youth will be notified and who should be involved in that discussion.
4. **If police decide not to proceed:** If police do not proceed with a criminal investigation/lay charges, review steps titled "Impulsive incidents: Next steps." The school should communicate with the parents or caregivers of the affected youth, the acting-out youth, and any other involved youth to ensure transparency and to coordinate ongoing support.
   Note: If someone other than the school reports the incident to police, police may contact the school for more information. Either way, review the ongoing school responsibilities above and consider any applicable school policies.

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YOUTH NCDII: WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS THE AFFECTED YOUTH

If your child had their intimate image or video shared by someone else (also known as non-consensual distribution of an intimate image — NCDII), it is understandable that you may be feeling overwhelmed and unsure about what to do next. There is support available at **support@protectchildren.ca**. Staff are available to listen and help you explore options for next steps so you can decide what feels right for your family.

Considerations for supporting your child:

1. Reassure your child

Reassure your child that you are there to help and support them.

You may be experiencing a range of emotions and wondering how to best support your child through this difficult time. While this can be upsetting, creating a calm and supportive space for your child to talk about what happened can make an important difference. Being present, listening, and reassuring them that they are not alone can help your child navigate what has happened. Consider the following when supporting your child:

- Listen to your child without judgment. You may have questions about what happened, including how the images/videos were created or shared. While these questions may feel important, try to focus on listening and seeking to understand your child's experience.
- Reassure your child they are not alone — as their parent, you are there to listen and support them. Use words such as, "Tell me more about that," followed by listening carefully to their concerns.
- Offer reassurance and hope. Let your child know that they will get through this experience.
- The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) can help reduce the availability of sexual/intimate pictures and videos online. For more information, contact: **support@protectchildren.ca**.



2. Gather information

As your child is ready, ask them for information about what they sent, to whom, how it was sent, when it was sent and where it may be posted/located. If relevant, discuss material that was artificial intelligence-generated (AI-generated). This information will help guide your next steps.

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VIEWING CONTENT: It is important that parents do not actively view the content unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Your child may feel embarrassment and shame knowing that you have viewed a sexual image or video of them. For this reason, limiting the number of individuals who see the content is in their best interest.

3. Explore how the school can help

Work with your school to support your child. Consider how the school can work with you to respond to the situation. This may include exploring the concrete and immediate steps the school can take to communicate with the families of the children involved. Depending on if police are or may be involved, you can also explore ways to reduce the availability of the material by having the content deleted from personal devices and any online accounts/platforms.

If the acting-out youth or other involved youth do not attend your child's school (e.g., ex-partner [acting-out youth] lives in another jurisdiction), the school may have a limited role. In these situations, the school role will be to focus on supporting your child's safety, well-being, and any accommodation needed.

Should police be involved in malicious situations, you may want to speak with them about the steps and what to expect. It can be helpful to determine roles and responsibilities in your efforts to reduce further harm to your child.

Work with the school to create a safety plan. Collaborate with the school to put supports in place so your child feels supported and secure. This can include helping your child identify who to go to for help to address any concerns that arise.

4. Take steps to address the content

Contact the website: If the concerning content continues to be publicly available online (e.g., social media), you may consider contacting the website/platform directly utilizing the "report abuse" function to request the material be removed (particularly in circumstances that do not involve law enforcement). This feature is available on most of the user-generated content websites and platforms. It is important that when you do this, you let the site know that you are the parent, that the person in the image or video is under 18 years of age, and that the content was made available without your child's consent. Visit **NeedHelpNow.ca** for additional details.

Send a message: If you do not know whether the concerning content is online or otherwise being shared, but are worried that it might happen, or even if you know it is being shared, you may wish to send a message to the parent(s) of the acting-out youth and/or the parent(s) of other involved youth who may have the image or video. You may wish to include the following types of statements:

- **Explain the issue:** "I have reason to believe [*your child, or insert name of acting-out youth or other involved youth*] is in possession of a sexual image/video of my child. This is a serious and potentially criminal matter. I am reaching out to you with the hope that you will be able to assist in addressing this concern."

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- **State that possession of the image is non-consensual:** "According to my child, the images/video was taken in circumstances considered to be private and personal, and my child does not consent to [*your child, or insert name of acting-out youth or other involved youth*] being in possession of the image/video."

  If the image or video was initially provided voluntarily, you may wish to adapt this language by adding, for example, the words "any longer."



- **Address past/future distribution:** "My child does not consent to [*your child, or insert name of acting-out youth or other involved youth*] forwarding it to any other person or posting it in any online location."

  If distribution has already occurred, you may wish to state that your child did not consent to that distribution, and does not consent to future distribution.

  - **Request deletion:** "I request that you speak to [*your child, or insert name of acting-out youth or other involved youth*] and ensure that they delete the image/video and all copies they may have of it immediately. In addition, if [*your child, or insert name of acting-out youth or other involved youth*] has posted the image/video online or in other location, I ask that you ensure that they remove the images/video immediately."
    - **Exception:** In cases involving a police investigation, follow the direction of law enforcement regarding the handling of digital evidence.
  - **Reference possibility of police involvement:** "This request is being made now in order to avoid the need to involve police. In Canada, there are criminal offences concerning the distribution of sexual images."
  - **Seek confirmation:** "Please respond to this message and confirm that the sexual image has been deleted/removed as requested. If I do not receive confirmation from you within [*set the number of days — anywhere from two to seven should be enough*], I may have no choice but to contact police."

5. Involve your child in decisions

Help your child understand what may happen next so they know what to expect. Where possible, include them so they feel informed and can make decisions to help regain a sense of control.

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6. Create a supportive home safety plan

Establish supportive safety boundaries. While still being supportive, be clear that there need to be some safety guidelines put in place. Frame these as steps to protect them not as consequences for doing something wrong. Examples may include:

- Taking a break from social media. Consider temporarily taking a break from their social media to reduce exposure to peers' comments related to the situation.
- Increasing supervision and support. Stay more connected and be present to notice any changes or concerns.
- Working together to reduce further harms. Encourage your child not to respond or retaliate against others. Reassure your child that you are working closely with the school to ensure the incident is managed with great care and sensitivity.
    - Following an incident of youth NCDII, it is important that you monitor interactions between your child and their peers. As a result of the incident, they may be targeted by peers and subjected to verbal and, in some cases, physical bullying, harassment, alienation, and/or cyberbullying. This can leave your child feeling isolated, ashamed, and helpless. Feelings of shame, guilt, and humiliation may also be intensified. **Take any threat of suicide seriously and immediately seek professional help.**
- Supporting connection with close friends. Encourage your child to stay connected to friends who are supportive. Positive peer relationships can help them increase their strength and resiliency and provide important support outside of the home.
- **If concerns arise again:** If the images or videos of your child resurface at any point in the future, and/or if your child is mistreated by peers, consult with the school, as the response may need to be escalated to law enforcement.

7. Seek professional support if needed

Consider professional support for your child as needed. Your school or family doctor may be able to help direct you to the appropriate services, or you may contact C3P at **support@protectchildren.ca**, which can help direct families to support services such as counselling/therapy or victim services that may be available in their region.



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YOUTH NCDII: WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS THE ACTING-OUT YOUTH

If your child has shared an intimate image or video of someone else without consent (also known as non-consensual distribution of an intimate image, or NCDII), you may be feeling overwhelmed and unsure about what to do next. These reactions are common in difficult situations like this.

This resource is intended to offer clear, practical considerations to help you respond in a way that supports your child while addressing the situation thoughtfully.

There are practical steps you can take to respond to your child's involvement in an incident of NCDII. When considering how to proceed, it is important to take into account the impact on the youth whose image was shared, as well as your child's understanding, motivation, and the nature of the behaviour.

In some cases, the behaviour may be impulsive or reflect a lack of awareness about the seriousness of sharing intimate images. In these situations, the following steps can help guide a measured and balanced response. In other cases, where the behaviour appears more intentional or harmful, next steps may be influenced by school processes or a potential law enforcement response.

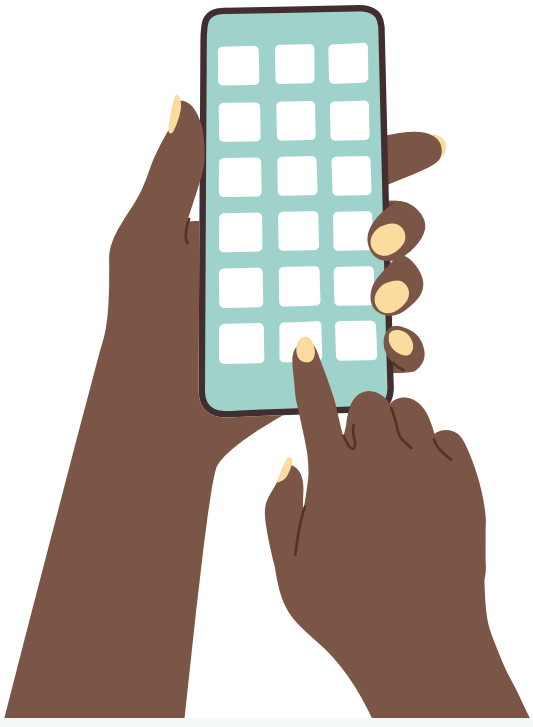
Alongside these steps, you may wish to seek professional guidance or support to help you navigate this situation in a way that is thoughtful, informed, and supportive of your child.

1. Intervene immediately

It is important to respond promptly. Acting early helps communicate to your child that the situation is serious and that steps need be taken to reduce the harm, address what has happened and take responsibility in a meaningful way.

Start with listening to your child's understanding of what occurred. As you do, you may notice a range of responses from openly acknowledging what happened to having difficulty accepting or talking about their involvement.

Minimize the damage: Immediately find out if the content is publicly available and whether your child still has the content on any mobile device. Take steps to ensure that your child deletes any digital representation of images or videos that are sexual in nature. **Exception:** In cases involving a police investigation, follow the direction of law enforcement regarding the handling of digital evidence.



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2. Determine your child's level of responsibility



In collaboration with the school, work to understand your child's role in and the broader context for what occurred. Taking time to gather information can help guide a fair and thoughtful process.

Once you have a clearer understanding, support your child in recognizing the importance of accountability. You might acknowledge that it can feel difficult or uncomfortable to talk about their role, while also reinforcing that taking responsibility is an important step in working towards repairing the harm in a meaningful way.

If your child is resistant, try to gently explore what may be making this difficult for them. Understanding their concerns, such as fear of consequences, embarrassment, or worry about how others will respond can help you support them in a way that feels safe while still encouraging accountability.

Conversations with your child: When speaking with your child about their involvement in the incident, consider the following:

- Situations like this, while serious, can also be opportunities for learning and growth.
- Supporting your child in taking accountability is an important part of the process. Involve them in thinking through how they can reduce further harm caused, prevent it from happening again, and they might begin to repair the impact on the other person.
- Consequences for the inappropriate behaviour should be reasonable and developmentally appropriate. While consequences can feel overwhelming for adolescents, it is important to set clear boundaries and limits in a way that is calm, supportive, and consistent.
- Use this as an opportunity to talk about healthy, respectful relationships, including consent, boundaries, and how others deserve to be treated. A good place to start is the Canadian Centre for Child Protection's (C3P) *Healthy Relationships* video series, available at **protectchildren.ca/healthy_relationships.**

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3. Identify the factors contributing to the behaviour

Take time to explore what may have contributed to your child's behaviour. Consider what needs they may have been trying to meet and what may have influenced their choices in the moment. Understanding the context, including your child's level of awareness, intent, and emotional state, can help guide how you respond and how to reduce the likelihood of similar behaviour in the future. This can also be an opportunity to support your child in building skills that promote awareness and healthier decision-making. This may include strengthening their ability to manage emotions (such as hurt, anger, or peer pressure), better understand relationship dynamics and impacts of behaviour, and build a sense of self-worth and confidence.

4. Outline the consequences for the behaviour

It is important that your child understands the range of consequences and impacts of their behaviour. In incidents of youth NCDII, there are often multiple layers of harm caused by forwarding/posting sexual images and videos of others. This can include the impact on the person whose image was shared, as well as potential consequences for your child.

When discussing consequences, focus on helping your child understand the seriousness of the situation and the effect their actions can have on others. Effective discipline is not about shaming, but about guiding your child toward more respectful and responsible choices. This includes fostering the development of empathy, respect for boundaries, and an understanding of how their actions affect others.

5. Build empathy

Empathy is about recognizing and caring about how others may feel and being able to understand the impact of one's actions on another person. Supporting your child in developing empathy can help reduce the likelihood of future harm. You might gently guide them to consider how the other person may have experienced the situation and what the impact of the behaviour may have been.

Sharing your own perspective in a calm and thoughtful way, such as how you feel about what happened and why, can also help. These conversations, when approached without shame or judgment, can support your child in developing a deeper understanding of others' feelings and strengthening their capacity for empathy.



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6. Reinforce the importance of friends

Your child's friends can play an important role in supporting them through this situation. Encourage connection with peers who reinforce respectful behaviour and do not minimize what has happened. Supportive friendships can help reinforce the messaging you are sharing at home and serve as a protective factor. This may also help reduce the risk of bullying or social isolation and support your child in making more positive choices moving forward.



7. Explore restoration

A restorative practice approach focuses on repairing harm and taking responsibility for one's actions. Consider whether your child is ready to take responsibility for what happened.

As part of making amends, you may also explore opportunities that help your child deepen their understanding of the impact of their behaviour. This could include educational activities or involvement in positive, community-based initiatives that reinforce empathy responsibility and respectful relationships.

8. Seek professional help (if appropriate)

Consider seeking professional counselling or support for your child if needed. Professional support may be particularly helpful if your child's behaviour was a result of them experiencing ongoing distress and/or if they are being impacted by the reaction of peers within the school environment.

Your child's school may be able to help connect you with appropriate services.

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