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COMMISSIONER

violence  
reduction  
unit

Dear parents and carers

Due to increased reporting of young people under the age of 18 sharing images of nudes with each other, we are seeking to highlight that this online behaviour will stay with them forever and to think before they share indecent images on social media. We intend this message to reach as many young people as possible between 11<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021.

We have produced a short video (8 minutes long) which includes an account from Megan (provided by Hampshire Police) who experienced sharing an indecent image of herself and the consequences of doing so. All secondary schools have been made aware of this video, and you can view it [here](#).

One of the things we have seen a lot of is that young people do not think about the potential consequences of sharing an explicit image or video with someone else. We're trying to help them understand that once they press the send button, they no longer have control over what happens or who sees it. As we all know, the internet has no boundaries.

Young people might see this as a bit of harmless fun, but if they are sharing nude images of someone who is under 18, that is a sexual offence and they could find themselves in serious trouble.

It is also hoped that the information we share will not only encourage young people to stop sending these images to their friends, but also to strangers and online contacts.

We will be telling young people that, if they have been affected by this issue, they should not be embarrassed and to please tell a trusted adult or to report it to the police.

You can report indecent and inappropriate images to the [Internet Watch Foundation \(IWF\)](#). In addition for help and support, or to report an incident, visit [www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre), or you can report using the [Tell Us Something](#) page on the Northumbria Police website.

There is further advice for young people at [yourpolice.uk](http://yourpolice.uk) on Instagram. The following links contain information about the law and where to get support:

<a href="#">The legal implications of sending indecent images of those under 18</a>	<a href="#">What they can do if they are worried about an online nude</a>	<a href="#">What they can do if they have sent an online nude</a>
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Thank you for your support

**DCI Caroline Ord, Crime (Cyber) department, Northumbria Police**  
**The Prevention Through Education Team, Northumbria Police**  
**Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit Education Team**