

All about

IMAGE-BASED

abuse.

We've all been online and seen something we don't like. But some images or comments are just plain *wrong*.

Read on to learn about what image-based abuse is, how to spot it, and why it's important to be a **positive bystander**.



What is **image-based** **ABUSE?**

If you spend time online, chances are you'll come across something that will make you feel uncomfortable.

But image-based abuse is more than just a thoughtless comment or off-tone meme.

Image-based abuse is when intimate, nude or sexual images are distributed without the consent of those pictured. This includes digitally altered images and videos. While most image-based abuse is about sharing images without consent, it can also include the threat of sharing images.

How Common is **IMAGE-BASED** **ABUSE?**

If you've received images you don't think are appropriate, or seen your friends 'like' and share things online that made you super uncomfortable – you're not alone.

In fact, 7 out of 10 Australian girls aged 15-19 who were surveyed believe online harassment and bullying is wide spread¹.

Another recent Australian study even found that 1 in 3 young people aged 16-19 who were surveyed reported at least one form of image-based abuse².



Standing up to **IMAGE-BASED** **ABUSE?**

Standing up to bullying and image-based abuse makes it more likely the perpetrator will stop. But it can be tricky to know how to step in without making the situation worse.

The truth is, putting an end to image-based abuse is everyone's responsibility.

Flip over if you want to know more about how you can be a positive bystander to image-based abuse.

¹Plan International Australia and Our Watch (2016) Don't Send Me That Pic: Australian young women and girls report online abuse and harassment are endemic. Melbourne, Australia
²Henry, N., Powell, A. & Flynn, A. (2017). Not Just 'Revenge Pornography': Australians' Experiences of Image-Based Abuse. A Summary Report. Melbourne: RMIT University.

How to be a positive bystander.

What is a BYSTANDER?

A bystander is a person who witnesses or knows about bullying that is being directed towards someone else.

If you see image-based abuse, it's important to take action but it's not always easy to know what to do.

Someone might choose not to speak up because they:

- feel peer pressure to follow group thinking or actions
- fear of becoming the next target
- are unsure about how to help in a safe way
- feel all of the above.

How to be a bystander WHEN you SEE IMAGE-BASED ABUSE?

Here are some tips on stepping in while image-based abuse is happening:

- Make it clear to your friends that you don't agree with what is being said or done.
- If someone you know is calling out abusive and disrespectful behaviour, back them up.
- If it's safe, privately message the person who made the post/shared the image and ask them to delete the inappropriate content.

Here are some things you could say to help get through a tricky conversation:

- "You're better than that" This challenges their behaviour in a non-confronting way.
- "Mate, what if that was your mum or sister?" Talking about someone close can make it more relevant to the person.

How to offer SUPPORT to a target of IMAGE-BASED ABUSE?

If you know someone is being bullied or abused, you can show your support for them in person, via a text or private message.

Your support might reduce any feelings of isolation they may be experiencing.

Encourage them to report the issue, tell someone they trust, or offer to help them in the process.

If you're unsure about how to handle the situation, check out [esafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au) or [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au) (1800 55 1800)

HOW TO REPORT image-based ABUSE.

The [esafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au) website is a great resource to learn about how to help stop image-based abuse. It offers advice on:

- how to report inappropriate content on social media
- reporting image-based abuse to the eSafety Commissioner if you are a target yourself
- how to report image-based abuse to the police if you are worried about someone's safety.