



MEMO

DATE: January 5, 2023
TO: School District 43
FROM: Coquitlam RCMP & Port Moody Police Department
SUBJECT: Increases in “sextortion” cases

Coquitlam RCMP and Port Moody Police Department are informing School District 43 and the parents of its students of a recent increase in sextortion incidents in our communities.

In recent months, local police have seen an uptick of money-motivated sextortion reports where youth of all genders are being targeted. According to cybertip.ca, there has been a 56% increase in youth sextortions between March and August of 2022 [cybertip.ca is a Canadian tip line for reporting online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Visit cybertip.ca for more information].

In these incidents, a suspect often begins a flirtatious online relation with the victim. Once the relationship has been established, the suspect convinces the victim to engage in sexually explicit activities online, such as sending a nude photo or videos of themselves. Once received, the suspect threatens to distribute the photos or videos to the victim’s family and friends unless payment is received.

These highly-sophisticated and well-organized criminals use the intimate images or videos to threaten, intimidate and coerce the victim – who is most often a youth – into sending the suspect(s) cash or gifts cards. When youth are involved, they are often too afraid to speak to their parents and may attempt to deal with the extortion themselves. We want those victims to know it is okay to ask for help by speaking with an adult as well as reporting such incidents to police.

The suspects use techniques to protect their identity and do not always reside within Canada, which can make it difficult to investigate and prosecute. Police are encouraging the public to use safe social media practices and to refrain from sharing nude or personal images and videos online.

Tips for parents:

- Be open about online behaviour
 - Place computers in busy family areas, work with your child to ensure they behave safely online from a young age and teach your child to treat life online as they would their regular life.
- Monitor your children’s online activities regularly
 - Search your child’s name using popular search engines, blogs and social network platforms to see what comes up on their public record
- Be aware of mobile applications

- Some social media applications are not suitable for all children & many applications have age limits in order to download. Some applications may publicly display private information including your child's location.

Tips for children

- Think before you share
 - It is difficult to remove information once it's shared. Even though a smartphone app may advertise what you send will "disappear" in a few seconds, content can still be screen captured to make it last forever.
- Be socially responsible
 - Speak up and do the right thing. If you see something you don't agree with, like cyberbullying, harassment or threats, ask a trusted adult for advice or help.
- Protect your privacy online
 - Only accept friend requests from people you know, only share images that you would be okay sharing with your parents and never send an intimate photo or video if asked.

For more useful information and tips, please visit the following links:

- [Government of Canada - Child Sexual exploitation on the internet](#)
- [Government of Canada – Online Child Sexual Exploitation](#)
- [BC RCMP – Internet Safety Tips for Teens](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#)
- [One Child](#)

If you believe a crime has been committed, please contact your local police department.

Youth Detail

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Coquitlam, B.C.
604-945-1550

Youth Services Section

Port Moody Police Department
3051 St Johns Street.
Port Moody, B.C.
604-461-3456