

Revenge Porn Helpline 2024 Report

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Revenge Porn
Helpline





Contents

Contents	3
The Revenge Porn Helpline	4
Recognition of supporters	4
Executive Summary	5
How women experience IIA	5
Glossary	6
Defining Key Terms	7
Voyeurism/Upiskirting	7
Threat to Share	7
Synthetic Sexual Content	7
Legal Framework	8
Intimate Image Abuse Law and the Online Safety Act	8
Synthetic Sexual Content	9
International Reach	9
Media	9
Report Findings	10
Reiya Chatbot	10
Key Issues	11
Sextortion	11
Intimate Images Shared Without Consent	11
Threats to Share	12
Voyeurism	12
Synthetic Sexual Content	12
Taking down content	12
Further Insights	13
Gender	13
Age	13
Location of content	14
The Remaining 10%	14
StopNCII	15
Impact on Clients	15
External support	16
Signposting and mental health support	16
Policy Recommendations	17
Tackling Intimate Image Abuse	17
Looking At 2025	18



The Revenge Porn Helpline

The Revenge Porn Helpline is operated by South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL), a partner in the UK Safer Internet Centre. The Helpline was founded in 2015 following the criminalisation of the sharing of intimate images without consent and an increase in the number of calls to the Professionals Online Safety Helpline, highlighting a significant issue that demanded dedicated support.

Helpline Practitioners assist adults affected by intimate image abuse by providing practical advice and support. Primarily, the Revenge Porn Helpline provides guidance and information regarding:

- › the law around intimate image abuse,
- › how to report to the police,
- › how to collect evidence and the reporting of private sexual images online for removal.

The Helpline also signposts to a variety of support services where appropriate, including emotional and legal support. It is available to adults living in the UK who are over the age of 18 and can be contacted in a variety of ways, including by telephone, email, anonymous contact form (Whisper), or through the Reiya chatbot.

Now, 10 years on, the Helpline stands as one of the most impactful support services in the UK. Over the past decade, we have assisted more than **60,000 individuals** and facilitated the reporting of over **400,000 intimate images**, with cases rising by an average of **57% each year**. Through advocacy and engagement with the Government, we have also played a key role in strengthening legislation, ensuring greater protections for those affected by this form of abuse. Public and Government awareness has significantly improved, and intimate image abuse is now recognised as a serious crime that demands action.

However, there is still work to be done. Further improvements are needed in legislation around intimate image abuse and in strengthening victim support. As we mark this milestone, we remain eager to continue working towards these changes while providing vital support to those who need it most. **The Revenge Porn Helpline** is as committed as ever to serving our clients and driving progress in the fight against intimate image abuse.

Recognition Of Supporters

The Helpline extends its sincere gratitude to all individuals, organisations, and partners who have contributed to our mission of supporting those affected by intimate image abuse. Your generosity and commitment enable us to continue providing vital assistance to adults across the UK, ensuring they receive the guidance, support, and content removal services they need.

The Helpline is partly funded by the UK Home Office as part of the Government's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, alongside additional support from the Scottish Government's Delivering Equally Safe Fund. Since 2022, the UK Safer Internet Centre, and therefore the Helpline, has also received funding from Nominet, the UK-based domain registry committed to social impact initiatives. However, we operate within a limited budget and rely on additional donations from the public, the private sector, and external grant agreements to sustain and expand our services.

To further strengthen our ability to support victims, we launched a new donation campaign, making it easier for members of the public to contribute. Supporters can now donate £5 by texting RPH to 70450, helping us provide direct assistance to those affected by intimate image abuse. Donations contribute towards answering calls, facilitating content removal, raising awareness, and advocating for greater protections.

In 2024, the Revenge Porn Helpline began a comprehensive evaluation of its services to assess impact, identify areas for improvement, and enhance support for those affected by non-consensual intimate image abuse (NCII). This evaluation process will continue into 2025, ensuring that the Helpline evolves to meet the changing needs of victims effectively.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we will analyse findings, implement key changes, and refine our approach to strengthen support, prevention, and intervention measures.



Executive Summary

Increase in reports from last year

Total support:
22,275,
up from **18,421**

20.9% increase in reports

Content removal for 2024

Content we have reported for removal (so far) **15,518 images**
90.9% takedown rate (so far).

15,041 (96.9%) of these images were for women (1,637): **9.19** images per woman vs **0.38** per man.

How women experience IIA

Where gender of client and gender of perpetrator is known:

Over
81%

male perpetrator
(same as last year)

4 times more people stated they had a negative experience/interaction with the police than positive

Positive response:
94

Negative response:
363

Glossary

IIA: Intimate Image Abuse

Revenge Porn Helpline, also referred to as 'the Helpline'

SWGfL: South West Grid for Learning

NCII: Non-Consensual Intimate Image

OSA: Online Safety Act

Case: Direct contact with the Helpline through telephone, Whisper, email

Reports: Overall, combining requests received from the chatbot and the Helpline contact points

Reiya: Website chatbot

Whisper: Anonymous reporting tool for the Helpline

NCII: Non-Consensual Intimate Image

Defining Key Terms



Intimate Image Abuse

Despite the Revenge Porn Helpline's name, we choose to avoid using the term 'Revenge Porn' as it does not accurately reflect the complexity of the issue. The sharing of intimate images without consent is not always motivated by 'revenge', and the use of those words suggests that the victim has done something to deserve what has happened. In addition, an individual's private sexual images are not pornography: pornography is commercial and, crucially, consensual. 'Revenge porn' fails to encompass the full spectrum of behaviours involved in intimate image abuse, such as sharing private sexual imagery, threats to share intimate content, sextortion, voyeurism, cyber-flashing, synthetic sexual content and upskirting. Hence, we prefer to use the more inclusive and victim supportive term 'intimate image abuse'.

Sextortion

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often referred to as 'sextortion'), or webcam blackmail, is a form of blackmail that can intimidate any individual into paying money to an offender who is threatening to share nude or semi-nude images of them. The majority of cases involve individuals meeting via social media or dating websites and forming a relationship. The blackmailer often assumes the identity of a man or woman who, after gaining the victim's trust, will quickly persuade them into sending intimate images or videos or will record sexual content without the victim's knowledge or consent. The images and videos will then be used to blackmail them for money or further sexual content. Typically perpetrated by organised crime groups operating outside of the UK, sextortion scammers can target any individual regardless of their age or gender.

Voyeurism/Upskirting

Voyeurism is a sexual offence where the victim is filmed by someone without their knowledge or consent, for the perpetrator's sexual gratification or as a means to exert control. This often occurs where one party films sexual activity without the knowledge of the other person but can also include filming up a skirt or down a blouse. Such actions are restricted to private spaces or situations where the body parts or acts would not typically be seen in public. In England and Wales, the corresponding legislation is the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, while in Scotland, it was incorporated into the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009.

Threat To Share

This refers to an implicit or explicit threat to have your intimate or sexually explicit material shared without your consent. This commonly involves situations where the perpetrator is a known person, for example, an ex-partner or family member, and they are making threats with the intent that the individual (or someone who knows them) will believe that it will be carried out or is reckless to the fact that they will fear it will be carried out.

Synthetic Sexual Content

We use 'Synthetic Sexual Content' to refer to sexual or nude imagery created using AI technologies, sometimes referred to as 'deepfakes'. Synthetic imagery can include images created by swapping someone's face onto another's body, 'nudification' apps where a clothed image can be recreated to be nude or completely fake. In this context, a person's image can be edited or altered to become an intimate image, or an intimate image can be manufactured of someone. The Helpline has observed a growing trend with the emergence of AI technology in publicly accessible apps, allowing users to create realistic synthetic images quickly and easily. This harmful use of technology presents a fresh risk and form of intimate image abuse, demanding proactive measures to prevent the exploitation of AI technology for such purposes.



Legal Framework

Since the Helpline's inception, legal protections against intimate image abuse have undergone significant reform across the UK. Initially, the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 introduced an offence in England and Wales for sharing private sexual images without consent and with the intent to cause distress. Scotland and Northern Ireland followed suit with their own legal frameworks under the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2016. In 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act made threats to share intimate images a criminal offence. However, gaps have remained in the law, making it difficult to prosecute cases of intimate image abuse effectively.

A major shift occurred on 31st January 2024 with the replacement of Section 33 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 with Section 66B of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 by the Online Safety Act. These long-awaited reforms have strengthened the legal framework by removing the requirement to prove intent to cause distress when prosecuting cases of non-consensual image sharing. The new legislation also introduces harsher penalties, with offenders facing up to two years imprisonment for sharing intimate images to cause distress, alarm, humiliation, or for sexual gratification, the latter also carrying registration on the sex offenders register. Additionally, threatening to share an intimate image has now been made a separate offence, carrying a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment, even if no such image exists.

The scope of intimate image abuse laws has also expanded to include synthetic sexual content. For the first time, images created by this technology is explicitly covered under the law, ensuring that individuals who distribute altered intimate images without consent can be prosecuted. Further protections for victims have been introduced, including the right to lifelong anonymity and eligibility for special measures during legal proceedings, providing much-needed safeguards for those taking their cases to court.

Further legislative changes are on the horizon through the [Crime and Policing Bill](#), which is currently progressing through Parliament. This bill will introduce new offences targeting the non-consensual recording of intimate images, including the use of covert recording equipment to capture private footage without consent.

These legal advancements mark a significant step forward in addressing intimate image abuse. However, there is still more to be done in strengthening protections and ensuring robust support for victims.

Intimate Image Abuse Law And The Online Safety Act

The Online Safety Act has introduced significant legal changes to combat non-consensual intimate image abuse (NCII). As of 31st January 2024, Section 33 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 has been replaced by Section 66B of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, introducing clearer, stronger penalties for sharing intimate images without consent. The revised laws now categorise offences based on consent, with maximum sentences ranging from six months to two years imprisonment, depending on whether an intention to cause distress or sexual gratification was a motivating factor. Additionally, threatening to share intimate images is now a standalone offence, carrying a penalty of up to two years in prison. Significantly, the inclusion of the new offences in the Sexual Offences Act gives victims a guaranteed lifetime right to anonymity through the criminal justice process. These changes mark an important step in streamlining prosecutions and providing stronger protections for victims.

As part of its advocacy for further legislative reform, SWGfL attended a Women and Equalities Committee session in Parliament on 6th November 2024 to present evidence on the escalating impact of NCII. David Wright CBE, CEO of SWGfL, and Sophie Mortimer, Manager of the Revenge Porn Helpline, highlighted the rapid rise in cases—from 1,600 in 2019 to nearly 19,000 in 2023—and the devastating, long-term effects on victims. The committee explored whether existing laws offer sufficient protection, how content removal processes can be improved, and the role of industry partners in tackling NCII.

A key challenge remains law enforcement response, with Helpline data revealing that victims are four times more likely to have negative experiences when reporting NCII to police. Many officers lack specialist knowledge of NCII laws, leaving victims without adequate support or legal recourse. Another major concern is the difficulty in fully removing harmful content online. Despite the progress made by StopNCII.org, the committee emphasised the need for more platforms to integrate the tool.

Synthetic Sexual Content

The Revenge Porn Helpline is pleased to see progress being made in the legislative response to synthetic sexual content, commonly referred to as “deepfakes”. The inclusion of a new offence of creating synthetic sexual content within the Crime and Policing Bill marks an important step forward in addressing the growing issue of intimate image abuse involving digitally manipulated images.

Initially, the Government proposed a motivation-based approach, which would have required victims to prove that perpetrators intended to cause harm, distress, humiliation, or gain sexual gratification. This approach raised significant concerns, as proving intent can be challenging and could have created loopholes in the law, making it harder to hold offenders accountable. Alongside campaigners, survivors, and legal experts, the Revenge Porn Helpline highlighted these issues, advocating for a consent-based framework that would align with existing intimate image abuse laws.

Following sustained pressure, the Government has now reversed its position, shifting to a consent-based model that ensures protections focus on whether the victim gave consent, rather than the motivations of the perpetrator. This change aligns with the approach proposed by Baroness Owen, whose Private Members’ Bill sought to remove the requirement to prove intent, which is currently being debated in the House of Lords.

While this progress is welcomed, there is still more work to be done to ensure robust protections and support for those affected by synthetic intimate image abuse.

International Reach

In 2024, we built upon the achievements of 2023, further expanding the international reach of the Revenge Porn Helpline and strengthening our global efforts to combat non-consensual intimate image abuse (NCII). Over the past year, awareness of NCII and online harms has continued to grow, particularly regarding their disproportionate impact on women worldwide. As the only dedicated UK helpline addressing intimate image abuse, we have consolidated our position as a global leader in victim support, content removal, and policy advocacy.

Collaborations with international bodies have been central to our work. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) invited the Revenge Porn Helpline and SWGfL to Bermuda in June 2024 to deliver a specialist training session for government officials and civil society groups on tackling intimate image abuse and strengthening local victim support frameworks.

At a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) roundtable in October 2024, discussions focused on the inclusion of NCII within the new UN Cybercrime Convention. This development presents a unique opportunity for international collaboration on legislation, law enforcement training, and platform accountability. A key outcome of the discussions was a strategic alignment between UNODC and SWGfL, particularly in relation to expanding StopNCII.org to increase platform partnerships and global prevention efforts.

Our international engagement extended further as SWGfL participated in the Twentieth Meeting of the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection at the ITU (International Telecommunication Union) in January 2024. This event brought together organisations and experts from around the world to share insights and drive forward global initiatives on child online safety.

Additionally, the Revenge Porn Helpline team played a crucial role in researching the impact of online abuse on rural communities in Scotland. Supported by the Scottish Government Delivering Equally Safe Fund, this research explored the unique challenges faced by women in rural Scotland affected by online harms. The findings, published in “Remote Realities: Exploring Online Harm and Abuse in the Context of Rural Scottish Women”, provide valuable insights into under-researched issues and help shape future policy and support services.

Media

Media coverage of the Revenge Porn Helpline was significant across the 2024 period with many media outlets covering topics such as sextortion and the current legislative gaps associated with intimate image abuse.

ITV news ran an extensive piece covering the work of the helpline whilst highlighting the significant rise in sextortion cases across the UK. The advocacy work of Georgia Harrison and her supporting documentary, “Georgia Harrison: Porn, Power and Profit”, also led to a significant rise in signposting and coverage.

In May, to align with the #NotYoursToView campaign, the Independent ran an article highlighting the issue that 10% of intimate image abuse reports were going unremoved due to non-compliant websites and legislative loopholes.

This heightened coverage and a rise in public awareness supported our campaigning around policy and legislative change.



Report Findings

All data presented in this report was sourced from the internal systems of the Revenge Porn Helpline and reflects cases handled throughout 2024. To maintain confidentiality, all personally identifiable information has been removed, and only aggregated data is included. The analysis provided is descriptive, with no predictive assessments made.

In 2024, the Revenge Porn Helpline experienced another notable increase in demand, providing support in **22,275 cases, a 20.9% rise** compared to 18,421 in 2023. This ongoing growth underscores the critical need for accessible support services for those affected by intimate image abuse.

A significant portion of these cases—18,160—were handled through the chatbot, Reiya, representing a 29.5% increase from 14,021 in 2023. In fact, 81.5% of all cases were handled through the chatbot highlighting Reiya's growing role in providing immediate and accessible support to individuals seeking help.

Conversely, direct contacts via phone and email saw a slight decrease, with 4,115 cases recorded in 2024, reflecting a 5.7% drop compared to 2023. Despite this decline, the overall demand for support services continues to rise, highlighting the importance of both traditional and digital assistance in responding to intimate image abuse.

Although direct contacts to the Helpline totalled 4,115, we identified 5,106 issue types, as many clients faced multiple challenges within a single case, often involving different types of crimes.

The increased demand for support is an indication that there is still much more to be done in the Intimate Image Abuse space, with enhanced support systems for our clients and increased financial support that will guarantee the expansion and continuation of the Revenge Porn Helpline.



Reiya Chatbot

Our chatbot, Reiya, was developed through Comic Relief's Tech for Good Fund, an initiative that has been supporting innovative digital solutions since 2016. Following the conclusion of the programme, Reiya was officially launched in February 2022 on both the Revenge Porn Helpline and Report Harmful Content websites.

Designed to provide round-the-clock access to advice, support, and referrals for those experiencing online harm, Reiya plays a crucial role in ensuring individuals can seek help whenever they need it. In 2021, data from both Helplines revealed that over 60% of reports were submitted outside of standard operating hours, emphasising the need for 24/7 assistance. Reiya also enables users to share their contact details, allowing Helpline teams to follow up with further guidance and support.

By extending access to essential resources beyond traditional working hours, Reiya has significantly enhanced the capabilities of the Revenge Porn Helpline, ensuring that more individuals receive timely and effective support.

The chatbot offers victims/ survivors access to a range of resources and advice pages on how to stay safe online.

According to our analysis, the most accessed advice page was **Intimate Images (Non-UK), which was visited 2,969 times**, while the **Online Harms (Non-UK)** section was the second most visited, accessed **1,347 times**, further demonstrating the global demand for support on digital abuse issues. Other domestic highly visited pages included **18+ Content Advice**, with **1,398 visits**, and **Private Messages Advice**, which was accessed **1,140 times**.

Key Issues



Sextortion

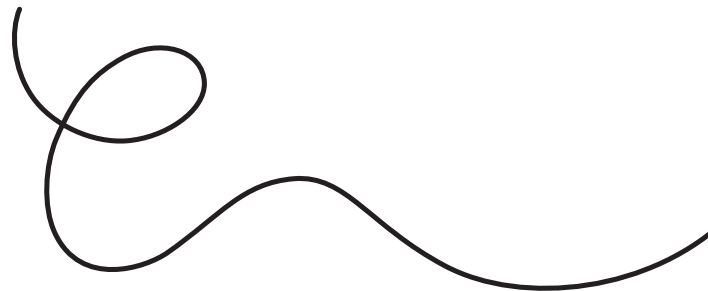
Among the 5,106 issue types identified, sextortion was the most common, accounting for approximately 22.7% of cases. This highlights the ongoing prevalence of online coercion and the urgent need for continued support and intervention. However, both the overall number of reports and their proportion of total cases have declined compared to 2023. In 2024, the Helpline received 1,165 reports of sextortion, a decrease from 1,525 cases recorded in the previous year.

The data continues to highlight a gendered trend in sextortion cases, with men being disproportionately affected. Of all reported sextortion cases in 2024, 89% involved male victims, reflecting a consistent pattern observed in previous years. While the decline in reported cases may suggest a shift in online threats or increased awareness and prevention efforts, sextortion remains a significant issue requiring targeted intervention and support for those impacted.

In 2024, the UK Safer Internet Centre (UKSIC) Insight Series conducted in-depth research into the experiences of our clients who faced sextortion. The findings, published in the UK Safer Internet Centre Sextortion Report, reinforce the gendered nature of the offence, with 85% of victims identifying as men and 64% aged between 18 and 34. This research provides valuable insight into the behaviours and patterns of offenders, as well as the impact on victims.

One respondent highlighted the challenges faced when attempting to address the spread of intimate content, stating:

"It was sent on Facebook Messenger to around 20 of my Facebook friends. This made it difficult as I didn't communicate with their account on Facebook, so I couldn't report the messages myself as I didn't receive the content and I didn't have the name of the account that shared them."



Intimate Images Shared Without Consent

Intimate image abuse remains one of the most prevalent issues handled by the Helpline, accounting for 21.6% of all identified issue types.

Women are disproportionately affected by intimate image abuse, with significantly more images being shared without their consent compared to men. Over the past year, the Helpline recorded 15,518 images requiring removal, with a takedown success rate of 90.9%. Of these, 15,041 images (96.9%) depicted women, while 1,637 images (3.1%) depicted men.

This disparity highlights a stark difference in the volume of images shared based on gender. On average, women had 9.19 images shared per case, compared to just 0.38 images per case for men. This means that for every image of a man shared, approximately 24 images of women were distributed without consent.

Threats To Share

Threats to share intimate images were the third most common issue reported to the Helpline, accounting for 7.4% of all identified issue types.

The data highlights that threats are most commonly made through emails, texts, and WhatsApp (450 cases), followed by Instagram Direct Messages (248 cases) and Snapchat (123 cases). Telegram (108 cases) and Facebook Messenger (87 cases) also feature as significant channels for threats.

In many cases, perpetrators specify where they intend to share the images. Instagram DMs (483 cases) were the most frequently cited platform for threatened distribution, followed by Facebook Messenger (186 cases) and emails/texts/WhatsApp (107 cases). Public platforms such as Facebook (56 cases), general pornography sites (51 cases), and X (30 cases) were also commonly mentioned as potential locations where images would be shared.

These figures underline the persistent and evolving nature of threats in intimate image abuse, as perpetrators utilise both private messaging and highly public platforms to maximise harm.

Voyeurism

Voyeurism remains a significant issue, with 254 cases recorded by the Helpline in 2024. The vast majority of victims were women, accounting for 195 cases (76.8%), while 45 cases (17.7%) involved men.

These figures reflect the disproportionate impact of voyeuristic offences on women, often linked to wider patterns of gender-based abuse. Cases range from covert recording in private spaces to the use of hidden cameras and digital breaches, all of which can leave victims feeling unsafe.

Synthetic Sexual Content

Even though the Helpline only received 58 cases of synthetic sexual content, making up just 1.1% of all cases, we remain deeply concerned that current legal provisions are not sufficient to prevent the rise of this issue. However, we are pleased with the new legislation introduced in January, which marks a significant step forward in tackling synthetic media abuse.

The rapid advancement of deepfake technology has created new opportunities for online harm, particularly targeting women and high-profile individuals. Until now, legal protections have struggled to keep pace with these developments, leaving victims without adequate recourse. Under the new law, the creation or sharing of sexually explicit deepfake images without consent will be a criminal offence, with offenders facing up to two years in prison.

Taking Down Content

The Helpline continues to play a vital role in the removal of harmful content and the reporting of social media accounts that facilitate intimate image abuse.

In 2024, a total of 857 social media accounts were reported for violating platform policies, with 674 successfully removed. While this represents significant progress, the persistence of harmful content and repeat offenders highlights the ongoing challenges in tackling online abuse. Many perpetrators simply create new accounts to continue their activities, emphasising the need for stronger enforcement of safety by design choices by platforms and proactive measures to prevent reoffending.

The Revenge Porn Helpline continues to prioritise content removal as a key part of its support for victims of intimate image abuse. In 2024, the Helpline reported 15,610 images for removal, marking a 21% increase from 12,921 in 2023. With a 90.9% takedown rate, 14,180 images have already been successfully removed, reflecting the effectiveness of industry collaboration in combating the spread of non-consensual intimate content.

In addition to current cases, the Helpline remains dedicated to tackling historic cases, with an unprecedented 61,213 images reported for removal—a 260% increase from 16,993 in 2023. This marks the highest number of images ever reported in a single year, demonstrating the growing demand for long-term victim support and the need for continued efforts to combat the circulation of intimate images online.

However, despite the high takedown rate, existing legislative gaps continue to limit the extent and reach of these efforts, particularly when the content itself is not deemed illegal. Without stronger legal protections, victims may still struggle to have harmful content removed, highlighting the need for further reform to ensure more comprehensive safeguards against intimate image abuse.



Further Insights

Gender

The profile of perpetrators varies significantly depending on the gender of the victim, reflecting distinct patterns of abuse and underlying motivations.

For female victims, intimate image abuse is most commonly perpetrated by individuals within their personal lives. Where the perpetrator is known, 58.4% of cases involve a current or former partner, highlighting the role of IIA as a tool for coercion and control within relationships. A further 22.7% of cases involve a known person, while 8.9% of cases are linked to criminal gangs. This underscores the deeply personal and often emotionally devastating nature of the abuse women face.

In contrast, men who experience IIA are predominantly targeted through financially motivated sextortion. Over 65.2% of male clients at the Revenge Porn Helpline (RPH) reported cases of sextortion, with perpetrators overwhelmingly linked to organised crime. Criminal gangs account for 80.7% of perpetrators, demonstrating the large-scale, systematic targeting of men for monetary gain. Additionally, 8.8% of perpetrators were current or former partners, while 6.9% were known individuals.

These findings further highlight the gendered nature of intimate image abuse—women often face it as a form of personal and emotional harm, while men are frequently exploited through financial extortion.

Age

Out of the 793 clients for whom age data was available, the largest proportion were young adults, with 308 cases in the 18-24 age group and 239 in the 25-34 category. This indicates that younger individuals are disproportionately affected by intimate image abuse and make up a significant portion of those seeking support. The number of cases decreases with age, with 80 clients aged 35-44, 52 aged 45-54, and 28 aged 55-64. The lowest number of cases was recorded among those aged 65 and over, with just eight clients. Additionally, 60 cases involved individuals under 18, reinforcing the urgent need for stronger online safety protections for young people.



Location Of Content

The location of intimate images plays a crucial role in understanding the spread and impact of intimate image abuse. In 2024, reports to the Revenge Porn Helpline highlighted that general pornography sites remained the most common location for non-consensual image sharing, accounting for 25.1% of cases (385 reports). Social media platforms also featured prominently, with Instagram (public and DM combined) making up 18.8% (289 reports), Facebook (public and Messenger) accounting for 14.8% (227 reports), and X at 5.5% (85 reports).

Private messaging platforms were frequently reported, with WhatsApp, email, and text-based services collectively responsible for 11.2% (173 reports), while Snapchat, Telegram, and TikTok accounted for 10.4% (160 reports) combined. Cases involving content shared on OnlyFans and Reddit remained relatively low (1.1% and 1.3% respectively), while hard copies of images were reported in 0.9% of cases.

These figures underscore the widespread nature of intimate image abuse, spanning both public platforms and private messaging services. The functionalities of different platforms are exploited by perpetrators to exacerbate the harm caused and evading detection.

The Remaining 10%

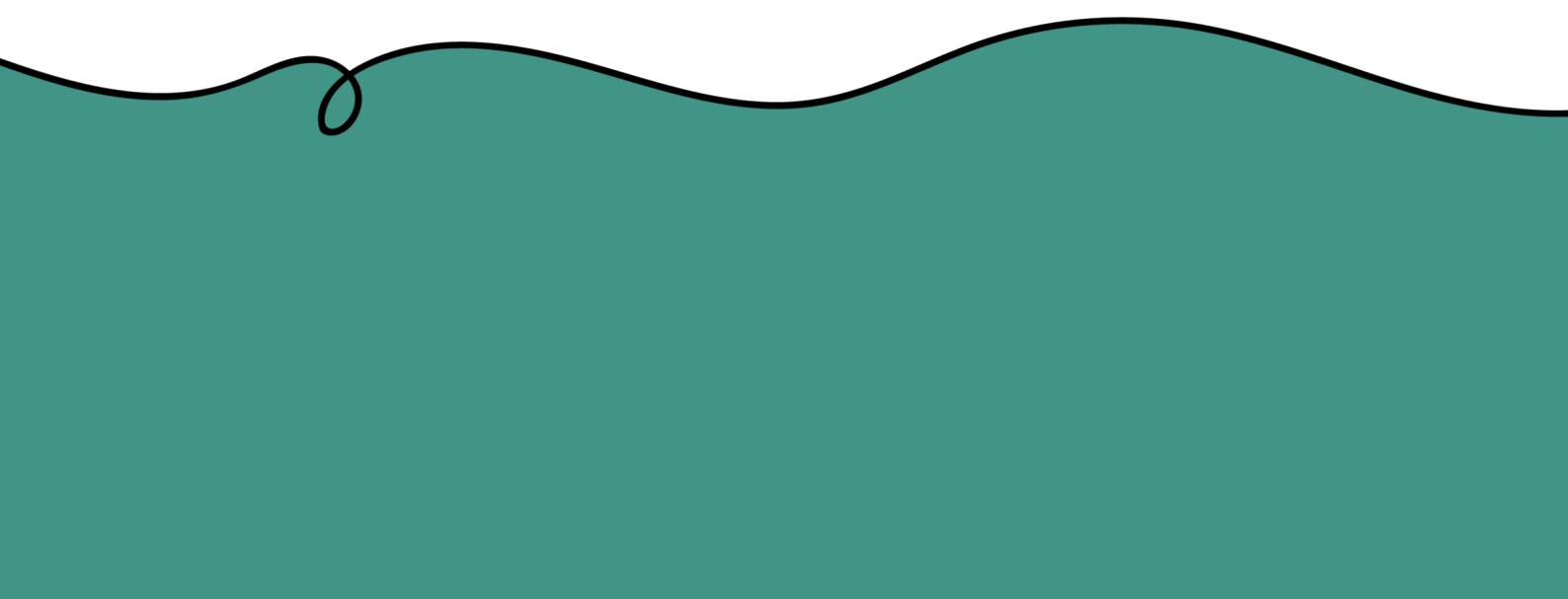
The long-term presence of intimate images online remains a significant issue for victims and survivors of non-consensual intimate image abuse. While the Revenge Porn Helpline works diligently to remove reported content, a substantial proportion remains accessible, with many images resurfacing over time due to continued resharing.

Currently, 10% of reported images remain unremoved, but this figure only accounts for publicly accessible content. The true scale of the problem is far greater, as undetected material and images circulated privately between individuals are not included in these figures. The persistent availability of such images continues to re-traumatise victims, forcing them to relive their distress each time their content is rediscovered or shared anew. Many individuals withdraw from online spaces altogether, as their images can resurface years after the initial abuse.

Since 2015, the Helpline has supported over 20,000 cases via phone, Whisper, and email, reporting more than 412,000 intimate images, with 387,000 successfully removed. However, in 2024 alone, the Helpline continued to report 61,213 images from historic cases, underscoring the scale and persistence of this issue.

A major contributing factor to the ongoing presence of intimate images online is gaps in legislation and enforcement. Existing legal mechanisms, such as deprivation orders under the Sentencing Act 2020, allow courts to compel offenders to surrender and delete intimate images from their devices. However, recent analysis by The Observer highlighted that in the last six months, only three out of 98 cases resulted in such an order being issued. This means that in the vast majority of cases, perpetrators retain access to the very images they weaponised against their victims.

Until these legislative shortcomings are addressed, and stronger enforcement measures are put in place, the problem of historic images will persist, leaving survivors exposed to ongoing harm. The Helpline remains committed to advocating for mandatory removal upon conviction, while continuing to support victims and report content on their behalf.



StopNCII.org

In December 2024, we marked the third-year anniversary of StopNCII.org (a global online tool to combat intimate image abuse) by revealing that StopNCII.org was being used to protect over 1,000,000 images from being shared online without consent. This brings the number of true positives (where images were identified and blocked across participating platforms) to over 27,000. The 1,000,000 milestone marks the number of 'hashes' that have been created on StopNCII.org to protect individuals against intimate image abuse. This increase in hashes marks a 130% increase from the previous year and illustrates the rising global empowerment to protect against NCII.

Impact On Clients

For the first time following the publication of the UKSIC Sextortion Insights, the Revenge Porn Helpline has gathered data on the broader impacts of intimate image abuse on those affected. This data provides critical insights into the emotional, social, and financial toll experienced by clients seeking support.

A significant number of individuals reported a worsening of pre-existing mental health conditions (111 cases), underlining the severe psychological effects of intimate image abuse. Additionally, suicidal ideation was recorded in 83 cases, reinforcing the urgent need for mental health support for those affected. More general mental health concerns were also prevalent, with depression being cited in 29 cases and paranoia in 21 cases.

Beyond mental health, the impact extended into victims' personal and professional lives. Reports of relationship breakdowns (31 cases) and harassment from others (31 cases) highlight the ongoing social consequences that many individuals face. Employment was also disrupted for 48 clients, while 52 individuals reported experiencing financial strain as a direct result of their intimate images being shared.

Additionally, 35 clients expressed concerns about cultural sensitivity, demonstrating how intimate image abuse can intersect with cultural and social pressures, further compounding the distress experienced by victims.



External Support

The data reveals a stark disparity in police responses to intimate image abuse cases, with victims being nearly four times more likely to have a negative experience than a positive one. Of the 457 cases recorded, 363 resulted in negative interactions with law enforcement, while only 94 were positive. This troubling trend is even more pronounced for women, who reported 304 negative experiences compared to just 66 positive ones, highlighting a significant gendered imbalance in victim support.

Certain types of intimate image abuse saw particularly poor police responses. Reports of intimate images being shared without consent resulted in 109 negative experiences but only 26 positive ones, making it the category with the worst response rates. Similarly, cases involving threats to share intimate images saw 40 negative interactions compared to just 7 positive, while voyeurism cases received 33 negative responses and only 4 positive. These findings underscore systemic failings in law enforcement's handling of non-consensual intimate image abuse, reinforcing victims' reluctance to report incidents and demonstrating the urgent need for improved police training, legal clarity, and accountability in responding to these offences.

Signposting And Mental Health Support

In certain cases, our clients require further support beyond the assistance provided by the Helpline. When needed, we signpost individuals to specialist services that can offer targeted help with mental health, legal matters, employment rights, and protection from abuse.

Mental health support was a primary area of signposting, with 552 clients directed to CALM and 176 to Mind, both providing essential mental health resources. Additionally, 97 individuals were signposted to the Hub of Hope, a directory of local mental health services, while 74 individuals facing severe distress or suicidal thoughts were referred to Samaritans for immediate crisis support.

Legal assistance remained a crucial component of signposting, with 319 clients referred to Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) for legal advice and 135 directed to Rights of Women, a specialist service offering legal guidance to women affected by abuse and violence. For those experiencing employment-related issues, the Helpline signposted 52 individuals to ACAS, which provides workplace rights and dispute resolution guidance.

To address CSAM content, the Helpline referred 127 cases to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), which works to remove harmful content, and 833 individuals to StopNCII.org, a leading tool designed to prevent non-consensual intimate image sharing.

Clients also required specialist support for issues beyond intimate image abuse. 88 individuals were signposted to RHC, 48 to the Stalking Helpline, and 15 to sexual abuse support services. Additionally, 24 clients from Muslim communities were referred to specialist services that offer culturally sensitive guidance and support.

Policy Recommendations



Tackling Intimate Image Abuse

To effectively combat the ongoing harm caused by non-consensual intimate image abuse, a stronger legal framework, improved enforcement, and greater industry cooperation are essential. The Revenge Porn Helpline continues to see cases where individuals remain vulnerable due to the failure to remove intimate content from online spaces. While significant progress has been made in removing reported material, legislative gaps mean that victims are often left without full protection, and offenders are not held to account.

One of the most pressing concerns is the failure to enforce existing laws that could mandate the deletion of abusive content. Recent analysis has revealed a concerning inconsistency in the use of deprivation orders—legal mechanisms that enable courts to compel offenders to surrender and delete intimate images. Despite clear powers granted under the Sentencing Act 2020, only three out of 98 cases in the last six months resulted in such an order. This means that in the vast majority of cases, perpetrators are allowed to keep the very images they weaponised to cause harm, leaving victims vulnerable to ongoing trauma and the threat of further dissemination.

The Helpline has long advocated for legislative reforms that would ensure intimate image abuse is treated with the same seriousness as other forms of image-based harm, such as child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Currently, CSAM is recognised as illegal content across multiple pieces of legislation, ensuring its swift removal and prosecution of offenders. However, intimate image abuse does not receive the same level of prioritisation. To offer adequate protection to victims, non-consensual intimate image abuse must be categorised as primary priority illegal content—not only under the Online Safety Act but across all legislative amendments. This would ensure a consistent and robust approach to its removal and prosecution, preventing further harm to those affected.

Additionally, law enforcement officers require enhanced training to understand the profound impact of this form of abuse and to provide meaningful support to victims. Many individuals reporting intimate image abuse to the authorities continue to describe negative experiences, often due to a lack of awareness of the laws in place to protect them.

In 2024, the Helpline continued to support victims of historic cases, reporting an additional 61,213 intimate images for removal. The need for ongoing efforts in this area remains clear. Without decisive action, victims will continue to suffer, and offenders will retain the ability to exploit and control those they have already harmed. Through strengthened legislation, more effective enforcement, and a commitment to victim-centred policies, real progress can be made in ensuring the protection of individuals affected by intimate image abuse.

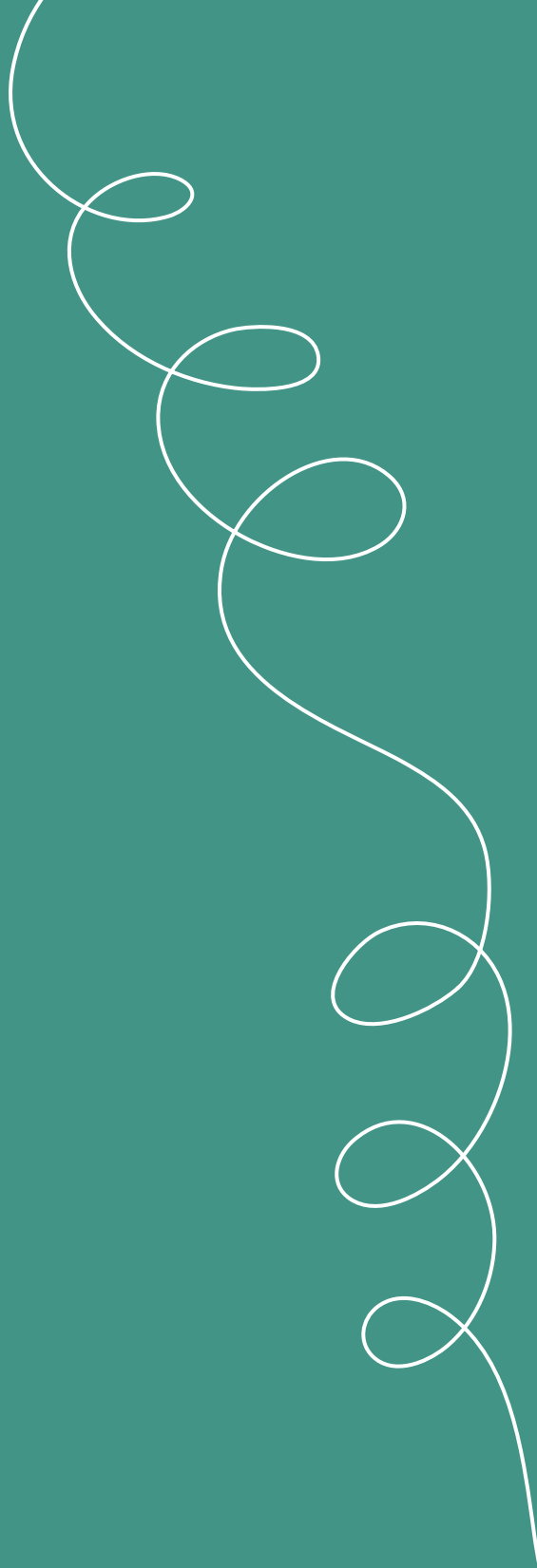
Looking At 2025

The start of 2025 saw significant releases from notable stakeholders. Ofcom set forth new draft guidance to tackle online harms against women and girls to include protections against intimate image abuse. With insights from victims, survivors, advocacy groups, and safety experts, this guidance outlines practical steps for tech firms to take responsibility when designing online platforms that prioritise user safety.

We strongly welcomed the findings of the Women and Equalities Committee's (WEC) report on tackling non-consensual intimate image (NCII) abuse. The committee's recommendations were a powerful call for action, demanding that the Government finally treat NCII as seriously as child sexual abuse material (CSAM) whilst empowering victim support services, and enforcing stronger platform accountability.

The NCII Summit that SWGfL held during the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York also convened key stakeholders from technology, policy, and advocacy sectors to address the pressing issue of Non-Consensual Intimate Image Abuse (NCII). The summit underscored the growing recognition of NCII as a severe and often under-documented form of abuse. The event facilitated essential conversations about technological solutions, evolving regulations, and the increasing number of platforms committing to integrated safety measures.

The research paper "The Scale of NCII" was also penned by SWGfL and the Revenge Porn Helpline to provide a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of NCII prevalence, examining its scope at national, Five Eyes, and global levels. By applying a modelling approach that extrapolates from UK prevalence rates, we estimated the potential worldwide impact of NCII, revealing its scale to be at least as significant as Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) reporting. Our findings highlighted that NCII affects an estimated 1.42% of adult women annually in the UK, with projected figures indicating that millions worldwide may be impacted each year.





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