

# WHAT TO DO IF **YOUR CHILD'S INTIMATE PHOTOS** ARE LEAKED TO THE PUBLIC?

More than **14,000 students** may face the misuse of their intimate content during a school year. If something like this happens to your child, it is important to express your support and know exactly what to do. **We have prepared some advice on how to address this problem.**

## 01. **Keep calm and don't blame the child**

Parents' response is crucial. Anger, shock or remorse can make the child even more withdrawn and stressed out. Children often have no idea how serious the consequences of their online actions can be; they need support, not punishment.

## 02. **Start an open conversation**

Speak to your child calmly and without prejudice. Ask them how it has happened, whether they feel threatened or embarrassed. The aim is to win their trust so they do not fear to tell you the truth and do not feel judged.

## 03. **Provide emotional support**

Tell your child you love them no matter what has happened and that you're there to help them. Family support is one of the most important protective factors when it comes to resolving crises in the digital space.

## 04. **Explain the risks linked to cyberbullying**

Children often fail to understand the consequences of sharing intimate content. Be it a breach of privacy, cyberbullying or sexual blackmailing (so-called sextortion). They do not realise that such behaviour can be used for manipulation and may even have legal consequences. It's important to explain and discuss these things with them.

## 05. Secure evidence

If your child has fallen victim to blackmailing or threats, it's important to secure all the evidence: **messages, photos, date and time of contact**. Don't just deal with the incident within the family but be prepared to notify competent authorities.

## 06. Block the contact

Together with your child, block the perpetrator on the social platform or in the application where the cyberbullying occurred. We recommend using protection tools such as blocking, profile reporting and restricting privacy settings.

## 07. Report content

If the intimate content has been, or is, at risk of being published online, contact the administrators of the relevant platform immediately to report a breach of their community rules. If a crime has been committed, contact the police.

## 08. Consider seeking professional assistance

Sexting may have serious psychological consequences. Your child may feel humiliated, scared or even hopeless. You may consider contacting a school psychologist, support team or helpline, such as <https://ipcko.sk/>, for instance.

## 09. Warn of other risks

Children must learn that anything they post or share online may be reposted and shared again, even without their consent. Their digital footprint is permanent and could be misused by unknown persons or their peers. Explain the difference between private and public content to them.

## 10. Introduce prevention to the family

Setting age-appropriate rules for using digital technology and regularly engaging with your child's online activities can significantly reduce the risk of cyberbullying. Parents should talk to their children about dignity, the value of one's own body, and what consent and respect mean.