



ONLINE PHOTOS AND IMAGES - PROTECTING AND REMOVING

BY INEQE – April 2022

Social media is a great place for young people to share photos with each other – showing what they've been up to, commemorating special occasions, and sharing special memories.

Unfortunately, there have been documented cases of people scouring social media profiles to find photographs of children and young people in school uniforms to post in private groups that seemingly have sexual child abuse connotations.

There have even been incidents where photographs of people who are now adults have had old photos from when they were in school taken from their social media pages and posted on these types of groups.

Beware of the words "*transferable, sub-licensable, royalty-free, worldwide license.*" This means that Facebook can license your content to others **for free** without obtaining any other approval from you!

Safety card – Copyright photos – handout available by emailing [**Marilyn.hawes@freedom-abuse.org**](mailto:Marilyn.hawes@freedom-abuse.org)

Reporting Child Sexual Abuse Imagery

- Childline and the IWF have an online tool to help children and young people regain control of any nude image of themselves online. You can access this [here](#).
- Adults can make an online report to [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command) or contact the local police

force for support if they have concerns a child is being groomed or sexually abused online.

- Adults can also report the URL of images for removal directly to the Internet Watch Foundation.



**Nude image of you online?
We can help take it down.**

What is Sharenting?

Many parents use social media to share important moments of their children's lives with friends and family. Some children's digital footprints begin before they are even born, when parents share an image of a baby scan to announce their exciting news.

Creating a digital footprint for a child by **sharing information about them** has become known as '**Sharenting**', when parents inadvertently or intentionally create a digital dossier for their child.

Just how safe is sharing these previously private moments, and what other information do we share without realising?

What are the Risks of Sharenting?

- **Privacy concerns:** Sharing images and short videos of children adds yet more data to their digital footprint. Sharenting may mean children have public records starting from the day they were born. A report by the Children's

Commissioner for England has raised concerns that the 'datafication' of children by their parents could be damaging.

- **Mis-use of images:** There is concern that **child sex offenders may use** photos of children online for their **sexual gratification**.
 - **Relaxed Privacy Settings:** A shared location or house number might allow offenders to pinpoint a child's exact location.
 - **Identity Fraud:** Sharing images of children their entire lives may even leave them vulnerable to **identity fraud when they reach adulthood**. Barclays has forecast that by 2030 "sharenting" will account for two-thirds of identity fraud facing young people over 18 and will cost £667 million per year.
 - **Future Embarrassment:** Sharenting has sparked debate regarding a **child's right to privacy**. In a study published in Children and Youth Services Review, young people reported disapproval of sharenting, viewing it as embarrassing. In one extreme case, a girl sued her grandmother in the Netherlands for sharing pictures of them as a child without permission.
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Safer Sharenting

According to Ofcom, 42% of parents share photos of their children, with half of these parents posting photos at least once a month. It's important that parents think about how they can share information about their children safely.

Here are our top tips on staying safer if you're sharenting:

- **Safety Settings:** Make sure you have the strongest possible safety settings set on any social media platforms you use and never add locations such as your home address or child's

school. Check out [our safety centre](#) for more information on privacy and safety settings.

- **Blur Details:** Before posting on social media, make sure you're not sharing more than you want or need to. Consider blurring out school badges and house numbers. Search your app store for photo editing apps.
 - **Crop Photos:** You can also crop a photo using the photo edit tools on any device. Consider cropping out any identifiable locations or personal objects.
 - **Restrict where you share:** Consider restricting your children's photos to closed family groups on Facebook or Whatsapp. You could also use a smaller social media platform such as FamilyAlbum, Lifecake or Tinybeans which are designed for closer family groups and friends.
 - **Ask Permission:** As children get older, ask their permission to share photos of them.
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It's natural to want to share proud moments with those close to us. If you like to share updates on your child's life, consider what steps above could help you do this safely and securely.

It might also help to discuss the issue of sharenting with other parents/carers in your community.

If you want social media sites to take an image down, the quickest way to do it is to point the fact you have copyrighted it.

While not required by law, you can include the copyright symbol © on your images to make the processing of reports quicker. It also helps you establish ownership of the image.

We deliver a highly effective course on how to best protect you and your child online Please contact for information

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