

Support services for children and young people

- Young people aged 5 to 25 can contact **Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800)**. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, free of charge. Counsellors can also chat online at Kids Helpline.
- **eHeadspace** offers free online counselling for young people, aged 12 to 25, and their families.
- **Headspace** also offers free or low-cost face-to-face support for young people aged 12 to 25 and their families. Appointments can be made by contacting one of their centres which are located around Australia.

Other support services

For immediate help, call the police on Triple Zero (000).

You can also contact:

- the Police Assistance Line on 131 444
- a specialist family violence agency for counselling support and safety planning, like 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732
- a legal advice service.

Visit esafety.gov.au for more information about how to be safe online and report abuse.

Keep up to date with latest online safety news



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Supporting children and young people

Technology-facilitated abuse in domestic and family violence situations



More than 25% of domestic violence cases involve technology-facilitated abuse of children.

What is technology-facilitated abuse?

Technology-facilitated abuse (also known as tech abuse) is abusive behaviour that happens online, on a phone or when using other technology.

There are four main forms of this abuse:



1. Harassment



3. Impersonation



2. Stalking



4. Threats

Tech abuse includes:

- sending a lot of abusive messages
- making threatening phone calls over and over
- creating fake social media accounts and making hurtful posts
- taking over internet accounts and blocking communication channels – such as email, social media and bank accounts
- sharing or threatening to share, intimate images or videos of someone
- tracking where someone is or secretly using cameras to film someone.

What the research says about tech abuse and young people

The children surveyed were most likely to experience:

- Monitoring and stalking - 45%
- Threats and intimidation - 38%
- Blocking communications - 33%

Communication channels used to harass and abuse:

- Mobile phones - 79%
- Text message services - 75%
- Facebook - 59%

Impact of tech abuse on young people:

- Mental health issues - 67%
- Fearful behaviour - 63%
- Negative impacts on the relationship with non-abusive parent - 59%
- Feelings of guilt for disclosing information to the abusive parent - 59%

Source: 'Children and technology-facilitated abuse in domestic and family violence situations' December 2020.

How to help kids dealing with tech abuse

1. Acknowledge the child is a victim in their own right.
2. Take their concerns seriously and respond appropriately.
3. Do what you say you will do and don't overpromise.
4. Don't make assumptions about how they might be feeling towards either parent.
5. Acknowledge the important role that tech plays in a child's life.
6. Help them draw up a list of trusted people.



Make some online safety rules

Help young people stay safe online by creating some online safety rules together. Child safety should always be your main priority, at all times. Don't forget to include older children and teenagers in the conversation too.

You might suggest they:

- avoid posting any locations online or sharing them with anyone. This may include addresses, suburbs, school, clubs, places where they visit family and friends, or shop.
- avoid posting photos online for now
- avoid checking-in themselves (and others) into venues
- avoid tagging family members online until things are safer
- turn off location services on devices - in case the location is embedded in photos and the device and location can be tracked.

Support other members of the family

- Understand and consider the different types of abuse someone might be experiencing (including tech abuse).
- Encourage them to collect and store evidence of the tech abuse - if it's safe to do. Visit the eSafety website to find out more about collecting evidence.

Other online issues and risks

Young people may find themselves dealing with many different situations online.

Visit the eSafety website and find out more about:

- Cyberbullying.
- Online pornography.
- Image-based abuse.
- Unwanted contact and grooming by a sexual predator.
- Digital reputation.
- Balancing time online.

