

Teacher Information

Introduction

The online sexual coercion and extortion of children is a crime. It occurs when someone a child has only met online asks them to send sexual photos and/or videos, or perform sexual acts via webcam. The offender may ask the child to keep the contact secret, threaten to post the photos or videos on the internet or share them with the child's friends and family if the child does not send more or pay money.

When targeting a minor, offenders have two main motivations:

- No.1** A sexual interest in children, where the objective of the extortive exchange is the procurement of sexual material (photos and/or videos depicting the child) or a sexual encounter offline.
- No.2** An economic interest, where the objective is to gain financially from the extortion.
(A combination of both is also possible.)

While the SPHE curriculum, and a range of resources are available to promote specific issues, there is an onus on the educational system to ensure that up-to-date resources are provided to cope with the emerging threats to students' safety. This resource addresses online sexual coercion and extortion. It is mapped to the Junior Cycle SPHE curriculum and is intended for use with second and third year students.

This resource created in partnership with An Garda Síochána seeks to inform school leaders and teachers about the online sexual coercion and extortion of children and how a school can address this issue, in collaboration with students' parents. The resource contains three lessons to support schools as they address the issue in the context of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme.

The introduction to the resource draws heavily from the European Cybercrime Centre's '*Online sexual coercion and extortion as a form of crime affecting children – Law Enforcement Perspective*' report. Supplementary materials in the lessons were produced as part of Europol's awareness campaign on online child sexual coercion and extortion. Both the report and the awareness campaign were launched in Ireland by An Garda Síochána in June 2017.

