# SaferCommunity

# TECHNOLOGY FACILITATED ABUSE

Broadly, technology facilitated abuse can range from online bullying between people who may have existing relationships right through to criminal behaviours like stalking.

## What is technology facilitated abuse?

Technology-facilitated abuse is when someone harasses, threatens, monitors or impersonates another person via the continuous use of technology. This kind of abuse may occur between strangers, but most often occurs alongside other types of abuse in domestic and family violence contexts. Technology is not the problem. The perpetrator/ abuser's behaviour is problematic.

## Signs of technology-facilitated abuse:

- Harassment - leaving constant phone messages, texts, emails and social media comments or posts.

- Stalking - tracking a person's whereabouts using mobile phone apps, tracking via online banking, hacking into a person's accounts (social media, bank accounts, emails).

- Impersonation - posting false information about someone online, pretending to be someone else to monitor a person.

- Threats - threatening to share intimate photos / messages (image-based abuse or 'revenge porn', getting other people to 'pile on' i.e. via threatening calls, messages or social media contact.

- Monitoring - using spyware technology to monitor online activity.

- Control - limiting access to technology.

### SAFER COMMUNITY

Safer Community provides advice, support and referrals if you witness or experience unacceptable or concerning behaviour.

P: 03 9479 8988

E: safercommunity@latrobe.edu.au

W: latrobe.edu.au/safercommunity

Offices: Bundoora PE level 2, Bendigo SSC

# Did you know?

- Image based abuse is against the law.

- It is illegal to record or capture intimate images without permission.

- It is illegal to distribute intimate images without permission.

- It is illegal to threaten to record or distribute intimate images.

Image based abuse is a crime and can be reported to police. Safer Community can assist you to make a report to police if you would like to do so. Perpetrators of technology facilitated abuse may be charged with stalking, surveillance, blackmail or indecency offences. You can contact and report to the police on 000 or you can attend a Police Station in person.

To ascertain your closest Police Station, go to www.police.vic.gov.au/location

## KEY FACTS

- 98% of domestic violence survivors experience technology facilitated abuse.

- 1 in 5 people have experienced image-based abuse.

- 5% of students experienced technology-based sexual harassment in 2016 in a university setting.

- Women (3.2%) were more than twice as likely as men (1.4%) to have been sexually harassed via technology

- People who identified as LGBTIQ were more likely to be victims (35%) of image-based abuse than heterosexual people (21%).

## SAFE CONNECTIONS

**All people deserve to be able to connect to formal and informal supports around them free from coercion, harassment and abuse.**

Safer Community has a local partnership with Safe Connections, a WESNET and Telstra initiative, to provide free smartphones with prepaid SIMs for women identifying survivors of family violence or sexual abuse that involves technology. Contact Safer Community if you or another staff or student would benefit from a Safe Connection.

# What to do if you experience technology facilitated abuse

Ask a friend, family member or neighbour for support and advice around what is going on for you. Make sure that it is someone that you can trust and be clear about them keeping the conversation private from the person whose behaviour is concerning.

Reach out to formal supports in the University like: Safer Community, Counselling, Special Consideration or Advocacy.

Consider reporting to your local police station, depending on what is going on for you.

Utilise services like the e-Safety Commission to check your privacy settings and get best-practise advice.

Report the abuse to the app provider. Most app providers have terms of service where abusive behaviour is not tolerated, and some app providers will intervene in certain instances.

Support yourself, consider blocking the person or taking a break from social me

# IMPORTANT: SUPPORT AND REFERRALS

## On campus

**Safer Community**: advice, support and referral if you or someone you know is experiencing technology facilitated abuse. Safer Community may be able to offer you a Safe Connection – free smartphone and credit.

P: 9479 8988          E: safercommunity@latrobe.edu.au     W: latrobe.edu.au/safercommunity

**Student Counselling**: psychological, social, and emotional support.

P: 9479 2956          E: counselling@latrobe.edu.au          W: www.latrobe.edu.au/counselling

**Crisis Line**: mental health and wellbeing support after hours, from 5pm to 9am on weeknights and 24 hours on weekends.

P: 1300 146 307          Text: 0488 884 100

**Student Complaints**: lodge concerns (about any aspect of University) formally online.

W: www.latrobe.edu.au/students/support/complaints

**La Trobe Student Association (LTSA)**: offer free advocacy and legal advice services.

W: www.ltsa.com.au

**International Student Services**: provide a range of supports to international students.

W: www.latrobe.edu.au/students/international/support/supportservices

## Off campus

**eSafety Commission:** deals with three key types of reports (i) cyberbullying; (ii) image-based abuse; and (iii) offensive and illegal content. Their website has a range of useful resources, as well as online reporting portals.

W: www.esafety.gov.au

**Victoria Police:** you can visit your local police station and make a report, alternatively you can contact them on their 24/7 non-urgent phone line.

P: 131 444          W: www.police.vic.gov.au

**Safe steps:** family violence response centre, including 24/7 phone support for women and children.

P: 1800 015 188          W: www.safesteps.org.au

**1800 RESPECT:** provides confidential counselling and advice for sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service.

P: 1800 737 732          W: www.1800respect.org.au

**Magistrates Court** for a personal safety intervention order

W: www.magistratescourt.vic.giv.au

**Headspace:** young people 12-25 can access counselling, call, or chat online for support. They also have resources about sexting and image-based abuse.

W: www.headspace.org.au