

Preserving Evidence of Teen Digital Dating Violence

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this tip sheet is to help teens between the ages of 12 and 18 who are experiencing teen digital dating violence understand the most common types of teen digital dating violence and the evidence you should collect if you are experiencing teen digital dating violence.

While this tip sheet is aimed at teen digital dating violence, the concepts apply to all types of online and digital violence.

*** Notes with regard to navigating this document**

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COMMON TYPES OF TEEN DIGITAL DATING VIOLENCE

This section lists some of the most common types of teen digital dating violence to help you determine if you have been a victim. As you read through this section, there will also be tips on the sort of evidence that you should save if you have experienced teen digital dating violence.

Note: *The list below is not a complete list of every type of teen digital dating violence. If you are not sure whether you have been a victim of teen digital dating violence, please consider contacting a legal advisor. [The Society for Children and Youth](#) has a legal centre that offers free legal advice for teens.*

Harassment

Harassment is when someone targets you with behaviour that causes you to feel uncomfortable or fearful. Digital forms of harassment are usually committed using social media or text messaging.

Examples of harassment include:

- Someone sends you threatening or insulting text messages.
- Someone repeatedly sends you messages or photos even after you ask them to stop. The messages themselves don't have to be threatening or insulting. Even normal text messages can cause people to feel fearful if they are unwelcome.
- A partner repeatedly asks you to send intimate photos or videos even though you feel uncomfortable.
- A classmate posts insulting or humiliating information about you on social media.

How to collect evidence of harassment:

1. Take [screenshots](#) or a [video screen recording](#) of any harassment that you receive.
 - Your screenshots should tell the full story.
 - For instance, if someone has been harassing you over text, do not delete portions of the conversation. Sometimes this can be tempting if you have said inappropriate or personal things during the conversation. However, in order for

your screenshots to be useful, they must be an accurate representation of what happened.

- After you have taken your screenshots, do not edit them in any way. Again, it can be tempting to edit screenshots if they contain embarrassing information about you. However, edited screenshots are usually not as helpful as unedited screenshots.
 - If the harassment is happening over social media, take screenshots of the profile of your harasser.
 - If possible, make sure that the date and time are included in your screenshots.
 - [Print off](#) all of your screenshots
2. If you are unable to take a screenshot of the harassment, [write down](#) the details of the harassment as soon as possible.
- You may be unable to take screenshots of the harassment in situations where:
 - The harasser has deleted their message or post.
 - The harassment happened in person. For instance, if someone verbally threatens to post personal photos of you online, you would clearly be unable to take a screenshot of a verbal threat.
 - If you are unable to take a screenshot of the harassment, your memory of what happened can be very useful evidence. You should try to record the details of any harassment as soon as possible when your memory is still fresh.
 - A [written record](#) of the harassment should include:
 - The date and time of the harassment.
 - What the harasser said or did and how you responded.
 - How you felt during the moment and how the harassment affected you afterwards.

You can download a copy of BCSTH's [Tech-Facilitated Violence Log](#) to help guide you in your written records.

3. If the harassment is happening at school and the harasser is a fellow student, collect evidence on how your school has responded to the harassment.

- You should only do this once the school is aware of the harassment. For instance, if you have told the school that a fellow student is harassing you or if teachers at the school have witnessed it, you should collect evidence on the school's response.
- Save or screenshot any communications that the school has sent you with regard to the harassment. Print out any screenshots you take.
- Write down the details of the actions the school has taken in response to the harassment. This can also include a lack of action from the school.

Stalking

Stalking is repeatedly following, tracking, or communicating with a person. Digital forms of stalking are usually committed through social media or GPS enabled apps.

Examples of stalking include:

- Your partner pressures you to share the password to your phone and social media accounts.
- Your partner checks your phone and social media accounts without your permission.
- Your partner pressures you to share your location on messaging applications like iMessage so they can keep track of you.
- Someone uses GPS enabled apps like Snapchat to track your movements.

How to collect evidence of stalking:

1. Keep a [written record](#) of each stalking incident

- Your memory of what happened can be very useful evidence. You should try to record the details of any stalking as soon as possible when your memory is still fresh.
- A written record of stalking should include:
 - The date and time of each incident
 - What the stalker did and how you responded
 - How the incident made you feel and how it affected you afterwards.

2. In some situations, you may be able to take [screenshots](#) or a [video screen recording](#) of certain stalking incidents.
 - For instance, if your partner regularly demands that you share your location with them through an application like iMessage, you can take screenshots of each incident and print out the screenshots.

Impersonation

Impersonation is when someone pretends to be you in order to cause you harm.

Examples of impersonation include:

- A classmate uses your social media account to send sexual messages to other people. This causes you to be harassed by people who think you've agreed to sex.
- A classmate uses your social media account to insult other people. This causes you to be attacked by people who think you've insulted them.

How to collect evidence of impersonation:

1. Do not delete posts or messages straight away. When an impersonator uses your account to create posts or send messages, it can be tempting to delete them, but it is important that you save the evidence first.
 - Deleted posts can sometimes be recovered depending on what application is being used. For instance, Instagram and TikTok both allow you to view deleted posts.
 - You may also be able to show that it was not you who logged into your account by checking your security and login information.
2. Take [screenshots](#) or [video screen recordings](#) of any posts or messages that have been created by the impersonator, including suspicious login activity.
 - Do not edit your screenshots. If possible, include the date/time in your screenshots.
 - Print out your screenshots.
3. If you know who the impersonator is, keep a record of how you know this.

- For example, the impersonator may be the only person who knows the password to your account.
 - Your account may also show that someone logged in at a time and place that you weren't.
4. If the impersonation is happening at school and the impersonator is a fellow student, collect evidence on how your school has responded to the issue.
- You should only do this once the school is aware of the issue. For instance, if you have told the school that a fellow student is impersonating you, you should collect evidence on the school's response.
 - Save or screenshot any communications that the school has sent you with regard to the harassment. Print out any screenshots you take.
 - Write down the details of the actions the school has taken in response to the harassment. This can also include a lack of action from the school.

Intimidation

Intimidation is when someone tries to force you to do something by using threats or violence.

Examples of intimidation include:

- Your partner threatens to post personal photos of you in order to prevent you from breaking up with them.

How to collect evidence of intimidation:

1. Use the same steps that are set out in [collecting evidence of harassment](#).

Sharing Intimate Images

An intimate image is a photo or video that shows you nude, semi-nude or engaged in sexual activity. It is a form of digital dating violence if someone shows an intimate image of you to another person.

Examples of sharing intimate images include:

- Your ex-boyfriend tells his friends that he has nude photos of you and asks them if they want to see the photos.

- Your ex-boyfriend does not actually have to show his friends the photos. Just offering to show the photos is considered sharing an intimate image.
- A classmate shows their friend a video of you engaged in sexual activity.
 - The classmate does not have to send the video to their friend. As long as the video is shown to another person, it has been shared.

How to collect evidence if someone has shared an intimate image of you:

1. If the images have been uploaded online, take a [screenshot](#) or [screen recording](#) of the post.
 - Do not alter the screenshot or screen recording in any way even though it will be tempting to cover up the contents of the intimate image that has been shared.
 - Make sure to include the name of the person who posted the image in your screenshot. Take separate screenshots of the person's profile as well.
 - Print out any screenshots that you take.
2. If the images have not been uploaded online, keep a [written record](#) of how you found out that someone has shared an intimate image of you.
 - For example, your friend tells you that your ex-partner has been offering to show people intimate images of you. Keep a record of exactly what your friend said so that you don't have to rely on your memory later.
3. If intimate images of you are being shared amongst other students at school, collect evidence on how your school has responded.
 - You should only do this once the school is aware of the issue. For instance, if you have told the school that a fellow student has been sharing intimate images of you, you should collect evidence on the school's response.
 - Save or screenshot any communications that the school has sent you. Print out your screenshots.

- Write down the details of the actions the school has taken in response to another student sharing intimate images of you. This can also include a lack of action from the school.

What is the next step? Once you have collected evidence of the teen digital dating violence you are experiencing, read part 2 of this tip sheet to see what legal options you have as a victim.

Additional Resources for collecting evidence of dating violence from BCSTH's [Preserving Digital Evidence Toolkit](#) are below:

- [Preserving Evidence for Civil Court Using Video Recording IOS and Android 2020](#) – PDF ONLY
- [BCSTH's Apple IOS Video Screen Recording Tutorial](#) – VIDEO
- [How to Save and Print Screen Shots for Evidence Preservation](#) – PDF ONLY
- [How to Preserve Videos as Evidence](#)
- [How to Preserve an Audio Recording as Evidence](#)
- [How to Save a Website Page as a PDF or HTML](#)
- [How to Preserve Emails as Evidence](#)
- [How to Back Up and Store Evidence of Technology-Facilitated Violence](#)
- [Documentation Tips for Women Experiencing Technology-Facilitated Violence](#)
- [Sample Technology-Facilitated Violence Log](#)

If you or someone you know is or might be experiencing dating violence, chat with a trusted adult or seek help from one of the organizations listed below. Often one form of dating violence is part of a continuum of gender-based violence that can be both online and in person.

You are not alone and there are confidential safe support services available.

- [PEACE Program for Children and Youth](#) is counselling program for children and youth experiencing violence.
- [Kid Help Phone](#) crisis line is available 24/7 by call or text.
- [KUU-US Crisis Line Society](#) is a crisis phone line for Indigenous Youth.
- [VictimLink BC](#) is a referral and information service for victims of crime.

- [Society for Children and Youth BC's Child and Youth Legal Centre](#) provides legal support for children and youth.

Spark Teen Digital Dating Violence Project

This document is a part of the [Spark: Responding to Teen Digital Dating Violence Toolkit](#). This document, or any portion thereof, may be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever as long as acknowledgment to the [BC Society of Transition Houses](#) is included in the product.

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