

Safeguarding Snapshot - 25.09.26

Childline Data Reveals Top 5 Platforms Linked to Online Child Sexual Harm

The NSPCC has released new data highlighting the top social media platforms and messaging apps most frequently named in Childline counselling sessions regarding online sexual abuse, grooming, and extortion (sextortion).

Top 5 Apps Named in Childline Sessions

Nearly 900 Childline counselling sessions were delivered regarding online child sexual abuse where specific platforms were identified:

- Snapchat – 324 sessions (a 19% increase from the previous year)
- TikTok – 234 sessions
- Instagram – 197 sessions
- Discord – 92 sessions
- WhatsApp – 39 sessions

Snapchat and Instagram have consistently been the most frequently cited apps in Childline sessions concerning online sexual harm over the last three years.

Key Insights for Parents & Carers

Online harm, grooming, and financial extortion often start with the request or sharing of a single semi-nude or nude image.

Perpetrators frequently contact young people on public social media or gaming platforms (e.g., Discord) and encourage them to move to private messaging apps (e.g., Snapchat or WhatsApp).

The NSPCC is urging the Government to introduce stronger legislation compelling tech companies to roll out built-in safety features, such as automatic nudity-blocking technology on devices used by children.

How You Can Help Support Your Child

- Talk Openly: Regularly discuss online safety, privacy settings, and the potential risks of sharing photos or switching to private messaging apps.
- Provide Reassurance: Ensure your child knows they can come to you for help without fear of getting into trouble or losing access to their devices if something goes wrong.
- Act Quickly: If a child is being pressured, extorted, or groomed online, do not pay demands or stay silent—report the incident and seek help immediately.

Additional resources

- [New Childline data reveals top 5 platforms and apps linked to online child sexual abuse](#)