



News from NIJ Publications

Defining Technology-Facilitated Abuse

This month, we're defining Technology-Facilitated Abuse. The research-based understanding of this type of abuse is harmful acts or courses of conduct facilitated through digital means that can compromise victims' privacy and cause them to fear for their safety, such as cyberstalking, nonconsensual pornography, swatting, doxing, and sextortion.

Personal harm from digital abuse extends far beyond the digital realm. These acts can cause serious psychological distress and damage relationships with family, friends, and partners and disrupt educational and professional pursuits.

Sextortion — A form of cyber extortion featuring an online attack on victim systems, for example through ransomware, in which offenders demand sexual images, sexual favors, or other things of value in exchange for stopping the attack.

Nonconsensual pornography — Distribution of nude or sexually explicit images or videos of an individual without consent.

Cyberstalking — Repeated use of electronic communications to stalk a person or group.

Doxing — Public release of private and sensitive personal identifying information about an individual without their consent. (The word "doxing" is derived from "documents.")

Swatting — False report of an emergency to trigger an emergency response, specifically deployment of a SWAT team, to a location where no emergency exists.

Recent NIJ resources to further expand understanding of this term — and help us systemically determine action — include:

[Ranking Needs for Fighting Digital Abuse: Sextortion, Swatting, Doxing, Cyberstalking and Nonconsensual Pornography](#)

[Source RAND Report: Criminal Justice Strategies for Combating Nonconsensual Pornography, Sextortion, Doxing, and Swatting](#)

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