

**NEDV**



**WESNET**  
The Women's Services Network

# Privacy & Safety

on Facebook

## A GUIDE FOR SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

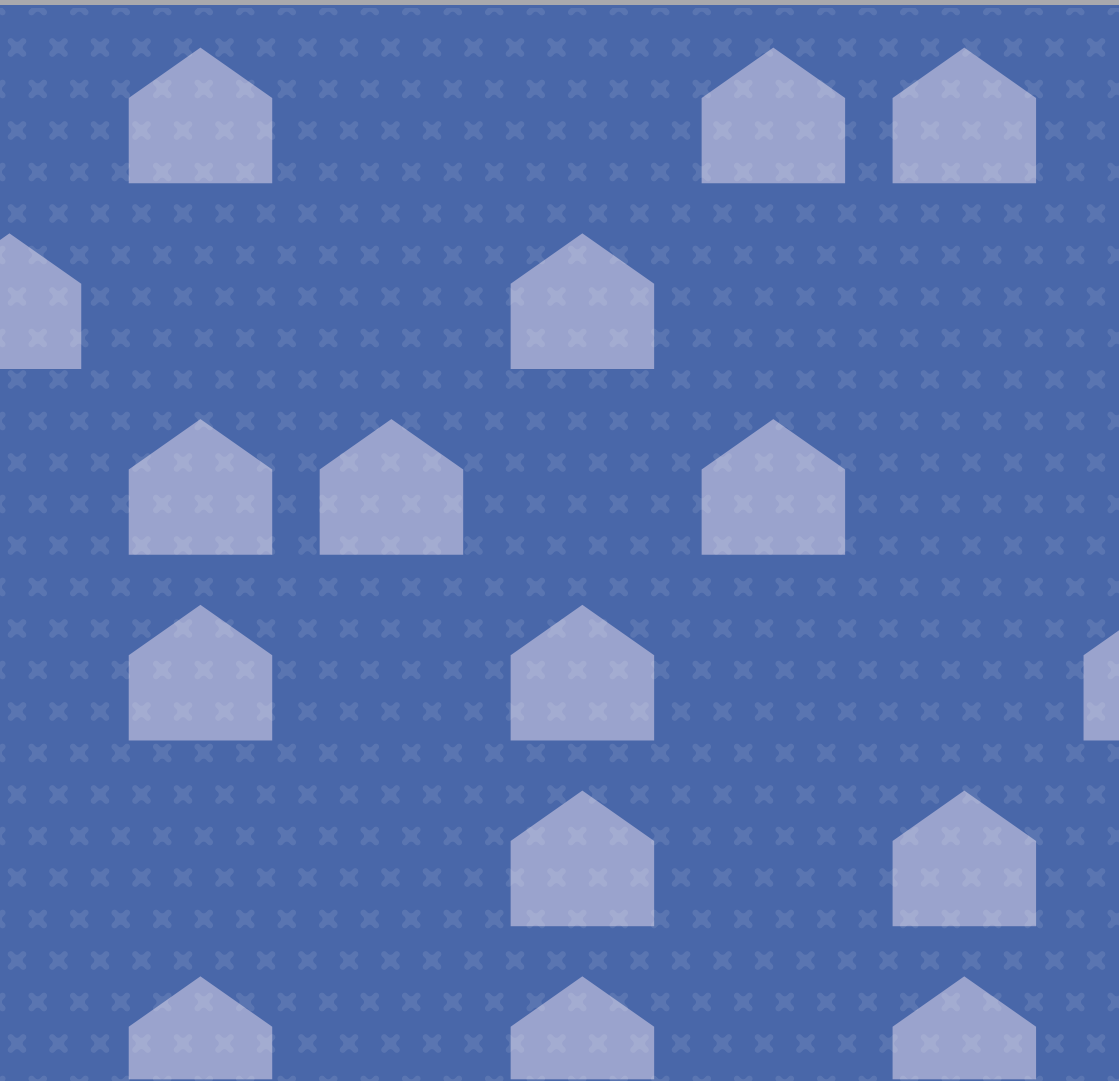




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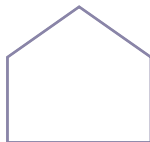
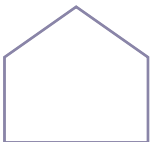
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Social media is creating a world that **is more open and connected**, enabling people to share the most important parts of their lives with families, friends and communities.



The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), Women's Services Network (WESNET) and Facebook have teamed up to offer tips for survivors of abuse so that you can still use Facebook but maintain safety and control over your information. This guide is aimed at helping survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking with how to use Facebook in a way that ensures that they stay connected with friends and family, but control their safety and privacy to help prevent misuse by abusers, stalkers, and perpetrators to stalk and harass.

### **REMEMBER:**

If you are victim of violence and need assistance, contact **1800RESPECT** on **1800 737 732** or through online chat.

**WESNET** is Australia's peak women's organisation working to eliminate domestic and family violence. For more information visit **[wesnet.org.au](http://wesnet.org.au)**

# the first line of defence: MANAGE WHO SEES YOUR CONTENT



In general, every friend you add may be able to see what you post, and depending on your privacy settings, your friends' friends may be able to see what you post as well. For some survivors, refusing to be friends with their abuser or even blocking them may not be possible and could escalate dangerous and controlling behavior by the abuser. The following are ways to manage what you share and with whom.

## DID YOU KNOW?

You can choose who sees your Facebook activity either by setting a default setting or by choosing your audience on individual posts.

### Select your audience

When you share information on Facebook, you can select the audience that sees that content. You have the option of sharing it with the Public, Friends, Only Me, or Custom—which gives you the most control over how you want to share a post. By creating lists of certain friends you can quickly limit the audience for any post or photo. These audience selector options can be found as part of individual posts, photo albums, and also on your basic information under the About section, however keep in mind that there are a few things that will always be public (learn more on what will always be public on the next page). You can use the "View As" feature to see what is visible to the public and friends by clicking the privacy shortcuts icon on the right hand side of your Facebook profile.

### Be cautious when accepting new friends

Facebook is based on real names and authentic identities, where people represent who they are in the real world. Unfortunately, some abusive individuals use clever tactics to gain access to a victim's information. If you receive a friend request from someone you thought you were already friends with, ask them if they created a new profile. In some instances, abusive individuals maliciously create accounts impersonating a friend of the person they want to connect with.

### Teach your kids

Some young people may believe that having many "friends" is a status and popularity symbol. Talk about privacy and safety with your children and why they should be hesitant to accept friend requests from people they don't know.

### Discuss privacy

Maintaining your privacy isn't always just up to you since friends may post content about you or tag you. Although you can manage whether those things show up on your Timeline (as seen on the next page), friends' posts or photos will show up on their Timeline, regardless of your own settings. Since survivors of abuse may have friends who are Facebook friends with the abuser, this can be concerning.

- **Uncheck** the box that allows friends of those tagged to see content. You can find this in the custom privacy option under the audience selector.
- **Use** the tag review tool to know when you are being tagged and by whom (learn more about this feature on pg. 4).
- **Discuss** your privacy preferences with friends and family.
- **Find** out if your workplace, places you volunteer, or agencies within the community that you participate in post information about staff, volunteers, or events and ask for your information to be kept private.

For more information about how to create friend lists on Facebook, click here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/help/listsbasics>

# take back control: REVIEW YOUR PRIVACY SETTINGS

## Who can see what you share?

You can choose who sees your Facebook activity either by setting a default setting under “Privacy Settings”/ “Who can see my stuff,” or by selecting your audience when you make an individual post. Anytime you select an audience in either place, it is remembered and set as your default for the next post you make. In other words, if you set something “Public” or to “Friends,” that will be the audience for your next post unless you change it. You can block an individual friend from seeing a particular post or limit your post to only be viewable by selected friends through the use of lists, as explained on the previous page. You can also limit the audiences for past posts if you weren’t using privacy settings previously. Take note that you control the privacy of your own information, but if you post something on someone else’s Timeline, who can see what you posted will be dictated by their privacy settings.

## Who can find you?

If you are following Facebook’s Terms of Service and using your real name on your profile, then anyone can look you up and find your profile by name. How much of your information they can see will depend on what privacy settings you are using. You can also control who, if anyone, can search for your profile by

your email or phone number. You can manage those options under your Privacy Settings page or the About page (hover over content to see and edit setting). The About section also allows you to limit who can see your other personal information. You can also choose to allow or not allow search

engines to directly link to your Timeline. If this selection is “off” when someone searches your name in a search engine, such as Google or Bing, or on people-finder sites, your Facebook profile will not come up. This option is important for survivors who want to minimise the amount of information that comes up when someone does an online search for them. It is important to note, however, that if you post content as “Public,” that content could still show up in a search engine. In addition to turning this setting to “off,” you can limit who can view past and future posts through the audience selector. Depending on what you share and your privacy settings, you could be found in real life. For survivors, location privacy can be critical to maintaining safety. If you send Facebook messages through your mobile phone make sure to turn off the location sharing feature, otherwise the person receiving the message can see your actual, physical location, complete with a map.

## How to control being tagged?

Tagging is another function within Facebook that may allow others to find your Timeline. Using your privacy settings, you can choose to approve all tags before they appear on your Timeline, limit the audience of posts that you are tagged in, and turn off the “tag suggestions” feature. You can also remove tags of yourself, although removing a tag or not approving a tag does not remove the post or photo from Facebook. Those options only allow you to control what shows up on your own Timeline. If you are concerned about your privacy, you can use Facebook’s social reporting tool to ask the individuals to remove the photos or posts. If something posted is harmful to you and violates Facebook’s community standards, you can report it to Facebook. You can also discuss harmful and harassing content with law enforcement.

## What are others saying about you?

Although you can’t control what others say about you on their own Timeline and elsewhere on Facebook, you can control what they say about you on your own Timeline. Under Timeline and Tagging, you can control who can post on your Timeline and who can see your Timeline.

## By default: what will always be public

Although Facebook gives you many options to expand your privacy, some information will always be available if someone comes across your Timeline. This information includes your name, current profile photo, current cover photo, networks you belong to, gender, username and user ID. Survivors may want to strategise about what information to share, use a generic profile or cover photo, or determine whether they want to be a part of any network in order to maintain their privacy.

**Liking or commenting on public posts:** Note that posts or photos that are on other people’s profiles or organisation’s pages take on the privacy settings they set for that item. In other words, if someone else’s photo is set to public (anyone can see it) and if you like it or make a comment, your comment and the fact that you liked it will also be public.

## Privacy Basics Tool

The Privacy Basics Tool is designed to give people complete control over their information and experience within Facebook. Use this to easily control your privacy.

[facebook.org/basics](https://facebook.org/basics)

# the second line of defense: SECURITY SETTINGS & NOTIFICATIONS



## SECURITY CHECKUP TOOL

Use this tool to quickly review options and add more security to your account. [facebook.com/securitycheckup](https://www.facebook.com/securitycheckup)

Security settings control who has access to your account. This can be very important for survivors. Some abusers will try to access the survivor's account by guessing the password. Using the security settings, you can ensure that someone else cannot log into your account. Some settings that are important for survivors are the following:

### Security questions

Most of the security questions are standard personal questions that the abusive person may know the answer to or be able to guess. It's not necessary to answer these questions honestly. You can be strategic with your answers, using a word or phrase that only you will remember, so that the abuser can't reset your password by guessing the answer.

### Login notifications

You can be notified, either by email or text message, if someone tries to access your account from a computer or device that you haven't used before.

### Login approvals

If you are logging into your account from a different web browser or device, you must have a security code to access your account.

### Recognised devices

You can manage the devices that are allowed to have access to your account and be notified if an unknown device tries to access your account. This is particularly helpful for a survivor who may have wanted to access their account from their partner's device, but now no longer wants that device to have access.

### Active sessions

This is important to note because it shows sessions that are currently active or logged on. You may have active sessions if you've accessed your account or are using an app and forgot to log off. This also will show if someone else might have accessed your account. In that case, you can choose to 'End Activity,' which will block that device from continuing to access your account.

### Notifications

Facebook allows you to be notified of a variety of activities, including when someone asks to be your friend, tags you, or comments on something you posted. Go through each of these notifications and determine when you want to be notified. You can select to be notified by email, on Facebook, or text messaging.

### Download Your Facebook Information

Facebook offer's a self-service tool that allows you to download your personal data you're your Facebook account. This tool is one of the best ways for a survivor to preserve evidence of abuse, harassment, and unwanted contact. Using this tool is one of the best ways for a survivor to preserve evidence of abuse, harassment and unwanted contact.

You will also find other information available in your Facebook account by accessing your profile and activity log.

To download a copy of your Facebook data:

- Click at the top right of any Facebook page and select Settings
- Click Download a copy of your Facebook data below your General Account Settings
- Click Start My Archive

Keep in mind that we have measures in place to help ensure the security of your information. We require you to confirm your identity to complete the download process. You will not be able to access the information until you have completed the security check. And you should also think about the security of the information that you download.

Survivors are also encouraged to capture harassing or unwanted contact by taking photographs or screen shots on the computer. Some content, such as likes on a post, will not be included in DIY and other content could be deleted by an abuser before the download finishes. Photos secure this information just in case. For more information about this tool, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/help/302796099745838>

# the third line of defense: REPORTING ABUSIVE CONTENT

## 1. Take Action

If there is content posted on someone else's profile or Page that you can't delete using the tools referenced above, and you believe that it violates Facebook's Community Standards, you can report it to Facebook using the Report link that appears near the content itself. Examples of content that you may wish to report include a fake account, a post on a Page that publishes your private information or content that harasses someone or contains hate speech. We will review the report and take appropriate action. Here are some examples of how you can report content to us:

To report a comment on Facebook:

- In the top right, click 'X'
- Select Report

To report a message:

- Go to the "Me" icon at the bottom of the Messenger app
- Select "Abusive content"

Click through to complete the form:

<https://m.facebook.com/help/contact/497274833784151?refid=69>

To see instructions for all types of content go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/report>

## 2. Document the Abuse

If you plan to report harassment to law enforcement, take a copy of the URL of the content if you can and take screen shots of any unwanted attention before blocking the harasser. After blocking someone, their prior engagement with you will no longer be visible. If you report something to the police, make sure you have a screenshot and a link to the content. They can then follow our Law Enforcement Guidelines (<https://www.facebook.com/safety/groups/law/guidelines/>) and make a request for data consistent with our terms, applicable law and international standards.





# the fourth line of defence: BE SAFE

Abusers, stalkers and perpetrators misuse a variety of online spaces to harass victims. Misuse of Facebook includes: threatening or harassing someone through posts or private messages; posting information or pictures without the person's consent in order to cause harm or distress; obtaining a victim's password and accessing the account without permission; or impersonating the victim.

Although these tactics of abuse are not acceptable, they may not violate Facebook's Terms of Service and, individually, may or may not be illegal. Because of that, it is important for survivors to know what their options are and what recourses are available when someone is harassing them through Facebook.



## Tools Within Facebook:

Unfriending or Blocking a person are two options within Facebook for addressing someone who is bothering you.

- **Unfriending:** When you unfriend someone, it means that activities (pictures, updates, posts) that you set to the "Friends" audience will no longer be seen by that person. Additionally, their activities will not show up on your News Feed. However, they will still be able to see whatever is public on your profile, including any activities you post with a "Public" audience, posts made by mutual friends to your Timeline, and any comments that you post on a mutual friend's Timeline. They can also re-request you as a friend.
- **Blocking:** When you block a person, they will not be able to view your Timeline activity, message or tag you, or send you another friend request (blocking automatically unfriends the person). You will also not be able to see their activity. They will still be able to see your public information and activity within apps or groups.

Use your judgment and instincts when considering the timing of threats these options. Since stalkers and abusers use monitoring and to maintain power and control over victims, when a survivor limits access, abusers sometimes find other methods of control or escalate dangerous behavior, including increased threats and even assault. Ending a relationship or contact with an abusive person can be dangerous for many survivors so it is important to plan for safety and talk to a domestic violence worker. If you are concerned about what the person might do if you were to cut off contact call **1800RESPECT** on **1800 737 732** or through online chat for more information and help.

To learn more about technology facilitated abuse you can also visit [www.techsafety.org.au](http://www.techsafety.org.au)

**Reporting a person, post or picture to Facebook** is a step that you can take if you feel that what is being posted or how the person is using the site is harmful. This can be done from your Timeline, from a message someone sent you, or on your News Feed.

You can report posts on your Timeline, posts that you were tagged in, or private messages. You can also report a photo, with or without a tag of you. For quick instructions on how to report certain types of content, visit: [www.facebook.com/report](http://www.facebook.com/report).

For more general information about how to report something to Facebook, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/help/reportviolation>.

When using the reporting option, you also have the choice of communicating with the person who posted the content to ask them to remove or edit the content and to inform another trusted person of the content you are concerned about.

If the content violates Facebook's Terms of Service, it may be removed. Facebook also has Community Standards and will remove content if it contains violence or threats, bullying or harassment, hate speech, sexual violence and exploitation, or impersonation. Visit this link: <https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards> for a full list of Facebook's Community Standards and more information on how they define harassment and threats.

**IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE** that if a survivor is interested in preserving evidence of any harassment, threats, or other behaviors on Facebook, they should take a screenshot of the activity or use the DYI tool to save it before submitting a report requesting for it to be taken down. Once removed, the content will not be accessible again.

For more information about addressing abuse on Facebook, see the following links on Facebook's Help Center:

Tools for Addressing Abuse: <https://www.facebook.com/safety>

Tools for Parents & Educators: <https://www.facebook.com/safety/parents>

# Outside of Facebook:



Some comments or posts may not violate Facebook's Terms of Service and therefore cannot be removed, even if they are meant to be and are perceived by you as threatening or harassing.

## Legal Options

If someone is harassing you, threatening you, or making you feel unsafe, you can call **1800RESPECT** on **1800 737 732** or local police about your options.

They should be able to discuss how to preserve and document the online harassment, what legal options are available, and strategies to ensure your safety in case the harassment and threats escalate. Even if the abuser's actions on Facebook, by themselves, don't violate Facebook's Terms of Service or break any laws, taken together (a series of vague harassing messages, for example) can constitute stalking or harassment.

If you have or are seeking a domestic violence order or intervention order against the person, request that the order include language that restricts the person from contacting you through any means including online or posting information or photos of you online. Existing orders may also be able to be amended to include this language.

Facebook has guidelines for how police can contact them for information needed in an investigation. You can share the following link with police that you are working with:

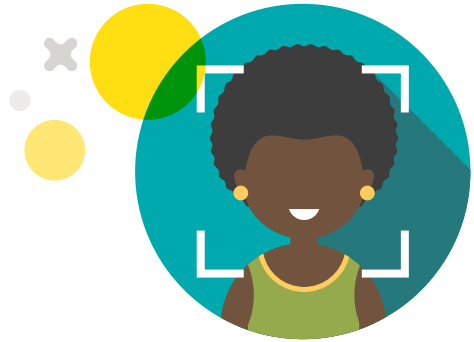
<https://www.facebook.com/safety/groups/law/guidelines/>



# Not Without My Consent



A guide to reporting and  
removing intimate images  
shared without your consent



People come to Facebook to share their stories, see the world through the eyes of others and connect with friends and causes. Integral to your interest in connecting and sharing, and to our excitement about a more open and connected world, is that you feel safe to connect in meaningful and profound ways.



That's why we offer tips and advice for anyone who may encounter abusive and advice for anyone who may encounter abusive content related to non-consensual intimate images (NCII), sometimes called non-consensual pornography or "revenge pornography."



# ZERO TOLERANCE FOR NCII



At Facebook our Community Standards **let you know what is and is not okay to share**. These policies aim to find the right balance between giving people a place to express themselves and promoting a welcoming and safe environment for everyone. We remove content that violates these policies.



The **non-consensual sharing of intimate images violates our policies**, as do threats to share those images.

We remove intimate images shared in revenge or without permission as well as photos or videos depicting incidents of sexual violence. We also remove content that threatens or promotes sexual violence or exploitation, including threats to share intimate images.

You can find Facebook's Community Standards by visiting:  
[facebook.com/communitystandards](https://facebook.com/communitystandards)

We also have developed tools and resources, explained in this guide, to help you stay safe.

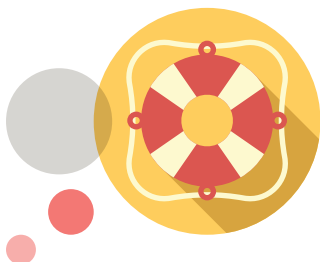
WHAT SHOULD YOU  
DO IF SOMEONE  
SHARES AN INTIMATE  
PHOTO OF YOU  
WITHOUT PERMISSION  
OR IS THREATENING  
TO DO SO



## Reach Out

At Facebook, we know how upsetting it can be to find intimate images of yourself online when you didn't consent to them being shared. The first thing we recommend is to surround yourself with friends, family, or other individuals that will **help support you** through the next steps. Consider reaching out to the following:

- ▶ A good friend
- ▶ Therapist/counselor
- ▶ Victim advocate/social worker
- ▶ Sibling
- ▶ Supportive parent
- ▶ Current partner
- ▶ School guidance counselor
- ▶ 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732





## Document EVERYTHING

After you have secured a support network, we recommend that you **document the abuse**. Consider having someone from your support network in your presence or on the phone when you do this. Documenting the material can be very upsetting and CCRI recommends that you have as much support as possible during this time.

**Save the screenshot** files to a secure folder on or off (e.g., cloud storage, USB drive) your computer. You also may consider printing the images and/or threats out. Screenshots and printouts can serve as evidence for you down the road.

Directions on creating screenshots can be found in the Facebook Help Center: [facebook.com/help/225186287544704](https://www.facebook.com/help/225186287544704)

Where you live it may be illegal to post things like this, or to extort payment or other actions using threats to post things like this. If you want to pursue legal action, you might need a screenshot or other record of the post.



## Report It

Facebook includes a **'Report'** link on nearly every piece of content and we remove reported content that violates our rules.

You can learn more about reporting at [facebook.com/help/reportviolation](https://www.facebook.com/help/reportviolation)





Our teams work in offices around the world, 24 hours a day 7 days a week and in multiple languages.

## Consider Blocking

You also always have the option to **unfollow**, **unfriend** or **block** the person uploading abusive content. You can take these actions directly from a person's profile. Facebook will not notify the other person.

- ▶ **UNFOLLOW:** When you unfollow someone, you won't see their posts in your News Feed, but you'll still be friends with them. They will continue to see your updates.
- ▶ **UNFRIEND:** This person is removed as a connection to you. If you want to be friends with this person again, you'll need to send a new friend request.
- ▶ **BLOCK:** People you block can no longer see things you post on your profile, tag you, invite you to events or group, start a conversation with you or add you as a friend.

Keep in mind that taking these actions may prevent you from having access to see future or previous content posted by that person.







facebook

**BE SAFE**

### For More Information:

Visit the following links to learn more about your privacy & security options on Facebook:

**Facebook's Privacy Page:**

[www.facebook.com/privacy](http://www.facebook.com/privacy)

**Family Safety Center:**

[www.facebook.com/safety](http://www.facebook.com/safety)

**Basic Privacy Settings & Tools:**

[www.facebook.com/help/privacybasics](http://www.facebook.com/help/privacybasics)

**Security Tips & Tools:**

[www.facebook.com/help/securitytips](http://www.facebook.com/help/securitytips)

**WESNET's Safety Net Project:**

[www.wesnet.org.au/safetynet](http://www.wesnet.org.au/safetynet)

**Safety Net Resources on Online Safety:**

[www.techsafety.org.au/resources](http://www.techsafety.org.au/resources)