

Men more likely to fall victim to sextortion say police



Police Scotland is warning that hundreds of men in the country are likely to fall victim to sextortion every year as social media channels are used to steal money from them online.

The scam is typically aimed at men between the ages of 18 and 44, who are targeted by Organised Crime Groups – usually based overseas – who seek to extort money from them by luring them to perform explicit sexual acts on social media. If they do so, the victim is then threatened that if they do not pay hundreds of pounds through money service bureaus, the footage will be posted online and sent to friends and family.

The warning was issued by Deputy Chief Constable Johnny Gwynne, who said, “This is a serious crime which can have catastrophic consequences for some of the victims. It is vital that victims are reassured that police will treat the report as serious and confidential, and that they will be supported as it is likely (given the nature of the crime) that they will be experiencing heightened feelings of shame, self-blame, fear and anxiety.”

“The sharing of indecent images is very concerning and increasingly indecent images, sent in the belief they would remain private, are being shared online.

“People need to understand they should only share pictures online that they are happy with their friends, family and others seeing. They also need to know how to keep their personal information private and to contact an adult if they feel threatened.

“Cyber-enabled extortion is a serious crime, and Police Scotland takes all reports seriously and investigates them thoroughly. Anyone who has any concerns about this type of criminal activity can report them to Police Scotland on 101, in an emergency always call 999.”

“Where a child or young person under 18 has been the victim of online child sexual abuse including ‘sextortion’, avenues to report concerns include parents / carers, guidance teachers, Police and Social work however, importantly when online they can connect to CEOP (www.ceop.police.uk) where they can make a report and have contact with a child protection advisor who can talk them through what they have experienced/are experiencing and help them to make a plan around their safety.”