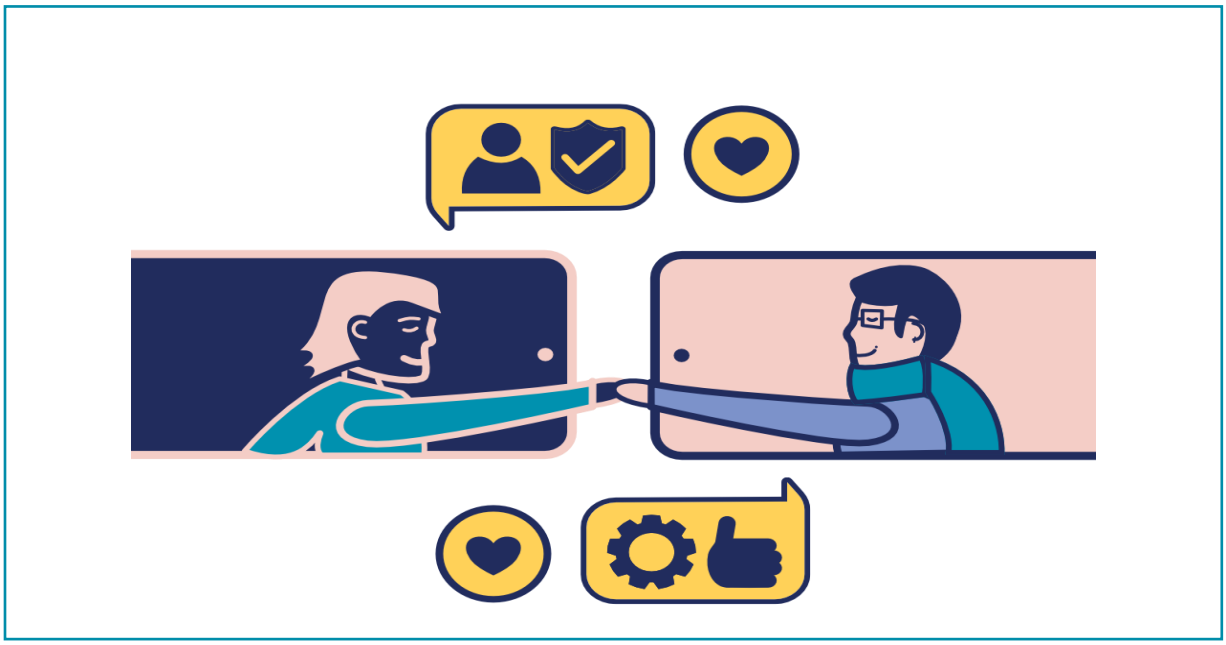
When to Tell Someone About Tech Abuse



If you feel uncomfortable or scared in a relationship, you might hesitate to tell others. You might think:

- “Maybe it’s not a big deal.”
- “They’ll get mad if I tell.”
- “No one will believe me.”
- “I should be able to handle it myself.”
- “I don’t want to get them in trouble.”
- “I’m not even sure if this is abuse.”

But remember that you deserve to feel happy, comfortable, and safe. If this is not happening, you do **not** have to figure it all out on your own. There are people who can support you.

You Can Tell Someone if Something Doesn't Feel Right

You may want to talk to someone if your dating partner:

- Keeps texting or calling after you ask them to stop
- Checks your phone, accounts, or messages without your permission
- Tracks where you are or asks you to prove where you are
- Demands your passwords or wants access to your accounts
- Pressures you to send sexual or private pictures
- Threatens to share your pictures or messages with others
- Uses gaming, social media, or other apps to follow or bother you
- Makes fake accounts to contact you
- Threatens you online or in person
- Gets angry when you do not reply right away
- Uses technology to make you feel scared, watched, or controlled

You don't need proof before you ask for help.

If something is making you uncomfortable, scared, or unsure, it is okay to tell someone.

Who Can I Tell?

Think about an adult you trust and who makes you feel safe.

This could be:

- A parent or caregiver
- An older family member like an aunt, uncle, or grandparent
- A teacher
- A school counsellor
- A coach
- A youth worker
- A counsellor or support worker
- Another adult you trust

You can also start by telling a friend. They can help you find an adult who can support you.

Not Sure Who to Tell

Think about someone who:

Listens to you. They let you talk without making fun of you or blaming you.

Believes you. They take your concerns seriously.

Helps you feel safe. They do not make the situation worse or pressure you to do something you don't want to do.

Respects your choices. They help you think about your options instead of taking over.



If you don’t have someone like this in your life right now, you can always reach out to a support service like Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868.

Getting Started

You can start small.

You could say:

“Something is happening with my partner online, and I don't know what to do.”

Or:

“Someone I'm dating is using technology to keep track of me, and it's making me uncomfortable.”

Or:

“I need help with something happening on my phone, but I'm not ready to explain everything.”

You can also show them a message, screenshot, or other information if that feels easier than explaining it.

What if I’m Worried about What Will Happen Next?

It is normal to worry about what might happen if you tell someone.

You might be worried that:

- Your partner will find out
- Your parents will be angry

- Your phone will be taken away
- You will get in trouble
- People will judge you
- Your partner will be punished
- Things will get worse

Tell the person you trust about these worries**.** They can help you think about what might happen next and make a plan with you.

If you are thinking about telling a teacher, counsellor, doctor, or another adult who works with young people, you can ask first:

“If I tell you something private, will you have to tell someone else?”

They can explain what they must keep private and when they may need to involve other people to help keep you safe.

What if I’m Not Sure if It’s Abuse?

You don't have to know.

If your partner's behaviour makes you feel scared, pressured, watched, controlled, or unsafe, talking to someone can help.

You are allowed to ask for help even if you are still figuring out what is happening.

If you are in immediate danger, get help from a trusted adult or emergency services right away.

Remember



- You are not responsible for your partner's behaviour.
- You don't have to handle tech abuse by yourself.
- You don't need to prove that something is abuse before asking for help.
- You can tell someone even if you're not sure what to do next.
- You deserve to feel safe in your relationship and online.

Technology-facilitated gender-based violence is part of a continuum of violence that can be both online and in-person. If you or someone you know is experiencing technology-facilitated violence, you are not alone. Encourage them to chat with a trusted adult, connect with the Kids Help Phone to create a safety plan, or use ShelterSafe.ca to find a shelter/transition house near you to discuss options and create a safety plan. You don't need to stay in a shelter to access free, confidential services and support.