



# SAFE & SOUND

Providing you with news and updates around safeguarding,  
prevent and British Values



## Addressing the Surge of Sextortion: Protecting Young Adults

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In today's digital age, where technology is woven into the fabric of our daily lives, the prevalence of online crimes has surged. Among these, sextortion—a form of blackmail where explicit images or videos are used to extort victims—is on the rise, particularly among young adults. This alarming trend necessitates both awareness and action to safeguard individuals from falling prey to such exploitation.

#### Understanding Sextortion:

Sexually coerced extortion or 'sextortion' is a type of blackmail where someone tries to use intimate, naked or sexual photos or videos of you to make you do things you don't want to do. Sextortion typically begins innocently enough, often on social media platforms or dating apps, where connections are formed and trust is established. However, this trust can quickly be betrayed as perpetrators manipulate victims into sharing intimate photos or videos. Once in possession of compromising material, they use it as leverage to demand money, more explicit content, or even coerce victims into further exploitation.

#### The Vulnerability of Young Adults:

Young adults, in particular, are susceptible to sextortion due to their frequent use of social media and online platforms, coupled with their inclination toward forming online relationships. The desire for acceptance and validation, coupled with a lack of awareness about the dangers lurking online, makes them prime targets for exploitation.

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## Reporting Sextortion

This is crucial in combating this crime and providing support to victims. Here are steps individuals can take if they find themselves or someone they know targeted:

1. Don't give in to demands and stop communications. Giving in only perpetuates the cycle of exploitation.
2. Document evidence: Preserve any communication with the perpetrator, including screenshots of messages or emails.
3. Report: Contact local police, as well as online at [reportharmfulcontent.com/report/](https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/)
4. Seek support: Reach out to trusted friends, family members, or anyone from the Abbeydale team for emotional and psychological support. If you wish to speak to someone independent then contact [revengepornhelpline.org.uk](https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk)
5. Finally - remember - this is not your fault. The person trying to blackmail or sexually extort you is the one who is in the wrong.

## Preventative Measures

Prevention is always preferable to dealing with the aftermath of sextortion. Here are some steps you can take to protect yourself:

Educate yourself: Stay informed about the dangers of online exploitation and familiarise yourself with common tactics used by perpetrators.

Privacy settings: Review and adjust privacy settings on social media platforms to control who can view your content and interact with you online.

Think before you share: Exercise caution when sharing personal information or intimate content online. Once shared, you lose control over how it's used or disseminated.

Trust your instincts: If something feels off or too good to be true, trust your instincts and proceed with caution.

## Special days ahead

### BVNA Vet Nurse Awareness Month

May #20yearsOfVNAM

### International Nurses Day, 12th May 2024

Held on the birthday of Florence Nightingale to mark the contributions that nurses make to society.

### The King's Official Birthday, 15th Jun 2024

Celebrations of the monarch's official birthday are held in June across the Commonwealth

### Father's Day, 16th Jun 2024

Father's Day is the celebration of fathers in the UK, the US and most of Europe and many other parts of the world

### Summer Solstice 20th Jun 2024

The first day of astronomical summer in the northern hemisphere.

### American Independence Day, 4th Jul 2024

This is the celebration of the independence of the United States of America.

## Our values...

- V** valuing ideas
- E** empowering our learners
- T** teamwork
  
- N** nurturing resilience
- U** unleashing potential
- R** respecting others
- S** student-centred approach
- E** eliminating discrimination



**Abbeydale**  
VET NURSE TRAINING

# Abuse or Accident?



**Fluffy has been brought into practice, a 12-week-old kitten with a skull fracture. The owner has said that fluffy had an accident and fell off her kitty tower landing on her head. Sounds innocent enough, right? What if I told you that from the age of 6 to 7 weeks kittens have the ability to turn over mid-air to land on their feet. So, explanations of falls to explain severe head injuries, including skull fractures are highly unlikely to be accurate accounts of what actually happened. Do you still think Fluffy's injury is as innocent now?**

Every day we see pets coming into veterinary practice who have acquired injuries or have untreated illnesses, but do we ever sometimes have a feeling that these injuries are not accidental or should have come in for veterinary treatment sooner?

I'm sure we've all seen things which make us question but it is difficult to know what to do in these situations. Who do we talk to? What do we do about it?

The Links Group is an organisation whose aim is to achieve a world free from the abuse of people and animals. They raise awareness of the link between the abuse of people and animals through support, training and inter-agency working. It is likely that when animals are abused, people are at risk and vice versa.

The Links group has a lot of information to aid with recognising abuse and how to deal with these types of situations. If there is suspicion of animal abuse upon clinical examination (which could include neglect) the veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse should attempt to discuss his/her concerns with the client if it is appropriate and they feel safe to do so.

In cases where this would not be appropriate or the clients' responses increase the level of concerns, then we should consider whether the level of neglect or abuse is sufficient enough to justify disclosing the client's information without consent. Client confidentiality and disclosure of this information is justified if animal welfare is compromised. The suspected abuse should be reported to the relevant authorities, for example: the RSPCA (Tel: 0300 1234 999 - 24-hour line) in England and Wales.

Your veterinary practice should have a protocol in place for situations of abuse or neglect so speaking to a senior member of staff for support and guidance would be a good first step. However, there are other organisations such as The Links Group or the RCVS that you can speak to for advice.

The most important thing you can do, is to take detailed notes of the consultation and any communication taken place with the owner, as this can all be used in evidence, if needed, at a later date. The more detailed the account of events, the better.

If you feel something doesn't quite add up like Fluffy's story, then just speak to someone and seek advice. I'm not saying to cross-examine every patient that comes in and interrogate clients, it's just all about looking at the bigger picture and trusting your instincts. Animals don't have a voice; we are their advocates and need to speak out to protect them and in the process of protecting them we may actually be helping and protecting a person from abuse too.

## Useful links:

Professional Conduct department of the RCVS (Telephone 020 7202 0789; email [profcon@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:profcon@rcvs.org.uk))

[www.thelinksgroup.org.uk](http://www.thelinksgroup.org.uk)

The Veterinary Defense Society [www.veterinarydefencesociety.co.uk](http://www.veterinarydefencesociety.co.uk) (Telephone 01565 652737)

[www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty](http://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty)

# Celebrating Pride 2024: Embracing Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion



As rainbow flags flutter in the wind and cities around the world burst into vibrant displays of color, Pride 2024 is not just a celebration but a powerful statement of solidarity, resilience, and progress. This year's Pride festivities mark a significant milestone in the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ rights and recognition, reminding us of the journey traveled and the road ahead.

As we come together to celebrate Pride in 2024, it's essential to reflect on the progress made in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. From the Stonewall riots in 1969 to landmark legal victories for marriage equality and anti-discrimination protections, the LGBTQ+ community has achieved significant milestones in the pursuit of equality and justice. Pride serves as a testament to the resilience and courage of those who have paved the way for progress, as well as a call to action to continue the fight for full equality for all.



One of the most beautiful aspects of Pride is its celebration of diversity within the LGBTQ+ community. Pride is a space where individuals of all backgrounds, identities, and experiences come together to celebrate their authentic selves and uplift one another. Whether you identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-binary, or anywhere else on the spectrum, Pride is a time to embrace who you are and affirm the right of every person to live openly and authentically.

As we celebrate Pride 2024, let us not forget that the fight for LGBTQ+ rights is far from over. While we have made significant strides, there is still much work to be done to achieve full equality and acceptance for all.

Let Pride be a catalyst for change, inspiring us to continue advocating, organizing, and standing up for LGBTQ+ rights in our communities and beyond. Together, we can create a world where every individual is celebrated, respected, and valued for who they are.

**Happy Pride!**



**British  
Veterinary  
LGBT+**

**To find out more or to seek advice on issues raised please visit:**

- BVLGBT.org (become a member, see events and resources) can also be found on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- BVNA has a free webinar with more information on how to address discrimination and promote diversity
- Vetlife, 0303 040 2551
- Switchboard LGBT+ helpline (Web chat, advice line 0300 330 0630 (10am-10pm) and email (chris@switchboard.lgbt)
- Stonewall.org.uk (advice, events, resources)

# Uncovering your unconscious bias

**Unconscious bias (also known as implicit bias) is prejudice or judgment that is present but not consciously recognized. Every person has unconscious biases that we attribute to another person or group of people, which thereby impact our instinctual decisions and reactions. And it happens without us realizing it!**







We are exposed to 11 billion pieces of information every second but our brains can only consciously capture and process about 10 pieces of information per second! Our brain has had to evolve to take shortcuts around processing information to help keep us safe, this is what has led to developing an unconscious bias. Subconsciously we decide what is safe and unsafe in our brains, we learn this by considering our memories, personal values, and social conditioning (what is most like us).

Everyone has an unconscious bias! It is not inherently bad but they do exist, but we need to look at this if it is having a negative impact on your or other's lives.

You may recognize some of your biases but you still have some hidden. However, there are ways you can change your values and become self-aware of your defaults.

To learn more watch this really useful TED talk, how to outsmart your own unconscious bias (17 min video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP-cqFLS8Q4>

## How does unconscious bias impact veterinary medicine?

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  | Recruitment (who we hire)                                    |
|  | Admissions (who we admit to vet or tech school)              |
|  | Evaluations (how we assess students and employees)           |
|  | Workplace conflict (how we resolve or mediate disagreements) |
|  | Recognition (who is awarded or promoted)                     |
|  | Client care (how we interact with clients)                   |

# Accident reporting

Accidents are never nice. And, no matter how many measures you have in place to prevent them, they still happen. Certain specified accidents – like fractures, amputations, and loss of consciousness, to name just a few – must be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

What to do if you have an accident:

- Obtain first aid and seek medical advice if required.

Next, you need to log the accident in your accident book. Within your accident book, you should record details like:

- The name, gender, date of birth, and job title of the injured party;
- The date the accident happened;
- The date the accident was reported;
- The name and job title of the person logging the accident;
- Whether or not the injured party is an expectant mother; and
- Whether or not the injured party is a minor.

You should update your accident book with these details as soon as is reasonably possible after the accident has occurred. **You also need to let a staff member at Abbeydale know about your accident so we can keep a record on your student file.**

It's always good practice for a line manager to review relevant risk assessments and internal policies after an accident or near-accident has taken place, so that they can identify any potential gaps and prevent something similar from happening again down the line.

