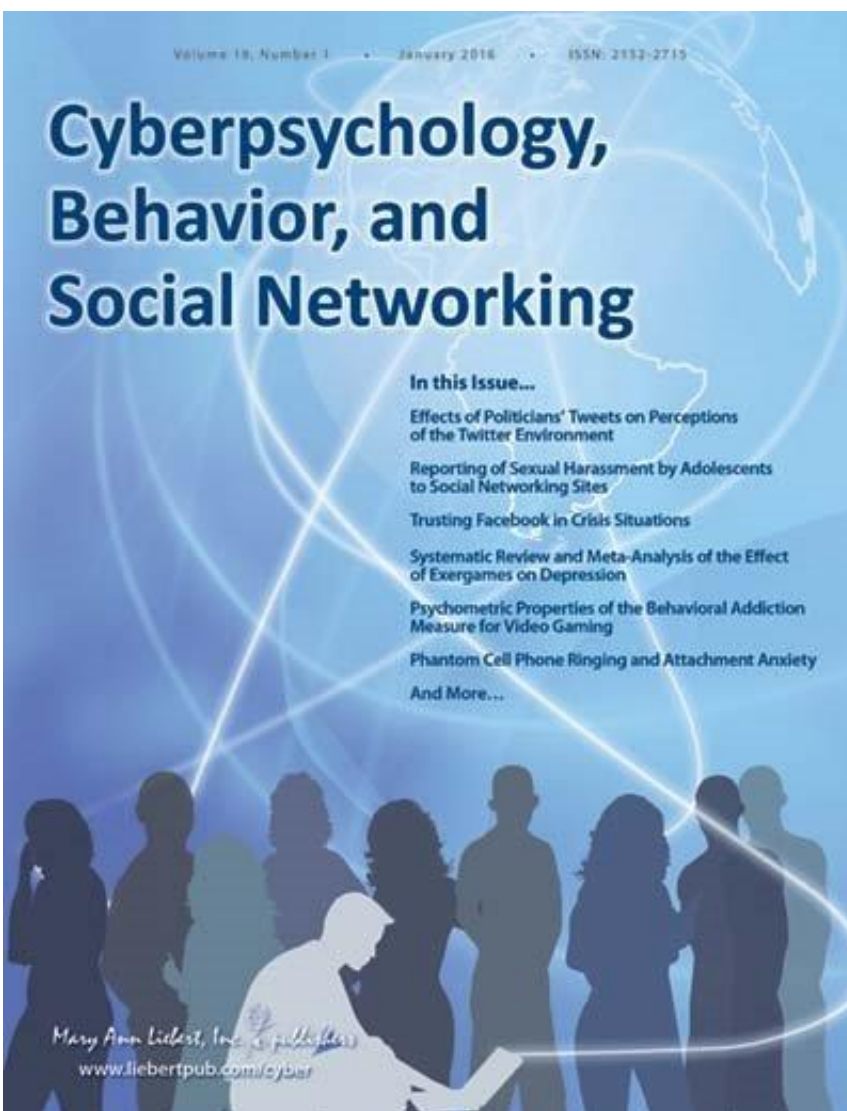


# About one in five adolescent victims of sexual harassment on social media report abuse to provider

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Among adolescents who encountered sexual harassment on social networking sites (mostly on Facebook), 21.8% reported the incident to the provider, but in nearly half of those cases the provider took no action, according to the results of a study reported in *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, a peer-reviewed journal from Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers. The article is available free to download on the *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* website until March 11, 2016.

In the article "Help, I Am Losing Control! Examining the Reporting of Sexual Harassment by Adolescents on Social Networking Sites," the findings show that the more negative emotions such as anger and shame victims experience, the less they feel in control of the situation. Public visibility of the sexual content and the inability to remove it from the site add to these feelings, increasing the likelihood that the adolescent will report the incident.

Coauthors Kathleen Van Royen, Karolien Poels, and Heidi Vandebosch, University of Antwerp, Belgium, propose that in addition to removing the offensive content and blocking/tracing the harasser, providers should consider strategies to offer emotional support to victims. These might include automatically generated messages and links to support organizations, intended to help alleviate the adolescent's negative emotions.

"Sexual harassment's migration to the digital domain has called for new strategies to ensure the safety of children and [adolescents](#)," says Editor-in-Chief Brenda K. Wiederhold, PhD, MBA, BCB, BCN, Interactive Media Institute, San Diego, California and Virtual Reality Medical Institute, Brussels, Belgium. "To help in this effort, two recent endeavours have been launched in the U.S. and Europe: 1) Safer Social

Networking Principles—a self-regulatory agreement developed by SNS providers in consultation with the European Commission; and 2) The U.S. Internet Safety Technical Task Force, which hopes to understand what role technology can play in the protection of children and young people on the internet."

**More information:** Kathleen Van Royen et al. Help, I Am Losing Control! Examining the Reporting of Sexual Harassment by Adolescents to Social Networking Sites, *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* (2016). [DOI: 10.1089/cyber.2015.0168](https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2015.0168)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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