

# Facebook asked users if pedophiles should be able to ask kids for 'sexual pictures'

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A new AI tool created to help identify certain kinds of substance abuse based on a homeless youth's Facebook posts could provide homeless shelters with vital information to incorporate into each individual's case management plan. Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Facebook is under fire after asking users whether pedophiles asking for

"sexual pictures" from children should be permitted on the giant social network.

"There are a wide range of topics and behaviours that appear on Facebook," one question in the [survey](#) that ran Sunday asked. "In thinking about an ideal world where you could set Facebook's policies, how would you handle the following: a private message in which an adult man asks a 14-year-old girl for sexual pictures."

The possible responses ranged from "this content should not be allowed on Facebook, and no one should be able to see it" to "this content should be allowed on Facebook, and I would not mind seeing it."

Another question asked who should decide whether an adult man could ask for sexual pictures on Facebook, with options ranging from "Facebook users decide the rules by voting and tell Facebook" to "Facebook decides the rules on its own."

Jonathan Haynes, digital editor at the Guardian newspaper, tweeted: "I'm like, er wait it making it secret the best Facebook can offer here? Not, y'know, calling the police?"

"That was a mistake," Guy Rosen, a [vice president](#) of product at Facebook, responded.

"We run surveys to understand how the community thinks about how we set policies," he wrote on Twitter. "But this kind of activity is and will always be completely unacceptable on (Facebook). We regularly work with authorities if identified. It shouldn't have been part of this survey."

Facebook said in a statement to the Guardian that it scrapped the survey.

"We understand this survey refers to offensive [content](#) that is already

prohibited on Facebook and that we have no intention of allowing," it said.

"We have prohibited child grooming on Facebook since our earliest days; we have no intention of changing this and we regularly work with the police to ensure that anyone found acting in such a way is brought to justice."

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