Cover Page: National Center on Sexual Exploitation's Policy on Sharing Proof

WARNING: The material in this document may contain graphic text, blurred images, and survivor quotes that may trigger the viewer.

Why do we post proof?

NCOSE researchers have collected this proof as evidence of the material that is made, contained, and/or distributed by the corporations and institutions NCOSE is confronting.

Proof is shared with corporate executives, shareholders, and/or board members, as well as with policymakers, law enforcement, journalists, and the general public to give witness to the sexual exploitation and abuse that is often rampant, yet sometimes hidden, on these platforms.

Why do you blur out images, including faces, if they're publicly available?

While we believe it is important to provide ample evidence of wrong-doing to support our claims and inspire change, we also strongly believe that no one – neither adult, nor child – should be exposed to the type of material our researchers collect: either for their own well-being, or out of respect for those being exploited. It is for this reason we pixelate/blur/block not only nudity or sexually graphic content, but also the faces of those being exploited.

We also want to limit access to this material (unfortunately, a luxury not afforded to children and adults using many of the platforms and products made by these companies). Therefore, we add several layers before someone can access the proof, and also don't include all the proof that we have obtained. If someone feels they need to see more evidence to understand the extent of the problem or the type of exploitation that is happening, they may request it of NCOSE by writing to public@ncose.com.

Did you receive people's permission to post?

Any personal testimony shared to NCOSE directly is posted only with the affected parties approval. For material that is publicly available, we do not seek permission to post. However, we redact names and usernames of survivors from articles, social media, etc. even when publicly available. To read more about our commitment to ethical engagement with survivors, please go here. We do not redact names or usernames of exploiters who have posted publicly.

Disclaimer: while we do collect information on those who request access to more proof, that information will only be used for our own, internal analysis. It will not be distributed, shared, or posted publicly or with outside parties.

Evidence of Exploitation on Reddit

Table of Contents

Image-based Sexual Abuse on Reddit	
Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) On and Through Reddit	13
Severe Sexual Content, Sexual Violence, and Sexualization of Minors on and through Reddit	16
Reddit's Ecosystem of Exploitation	21

Image-based Sexual Abuse on Reddit

Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA)¹ is rampant on Reddit. A 2022 analysis of 4.5 billion messages across texts, email, YouTube, and 30+ apps and social media platforms by leading child online child safety monitoring company, Bark, found Reddit to be the third top app flagged for severe sexual content. However, Reddit has failed to implement meaningful moderation practices and effective content policies, allowing this abuse to proliferate.

Both IBSA and CSAM are easily found on Reddit, even though they are prohibited. Reddit's most recent update to the platform's non-consensual intimate media policy (what Reddit calls Rule 3) in March 2022 was recently praised for its progress in the 2022 Transparency Report and the ArsTechnica article Reddit cracked down on revenge porn, creepshots with twofold spike in permabans. However, NCOSE researchers and other industry experts have found otherwise.

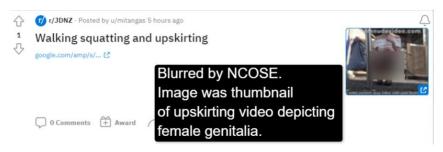
Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA) is an <u>umbrella term</u> encompassing a wide range of abusive activities. It includes the creation, theft, extortion, threatened or actual distribution, or any use of sexually explicit or sexualized materials without the meaningful consent of the person/s depicted and/or for purposes of sexual exploitation. It also includes sexual violence or harassment committed towards a person's representation (e.g., a person's avatar) in virtual reality or online gaming.

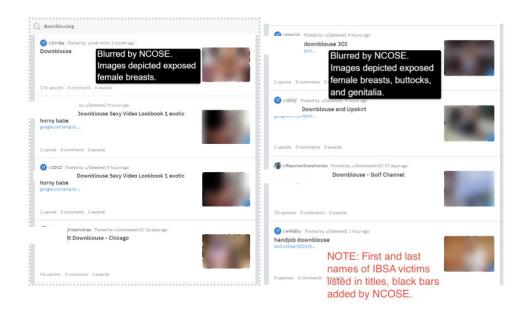
Importantly, sexually explicit and sexualized material depicting children ages 0-17 constitutes a distinct class of material known as child sexual abuse material (CSAM) (i.e., "child pornography"), which is illegal to knowingly possess, access, reproduce, and distribute under US federal law. CSAM should not be conflated with image-based sexual abuse, though the two forms of crimes are closely related.

The following images demonstrate the various forms of IBSA currently existing on Reddit.

¹ According to scholars Clare McGlyne and Erika Rackley, the term "image-based sexual abuse" was first used in a news report appearing in the *Sydney Herald* on October 4, 2015. For more about the origin and history of this term see: Clare McGlynn and Erika Rackley, "Image-based Sexual Abuse," Oxford Journal of Legal Studies (2017): 1–28, doi: 10.1093/ojls/ggw033.

Upskirting and Downblousing





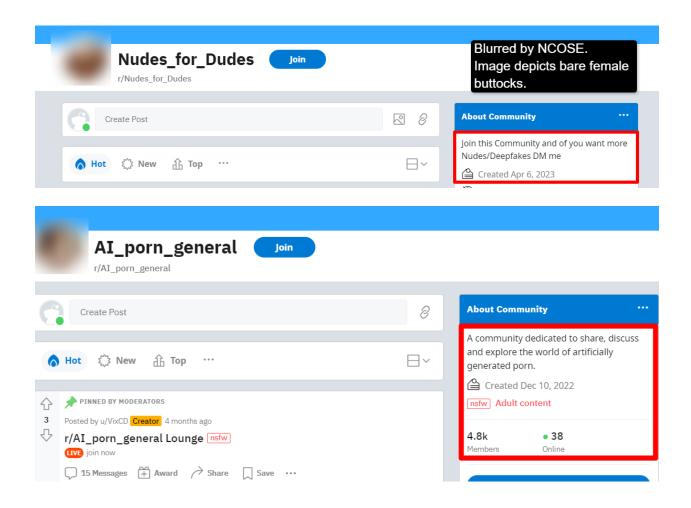
Synthetic Sexually Explicit Material (SSEM)

Although Reddit's "non-consensual intimate image (NCII) policy" includes banning of AI-generated and sexual deepfakes prohibiting, "depictions that may have been faked... or soliciting "lookalike" pornography (e.g. "deepfakes" or "bubble porn"), AI-generated pornography and sexual deepfakes were concerningly present on Reddit.²

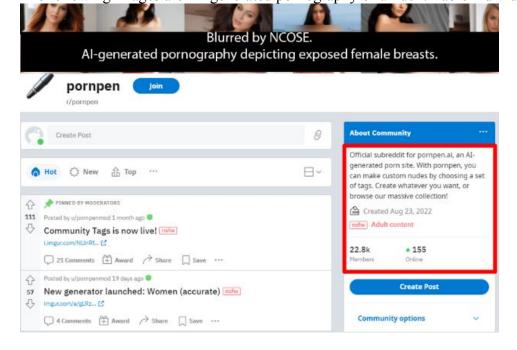
AI and deepfake porn are easily found.

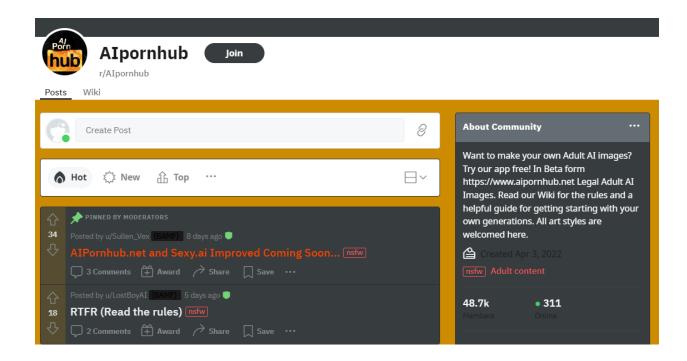
² Gamage, Dilrukshi, Piyush Ghasiya, Vamshi Krishna Bonagiri, Mark E Whiting, and Kazutoshi Sasahara. 2022.

[&]quot;Are Deepfakes Concerning? Analyzing Conversations of Deepfakes on Reddit and Exploring Societal Implications." https://doi.org/10.1145/3491102.3517446.; Gamage, Dilrukshi, Hariharan Ravinthran, and Kazutoshi Sasahara. 2023. "Moral Intuitions Behind Deepfake-Related Discussions in Reddit Communities." https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.2303.06216.;



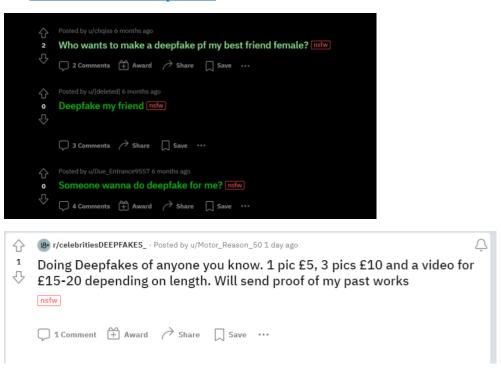
The following images are AI-generated pornography of unidentifiable individuals.

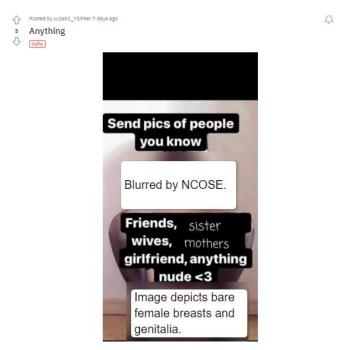




Search was conducted in April 2023.

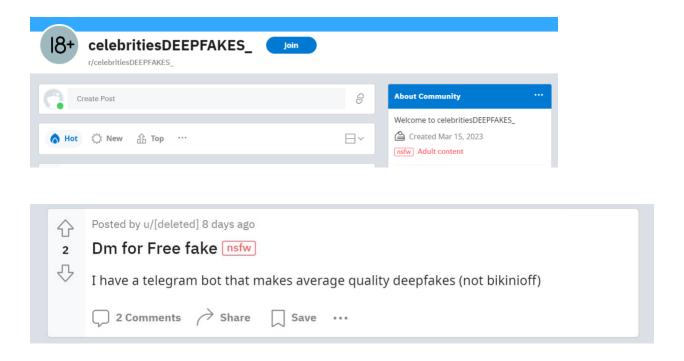
Users post requests and solicitations and requests to create sexual deepfakes for other users. This is a violation of Reddit's policies.



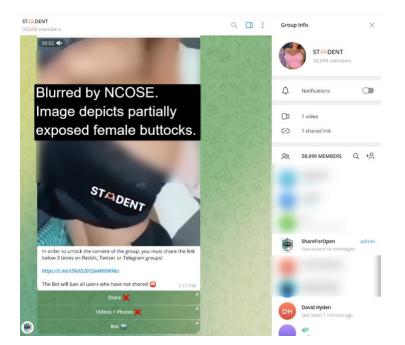


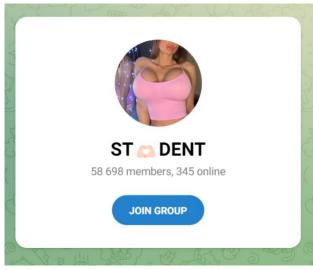
Search was conducted in April 2023.

In one subreddit r/celebritiesDEEPFAKES, a user posted a link to a sexual deepfakes Telegram group chat containing over 58,000 members.









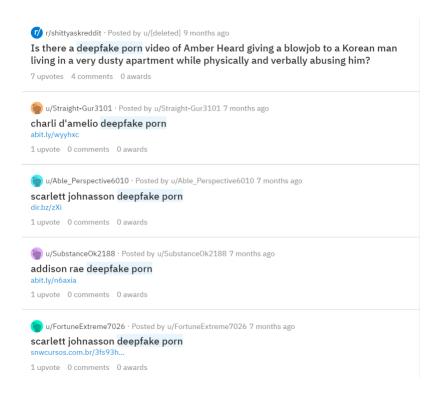
Search was conducted in April 2023.

Redditors even <u>compiled a document</u> of the AI-generated pornography and sexual deepfake subreddits for interested members.



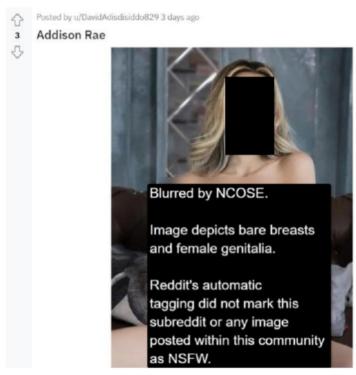
Search was conducted in April 2023.

Many of these communities contain sexual deepfakes and AI-generated pornography of identifiable individuals such as celebrity women. This is image-based sexual abuse.



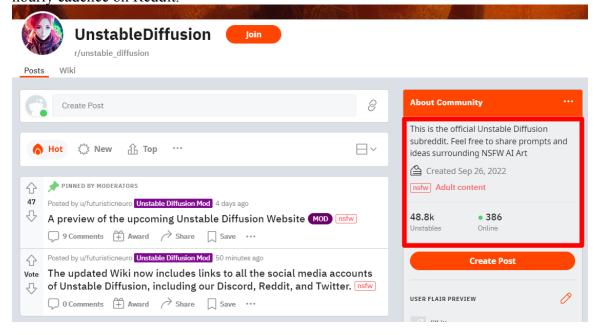


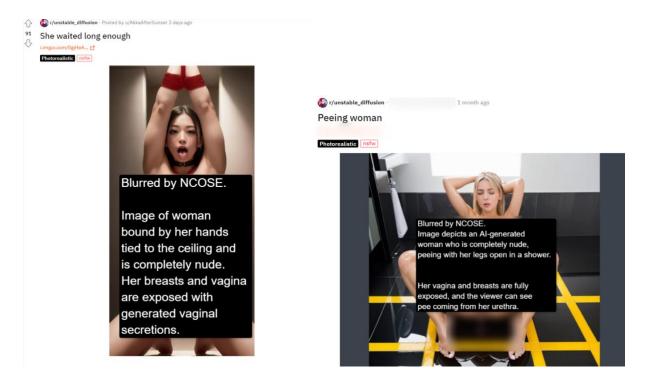




Search was conducted in April 2023.

Even the most apparent violations go unchecked by Reddit, such as <u>r/UnstableDiffusion</u>, a dedicated sexual deepfake community of over 48,000 members is currently active on Reddit. They have amassed over 15 million "donated" sexually explicit and pornographic images to train their sexual deepfake technology and post sexual deepfakes and AI-generated pornography on an hourly cadence on Reddit.

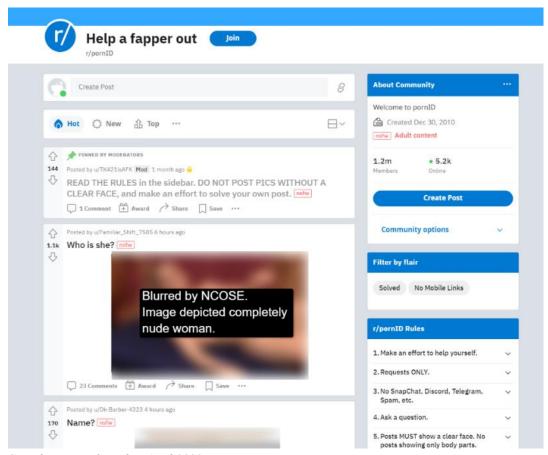




Search was conducted in April 2023.

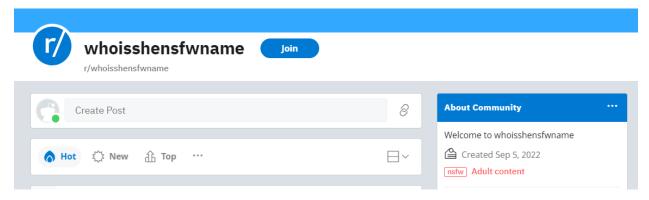
Many victims of IBSA also experience doxing – the practice of sharing, requesting, or trading personally identifying information with images of IBSA. Doxing was also highlighted in the August 2022 BBC article detailing the prevalence of <u>doxing that victims of IBSA</u> experience on Reddit. Although Reddit banned non-consensual dissemination of sexually explicit media (NCDSEM) and doxing in 2015 after the celebrity iCloud leak known as <u>TheFappening</u> on Reddit (r/thefappening), similar communities still exist today.

NCOSE researchers identified a similar subreddit called r/PornID (Help a fapper out), containing **over 1.3 million members**, that allowed users to post images of pornography performers, content creators, or other influential women for members to help identify their real names.



Search was conducted in April 2023.

Similar subreddits like r/whoisshensfwname (who is she nsfw name), allow members to post images and requests for names of influential women online (TikTok, Instagram, etc.) and in pornography.



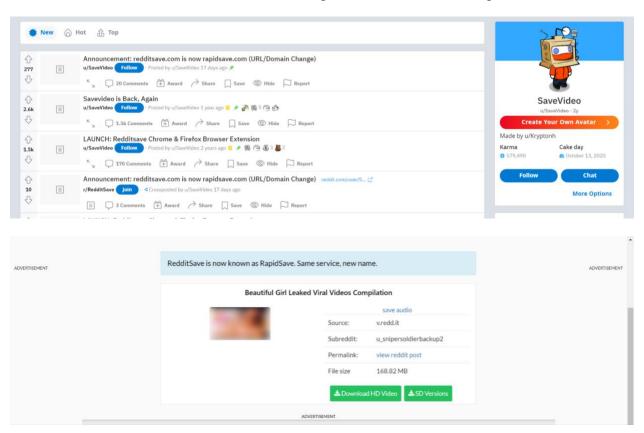
Search conducted April 2023.

u/savebot: Reddit's Notorious IBSA Bot

NCOSE researchers also found evidence of a bot used to save images and videos on Reddit to personal devices was being used to save IBSA. The u/savevideo has carried several names over the years, its changes synchronized with each temporary ban or suspension it receives, primarily for allowing users to save non-consensual sexually explicit images and videos of other individuals. The bot is supported by a subreddit called r/RedditSave, a dedicated subreddit for saving videos from Reddit.

NCOSE researchers discovered the bot in February 2023, after using the search term "girls leaks." The u/savebot was linked to a video compilation of non-consensual sexually explicit images and videos of young women.

Reddit users further attempted to dox – identify the women and young girls in the video in the comments section. To download the non-consensual video, all users had to do was comment the bot's name "u/savevideo" in the comments section, and they would be taken to a link to download the video. The subreddit and save image bot were active as of April 25, 2023.

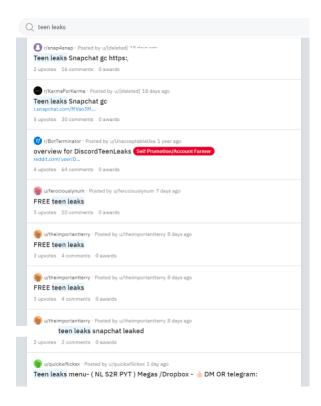


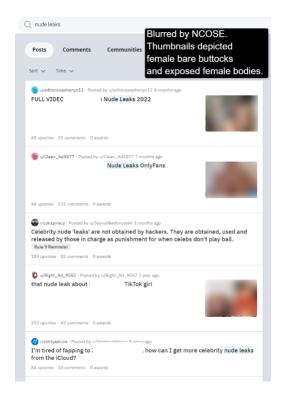
Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) On and Through Reddit

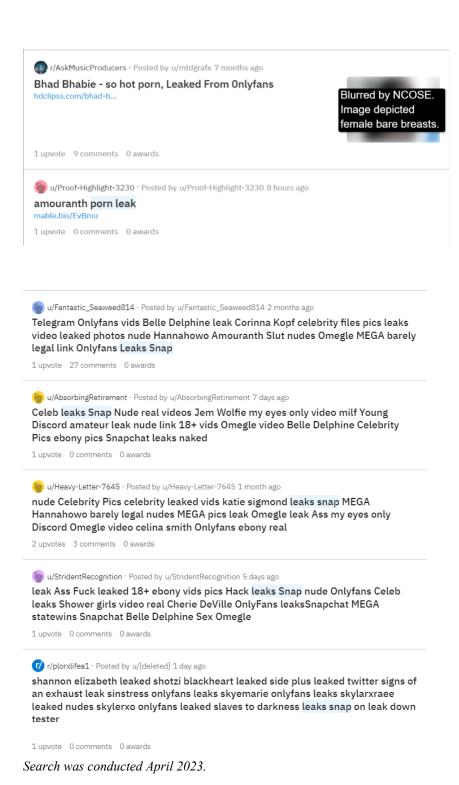
In addition to failing to adequately enforce their own policies, Reddit refuses to implement meaningful age or consent verification for people depicted in sexually explicit images. Sexually explicit and pornographic content are actively being shared on Reddit without reservation — allowing exploitation, including child sexual abuse material (CSAM) to thrive. NCOSE researchers found extensive evidence of IBSA and indicators of CSAM within a few minutes.

Searches for 'teen leaks' (likely CSAM) and 'nude leaks' (IBSA, which could also include CSAM if images are of minors) returned dozens of results:

The following are screenshots of a few samples of IBSA and links to potential CSAM² NCOSE researchers found between late March and mid-April.







News reports, such as those documented below, are examples of Reddit's problematic "hands off" approach when it comes to regulating non-consensual sexually explicit content, allowing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) to exist on the platform.

The following cases are just a few reports from the past year:

- In September 2022, <u>a 47-year-old Kentucky teacher</u> was arrested after the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force discovered he had posted CSAM on his Reddit account.
- In October 2022, <u>a 38-year-old Porter County man</u> was arrested for disseminating CSAM on Reddit and was held on a \$25,000 bond.
- In December 2022, a 37-year-old Kenosha man was arrested for 10 counts of felony possession of child pornography. Investigators were informed by NCMEC that the offender had uploaded CSAM on two social media apps, Kik and Reddit, both of which reported the man's behavior to NCMEC's Cyber TipLine.
- In January 2023, a <u>44-year-old Maryland man</u> was arrested on numerous charges related to rape, sexual solicitation of a minor, and dissemination of CSAM.
- On March 14, 2023, a 34-year-old Salina, OK man, was charged with numerous counts of disseminating CSAM after investigators found he had been sharing CSAM on Reddit. Investigators estimated the man had over 15,000 images of CSAM of teenage girls between the ages of 13 to 16. He was quoted to be 'bragging' to other Redditors that he had been engaging in sex with a 12-year-old girl and her grandmother and mother would watch.
- On March 27, 2023, a Springfield, IL man was <u>sentenced to 96 months</u> of federal prison and a lifetime of supervised release for the distribution of more than 600 images of CSAM. He also owned a subreddit of approximately 900 members where the offender would share images of CSAM.
- On March 28, 2023, a <u>Covington, KY high school teacher</u> was arrested on two charges of pandering obscenities of a minor after investigators received a tip from Reddit regarding the distribution of CSAM. He had been employed as a Spanish teacher and assistant soccer and esports coach at Holmes High School since 2021.
- On March 29, 2023, another man was <u>charged on five counts</u> related to cyberstalking, hacking, and selling CSAM and IBSA on Reddit, Twitter, and Telegram.

Until Reddit can implement a robust age and consent verification process for sexually explicit content and create clarity and consistency for policy implementation, pornography must be prohibited to stem the IBSA and CSAM rampant on Reddit.

Reddit should also consider **removing all "save video" bots from the platform**. They allow users to save non-consensual content and contribute to the proliferation of IBSA and CSAM.

Severe Sexual Content, Sexual Violence, and Sexualization of Minors on and through Reddit

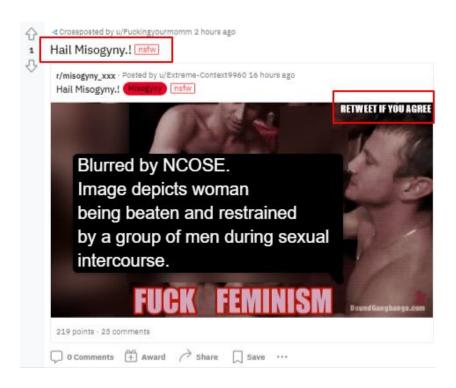
Reddit refuses to implement effective content policies and moderation practices allowing severe sexual content, sexual violence, and sexualization of minors to exist on Reddit.

Reddit's community-driven, volunteer moderator approach creates a space for ambiguity and inconsistency in implementation between specific moderator rules and content that Reddit's policies prohibit – such as CSAM. A study by Kikerpill et al. (2021) analyzing online community reactions to the 2018 rule that banned sexual deepfakes and expanded the platform's policies on 'involuntary pornography' and the sexualization of minors, found Reddit's policies surrounding the issues mentioned above to lack transparency and consistency. The study also suggests Reddit's lack of transparency contributes to the co-occurrence of severe sexual content, sexualization of minors, CSAM, and IBSA on Reddit.

Severe Sexual Content and Sexual Violence

Although Reddit banned hate speech and sexism/misogyny from their platform, communities like r/jailbait_ll, a reiteration of the now defunct r/jailbait community that was banned in 2012 for inciting violence against women and hosting CSAM, continue to exist on Reddit.

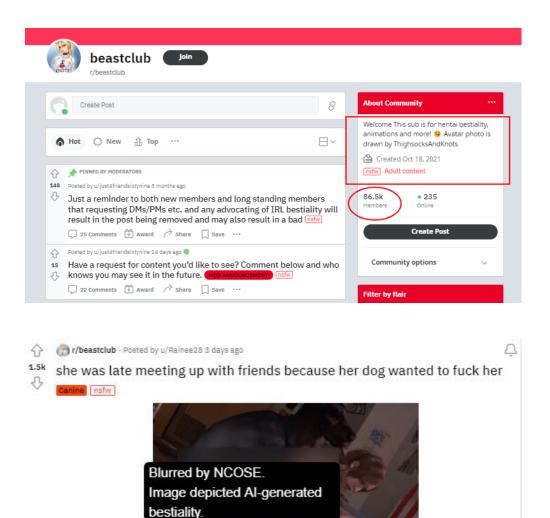






Search was conducted in April 2023.

Although bestiality is illegal and sexual deepfakes are prohibited on Reddit, one community, containing over 86,000 members was dedicated to the creation of AI-generated bestiality.



Search was conducted in April 2023.

78 Comments + Award Share Save ...

Reddit allows for the posting of sexual audio scripts containing stories focused on rape, sexual slavery, incest, and child sexual abuse. The subreddit <u>r/GoneWildAudio</u>, containing 1.2 million members, is a homage to r/GirlsGoneWild where users post audio recordings with themes of rape, sexual slavery, incest, and child sexual abuse at times including textual transcripts of the audio. Without proper age and consent verification there is no way to determine if these audio crimes are depicting actual experiences of abuse.

In April 2022, a member of the r/GoneWildAudio, <u>a 55-year-old former drama teacher</u> from Toronto, Canada was arrested on four counts of luring a child under 18 years; two counts of sexual exploitation; making child pornography; two counts of possession of child pornography; and two counts of accessing child pornography. Toronto police discovered he had been operating a Reddit community where he posted <u>scripted audio pornography</u> including content about minors

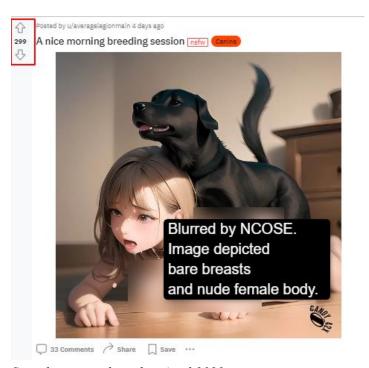
and school students. The offender began the community in 2017, calling it "a repository for all my recordings," and by the time it was shut down had surpassed over 5,000 recordings. While Reddit banned the offender and his community, links and posts to his content still exist on your platform through r/GoneWildAudio.

The former drama arts teacher was fired in 2011 for charges related to child sexual abuse, after a parent complained "that he 'spooned' with female students on international trips and sent 1,300 sexually charged texts to one female student, including one text where he said he had a dream of performing oral sex on her. He received a one-year suspension from teaching in 2011, for allegations that surfaced in the 2006-07 school year."

Considering his history in the teaching profession and history of child sexual abuse, the descriptions of scripted audio recordings such as "young girl" being interviewed by a police officer about sexual abuse and "Slutty schoolgirl detention" are incredibly alarming.

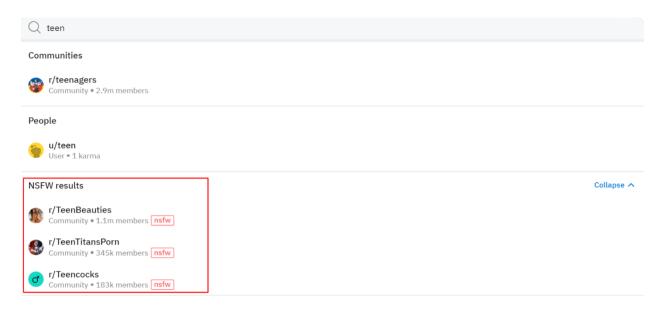
Sexualization of Minors

NCOSE researchers also found evidence of content promoting the sexualization of minors. This image is AI-generated hentai (animated content) and while it is not legally constituted as CSAM, its purpose remains disturbing.



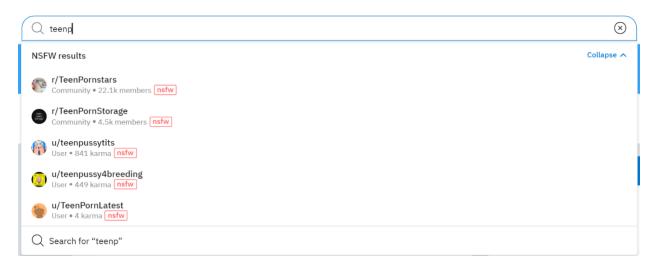
Search was conducted in April 2023.

Even the names of subreddits indicate a tolerance and glorification for the sexualization of minors on Reddit. When NCOSE researchers searched the term "teen" on Reddit, numerous NSFW subreddits were suggested such as r/TeenBeauties and r/TeenCocks.



Search was conducted April 2023.

When NCOSE researchers began to search for other indicators of sexualization of minors on Reddit such as through searches like "teen porn," our researchers only had to type in "teenp" before being suggested a slew of subreddits related to the sexualization of minors.



Search was conducted April 2023.

Reddit's Ecosystem of Exploitation

Absence of industry-standard protections and practices and anemic policy implementation on Reddit create an ecosystem of exploitation.

Lack of accountability.

Reddit is substantially behind current safety and moderation practices, failing to implement even the most basic safety practices, such as requiring a verified email address – something that is now much of an industry-wide standard. As a result, <u>ban evasions, throw-away accounts</u>, and escaping accountability for posting harmful and illicit content are commonplace on Reddit. Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok all require users to provide a valid email address to create a profile on their app and limit the ability to search content without creating an account – basic features that Reddit fails to require.

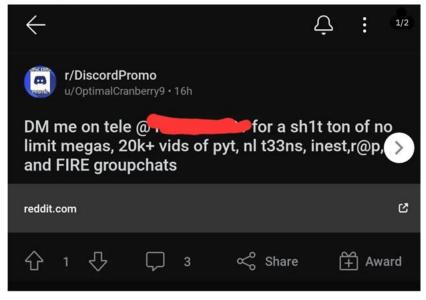
Lack of either protection or tools for *moderators*.

One study estimated that moderators do a total of \$3.4 million worth of unpaid moderation for Reddit. Female moderators have also reported experiencing abuse once community members are aware of their gender, contributing yet again to Reddit's problems with misogyny and sexism. Moderators have experienced abuse at the hands of throw-away accounts for attempting to make their communities safe and enjoyable environments – something Reddit admins fail to achieve.

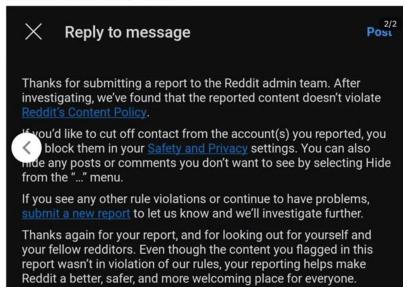
Lack of reporting mechanisms.

Reddit also fails to provide effective and easy reporting mechanisms for users and moderators on their platform. Even when one user reported the sale of suspected CSAM, Reddit refused to act.

someone promotes a discord server with non legal teens and reddit told me that doesn't violate its rules. guess they have no problem with child porn here.



someone promotes a discord server with non legal teens and reddit told me that doesn't violate its rules. guess they have no problem with child porn here.

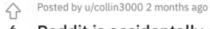


Search was conducted in April 2023.

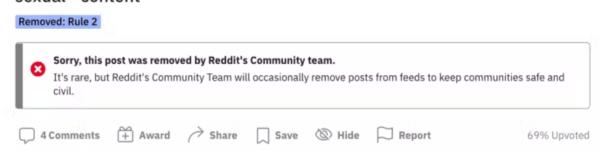
This is especially concerning, given that moderators do not have the tools or ability to remove content from Reddit permanently. Moderators can "<u>remove</u>" content and ban users from subreddits. Still, the content continues to exist on the platform marked as [removed] and remains visible until a Reddit Admin physically deletes the [removed] content.

An article in 2022 <u>exposed Reddit's refusal</u> to allow moderators to remove content which inadvertently led to a collection of posts in the subreddit <u>r/TikTokThots</u>, a community of 1.3 million users, in which moderators removed posts containing potential CSAM that remain searchable on Reddit today.

When the <u>user exposed Reddit's 'loophole,'</u> their post was removed by Reddit Admins. How is it that Reddit Admins immediately removed a post exposing their refusal to remove potential CSAM but not the actual evidence itself?



Reddit is accidentally creating a searchable index of underage - including sexual - content



Search was conducted in April 2023.

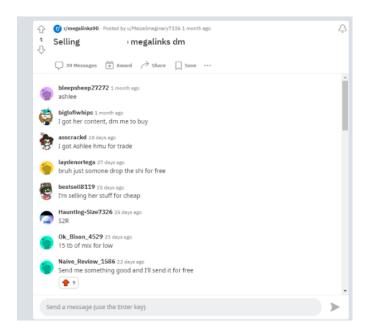
Reddit as a platform is serving as a marketplace for CSAM. In 2021, Reddit was <u>sued by 6</u> <u>victims of CSAM</u> for knowingly profiting from and facilitating her abuse. Although the case was dismissed in 2022, Reddit continues to be implicated in CSAM cases.

NCOSE researchers found numerous posts containing Megalinks to child sexual abuse material through general searches such as "teen leaks," "leaks," "girls leaks." Mega is an image repository similar to Dropbox that is widely known for hosting CSAM and IBSA.

By allowing users to advertise the sale of and links to CSAM not only violates Reddit's policies but is also *illegal*.

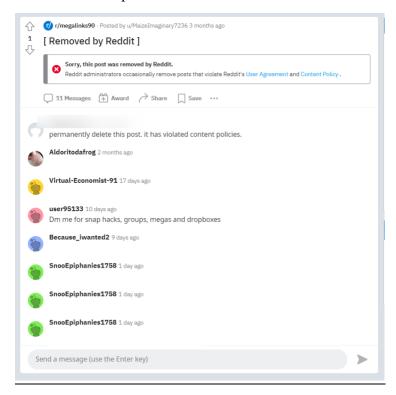
NCOSE researchers discovered a subreddit, r/megalinks90, containing indications of using Reddit's live chat feature to facilitate the buying, selling, and trading of child sexual abuse material.

What perhaps is even more disheartening, is the fact that Reddit removed one of the live chat posts for violating Reddit's content policies but chose not to ban the entire subreddit even though it is clearly dedicated to the buying, selling, and trading of CSAM. The subreddit is still active as of April 25, 2023.



Search was conducted in April 2023.

Further, even though the post depicted below had been removed, the live chat feature is still available for users to message on. To test this, using a minor aged account, NCOSE researchers were able to comment on the post reiterating its violation, "permanently delete this post. it has violated content policies." The comment was added to the allegedly "deleted post."



Search was conducted April 2023.

Failure to implement existing policies.

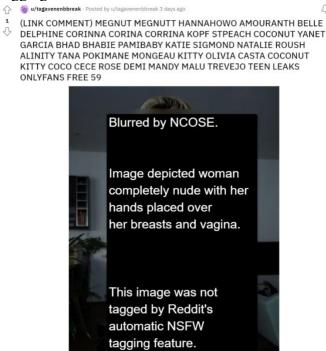
As noted earlier in the letter and exemplified throughout, Reddit fails to implement its own policies – with newly announced policies easily proven ineffective.

In addition to the example of the recently updated IBSA policy which failed NCOSE researcher testing, Reddit announced <u>automatic tagging of NSFW images</u> in March 2022. Despite Reddit's promise to automatically tag sexually explicit images as NSFW, this failed to occur for many of the images within these deepfake and IBSA communities.

→ NCOSE researchers found sexual deepfakes of Addison Rae. The image depicted Addison Rae sitting completely nude; her breasts and vagina were exposed.

Search was conducted in April 2023.

Other sexually explicit images on Reddit also failed to be tagged by the automatic NSFW tagging feature.



Search was conducted in April 2023.

Reddit refuses to proactively moderate content and implement effective policies resulting in the existence of harmful and illegal material. The lack of seriousness the platform has demonstrated to creating an environment safe for its users is apparent. NCOSE will continue to call on Reddit until actionable steps and implementations are made.