

We have been asked by Hampshire County Council Children's Services to pass on this important message from Hampshire Police, dated 9th February 2018.

MESSAGE FROM HAMPSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Hampshire Constabulary will carry out thorough investigations into matters of children sharing explicit videos or photos of another child on social media, and will speak to anyone who has a connection with these incidents.

The advice from the police remains the same; if a child or young person receives an inappropriate image or video on any social media platform, be it Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp or any other channel, they should delete it immediately and tell a trusted adult, for example a teacher or parent.

It is really important that they understand that if they show an indecent image or video to someone else or forward it on to other people, they could be committing a crime and we want to stop that happening. We have been clear that we do not want to criminalise children and that they will not be in trouble if they have made a genuine mistake.

Sadly, we are seeing more offences where children and young people are being targeted by offenders who conceal their identities, and know where to go online to access and initiate false friendships with children. Unfortunately, no-one is immune to the dangers and so it is vital we support children and young people in knowing how to keep themselves safe on-line and to minimise risk. Please discuss this with your children and encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any worries or concerns. They can also call ChildLine if they really don't feel comfortable talking to someone face-to-face.

If you have any concerns about the safety of your children online or would like to know more, there is further support and advice for children and parents available on the CEOP website <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>.