



netsafe

Sextortion Survey

Insights Report
July 2025

Background

“Sextortion is a crime where the culprit tries to extort money or favours from the victim by threatening to publicise intimate images, videos or conversation - real or manufactured.”

- This presentation shares the results of the Netsafe sextortion survey
- Survey designed to replicate a ‘Sextortion in India’ survey conducted by Social & Media Matters
- Key objectives of the NZ survey were to:
 - › Understand the incidence of sextortion
 - › Measure awareness of sextortion
 - › Understand the various ways in which sextortion is conducted
 - › Identify the extent of the impact of sextortion on victims
 - › Understand what actions are taken in terms of reporting and satisfaction with support provided

**Online surveys with
1,000**

**Completed
1 - 19 July 2025**

Sample

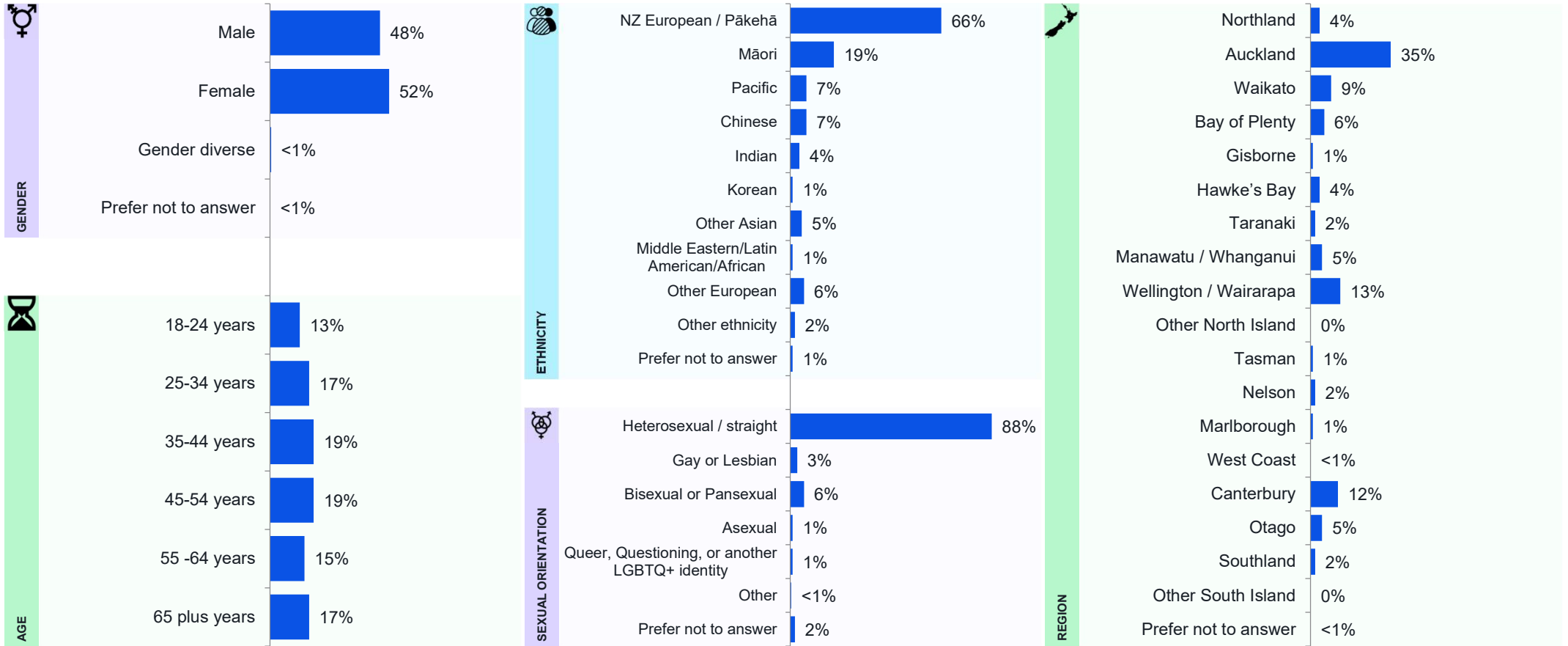
- **Data collected via online survey**
 - › **10 minute survey**
 - Sample mix of Yabble, PS and Dynata consumer panels
 - NZers aged 18+ nationally representative for age, gender, ethnicity and region
 - › **Total nationally representative sample of N=1,000**
 - › **Additional booster sampling for key groups of interest to reach sample sizes of:**
 - Māori – N=302
 - Asian – N=296
 - Pacific – N=202
 - Rainbow – N=156

Presentation Content

- Sample Profile
- Awareness
- Perceptions
- Impact
- Reporting & Support
- Key Point Summary

Sample Profile: Who we talked to

Nationally representative sample – quotas applied for age, gender, ethnicity and region
 Survey completers screened to ensure aged 18+



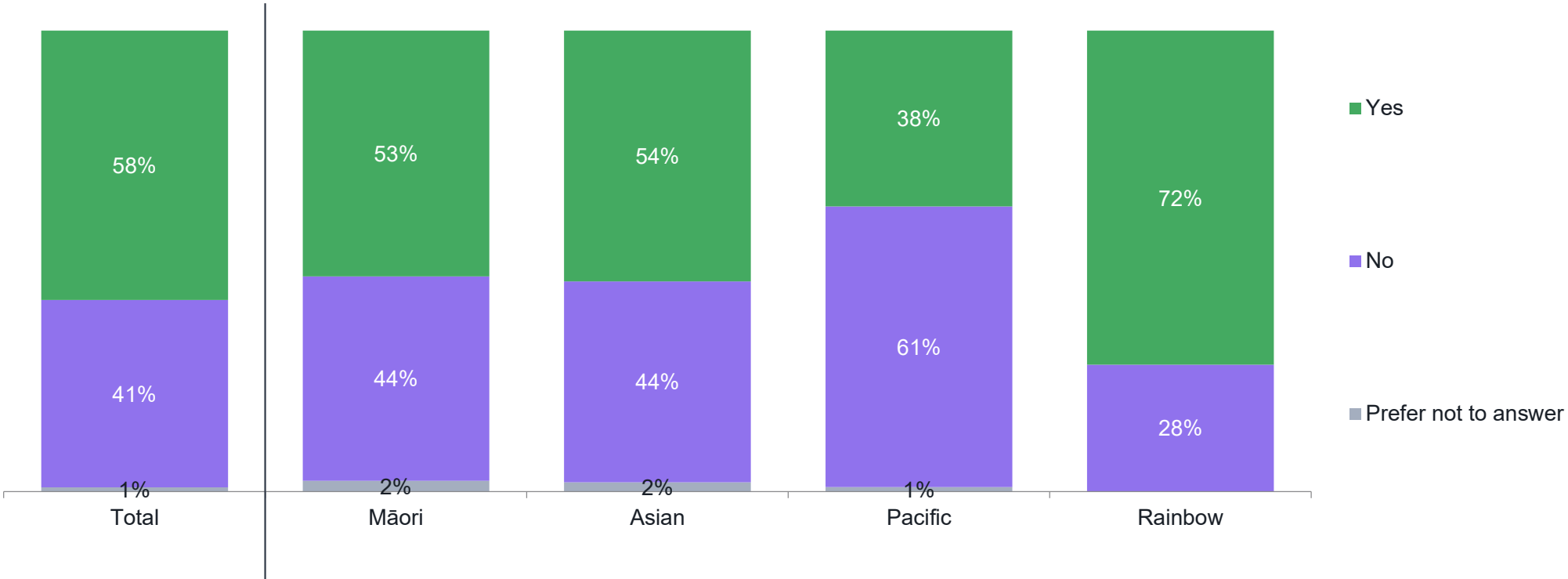
Base: Total N=1,000



Awareness

**58% of New Zealanders aged 18+ are familiar with the term ‘sextortion’.
Awareness much lower among Pacific peoples (38%), and highest among
Rainbow community (72%)**

Familiar with the Term ‘Sextortion’



Base: Total N=1,000; Māori N=302, Asian N=296, Pacific N=202, Rainbow N=156
Q. Are you familiar with the term 'sextortion'?

53% of all respondents said they had heard about sextortion cases – most had only heard about these via general media, while more than a fifth had a personal connection or direct experience

Via media sources
~ 44%



"I have heard about it online on social media - so third party and just the general theme of it."

"Yes, generalised stories re celebrities."

"Articles in the news."

"Seen articles in the newspapers and on TV involving a variety of people."

"Yes, on social media, most of the celebrities are or were blackmailed for their explicit videos or pictures."

Personal connections
~ 28%



"A colleague's daughter was threatened online."

"Heard about it through a friend whose cousin was blackmailed."

"My neighbor's son had a run-in with these kinds of people."

"My friend experienced it last year."

"Family member was a victim."

"My cousin talked about an incident in a private social media group where she was a victim."

Direct experience
~ 20%



"I've faced such a situation myself and know how serious it gets."

"I was directly involved, unfortunately, and it was a harsh lesson."

"Received direct emails threatening with something that wasn't even true."

"Someone tried to scam me with my own photos."

"I was directly targeted by one of these scams last year."

Professional contexts
~ 8%



"Yes, I heard about it at a talk at my son's school by John Parsons."

"We discussed it in a workshop at work."

"Heard during a school presentation on online dangers."

"In a legal case study session at college."

"It was a significant part of the cybersecurity training at work."

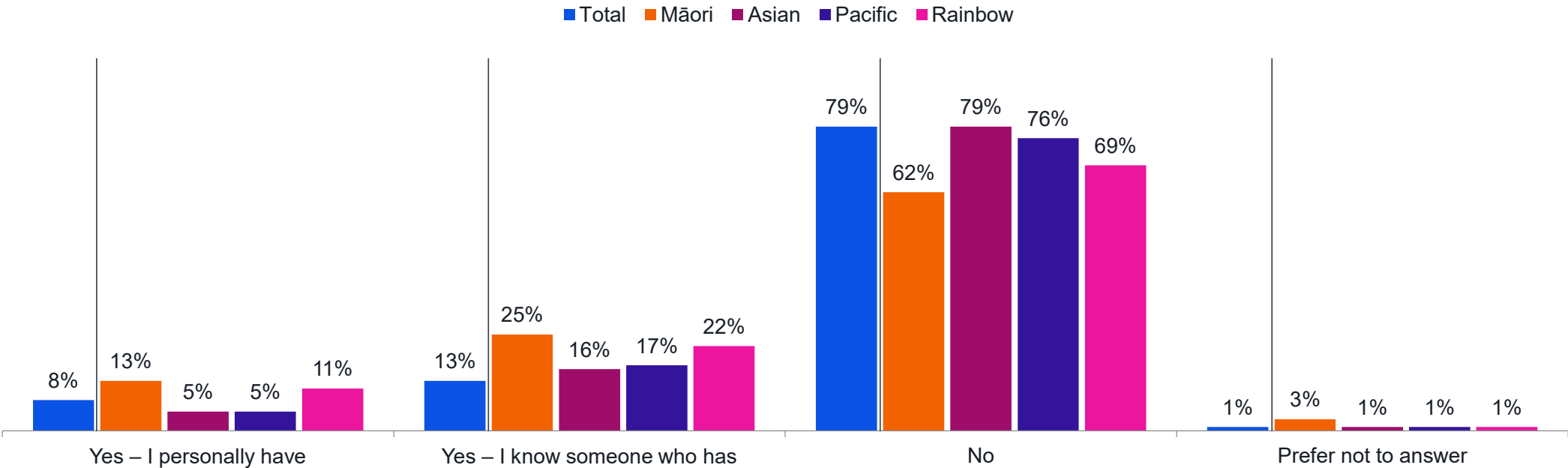
"Saw it in professional development sessions for teachers."

Base: Total N=1,000

Q. Have you heard about any cases where a person is, or has been, blackmailed for their explicit pictures or videos? If yes, please tell us about it in as much detail as you are willing to share.

When asked directly... 8% of New Zealanders had personally been sextorted and 13% knew someone who had been... incidence of personal experience or generalised knowing someone highest among Māori (38%)

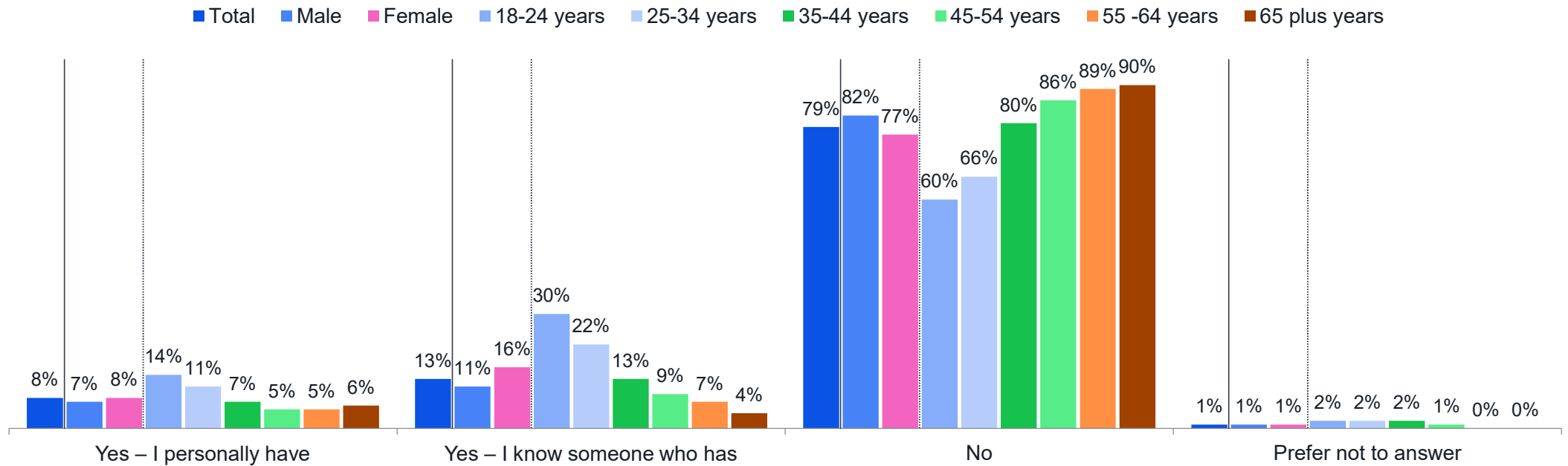
Personally Have, or Know Anyone who has, Received a 'Sextortion' Blackmail Message, Video or Audio Call



Base: Total N=1,000; Māori N=302, Asian N=296, Pacific N=202, Rainbow N=156
 Q. Have you personally, or anyone you know, ever received a 'sextortion' blackmail message, video or audio call?

By age group, highest incidence of having a personal connection to a sextortion incident among under 35s, with the youngest age group of 18-24s most impacted (40%)

Personally Have, or Know Anyone who has, Received a 'Sextortion' Blackmail Message, Video or Audio Call by Age & Gender

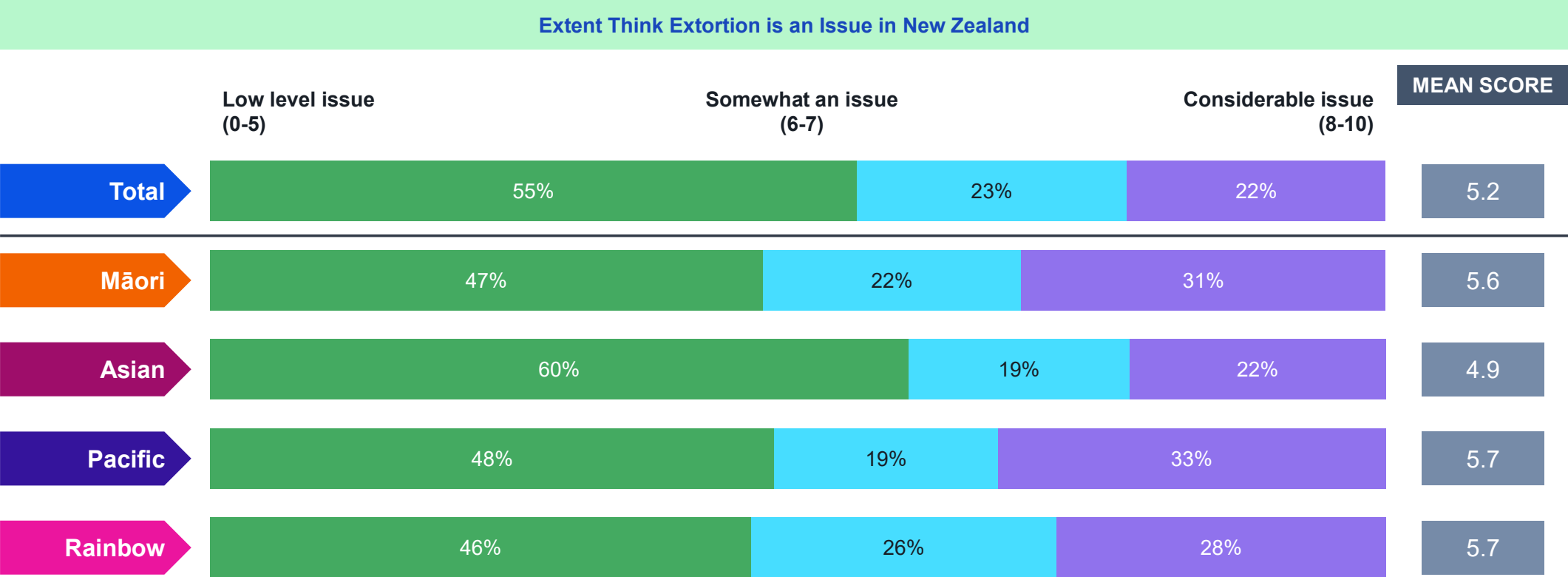


Base: Total N=1,000; Male N=478, Female N=517; 18-24 years N=130, 25-34 years N=170, 35-44 years N=190, 45-54 years N=190, 55-64 years N=150, 65 plus years N=170
 Q. Have you personally, or anyone you know, ever received a 'sextortion' blackmail message, video or audio call?



Perceptions

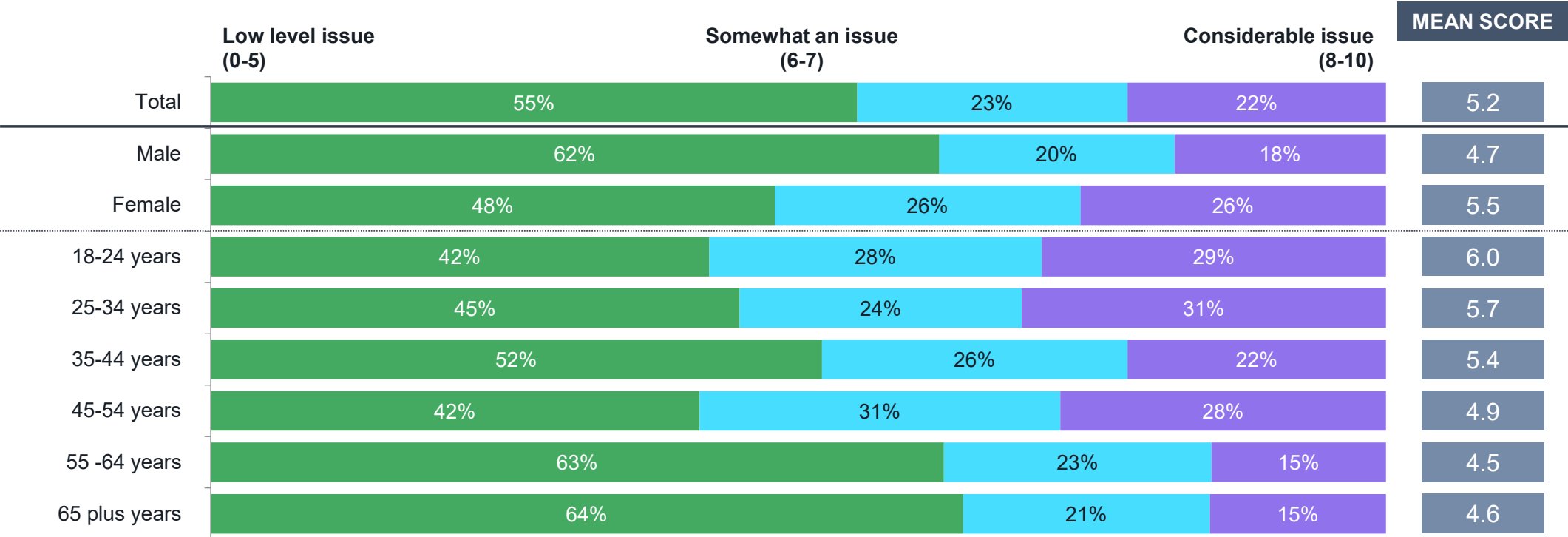
22% of New Zealanders feel sextortion is a considerable issue in NZ (i.e. gave a rating of 8-10 out of 10) ... rising to 45% among those giving a rating over 5... Asians less likely to feel it is an issue



Base: Total N=1,000; Māori N=302, Asian N=296, Pacific N=202, Rainbow N=156
 Q. To what extent do think sextortion is an issue in New Zealand?

Females more likely than males to feel sextortion is a considerable issue in NZ... with under 35s and 45-54s also more likely to feel it's an issue compared to other age groups

Extent Think Extortion is an Issue in New Zealand by Age & Gender



Base: Total N=1,000; Male N=478, Female N=517; 18-24 years N=130, 25-34 years N=170, 35-44 years N=190, 45-54 years N=190, 55 -64 years N=150, 65 plus years N=170
 Q. To what extent do think sextortion is an issue in New Zealand?

Sextortion perceived by NZers to most strongly impact young people – especially young women and girls, those who are vulnerable or isolated, and active users of social media and technology

Young – particularly 15-25 / teenagers



“The age is mostly on the 15-25yr bracket.”

“Everyone - young people, girls and boys, the families of these young people.”

“Young people aged 15-25, because they’re often targeted.”

“Primarily people aged between 15 and 25, as they are most active online.”

Both genders can be impacted, but particularly females



“Young people - particularly girls.”

“Teenagers, vulnerable, impressionable folk. Females.”

“Young women extorted by men.”

“Women, particularly younger women and girls.”

“Females, especially those who are more active online.”

“Minors and marginalised women (trans, non-white, disabled, etc).”

Vulnerable groups – emotionally or socially isolated, low self-esteem, not tech savvy



“Teenagers and people who are vulnerable emotionally.”

“People who are vulnerable. Young people.”

“Women, especially women in vulnerable minorities, eg LGBTQIA, sex workers, as well as women in leadership positions.”

“Vulnerable, lonely, mentally/ physically weak individuals.”

Social media / heavy tech users



“Young people, heavy social media users, Teenagers and school children.”

“Anyone who uses social media a lot or has no protection on their computer devices is potentially more likely to be impacted.”

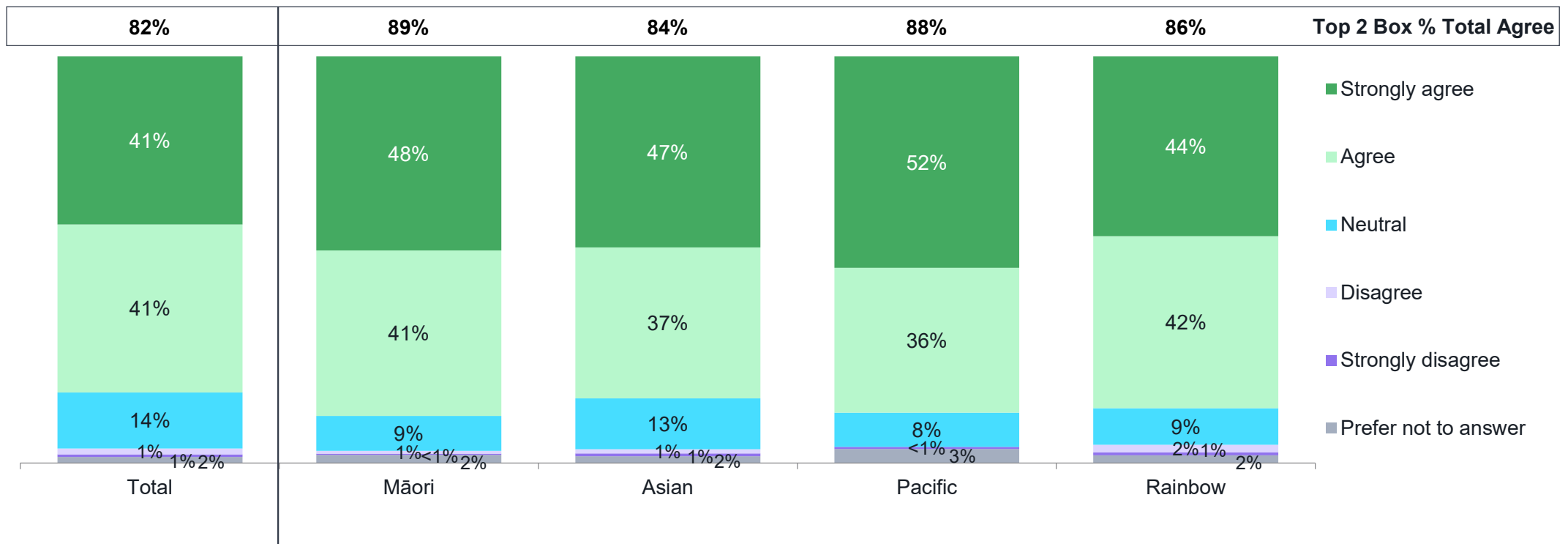
“Teenagers who are very active on social media are most at risk.”

“People who are very active on social media and share a lot of personal photos and videos.”

Base: Total N=1,000
Q. Who do you think is most affected or impacted by sextortion?

8 in 10 NZers surveyed agree (41% strongly) there should be an awareness campaign regarding sextortion

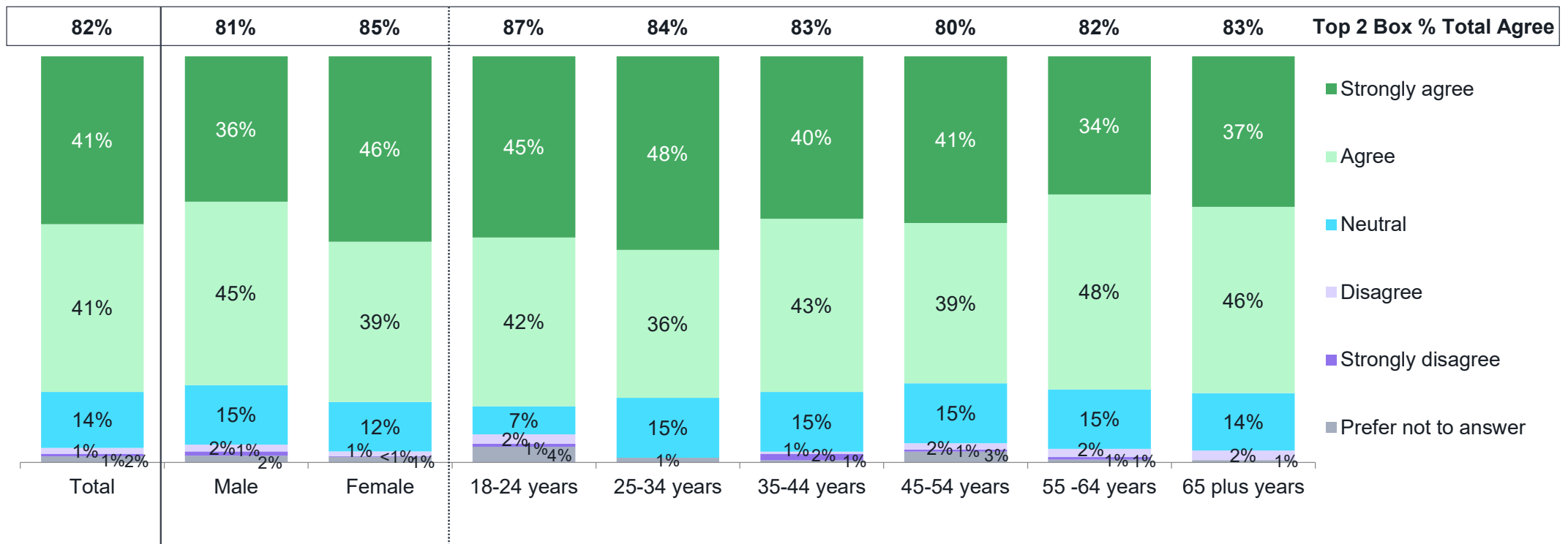
Extent Agree there should be an Awareness Campaign Regarding Sextortion



Base: Total N=1,000; Māori N=302, Asian N=296, Pacific N=202, Rainbow N=156
 Q. To what extent do you agree, or disagree, there needs to be an awareness campaign regarding sextortion?

Agreement a campaign is needed is higher among females and the younger age groups... especially among under 25s

Extent Agree there should be an Awareness Campaign Regarding Sextortion by Age & Gender



Base: Total N=1,000; Male N=478, Female N=517; 18-24 years N=130, 25-34 years N=170, 35-44 years N=190, 45-54 years N=190, 55-64 years N=150, 65 plus years N=170
 Q. To what extent do you agree, or disagree, there needs to be an awareness campaign regarding sextortion?

Most important messages NZers think should be communicated are around raising awareness, education on how to prevent, where to report incidents, and the consequences for perpetrators

Awareness and education



- Raise awareness about the dangers of sextortion, what it entails, and how prevalent it is
- Educate people, particularly young New Zealanders, on how to recognise and avoid potential sextortion scenarios

Safety and prevention



- Emphasise the importance of online safety practices, such as not sharing explicit images, understanding the risks of digital interactions, and maintaining privacy settings on social media
- Inform NZers about tools and strategies to protect themselves

Support and reporting



- Encourage victims to speak up without shame and reinforce that help and support are readily available
- Provide clear information on how to report sextortion and seek assistance from authorities or trusted individuals

Consequences for perpetrators



- Highlight the legal implications and penalties for those who engage in sextortion
- Reinforce it is a serious crime with severe consequences



Impact

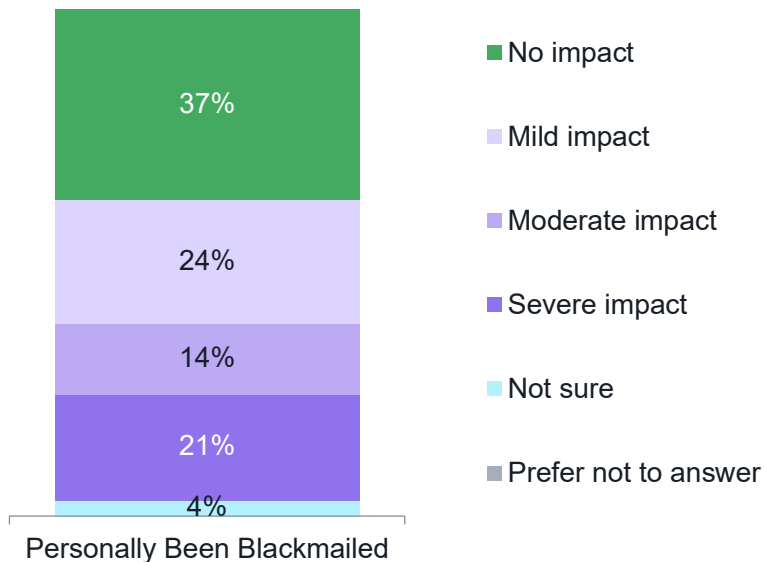
Just over a third (35%) of victims report the impact of being sextorted has been either severe or moderate on their mental wellbeing... for those who know someone a higher 73% say the impact has been moderate to severe

Impact of Experience on Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Personally Been Blackmailed – Impact on Self

35%

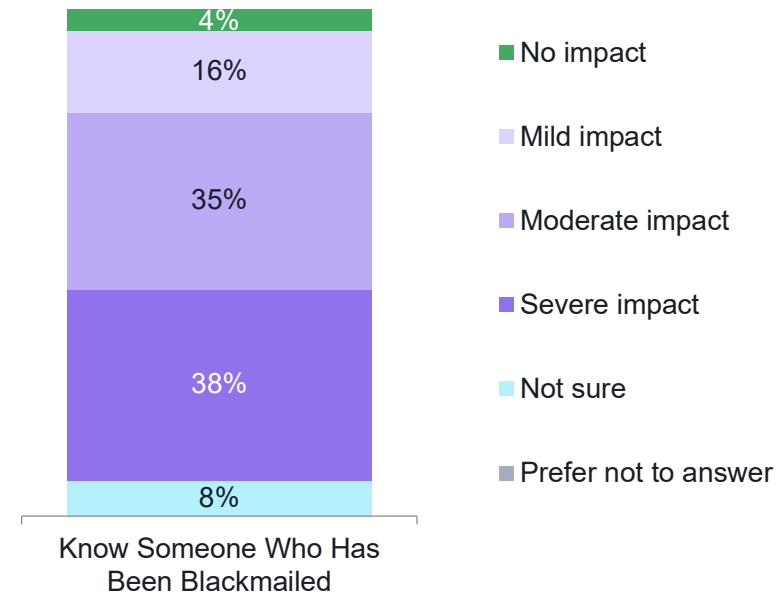
Total Moderate + Severe Impact



Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed – Impact on Them

73%

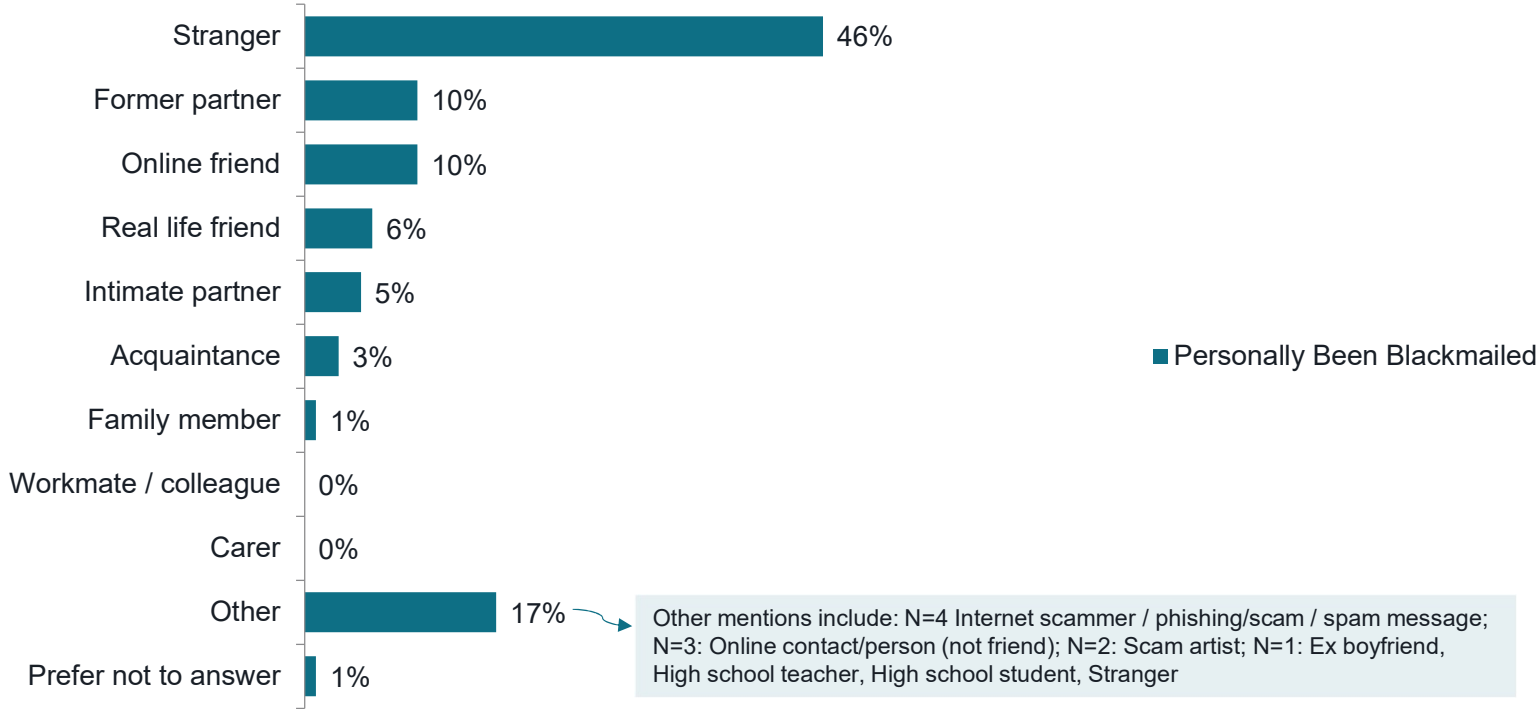
Total Moderate + Severe Impact



Base Total: Personally Been Blackmailed N=78; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=134
 Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. What impact has this experience had on your mental and emotional wellbeing?
 Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. What impact has this experience had on their mental and emotional wellbeing?

Among victims, in just under half of cases the most common perpetrator was a stranger (46%)... for one in 10, the perpetrator was either a former partner or online friend

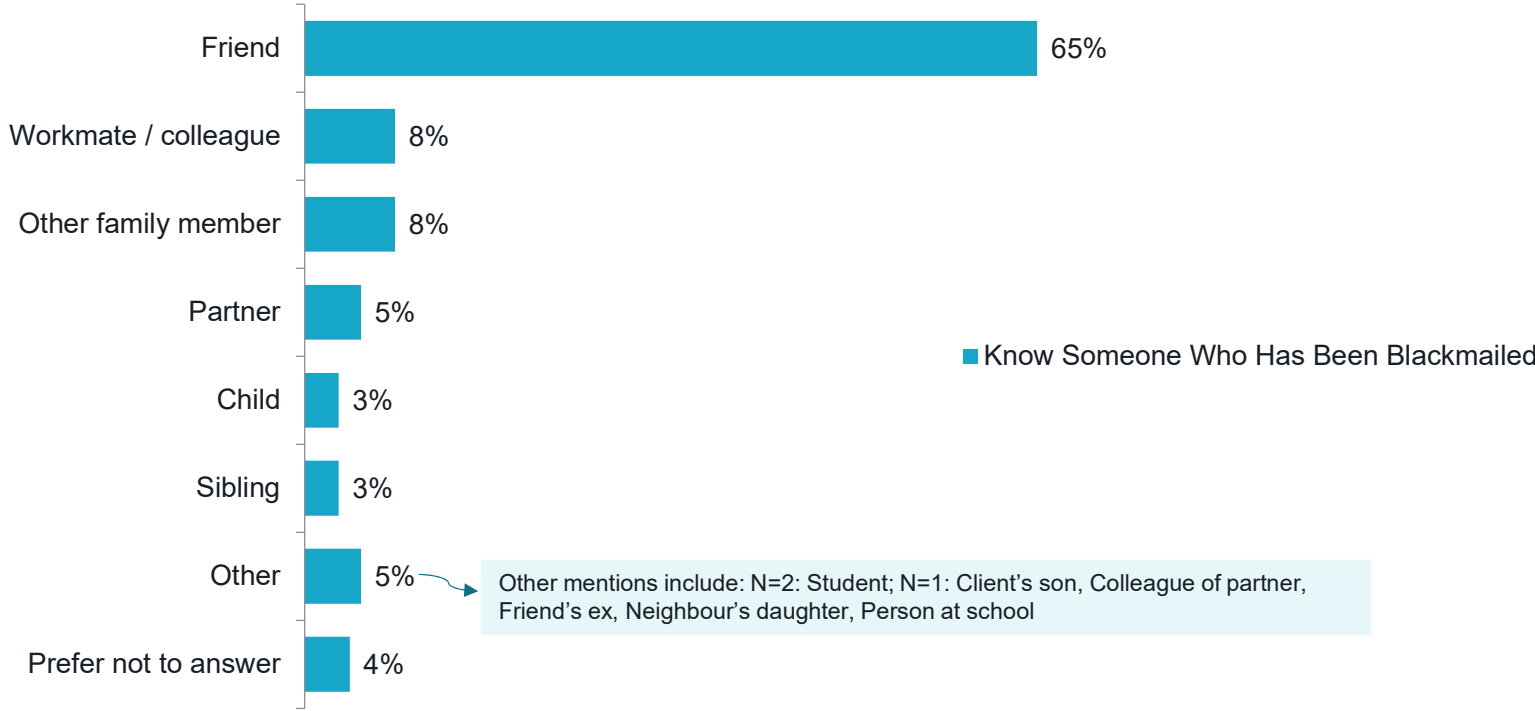
Relationship with Person Who Tried to Blackmail them
(Base: Personally Been Blackmailed)



Base – Personally Been Blackmailed: Total N=78
 Q. At the time of the sextortion incident, what was your relationship with the person who tried to blackmail you?
 If you have experienced sextortion more than once, please answer based on the most recent incident.

Among those who know someone impacted by sextortion, the victim's relationship to the perpetrator was most commonly reported as being a 'friend' (65%), followed by a workmate/colleague (8%) or family member (8%)

Relationship with Person Know Who Was Blackmailed
(Base: Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed)

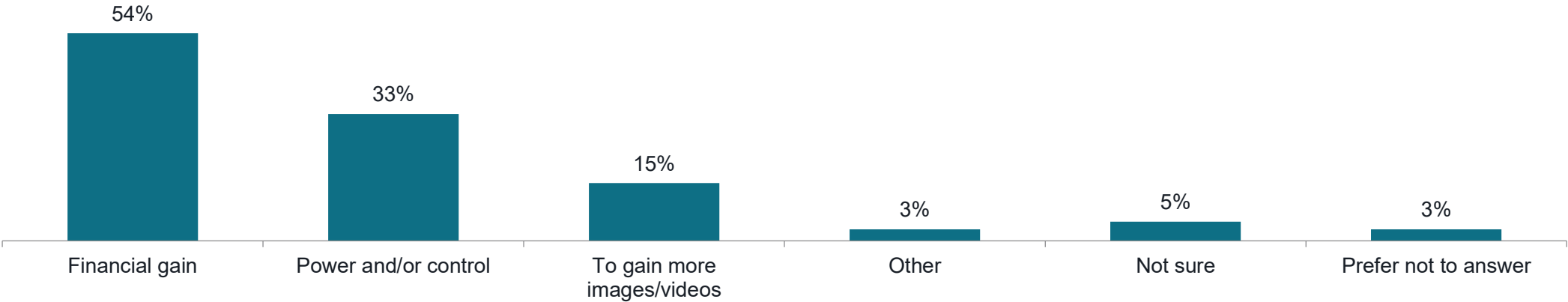


Base – Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Total N=134
Q. What relationship to you is the person you know of who was blackmailed?
If you know of more than one person who has been 'sexorted', please answer based on the most recent incident you are aware of.

Just over half of victims (54%) believe the primary motivator of the blackmailer is financial gain... a third believe power and/or control is the main motivator, and 15% that they want to gain *more explicit content*

Primary Motivation of Blackmailer
(Base: Personally Been Blackmailed)

■ Personally Been Blackmailed

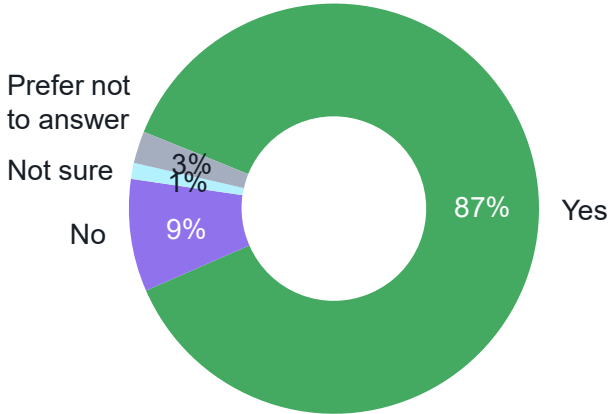


Base – Personally Been Blackmailed: Total N=78
Q. What do you think is/was the **primary** motivation of the blackmailer?

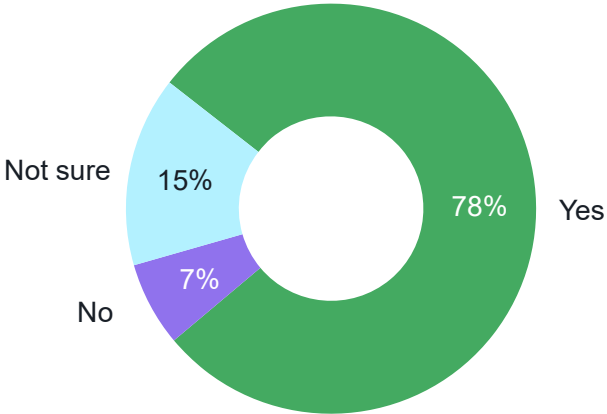
For around 80% of sextortion incidents, the blackmailer did threaten to share pictures or videos (87% for those personally blackmailed and 78% among those who know someone who has been blackmailed)

Blackmailer Threatened to Share Pictures or Videos

Personally Been Blackmailed



Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed

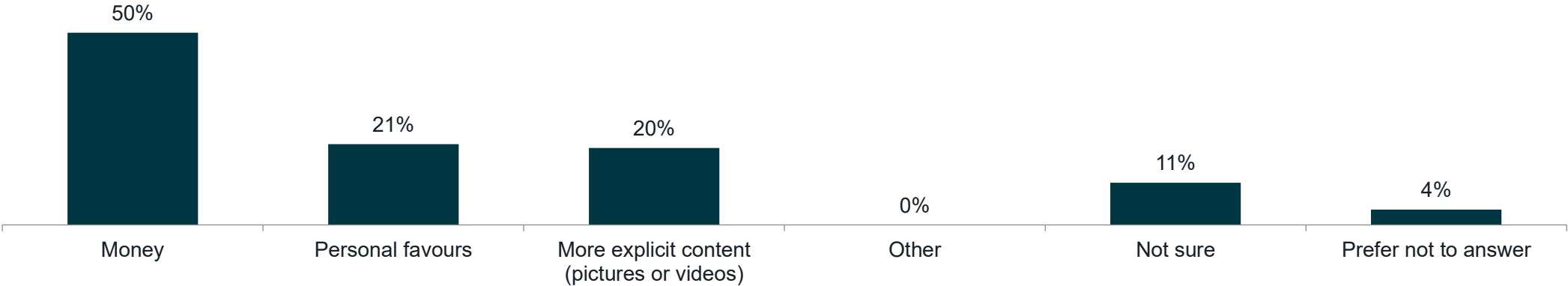


Base Total: Personally Been Blackmailed N=78; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=134
Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. Did the person who tried to blackmail you threaten to share pictures or videos of you?
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. Did the person who tried to blackmail the person you know, threaten to share pictures or videos of them?

In half of the incidents, money was demanded in exchange for not sharing pictures or videos, while in a fifth of cases personal favours or more explicit content was demanded

What Blackmailer Demanded in Exchange for Not Sharing Pictures/Videos
(Base: Personally Been Blackmailed or Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed)

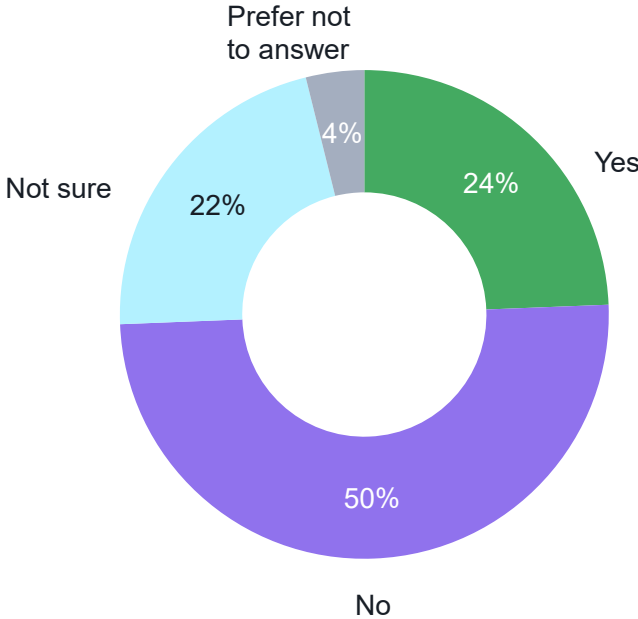
■ Personally Been Blackmailed or Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed



Base – Personally Been Blackmailed or Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Total N=199
Q. What did the blackmailer demand in exchange for not sharing the pictures or videos? Please select all that apply.

Among those personally impacted... a quarter (24%) reported the explicit content was shared without their consent

Pictures / Content Shared without Consent
(Base: Personally Been Blackmailed)



Base – Personally Been Blackmailed: Total N=78
Q. Were the pictures/content shared without your consent?

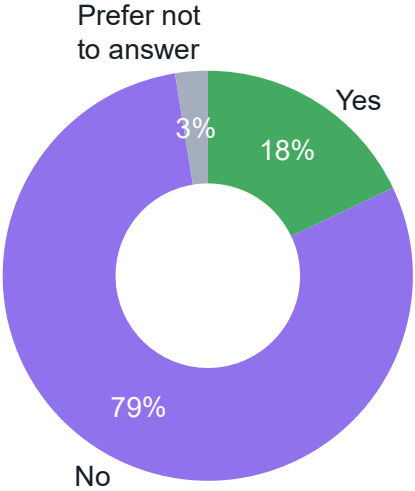


Reporting & Support

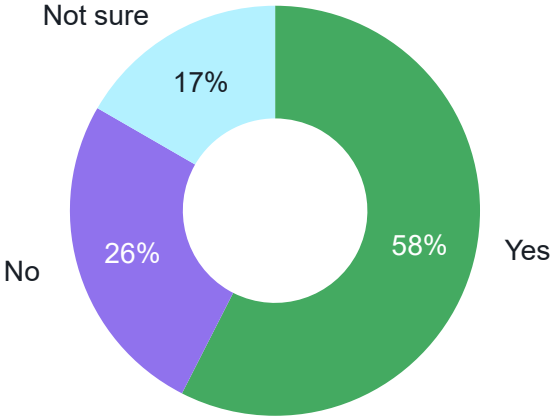
Less than a fifth (18%) of victims sought help after the incident... a much higher 58% of NZers who know someone impacted believe the victim sought help, indicating the nature of 'help' is being perceived quite differently by the two groups

Sought Support or Help After Incident

Personally Been Blackmailed



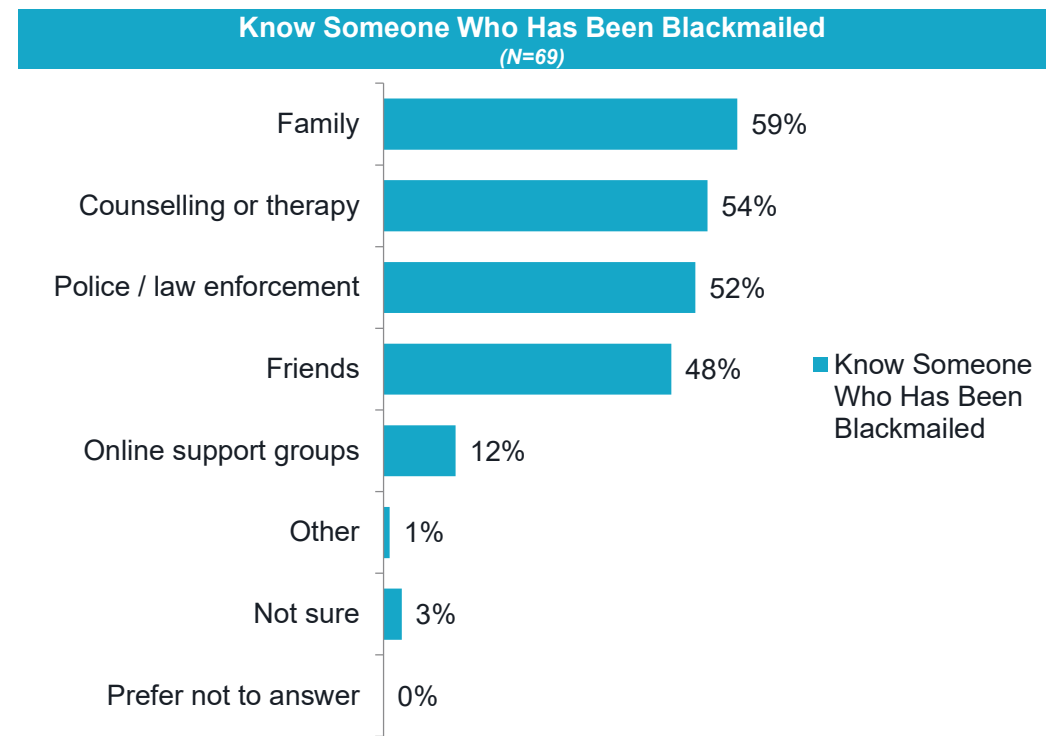
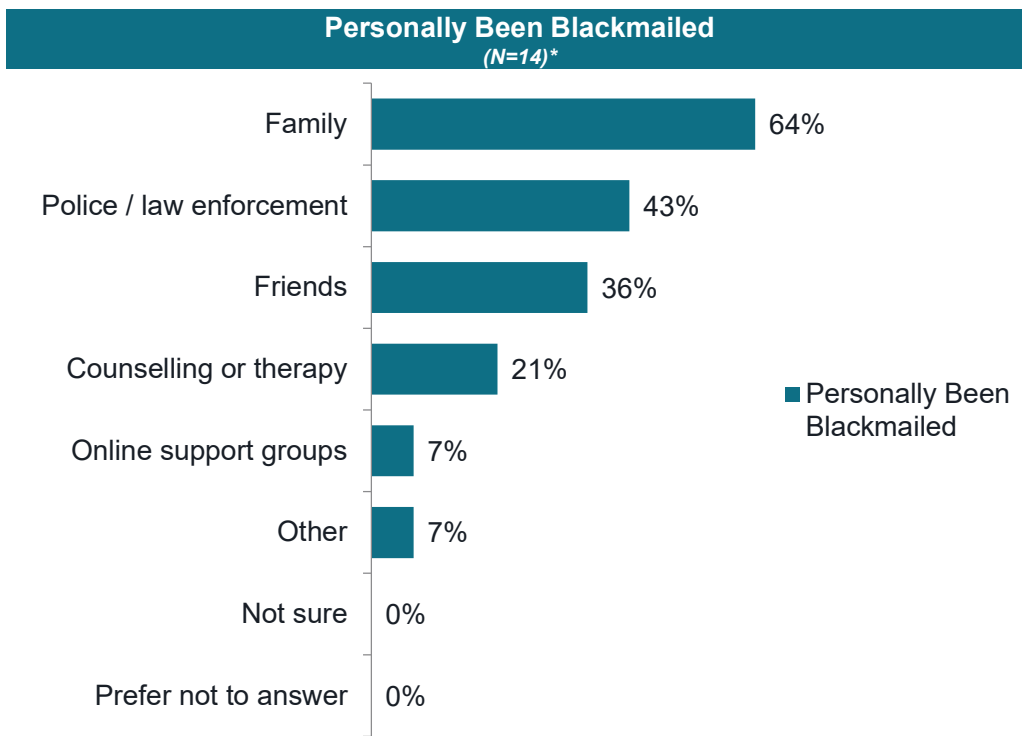
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed



Base Total: Personally Been Blackmailed N=78; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=134
Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. Did you seek support or help after the incident?
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. Did they seek support or help after the incident?

The small number of victims who sought help most commonly approached family for support, while just over 4 in 10 asked Police for help... those who know victims reported a range of sources of help were sought

Where Sought Support From
(Base: Sought Support or Help After Incident)

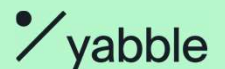


Base Total – Sought Support or Help After Incident: Personally Been Blackmailed N=14*; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=69

Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. Where did you seek support from? Please select all that apply

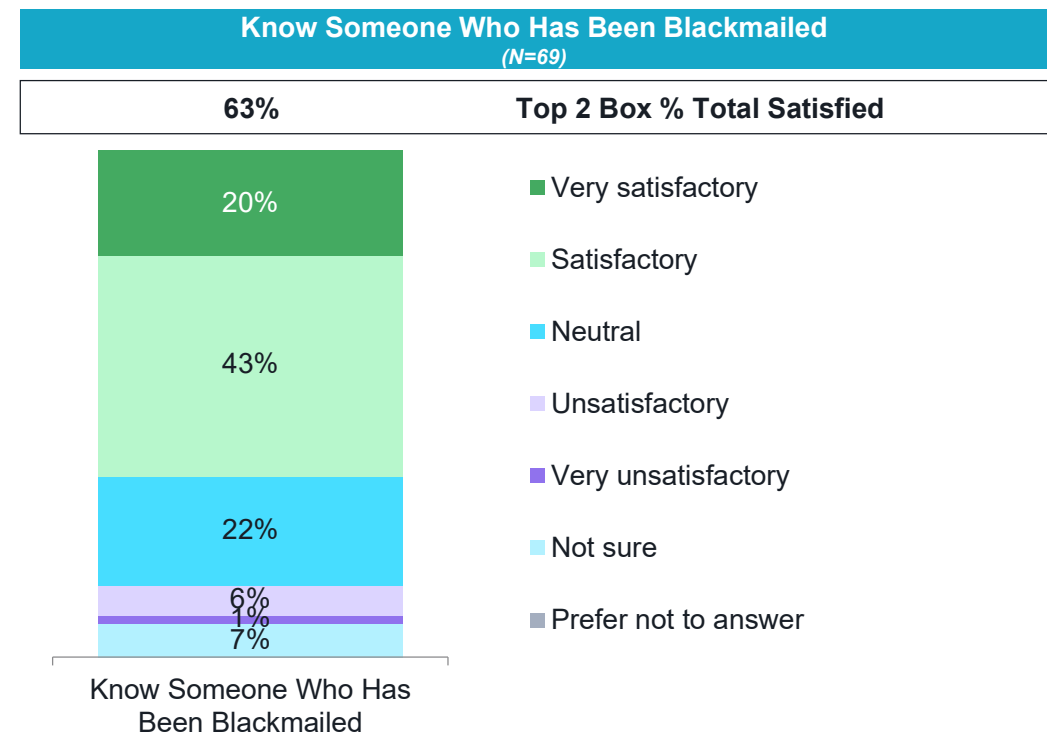
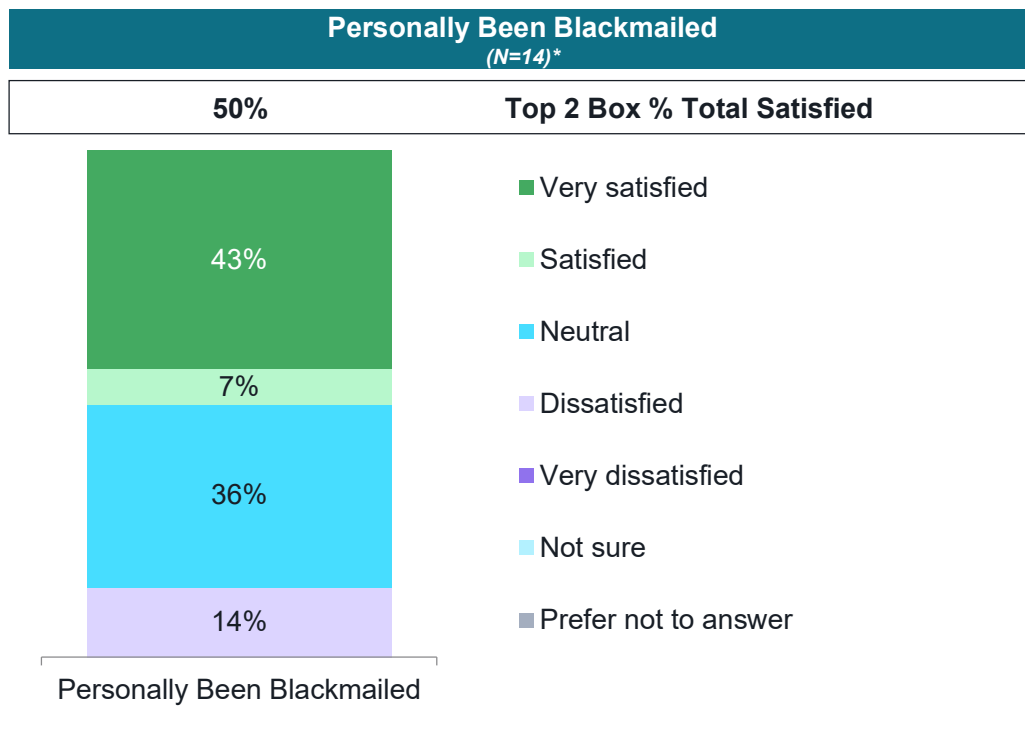
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. Where did they seek support from? Please select all that apply

* Caution very low sample size for Personally Been Blackmailed N=14



Only half of victims were satisfied with the support they received, while satisfaction was reported to be much higher among those who knew about incidents second-hand (again indicating a mismatch in the perception of support received)

Satisfaction with Support Received (Base: Sought Support or Help After Incident)



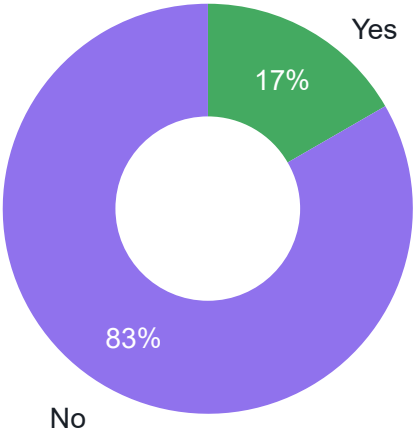
Base Total – Sought Support or Help After Incident: Personally Been Blackmailed N=14*; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=69
 Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. How satisfied were you with the support you received?
 Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. How satisfactory do you feel the support was that they received?

* Caution very low sample size for Personally Been Blackmailed N=14

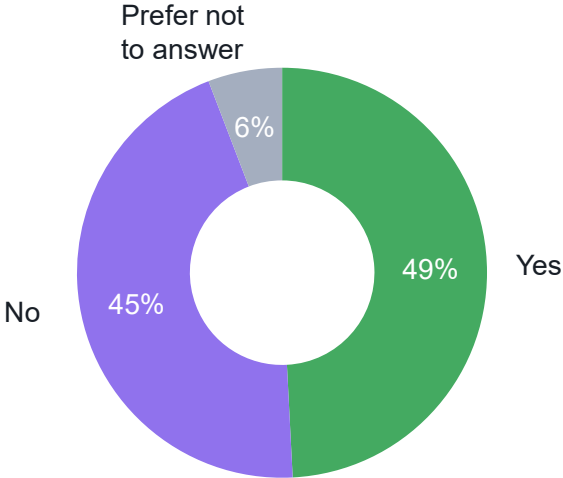
Just under a fifth (17%) of victims said they reported the incident to an official authority or platform... those who know of victims said a much higher half of victims made an official report

Reported the Incident to Any Authorities or Platforms

Personally Been Blackmailed



Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed

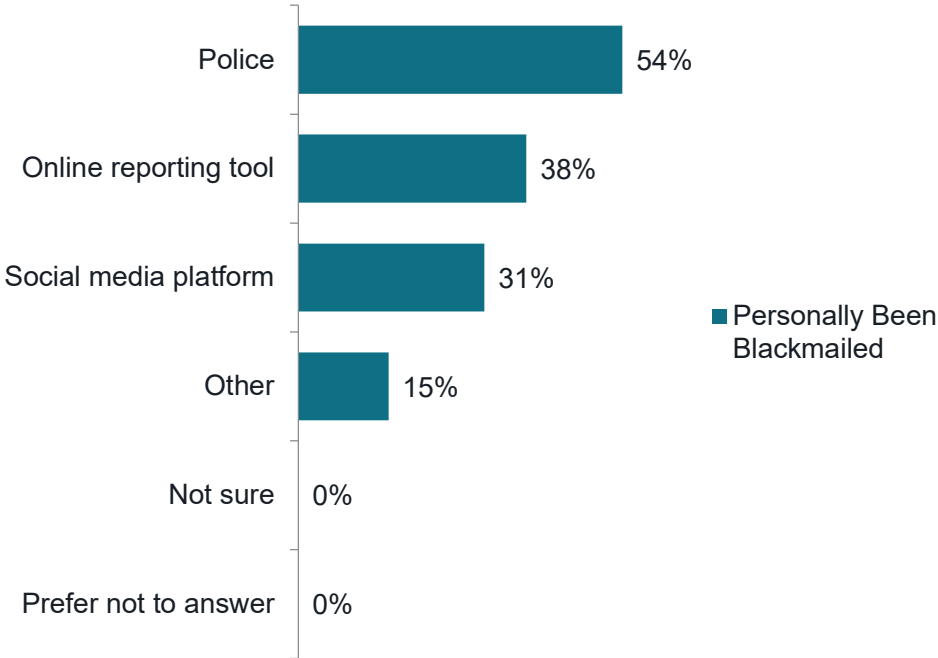


Base Total: Personally Been Blackmailed N=78; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=134
Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. Did you report the incident to any authorities or platforms?
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. Did they report the incident to any authorities or platforms?

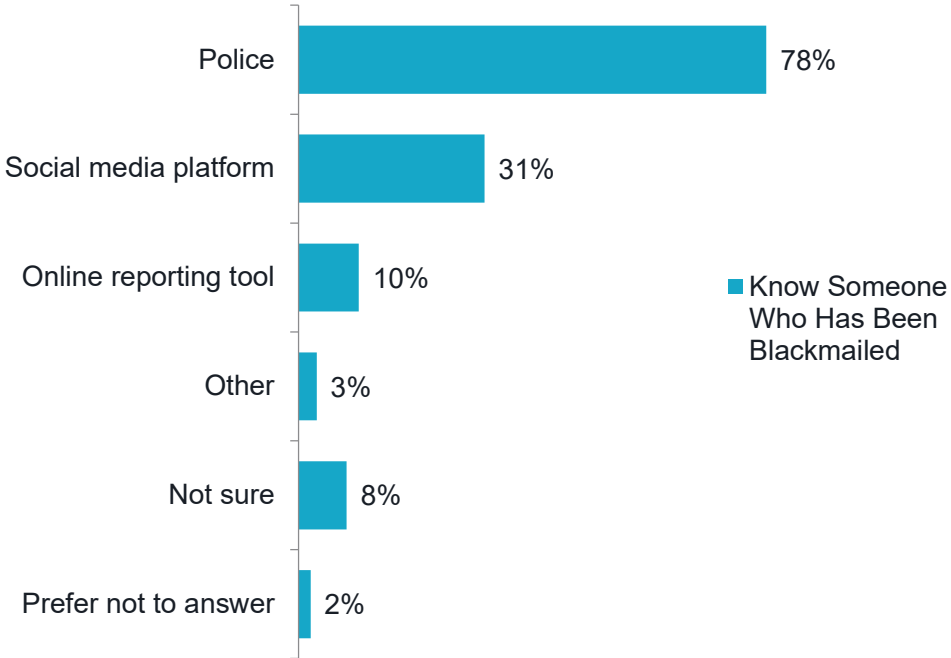
Victims most commonly reported incidents to Police (54% of those who made a report)... Police was also most common among those who know of a victim of sextortion (78%)

Where Reported Incident (Base: Reported Incident to Authorities or Platforms)

Personally Been Blackmailed (N=13)*



Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed (N=59)



Base Total – Reported Incident to Authorities or Platforms: Personally Been Blackmailed N=13*; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=59

Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. Where did you report the incident? Please select all that apply
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. Where did they report the incident? Please select all that apply

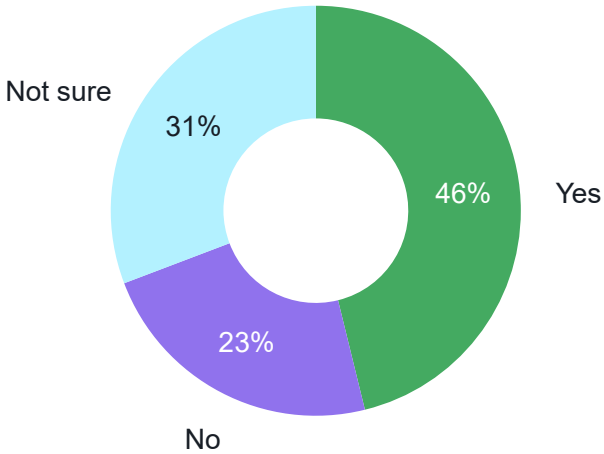
* Caution very low sample size for Personally Been Blackmailed N=13



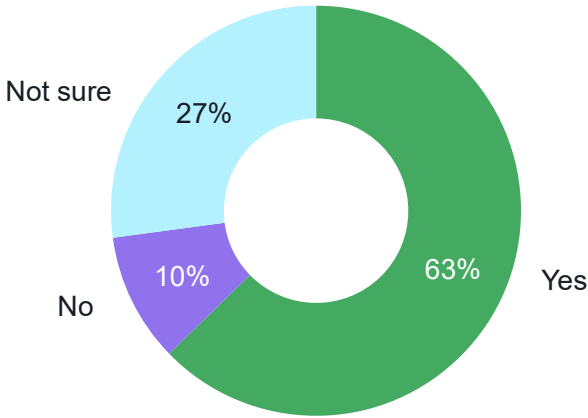
Half of victims who made an official report said action was taken as a result... among those who know of cases second-hand, 63% said action was taken

Action Taken as a Result of Report (Base: Reported Incident to Authorities or Platforms)

Personally Been Blackmailed (N=13)*



Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed (N=59)

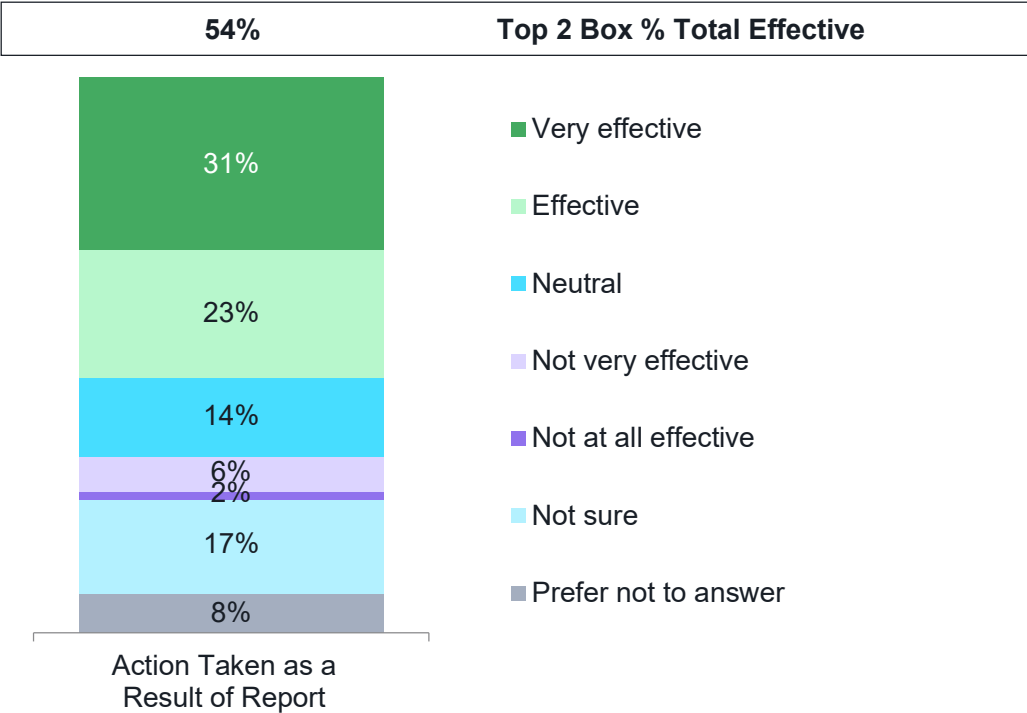


Base Total – Reported Incident to Authorities or Platforms: Personally Been Blackmailed N=13*; Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed N=59
Personally Been Blackmailed: Q. Was any action taken as a result of your report?
Know Someone Who Has Been Blackmailed: Q. Was any action taken as a result of their report?

* Caution very low sample size for Personally Been Blackmailed N=13

Half of victims and those who know of victims felt the action taken by the official authority or platform was effective... almost a fifth were unsure, while 8% felt it was ineffective

Rating of Effectiveness of Action Taken
(Base: Action Taken as a Result of Report N=65)



Base- Action Taken as a Result of Report: Total N=65
Q. How would you rate the effectiveness of the action taken?



Key Point Summary

Key Point Summary: Awareness & Incidence

- Familiarity with the term 'sextortion' among New Zealanders aged 18+ is fairly low (58%)
- A slightly lower proportion (just under half) had heard about sextortion cases, mostly via general media rather than being personally involved
- A total of 21% of New Zealanders had direct experience of sextortion incidents:
 - 8% reported they had personally been sextorted
 - 13% said they knew someone who had been sextorted
- Just 22% feel 'sextortion' is a considerable issue in New Zealand (rating it as a 8, 9 or 10 out of 10)
- A high 8 in 10 New Zealanders, however, agreed there should be an awareness campaign regarding sextortion, communicating key messages around awareness and education on how to prevent, where to report/get support, and consequences for perpetrators

Key Point Summary: Impact on Victims

- 35% of victims reported the impact of their sextortion experience on their mental wellbeing was moderate to severe
- Among victims the most common perpetrator was a stranger (46%)
- For around 80% of incidents, the blackmailer did threaten to share pictures or videos
- In half of the incidents money was demanded in exchange for not sharing pictures or videos and for a fifth personal favours or more explicit content was demanded
- A quarter (24%) of victims reported the explicit content was shared without their consent

Key Point Summary: Support & Reporting

- Less than a fifth (18%) of victims sought help or support after the incident
- Those who did most commonly approached family members, while just over 4 in 10 asked Police for help
- Only a half of victims were satisfied with the support they received
- Just under a fifth (17%) of victims said they reported the incident to an official authority or platform – most commonly Police (54% of those who made an official report)
- Half of victims who made an official report said action was taken as a result – a high 31% were unsure
- Only half of victims and those who know of victims felt the action taken by the official authority or platform was effective



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Survey Introduction

You're invited to take part in an important survey about sextortion in New Zealand. Sextortion, or sexual extortion, can be described as being blackmailed with nudes or sexually explicit content. Victims are often tricked or pressured to share nude images or videos, or this material may have been digitally altered.

To have your say you need to complete the survey before midnight Sunday, 13 July.

The survey will take you around **5-10 minutes** to complete.

Your privacy is important to us. Responses are de-identified and anonymised and published for the purposes of research into sextortion in New Zealand.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any moment. Any response provided up to your withdrawal will not be used. By clicking on 'Get Started' and completing this survey, you give consent to participate.

This survey contains questions of a sensitive nature.

You may wish to be in a private space when answering these questions. If you want to stop the survey and return to it later, simply close your browser and use the survey link emailed to you to return to the survey when ready.

Please note, the following questions may trigger memories of unpleasant past experiences for some people. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to and if you wish to remove your responses you can contact Yabble using the link provided once you've finished the survey.

At the end of the survey we provide a list of support services for you to contact if you need help.

Yabble has been engaged by Netsafe, NZ's leading online safety organisation to conduct this research. Netsafe appreciates your time and participation.

Survey Close

Thank you for your participation!

If you want to report an online incident (e.g. scams, online bullying, harassment or abuse) or get advice, contact us by:

Calling toll-free on 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723)

Completing an [online contact form](#)

Emailing help@netsafe.org.nz

Netsafe's helpline is available to help from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am – 5pm on weekends.

You can also get help from:

- Lifeline: 0800 543 354 (available 24/7)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO) (available 24/7)
- Youthline: 0800 376 633
- Depression helpline: 0800 111 757 (available 24/7)
- Samaritans 0800 726 666
- Women's Refuge crisis line 0800 733 843 (available 24/7)

If you're in danger or a crime is being committed, call 111 immediately.