

As a woman in college, receiving unsolicited sexual imagery is a shared experience among my peers. With dating apps on the rise, especially among people in their early 20s, what can start out as an average conversation can end in a disturbing experience for many. We try to laugh it off; it becomes an anecdote when girls share their “Tinder matches gone wrong.” However it is downplayed, these experiences stick with you and leave you feeling violated.

Many of my peers also have shared experiences from when we were younger with the site Omegle, where young kids can join video chats – the site is notorious for housing predators and pedophiles. Middle schoolers who are maybe 11 or 12 years old can join a video chat with an adult man who will likely expose himself. Not only does it put these children in danger, it can mentally scar them to have seen these sexual images, especially when they are so young. It can shape their attitude toward sexuality in a negative way, or make them uncomfortable later in life when they are ready to be sexually active.

The task force outlined in HB600 is necessary in solving this issue. It is overdue to have some serious action on nonconsensual sexual imagery, especially in today’s world where social media and online communication is the norm.