# An Introduction to IBSA:

# Educational Booklet

The Moxie Collective

By The Moxie Collective

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# 01. What is IBSA?



**Image-Based Sexual Abuse (IBSA)** refers to the act of creating, distributing, and/or threatening to share, an intimate image or video of a person without their consent (McGlynn & Rackley, 2017). It takes a wide range of forms such as "revenge pornography", hacking and distributing, spy camera recordings, sextortion, and sexualised photoshopping. A growing variant is deepfake sexual abuse, where AI-generated explicit content is created without the subject's permission.

# 01. What is IBSA?

## Not "Just Pictures"

IBSA is often dismissed as "just pictures," a misconception that minimises its harm. Survivors often experience severe psychological distress, harassment, social isolation, loss of employment, and lasting trauma (Bates, 2017; Huber, 2023). Further, digital content can spread indefinitely, resulting in a sense of endless violation (McGlynn et al., 2020).
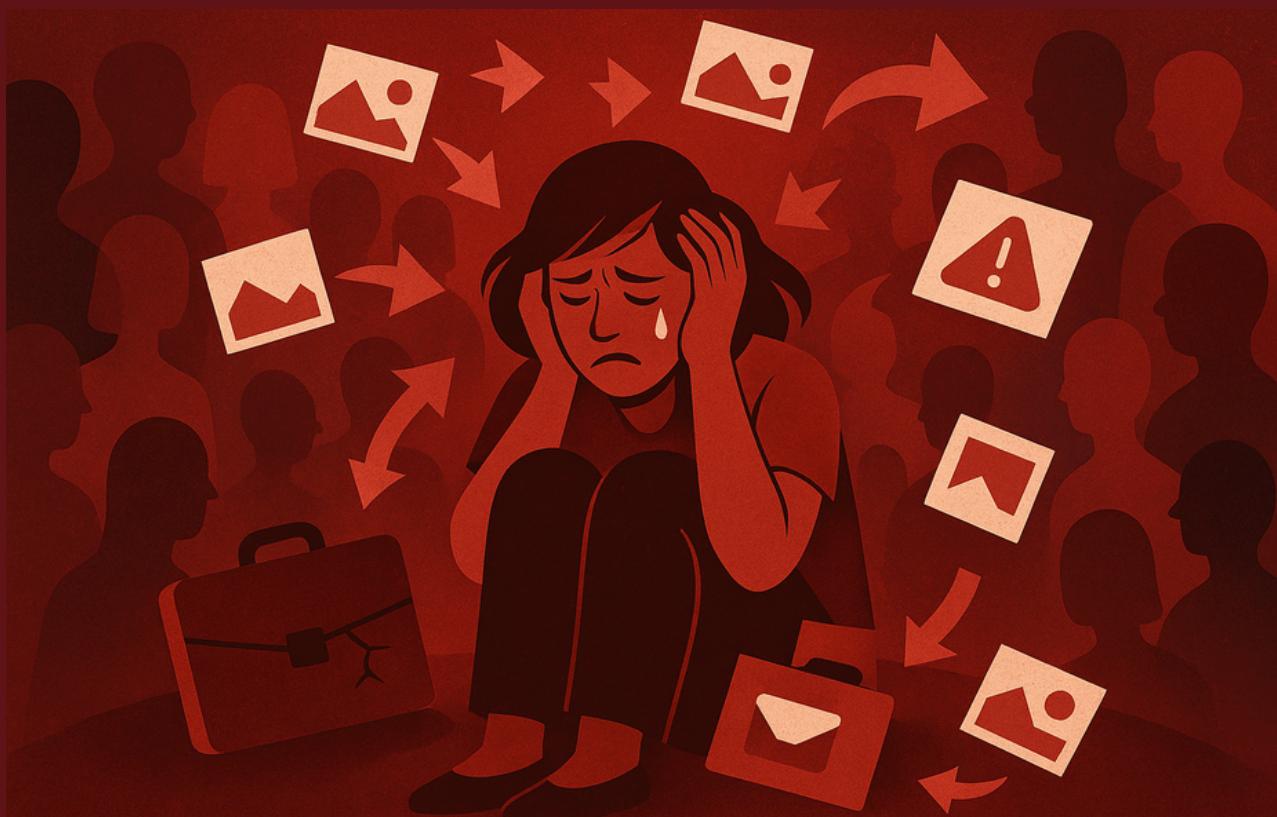


## IBSA Typically Involves (McGlynn et al., 2017):

- The weaponisation of images or videos;
- The gendered nature of perpetrating and surviving the abuse;
- The sexualised nature of the abuse;
- Violation of dignity, sexual autonomy, and sexual expression.

# 02.Key Trends

## A Closer Look at Deepfakes

Deepfake technology today has made it alarmingly easy to fabricate sexualised images without consent, fuelling a new and pervasive wave of IBSA.

According to Security Hero (2025), deepfake content surged by over 550% since 2019, with nearly 96,000 videos circulating online by 2023. This explosive growth underscores the rapid spread and normalization of deepfake technology across digital platforms.

**Total Percentage of Deepfake Video Online**

2% Others

98% Deepfake Porn

An estimated 98% of deepfake videos circulating online are pornographic, hinting at technology's widespread misuse to create explicit, non-consensual content.

**Gender in Deepfake Porn**

1% Male

99% Female
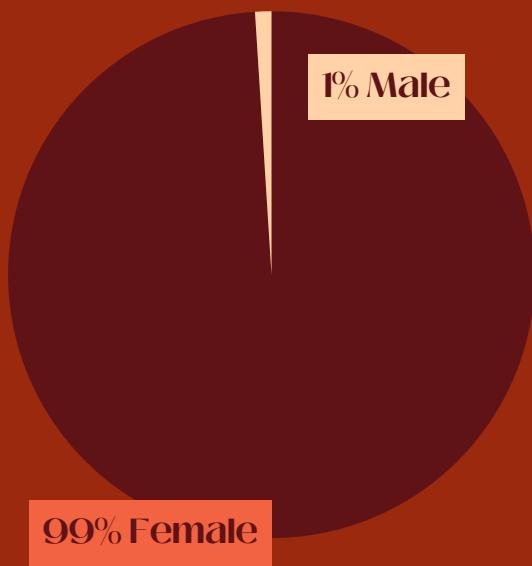
## Targeted Individuals

Deepfake porn is overwhelmingly gendered, with 99% of explicit content featuring women. This reflects a targeted and systemic form of digital abuse, where technology and audience demand converge to exploit and objectify women based on gender, profession, and visibility.

# 02. Key Trends

## IBSA in Singapore

While Singapore lacks comprehensive data specific to IBSA, related statistics and news on online harm and technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV)* reveal a troubling and growing prevalence of digital gender-based abuse:

In 2024, the online harms support centre SHECARES@SCWO assisted 158 individuals, up from 99 in 2023, with reported cases of IBSA rising from 27 to 46 over the same period.

In 2021, AWARE's Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC) recorded 227 new cases of TFSV, up from 191 in 2020. TFSV accounted for 27% of all cases that year. While overall case numbers fell to 856 from a 2020 peak of 967.

In 2021, 70% of TFSV cases reported to AWARE's SACC involved IBSA, the highest proportion recorded to date in the centre's annual analysis.

An AsiaOne investigation uncovered that men were using private Telegram groups such as "SharingIsCaring" and "SG Nasi Lemak" to share non-consensual and voyeuristic images of women and girls (Vitis, 2021).

Reports indicate that Sam's Forum, a popular Singaporean message board, has hosted threads where users exchange non-consensual sexual images, despite disclaimers discouraging the sharing of "snipe" or upskirting photos (Vitis, 2021).

*TFSV refers to unwanted sexual acts committed through digital means, including social media, messaging apps, dating platforms, and other online technologies. IBSA is a broader category encompassing the non-consensual creation, sharing, or misuse of another person's sexual, nude, or intimate images or videos.

# 03. Research

## Layers of Harm: How Identity Shapes IBSA

### 01 Race & Religion

Systemic racism and faith-based norms can worsen IBSA's impact. Women of colour face higher rates of sexualised violence receive less support (Champion, 2024), they also have a higher likelihood of enduring racial harassment alongside privacy breaches (Farries & Strum, 2019). In some faith contexts, perpetrators exploit honour-based norms, where even images showing uncovered hair or arms can trigger shame or violence (Gohir, 2013).

### 02 Sexuality

A Sayoni (2018) report on LGBTQ+ violence in Singapore found that queer survivors may face both digital and institutional harm. In one case, a bisexual student secretly filmed with her girlfriend was punished while the perpetrators were not apprehended, showing how IBSA reinforces heteronormative bias by policing queer intimacy and silencing victims.

### 03 Citizenship

Migrant and non-citizen women face heightened vulnerability from surveillance and power imbalances. Foreign domestic workers are often constantly monitored through CCTV and health checks, making their bodies more "watchable" and "recordable" (Vitis, 2020). Intimate images are sometimes used for extortion or control, showing how digital abuse intersects with exploitative labour and immigration systems.

# 03. Research

## Structural Gaps in Protecting Victim-Survivors of IBSA in Singapore.

### 1. Limited Legal Recognition and Redress

Existing laws often lag behind digital realities, leaving gaps in addressing newer forms of IBSA like deepfakes, doxxing, and cross-border image circulation. Survivors face complex reporting processes and limited digital evidence protections.

### 2. Institutional Bias and Unequal Responses

Schools, employers, and authorities may sometimes respond to IBSA through moral or disciplinary approaches rather than with survivor support. This can miss how IBSA affects people differently, especially queer, migrant, and minority survivors, who could face greater IBSA risks and consequences.

### 3. Barriers to Access and Support

Non-citizens, low-income, and marginalized women may face barriers to counselling, legal aid, and online safety resources. Surveillance in workplaces and homes, especially for migrant domestic workers, further deters reporting and reinforces power imbalances.

# 03. Research

## Global Innovations: Bold Ideas for a Safer Digital Future

### 1. Denmark: Copyrighting Likeness

In 2025, Denmark proposed granting individuals copyright over their own likeness, treating a person's face as intellectual property (Bryant, 2025). The policy gives citizens legal power to remove non-consensual deepfakes and reclaim control of their digital identities, challenging traditional ideas about ownership and identity in the digital age.

### 2. Image Angel: Making Digital Abuse Traceable

Image Angel uses invisible forensic watermarking to embed a unique, traceable fingerprint every time an image is viewed or shared (Image Angel, n.d.). This makes digital abuse traceable without invading privacy—revealing who accessed and leaked content if violations occur.

### 3. Holding Payment Companies Accountable

A U.S. court ruling allowing Visa to be sued for processing payments tied to sexual exploitation on Pornhub redefined the financial system's role in online abuse (CBC, 2020; Price, 2022). By cutting ties with exploitative platforms, payment networks became gatekeepers of accountability, disrupting the profit flows that sustain image-based sexual abuse.

### 4. White Ribbon: Building Male Allyship

White Ribbon mobilises men and boys as allies to end gender-based and image-based sexual violence (White Ribbon, 2025). Programs that promote empathy, consent, and accountability work to reshape norms in schools, workplaces, and communities—shifting prevention upstream by redefining masculinity and promoting cultural change before harm occurs.

# 04. About Us

## The Moxie Way: Community Healing

**01**      **Women's Circles as Spaces of Safety and Belonging**

Our women's circles create compassionate spaces where survivors can be seen, heard, and held without judgment. They offer a gentler alternative to formal processes that may feel retraumatising and rigid, centering empathy and shared understanding instead.

**02**      **Creative Practices for Reclaiming the Self**

Through art-making, journaling, book discussions, and movement, survivors explore new ways of expressing pain and possibility. Creative practice becomes a way to reclaim the body, imagination, and joy on one's own terms, yet in community.

**03**      **Collective Therapy with Trained Practitioners**

Our group therapy sessions, facilitated by qualified therapists, weave professional care with the warmth of peer support. Together, they offer a grounded space for reflection, validation, and healing through shared experience.

**04**      **Casual Gatherings that Restore Connection**

Informal meetups, over food, conversation, advocacy events, or other activities help soften isolation. These moments of togetherness remind survivors that healing can begin in small, relational human acts of being witnessed and supported.

# 04.Our Learnings

**Insights from Survivors: <u>How Moxie helped them feel seen, understood, and not alone</u>**

> *"My first meeting with Moxie was life-changing. I wasn't victim-blamed, I was seen as a whole person. That night, I finally slept peacefully."*

> *"Moving from deep conversations during book discussions and reflection sessions to casual hangouts showed me I was accepted, even after revealing my shame and vulnerabilities."*

> *"Healing came from the little things—laughing, ranting, sharing our days. Those small moments of solidarity made me feel truly not alone."*

> *"The Know My Name book discussion was heavy but powerful. Hearing others voice their pain made me feel less isolated and more understood."*

> *"Moxie has become a small village for me: a community that holds space for the big and small. The steady monthly support helped me feel grounded and not alone."*

# 04. Our Learnings

## Insights from Survivors: Hopes & fears for systems of safety & healing

**Fears:** *What you wish others understood more about the fears around systems of safety and healing*

- Systems often fail to hold perpetrators sufficiently accountable, causing fear of enabling them.

- Careless language or judgment can deeply wound or derail healing.

- Healing is slow and non-linear, but there is external impatience, pressure to "move on," or expectations of immediate disclosure.

- Excessive interrogation and demand for proof causes institutional fear and minimizes certain forms of abuse.

- Survivors fear being misunderstood or unsupported because others lack empathy or the capacity to meet them where they are.

**Hopes:** *What support, change, or care would make healing safer and more robust?*

- Survivors need stronger consequences for perpetrators so that taking action feels meaningful and safety feels possible.

- Support should be tender, guided, and low-pressure, treating new survivors with care rather than suspicion, judgment, or demands for outcomes.

- Healing requires accessible, diverse, and affordable support, including therapy, community spaces, and alternative healing practices.

- People need better emotional skills (empathy, regulation, and comfort with grief) so survivors aren't avoided, judged, or left to carry pain alone.

- A culture of awareness and accountability is essential: from early education on IPV to stronger community responses, bystander action, and fewer restrictions on survivors' voices.
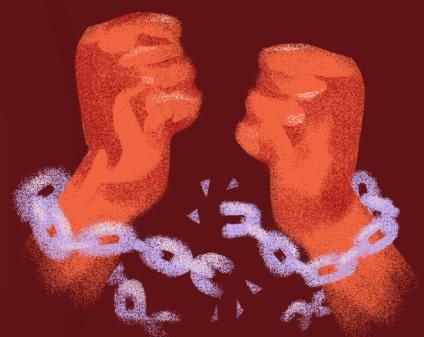
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