



# Smithtown Central School District

26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787

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**Mark Secaur, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools  
(631) 382-2006

February 6, 2023

Dear Smithtown School Community,

The district has been made aware of a concern that we wanted to bring to your attention. We have heard reports of multiple cases of adolescents being extorted via social media. It was shared that the extortion begins when the perpetrator befriends a child posing as someone their age on social media. At some point, this person asks the child to share explicit photos of themselves. Once the photos are shared, they look to blackmail the child by telling them that the photos will be posted/shared with others unless money is paid. In some cases, the perpetrator asks for money in the form of gift cards because they know that many children still have unspent cards from the holidays and using them is less likely to alert parents and other authority figures. Thus far, there has been one case in which the perpetrator did in fact post the explicit photos of the child after not receiving the money that they demanded.

If anyone has any information about these cases, thinks they may be a victim, or knows someone who may be a victim, they are urged to contact their local law enforcement agency. Please consider using this information to make your children aware of these incidents and reinforce the best ways for them to stay safe when using the internet and social media.

Sincerely,

Mark Secaur, Ed.D.  
Superintendent