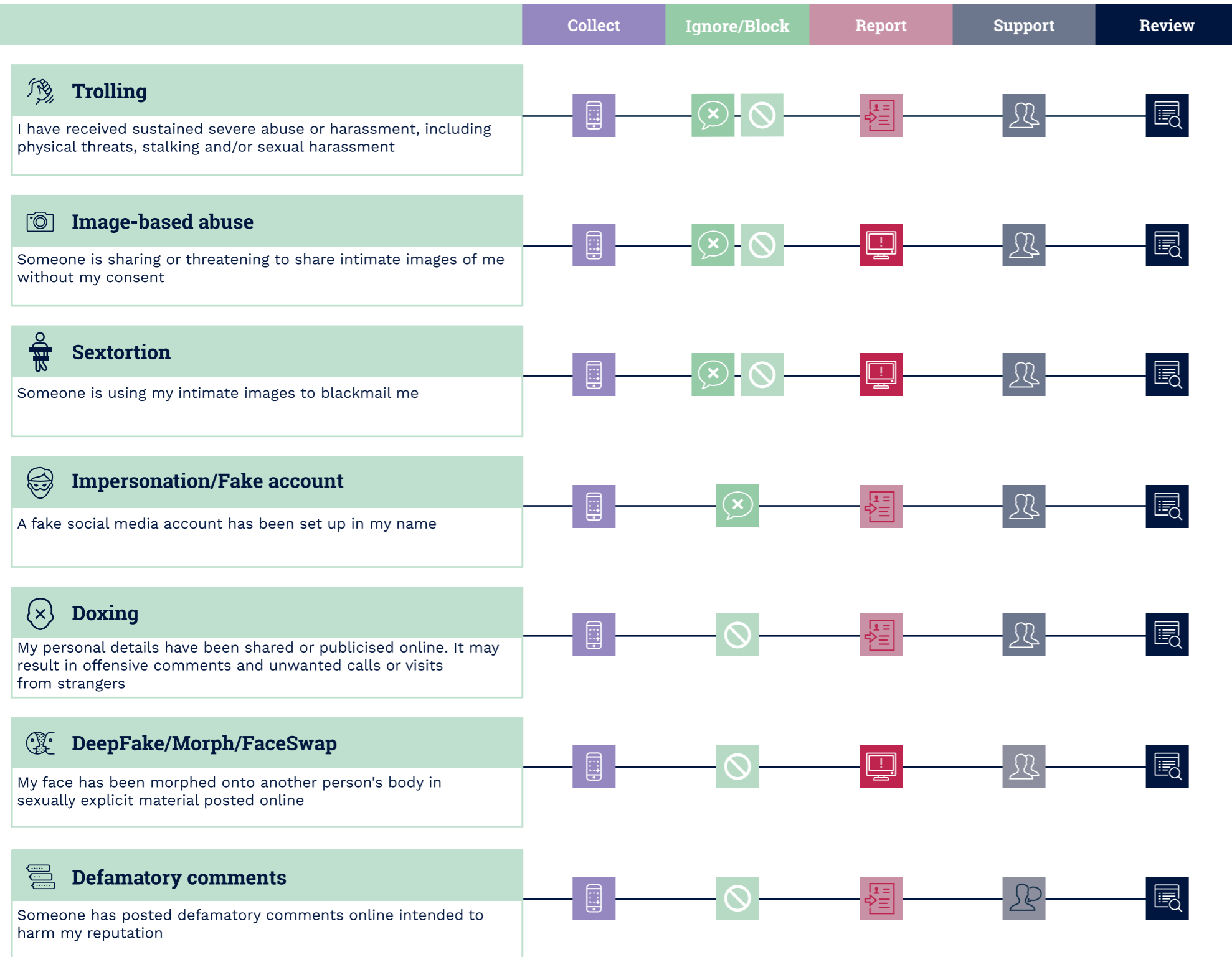


Responding to cyber abuse



What is cyber abuse?

Cyber abuse is online behaviour that is reasonably likely to have a seriously threatening, intimidating, harassing or humiliating effect on a person. It is behaviour that threatens to hurt a person socially, psychologically or even physically.

Cyber abuse can have a devastating impact. It can affect a person's wellbeing, mental health, confidence, relationships and sense of safety. It can also lead to a person stepping back from public conversations or self-censoring out of fear for their privacy and safety.

Cyber abuse can quickly intensify in scale and nature. It can also feel deeply personal.

It is important to remember that cyber abuse is not about you; it reflects on the person who is abusing you.



Preserve evidence



Don't respond/ignore



Block unwanted contact



Report to the social media platform
esafety.gov.au/report-to-socialmedia



Report to us
esafety.gov.au/iba



Seek support
esafety.gov.au/iba/support



You can alter the context of the discussion with constructive comments or positive messaging



Review and update your social media privacy and security settings



If you are at risk of immediate harm, call Triple Zero (000)

Skills and strategies for coping with cyber abuse

There are a number of ways you can respond to cyber abuse

Let's build your psychological armour

Remember your strengths

Don't let the opinions of others define your self-worth. Remind yourself of your best qualities and attributes.



Pause and reflect

Cyber abuse can be overwhelming. Give yourself space and time so that you respond rather than react.



Maintain perspective

While the situation may seem challenging in the moment, remember to focus on the big picture and your main priorities in life.



Acknowledge your feelings

You're allowed to be upset. But try not to deplete your emotional strength by defending yourself against every unwarranted attack. Question whether this is worth your time and energy.



Build a supportive network

Surround yourself with supportive people. You don't need to handle this on your own. Talk with family, friends, peers and mentors who may be best placed to help.



Be kind to yourself

Practice self-care through leisure, exercise good nutrition, adequate sleep, meditation and other relaxation techniques.



Create a safe space offline

Go for a walk, catch up with a friend or read a book. Consider turning off notifications at night or during periods when you want to disconnect.



Stay positive

Emotional reactions can feed the trolls. Don't be afraid to respond to negative comments with a positive attitude.



Be prepared

Clarify your thoughts and be informed on issues so that you are better prepared to take part in online discussions.



Be confident & assertive

In your beliefs, opinions and values. Don't be afraid to advocate for your beliefs and opinions online. Stay true to your character and your sense of right and wrong.



Be a role model

You can gain a sense of purpose by knowing that you're contributing to an improved online world for other people.



Support other people

Help other people when they experience abuse online by safely speaking up or showing other forms of support.

