

# Skyll to Launch 'Deputy' AI Assistant to Educate and Protect Youth After Meta Deletes 63K Sextortion Accounts, FBI Alert

*Meta deletes 63K Nigerian 'sextortion' accounts amid FBI alert; new influencer-led 'Deputy' AI assistant announces launch to educate youth, respond to crises.*

The logo for "Deputy", with "Dep" in black, "ü" in blue, and "ty" in black.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Skyll Inc. ([www.skylapp.com](http://www.skylapp.com)), in partnership with Southern Virginia law enforcement and West Virginia lawmakers, is set to launch 'Deputy' in January 2025—an empathetic AI assistant born from a shared commitment to protect our youth. Deputy is more than a tool; it's a lifeline for children navigating the digital world, offering real-time education on social media safety and immediate crisis response. With the ability to file reports and remove explicit materials swiftly by utilizing public advanced technology from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Deputy stands as a beacon of hope and security in the fight against online exploitation.

The Deputy AI assistant communicates using the likenesses of popular social media influencers regarded by youth as peers.

This initiative is in response to the critical need for increased action and prevention of child sexual extortion, or 'sextortion.' Meta announced Wednesday that it had [deleted over 63,000 Nigerian Instagram accounts](#) involved in sextortion schemes, revealing a more widespread problem than previously acknowledged. This announcement follows a [National Public Safety Alert issued by the FBI and HSI](#), which underscored sextortion as an urgent threat to child safety.

Deputy is built with empathetic AI technology, incorporating an empathic large language model (eLLM). This advanced AI understands and emulates human emotions, offering guidance on social media safety, mental health support, and crisis intervention. Using CyberTipLine and Take It Down, technologies provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Deputy can file reports for investigation by the Department of Justice's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces. Deputy also facilitates the takedown of explicit materials, reassuring

children and making these crucial resources easily accessible during moments of panic.

Users can select from headlining influencers such as Niki Victoria, who have signed up to lend their likenesses. The AI responds in the influencer's voice and with their face, making kids feel safe and understood. "By interacting with an AI that they trust and regard as a peer, children are more likely to open up and feel supported during critical moments," says Niki Victoria, Skyll's headlining fashion and beauty influencer with over 1 million followers each on Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, collectively over 3.7 million followers.

A demonstration has been made available by Skyll on its website ([www.skyllapp.com](http://www.skyllapp.com)).

"Believe it or not, I'm not a real person. I'm an AI twin for Deputy," says the AI-generated young woman in a demonstration video. "I can chat by voice or video, give advice, and even take action when you need me. Deputized by Sheriff Mike Brown and the Safe Surfin' Foundation, I use technology from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. By using this technology, I can file reports to law enforcement, remove unauthorized explicit photos, and help shut down cybercriminals to keep you safe on social media."

She concludes with, "Social media is your space. Together, we make it safe."

Deputy is one of the technologies developed by Skyll to deliver Yourspace, a social media safety education curriculum created jointly by the Safe Surfin' Foundation and Skyll. Mandated by West Virginia Senate Bill 466, which was unanimously passed, this law requires all public schools in the state to implement the curriculum, reaching over 260,000 students. Its passage has set a nationwide precedent, generating immediate interest from other states, including Virginia, North Carolina, Michigan, and Mississippi. "This is just the beginning," said Sheriff Mike Brown, founder of the Safe Surfin' Foundation and longest-serving administrator of the Department of Justice's Southern Virginia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, with over 23 years of dedicated service to protecting children from predators online.

Sextortion is a severe and escalating crisis. Predators exploit social media platforms to coerce victims, often minors, into sharing explicit images, subsequently threatening to publicize these images unless their demands are met. This crime has seen a staggering increase of 1,000% in the past 18 months, fueled in part by a loosely organized group called the Yahoo Boys, operating mainly out of Nigeria, Meta said. Approximately 5% of U.S. middle and high school students have fallen victim, according to ARP.

The psychological toll is devastating, as highlighted by tragic cases such as Braden Markus, who took his own life just 27 minutes after being targeted, and Jordan DeMay, who was driven to suicide within six hours of the initial threat.

According to Thorn, as of June 2024, between 3.5% and 5% of individuals are believed to have experienced sextortion before reaching adulthood. Thorn also notes that the impact on children

can be devastating, "leading to severe trauma and, in extreme cases, suicide due to sextortion."

The FBI's announcement in January of 7,000 reports of sextortion has been dwarfed by today's revelation of Meta taking down 63,000 Instagram accounts involved in sextortion schemes. In addition to removing the Instagram accounts, Meta took down 5,700 Facebook groups, 1,300 Facebook accounts and 200 Facebook pages that were providing tips to scammers. "The sheer volume of these accounts indicates a much larger issue than was ever made known before," said Graeme Page, CEO and co-founder of Skyll. "If each of these 63,000 accounts targeted just 10 kids, that's potentially 630,000 victims already. This is undoubtedly just the tip of the iceberg."

In large part, the enormity of the problem is obscured by the fact that sextortion victims often choose to remain anonymous, as permitted by the law in most jurisdictions.

"This is a national emergency in our own backyard," said Page. "We need comprehensive solutions to protect our children."

Deputy is poised to launch first in schools in January as part of a pilot program for Yourspace in participating institutions.

About Skyll:

Founded by Graeme Page and Marvin Winkler, Skyll's mission is to realize the highest capabilities of every human through the transformative power of education, enabled by unconventional technology.

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