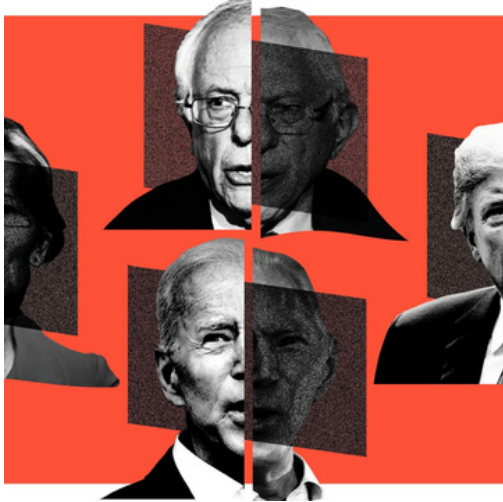


DEEPPFAKES

IS IT A SCHOOL EPIDEMIC FOR TEENS?



“Nudification” apps

Boys in several states have used widely available “nudification” apps to pervert real, identifiable photos of their clothed female classmates, shown attending events like school proms, into graphic, convincing-looking images of the girls with exposed A.I.-generated breasts and genitalia. In some cases, boys shared the faked images in the school lunchroom, on the school bus or through group chats on platforms like Snapchat and Instagram, according to school and police reports. Such digitally altered images to harass, humiliate and bully young women can harm mental health, reputations and physical safety as well as pose risks to their college and career prospects.



Teen girls face the problem

Some 10th-grade girls at Westfield High School alerted administrators that boys in their class had used artificial intelligence software to fabricate sexually explicit images of them and were circulating the faked pictures. Five months later families say the district has done little to publicly address the doctored images or update school policies to hinder exploitative artificial intelligence use.

The school district said it had opened an “immediate investigation”, had immediately notified and consulted with the police, and had provided group counseling to the sophomore class. “All school districts are grappling with the challenges and impact of AI and other technology available to students at any time and anywhere,” Raymond González, the superintendent of Westfield Public Schools, said.



Blindsided last year by the sudden popularity of A.I.-powered chatbots like ChatGPT, schools across the United States scurried to contain the text-generating bots in an effort to forestall student cheating. Now a more alarming A.I. image-generating phenomenon is shaking schools.

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Such digitally altered images – known as “deepfakes” or “deepnudes” – can have devastating consequences. Child sexual exploitation experts say the use of nonconsensual, A.I.-generated images to harass, humiliate and bully young women can harm their mental health, reputations and physical safety as well as pose risks to their college and career prospects. Last month, the Federal Bureau of Investigation warned that it is illegal to distribute computer-generated child sexual abuse material, including realistic-looking A.I.-generated images of identifiable minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct. Yet the student use of exploitative A.I. apps in schools is so new that some districts seem less prepared to address it than others. That can make safeguards precarious for students.

- **A ‘Radical’ Idea:** A charter school in Brooklyn is experimenting with a new way to help families by staying open 12 hours a day. So far, the program seems to be working.
- **A.I.-Doctored Photos:** Teen girls are confronting an epidemic of deepfake nudes in schools, as middle and high school students have used A.I. to fabricate explicit images of female classmates.
- **N.Y.C. Parent Meetings:** In school districts across the city, families are fighting over transgender athletes and how race and discrimination are taught in the classroom.
- **Absences Have ‘Exploded’:** Since the coronavirus pandemic closed schools four years ago, classrooms have seen a sharp increase in student absenteeism across demographics.

