

Sexting Today

Awareness in today's instructional realm



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An uncomfortable issue...

- ⊖ Value system scrutinized and picked apart.
- ⊖ Impacts all levels (parents, staff, community).
- ⊖ Simple truth, the teens around you are doing it.
- ⊖ It has history... remember a “polaroid”?
- ⊖ Sex and technology intersect at Web 2.0

By The Teen Numbers (ages 13-19)

- ⊖ Sexually suggestive photos sent -20% overall, 22% girls, 18% boys, 11% young teen girls (ages 13-16)
- ⊖ Sexually suggestive messages sent -39% of all teens, 37% girls, 40% boys, 48% of teens say they have received such messages.
- ⊖ Overall posting/sending nude images for young adults (ages 20-26) 33% overall, 36% young women, 31% young men

Who Are These Sexually Suggestive Messages And Images Being Sent To?

- ⊖ 71% of teen girls and 67% of teen guys who have sent or posted sexually suggestive content say they have sent/posted this content to a boyfriend/girlfriend.
- ⊖ 21% of teen girls and 39% of teen boys say they have sent such content to someone they wanted to date or hook up with.
- ⊖ 15% of teens who have sent or posted nude/seminude images of themselves say they have done so to someone they only knew online.

Social Impact When Sexually Explicit Images and Messages Get Shared In School...

- ⊖ Reduced school attendance
- ⊖ Increased bullying and harassment
- ⊖ Learned “distrust” of relationships
- ⊖ Emotionally destructive -counseling may be required.

Legal impact

- ⊖ If the person in a sexually explicit image is under 18 in the U.S., it's child pornography. Over age 18 and it's dissemination of pornography to a minor if it is sent to someone under age 18.
- ⊖ For the teen under 18 years, if you take that nude picture, you are manufacturing it, if you send that nude picture you are distributing it.
- ⊖ In at least 4 states, "sexting" kids are facing charges of child pornography and sexual exploitation of a minor.
- ⊖ Vermont and Nebraska legislators are considering a bill that would legalize "sexting" between teens 13 to 18 years of age.

Cyberspace Truths: Our Teens Should Know...

- ⊖ Don't assume anything you send or post is going to remain private. (Messages and images will get passed around -virtually guaranteed).
- ⊖ There is no changing your mind in cyberspace -anything you send or post will never truly go away. (Many different people will find your past posts).
- ⊖ Don't give in to the pressure to do something that makes you uncomfortable, even in cyberspace. (Pressure from guys and friends).
- ⊖ Consider the recipient's reaction. (Whatever you post, write or send are what people will think of you).
- ⊖ Nothing is truly anonymous. (People can find you from your web info).

Cyberspace Truths:

What We Should Be Doing (staff informing **parents**)...

- ⊖ Talk to your kids about what they are doing in cyberspace. (Understand short/long term consequences)
- ⊖ Know who your kids are communicating with. (It's not nagging, it's part of our job as parents)
- ⊖ Consider limitations on electronic communication.
- ⊖ Be aware of what your teens are posting publicly (If everyone else can look at it, why can't you?)
- ⊖ Set expectations (Give reminders from time to time)

Things to Consider...

- ⊖ Stick to state law and board policy when deciding action.
- ⊖ You should be administrative and have probable cause with student safety in mind to look through student cell phones and MP3 players.
- ⊖ Always, always, always bring in legal counsel if in doubt.
- ⊖ Approach same age exchanges with caution.
- ⊖ Your precedence will set your outcome.
- ⊖ You already have policies in place for student expectations.
- ⊖ Discretion and confidentiality will reward every time.

Sources:

- ⊖ <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/sestech/>
- ⊖ <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=101735230>
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pi](http://www.seattlepi.com/local/388940_bothell22.html?source=my_pi)