

SEXTING

Today we are more connected than ever. Texting is an important part of our social lives, but it is important to think twice before hitting send.

WHAT IS SEXTING?

Sexting is sending or receiving sexual messages or photos on your cell phone.

HOW OFTEN DOES IT HAPPEN?

- Roughly half of teens have received a sexual message from someone else
- 2 out of 5 teens have sent a sexual message to someone else

NO PRIVACY

In some cases, it's illegal. If you send or receive a sexual picture of someone underage, you could face child pornography charges, go to jail, or have to register as a sex offender in your state.

Also, when you send an image or suggestive message, you aren't guaranteed any privacy. Pictures or messages are sent to other people at times, especially after break-ups.

TIPS FOR TEENS

- Never take photos of yourself or send messages that you wouldn't want everyone – your classmates, teachers, friends, and family – to see.
- Report any nude pictures you receive on your phone to an adult you trust (like a teacher or school counselor).

BEFORE PRESSING SEND

- Don't assume anything you send will remain private. Your messages and images might get passed around, even if you don't think so now.
- Remember that anything you send or post will never truly go away. Even if you delete something, there is no telling who has already copied, saved or forwarded it elsewhere.
- Don't give in to peer pressure. Many teens say that pressure from friends or someone they liked is what prompted them to send sexual messages or photos. It may be easier to express yourself through texting or communicating online, but remember that whatever you write or post will shape people's beliefs about the real you.
- Consider the recipient's reaction. Just because a message is meant in fun doesn't mean that someone else will take it that way.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional information about Sexting visit:

- <http://us.reachout.com/facts/factsheet/understanding-sexting>
- <http://pewresearch.org/pdf/teens-and-sexting.pdf>
- www.weRnative.org
- www.gbtchb.org

