

What Parents Need to Know About Sexting

Sexting is defined as the sending or receiving of nude or seminude images or sexually explicit text messages and can happen when one person pressures another to send a nude or seminude photo.

For teenagers, this scenario can happen between people who are dating or those who just started to like each other and one teenager is asked to "prove" they like the other person. Sexting can also happen when one person sends a nude or seminude photo to another without asking for consent first. Sexting can lead to the spread of the photos or messages such that other people see them or distribute them. For teenagers, this can happen if a dating relationship ends; the couple gets in a fight; or a friend borrows the teenager's phone, sees the photos, and sends them to others.

Thus, it may not be surprising to learn that sexting has many risks. These risks include emotional distress for those who are pressured to send these photos as well as those who receive these photos. Sexting can also cause harm if photos are distributed widely, causing increased distress or embarrassment. Sexting can trigger legal consequences. However, sexting is not rare. Surveys have shown that approximately 12% to 16% of youths aged 10 to 19 years have sent a sexual photo to someone else.

Why do adolescents engage in sexting? Adolescence is a time of life in which teenagers are learning about their own bodies, how to take risks, and about romantic attractions. For some teenagers, engaging in sexting may feel like a way to explore their attraction to someone. It is recommended that rather than having one big talk about sexting, have several small talks over time to check in on your child's understanding, see if there are questions, and reinforce key messages.

Tips for Talking With Your Child About Sexting

Start the Discussion Early

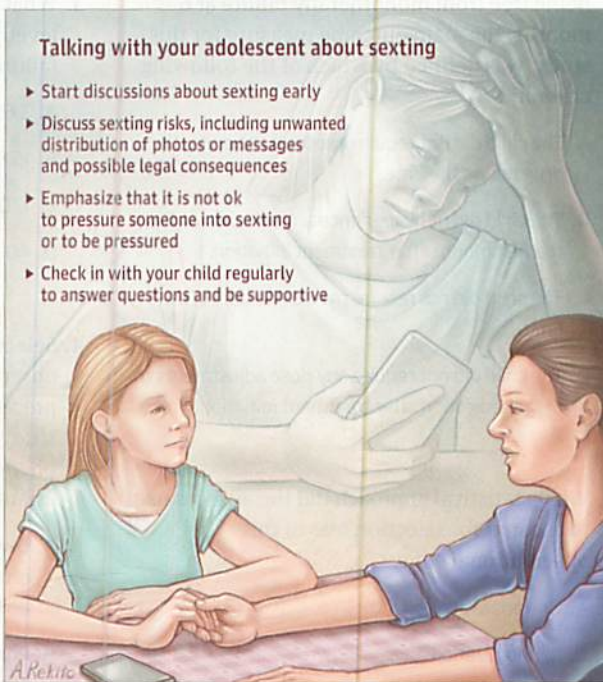
Start the conversation with your child by asking broad questions such as, "Have you heard of sexting? Tell me what you think it is." You can then frame your conversation around how much your child does or does not know. Seeing a story in the news, community, or at your child's school is a good prompt to check in again. Emphasize the consequences of sexting as shown by situations in the news where it has gone badly.

Use Examples Appropriate for Your Child's Age

For tweens with cell phones, let them know that text messages should never include images of anyone without clothes. For teenagers, be specific about what sexting is and that it can lead to serious consequences. For all ages, remind them that once an image is sent, it is no longer in their control and they cannot get it back. What is online or sent via text can exist forever and be sent to others.

Talking with your adolescent about sexting

- ▶ Start discussions about sexting early
- ▶ Discuss sexting risks, including unwanted distribution of photos or messages and possible legal consequences
- ▶ Emphasize that it is not ok to pressure someone into sexting or to be pressured
- ▶ Check in with your child regularly to answer questions and be supportive



Remind Your Teenager of Their Own Worth

Let your child know that being pressured to send a sext is not okay, nor is it a way to "prove" their love or show attraction. Let your child know you understand it is hard to be pressured or dared to do something but that they have the power to stand up for themselves. Remind your teenager that they are worthy of respect.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For parents, Commonsense Media's Sexting Handbook:
https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/landing_pages/sexting_handbook_ce_1020_1_.pdf

For teenagers, to help resist cyber peer pressure:
<https://www.thatsnotcool.com>

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Online Quiz Questions

Comparative Effectiveness of Levetiracetam vs Phenobarbital for Infantile Epilepsy

- Being free from monotherapy failure at 6 months, the main outcome measure for this study, was defined by which of the following criteria?
 - The child did not require a second antiepileptic drug during the time.
 - The child did not experience any seizures within the first month after treatment initiation.
 - The child did not require pyridoxine during the time.
 - The child did not require any dose adjustments to their medication after treatment initiation.
- What statistical approach did the authors use to account for selection bias in this observational study?
 - Univariate analysis.
 - Randomization.
 - Propensity scores with inverse probability of treatment weighting technique.
 - Generalized estimating equations.
- What percentage of children receiving levetiracetam were free from monotherapy failure?
 - 3.6%.
 - 15.8%.
 - 17.0%.
 - 40.2%.
- Selection bias is a potential limitation in any observational study. What selection bias, if present, might explain the findings in this study that levetiracetam appears superior to phenobarbital as initial monotherapy for infantile-onset epilepsy?
 - Levetiracetam may have been prescribed more often for children perceived as having worse epilepsy.
 - Phenobarbital may have been prescribed more often in children perceived as having worse epilepsy.
 - Nonsyndromic epilepsy has many causes.
 - Children aged younger than 1 month were excluded.

Educational Objective

To compare the effectiveness of levetiracetam vs phenobarbital for nonsyndromic infantile epilepsy.

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