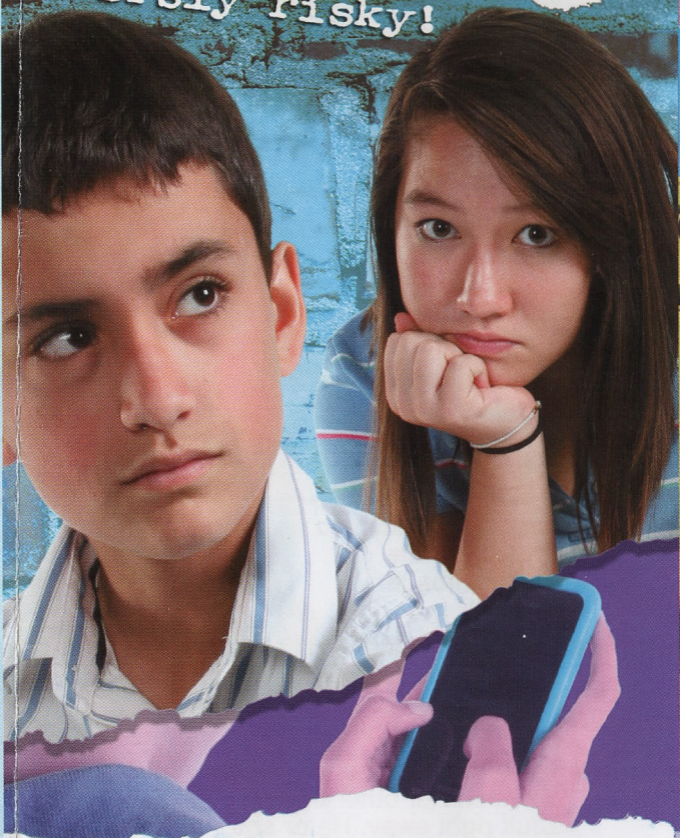


Sexting

--Srsly risky!





Texting vs. SEXTING

**Do you know
the difference?**

Texting can be simple and fun.

Texting is a great way to quickly share information, photos and more with friends, parents and others.

But sexting is a different story.

Sexting means sending, receiving or forwarding sexually explicit messages or sexual* photos or videos of yourself or another person. These messages, photos or videos may be texted, or shared on messaging apps or other online platforms. Sexting may sound flirty and harmless. But it can lead to serious problems.

*“Sexual” generally means nude, partially nude or showing sexual activity.

Please read:

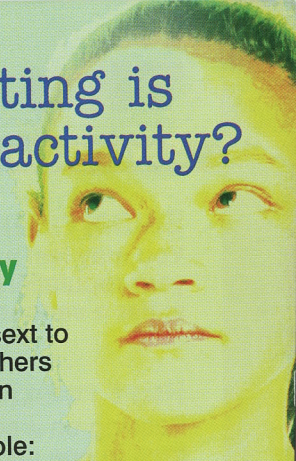
Talk to a professional! This folder is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified expert.

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Think sexting is a private activity?

Think again!


A sext can quickly become public.

A person may send a sext to just one person. But others may still see it. This can happen by accident or on purpose. For example:

- After a breakup, a person may pass on a sext out of anger—or just to be mean.
- A person may forward a sext to just one or two “trusted” friends—and they may pass it on... and so on.
- Others may have access to a person’s phone or other device. Or they may hack into a person’s account.

You can’t control it.

Information online can be copied, shared, re-posted or altered by many people. **Once it’s out there, you can’t get it back.**



**Some people may
tell you sexting
is no big deal.
Don’t believe it!**

The risks are real.

Sexing can lead to:

Embarrassment

You may feel ashamed and worried about your reputation. Your self-esteem could suffer a serious blow.

Hurt relationships

Passing on a sext can cause people to lose trust in one another. They may feel hurt or angry. Friendships or romances could end.

Bullying, sexual harassment or blackmail

You could become the target of bullying—in person or online. People could make unwelcome sexual comments or advances. Or they could try to use your sexts against you to get something they want.

School discipline

Students may be suspended or expelled, or kicked off a team or out of a club for sexting.

Trouble at home

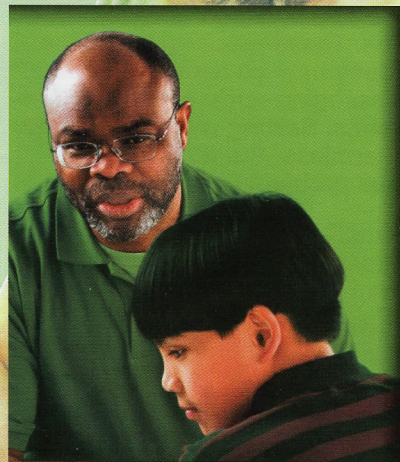
Your parents may feel angry, embarrassed or disappointed. You may lose privileges—and your parents' trust.

Legal problems

Laws related to sexting by minors vary from state to state. But some young people have faced serious legal charges.

Attention from criminals

Sexts can end up posted online—with or without your knowledge. Sexual predators (people who search online for young people to sexually abuse) may find them—and you.



Sexing can also hurt you years from now. Imagine if a college admissions officer or an employer found an old sext during an online search.



If the pressure's ON

Stand up for yourself.

If a group or person asks you to send a sext, don't give in. You could:

- Say no. Or ignore the request.
- Give a reason—"That's sharing way too much."

People who really care about you won't pressure you to do something unsafe.

Do the right thing.

If someone sends you an inappropriate message, image or video:

- Don't reply. And don't share it with anyone. Passing it on could land you in big trouble.
- Tell a parent, teacher, school counselor or other trusted adult right away. He or she can help find the right way to deal with it. Get his or her OK before deleting the message.

Already sent something you now regret? Don't panic. Do ask a parent, teacher or school counselor for help.

Be smart when you communicate!

Think it over.

Before you send, forward or post anything, ask yourself:

- How would I feel if my parents, grandparents, teachers or coach saw this?
- Would I want this posted at school where everyone could see it?
- Would I say this or share this in person?

If the answer is "Not good" or "No," don't share it!

Keep personal information personal.

Don't reply to any message from someone you don't know. And don't post personal information online. Examples include your name, age, address or school name.

Follow the rules.

This includes school rules for using digital devices and the Internet. It also includes any rules your family may have at home.

Stay in control-- don't sext!