



Sexting: Advice for young people about the dangers and risks online

The internet is certainly a valuable and fun resource for instant entertainment, sharing media, meeting new people, keeping in touch and a phenomenal learning tool; however, with this technology comes great responsibility.

The internet poses a significant amount of risk from various forms of illegal activity, ranging from bullying, indecent images, through to fraud; people on the internet aren't always who they seem.

In the same way you learn about safety when you leave the house, it is important to learn how to stay safe online and to use these are skills throughout your life.

Sexting

Sexting refers to sending and receiving messages, photos or videos which contain:

- * **Images or videos of a sexual nature**
- * **Sexually worded texts**
- * **Nudity**
- * **'underwear shots'**

A common scenario is when images or video are shared between boyfriend/girlfriend, friends; or with someone they only know online.

Common reasons why people might 'sext'

- * Being harassed, threatened or blackmailed to do it: it's easier to give in
- * Made to feel guilty if you don't do what they ask
- * Feel pressured to 'prove' you're willing
- * Their friends are doing it
- * Feel they 'owe' it to their boyfriend/girlfriend
- * They feel proud of their body and want to show it off to other people
- * It's ok because they're in love with the person and trust them
- * Wanting to fit in with in with friends

Remember

There's no turning back once you press send

If you use apps like Snapchat, people can take screen shots to capture the image

You risk giving the wrong message and be judged as someone you are not

You may attract unwanted attention, resulting in cyber-bullying or cyber stalking.

Help & Support

Check out the ThinkuKnow 'Exposed' video clip as an example of how sexting can go bad. The organisations that can give you information, advice and support to report incidents



A web site offering age appropriate games, videos and information about the internet; find out what's good, what's not and what you can do to stay safe; report online incidents that make you feel worried or uncomfortable www.thinkuknow.co.uk



If you know someone who is carrying out any form of cyber-crime, you can report them anonymously through Fearless or CrimeStoppers www.fearless.org

