

Sex and Technology: How to Protect Your Teenager, Know the Law -- Educate Your Child

Sexting Statistics:

- 22% of teen girls have admitted to sexting, and about 18% of boys have admitted the same.

What Is Sexting? Sexting is when sexually explicit photos or videos are sent to other people's cell phones or devices. This type of media often depicts partially nude or fully nude individuals. Sexting also includes explicit messages that teens may share. Once the sexting photos, videos, or messages are sent, there is no control over who will see it or potentially receive it.

Teens Need To Know That Sexting Is Against The Law!

Teens under the age of 18 who take partially nude or nude photos/videos of themselves and send them to others are disseminating, what the law considers to be child pornography. When partially nude or nude photos/videos are received, the receiver is in the possession of child pornography. Passing this type of illegal material on to friends is considered disseminating child pornography.

When a child or teenager is charged, it is a serious crime that is considered a felony. If convicted, they will be required to register as a sex offender.

How To Prevent Your Child From Sexting

Open dialog and active involvement are critical in preventing your student from sexting. Talking with your child about the legal consequences provides the opportunity for discussion and prevention. Remind your child that sexting can potentially destroy a person's life because of the social and legal ramifications.

- 1) Talk to your kids about what they are doing on phones and in cyberspace.
- 2) Know who your children's circle of friends and communication habits.
- 3) Consider limitations on electronic communication.
- 4) Be aware of what your teens are posting publicly.
- 5) Set expectations.

Teach Your Child 5 Things To Think About Before Pressing Send

- 1) Don't assume anything you send or post is going to remain private.
- 2) There is no changing your mind in cyberspace - anything you send or post will never truly go away.
- 3) Don't give in to pressure to do something that makes you uncomfortable, even in cyberspace.
- 4) Consider the recipient's reaction; messages are not always received as they were intended.
- 5) Nothing is truly anonymous.

Information about bullying and cyberbullying can be found on the Cleveland County Schools website by clicking the "Bully Prevention" link that is located in the *Students* section in the top navigation menu.