

What is Sexting?

Sexting can be defined as:

*To send someone a sexually explicit digital image, video, text message, or email, typically a photo of oneself, usually by a cell phone.

*Transmitting sexually explicit messages, primarily through cell phone text messaging

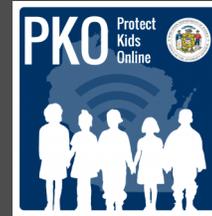
Sexting has become very popular with teenagers, arguably being seen as just another step in building a relationship. Having discussions with kids about their attitudes towards sexting as well as the consequences should they choose to participate could decrease the amount of these occurrences.



Want more information?

Email us at ICAC@DOJ.STATE.WI.US for additional help!

Find us on www.protectkidsonlinewi.gov and tune in for our Protect Kids online (PKO) podcast!



Find us on:



Twitter @WICACTaskForce/
Facebook WI ICAC Task Force

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
www.missingkids.org



NetSmartz (information for kids, parents and educators)



www.netsmartz.org

WI Victim Helpline (WI Office of Victim Services)
www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs



WI Department of Public Instruction (DPI) dpi.wi.gov/internet-safety



INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN TASK FORCE

SEXTING

WWW.DOJ.STATE.WI.US/DCI/ICAC

Wisconsin Department of Justice
Risser Justice Building

17 W Main St
PO Box 7857
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 266-1671
Fax: (608) 267-2777

WISCONSIN INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN (ICAC) TASK FORCE

DISCUSSION POINTS

No parent/guardian wants to think about their child sexting. However, a great way to keep them at least informed of the consequences of sexting is keeping an open line of communication. Here are some things you can ask them about to approach the topic of 'sexting' with your child:

- * Have you ever received a naked picture on your cell phone?
- * Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to send a nude or a sexual picture?
- * Do you think it's okay to send 'sexy' messages or images? Why?
- * What could happen to you if you send or forward a naked picture?
- * How likely is it that images and messages intended for one person will be seen by someone else?
- * Do you know of someone who has sent a 'sexy' image to someone else? Has and how has your opinion changed of them?
- * What are some things you could say if someone asks you for a sexually explicit picture?

IMPORTANT FACTS



- * Sending, possession, or taking a naked or sexually explicit picture of someone under 18 years of age is illegal regardless if it was consensual
- * Girls are just as likely as boys to send or receive sext messages
- * The older kids get, the more likely they are to send or receive sext messages
- * Although there are reported statistics of how many teens sext (around 15%), the actual amount is probably much higher
- * Kids are sexting at younger ages most likely due to the fact kids are also getting phones at younger ages
- * Sexting can also lead to SEXTORTION, which is when someone threatens to distribute your private and sensitive material if you don't provide them with more sexual images, sexual favors, or even money
- * Of about the 1,750 cybertips the WI ICAC received in 2017, over 30% of those tips were about teenage sexting

CONSEQUENCES

What can happen if you send a sext message and it gets discovered?

*Legally: Although Wisconsin has a few ordinances that in certain areas of the state, instances of sexting result in fines or having to go through diversion programs, in most areas of the country that is not the case. Technically, if you have sent, taken, or possess a nude or sexually explicit picture of a child under the age of 18 you are illegally possessing, creating, and/or distributing child pornography and you could be prosecuted and arrested (for minors this is very rare but possible.) Along with this, you could be forced to register as a sex offender and parents may also be exposed to legal consequences.

*Socially: If you send an explicit picture and it gets sent around, you may face embarrassment, humiliation, bullying, guilt, shame, objectification, and even lose friendships. If this happens, the website <https://needhelpnow.ca/> is a resource to help you figure out how to cope with and possibly erase images if your picture is exposed.