

PARENTS RESOURCE

“It is your life, these are your friends. However, as you move about, contact new people in person or on devices, I can’t very well protect you. I want to help you learn how to make yourself safer, to be your own guardian of your own privacy & security.”



Internet Safety Resources

- Enough Is Enough – <http://www.enough.org/>
- Internet Safety 101 – <http://www.internetsafety101.org/>
- Google’s Safety Center – <https://www.google.com/safetycenter/families/start/>
- iKeepSafe – <http://www.ikeepSAFE.org/>
- Stop Cyberbullying <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/>
- Make a Difference for Kids <http://www.makeadifferenceforkids.org/>
- Cybersafety Prevention 101 <http://www.datehookup.com/content-cybersafety-prevention-101.htm>
- Facebook for Parents <http://facebookforparents.org/>
- Be Smart, Be Safe! <http://www.edmondschools.net/cheyenne/MediaCenter/InternetSafety.aspx>
- Internet Safety Resources <http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/K12/internet-safety>
- Online Predators and Their Victims <http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/amp-632111.pdf>
- Common Sense Media – <http://www.common Sense Media.org/>
- Movieguide – <http://www.movieguide.org>

The following organizations regularly feature Internet Safety updates on their blogs:

- Educate and Empower Kids Blog – <http://educateempowerkids.org/>
- Covenant Eyes – <http://www.covenanteyes.com/blog/>

FOR MORE HELP TIPS- National Center on Sexual Exploitation
<http://endsexualexploitation.org/resources-parents/>

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SEXTING

Whether or not you think your teen is sexting, many teens are or their friends are doing it. Eye opening [statistics](#) show that 1 in 5 teens *admit* to sexting. The key word in this statistic is “admit.”

There are far more teens who are sexting but don’t admit to it. I can bet the parents of these teens are generally unaware their teen is a “sexter.” Due to the sexting epidemic that is an unfortunate reality today, it is essential that parents talk frequently to their kids about sexting if they don’t want their teen participating in it.



The first question is when to start talking to your kids about the peril sexting brings. The first discussion should commence before your child even gets a cell phone or any device that’s capable of sending a sext (ie. computers, tablets, etc). Once a child receives such a device, they are susceptible to the influences of sexting. To prevent your teen from sexting you should take initiative. After your child has a device, you should frequently have an open discussion on the topic. Frequent and open discussions about sexting will make your child feel comfortable to approach and talk to you about it.



The second question is how to talk to your child about sexting. Sexting is a difficult topic to approach and requires a balancing act. You don’t want to appear too judgmental or forceful, but at the same time you want to be firm with where you stand and help them to see the dangers and consequences.

To aid in your discussion we have listed a few helpful talking points:

- **What do you think is considered sexting?**
 - Sexting: sending someone sexually explicit photographs or messages, whether verbal or in pictures

- **Is there any harm to sexting?**
 - Can be charged for child pornography (by sending or receiving sexts)
 - Images/messages follow you, you can’t delete them once they are sent
 - Sexually objectifies you
 - Images are almost always shared with others besides the receiver.
 - Reputation and future opportunities are often at risk.

- Many stories of children being forced into prostitution or sex trafficking begin with the “pimp” using sexts as a means of coercion to get them to comply with their demands.

Is sexting worth the attention?

- The receiver and those they show it to are likely to lose some respect for you.
- You become a sexual object instead of a real person
- The individual asking will often try to make you feel special but all he/she really wants is a sexually explicit photo. Odds are, if he/she doesn't get it from you they will just try and get it from someone else. As long as they get it, they don't care if it's from you or the next person

- **Do you have control over a picture/ message once it's sent?**

- Absolutely not. Nearly every teen who receives a sext ends up sharing it or forwarding to others, and many sexts end up on third party websites. All of this usually occurs without your knowledge or consent.

- **Why do people sext?**

- Seeking attention/approval
- Peer pressure
- Bullying
- Want to satisfy another



Here are some tips to start the discussion:

- Talk about healthy media choices in general.
- Mention a story you heard in the news about other kids who are engaged in sexting.
- Ask if they know anyone who does this, maybe other kids at school.
- Ask if they have ever been asked to sext.
- Ask your kids about their future goals and then start talking about some hurdles they might encounter that would impede those goals (sexting can impact grades, college acceptance, etc.)
- Have frequent talks about healthy intimacy and boundaries, work sexting into the discussions.

REMEMBER THAT THIS IS NOT A ONE-TIME CONVERSATION!

Obtain the CHOSEN documentary and show young people how easily girls can be trafficked when they “don't know” the signs.

www.sharedhope.org/chosen



Talking to your kids is the most crucial and effective way to prevent sexting. Genuinely understanding the harms and consequences of sexting will be the best form of prevention.

It's a lot better for your kids to *choose* not to sext than to force them not to sext.

However, you can also consider taking actions to monitor your kids' devices. This can be done a number of ways. To get you started, here are three ideas:

1. Check your child's devices at random times. Checking at random times will encourage your kids to not send or receive anything inappropriate because they don't know when you may check their device.
2. Don't let your child go to bed with their devices. When a teen goes to bed they are left behind closed doors for hours, and as the saying goes, "Nothing good happens after midnight." This creates a prime environment for sexting. Don't let that environment be created.
3. Use a program or app that helps you monitor your kid's cell phone and Internet activity. Dr. Phil has an excellent list of recommended programs to use.

<http://www.drphil.com/articles/article/603>

MORE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

<http://endsexualexploitation.org/resources-parents/>

- A list of resources for parents, includes: talking about porn, safe media choices, technology solutions, discussing healthy intimacy, etc.
- **How to find if your teen is sexting on Snapchat**
<http://money.cnn.com/2014/09/03/technology/social/spy-on-snapchat/>
- **More programs for monitoring your child's device:**
 - [WebWatcher](http://www.webwatcher.com/): <http://www.webwatcher.com/>
 - [TeenSafe](http://www.teensafe.com/): <http://www.teensafe.com/>
 - [Review of best cell phone monitoring softwares of 2015](http://cell-phone-monitoring-software-review.toptenreviews.com/): <http://cell-phone-monitoring-software-review.toptenreviews.com/>

Further help with talking points:

- <http://www.wcsap.org/sexting-talking-points-youth-focused>
- <http://www.whowillyouempower.com/craigsblog/2014/4/22/sexting-a-digital-topic-to-talk-about-with-your-teen>
- <http://www.childmind.org/en/posts/articles/2011-6-8-how-talk-your-kids-about-sexting>