

## **Sexting and Social Media**

### **What is sexting?**

Sexting is sending a sexual text message with a picture or movie of people who are naked or having sex. It also includes posting these types of pictures or movies online through social media. A survey found that one in 5 teens has texted or posted online naked pictures or videos of themselves. Teens who do sexting may be called a teen who “sends” by another teen.

### **Why should I worry?**

Most cell phones connect to the internet. Even if you trust others not to share your pictures, their phone or email may not be secure. This means your pictures might be seen by others on the internet. A fight or an argument may cause someone to send out your picture. Once the picture is on the internet, it never goes away.

### **Can minors (under age 18) get in trouble for sexting?**

In the state of Wisconsin, these naked pictures are called child pornography. Taking, receiving, or sending the pictures is a felony. You could be labeled as a sex offender for the rest of your life.



### **What if I didn't take the pictures?**

You could be charged if you receive a naked or sexual picture of a minor and do not delete it right away. This is a felony. You could be charged and labeled as a sex offender for the rest of your life if you are found guilty.

If you get a nude or semi-nude photo of a minor, report it to the police right away. Even if you erase a photo it can be traced back to your hard drive. The only way to clear yourself of possible charges is to report it immediately.

### **What if I say it's ok for others to see naked or sexual pictures of me?**

If you are a minor and send naked or sexual pictures of yourself it is a felony, a serious crime. These pictures could cause you problems for the rest of your life. Employers and colleges have easy access to the internet. Think about how you would feel if these people or someone you know were able to see naked pictures or movies of you. Most people do not want others to see naked pictures of them.

### **What if someone sends naked pictures of me to others?**

Tell your parents, a teacher, a trusted adult, or your local police department right away. The pictures are child pornography. It is a very serious crime to send them out. No matter how the person got the pictures, they should never be used against you or to control you.

Never give in to threats. Always tell your parents and authorities if you are being threatened. Otherwise, it will likely get worse and more dangerous.

**ALERT:** Call your doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if you have special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.

## **Websites that may be helpful**

<https://youngwomenshealth.org/parents/internet-safety-parent/>

<http://www.missingkids.com/home>

<http://www.missingkids.com/theissues/onlineexploitation/sexortion>

<https://www.netsmartz.org/Home>