

# DANGERS OF SEXTING

Sexting is sharing or receiving nude or partially nude photos or videos or other sexually explicit messages through your cell phone or online. Some people sext because they see others doing it and assume it's no big deal. Maybe they are trying to impress or establish intimacy with a partner. Often, they do it because they feel pressured. Even if it feels like it would be safe to engage in sexting, it can quickly become a dangerous and serious issue.



- Sexting is illegal when it includes nude images of anyone under 18. There can be serious legal consequences from texting or forwarding nude images of someone underage, even if the picture is of you. Report any images you receive. Talk with a parent or trusted adult about what to do. To report an image, call the Cyber Tip Line (800) 843-5678 or visit <https://report.cybertip.org/>.
- Sexting can lead to **sextortion**, which is a kind of blackmail where someone who has an explicit photo of you threatens to share it with others unless you do what they say. Sometimes they ask for money and sometimes they ask for even more images or videos.
- Sexting can also lead to **revenge porn**, which is when someone (often an ex-partner) shares photos or videos of you to harm you.
- Leaked or shared pictures can affect your family and impact your future and career.
- Sexts never go away. If they get online, predators may pass them around without your knowledge.
- Hiding your face does not always make your photo anonymous, especially if you have tattoos, moles, or other identifying features.

Do not take or share pictures, even of yourself, that you would not want family members to see. Remember, the best way to prevent a picture or video from getting into the wrong hands is to **never** take the picture in the first place.

For more information, check out these resources:

- [Teen Sexting: Think Twice Before You Hit "Send"](#)
- [State Sexting Laws](#)
- [Sextortion](#)
- [You sent a Sext. Now What?](#)
- [Sexting: Advice for Teens](#)



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