

SEXTING DANGERS



Parents and trusted adults: During summer break, teens have a lot more time to spend online. It's essential to have open discussions with them about online risks, including the consequences of sexting, to help them navigate the digital world safely and make informed decisions. Use this tip sheet to help start the conversation.

What is Sexting?

Sexting is sending, receiving or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photos or videos via cellphone, computer or other digital device. This often occurs between young people but can also unknowingly involve a young person and an adult.



Normalize Conversations

Have age-appropriate talks before issues arise. Create an environment where they feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics and can talk to you without judgement or fear if they encounter something online that make them feel uncomfortable.



Teach the Risks

Sexting is risky behavior. Sometimes, teens self-produce images or videos and share them with others. If predators get their hands on these images or videos, they can use them to exploit teens.



Emphasize Privacy and Respect

Discuss the permanency of data and encourage children and teens to respect the boundaries of others, emphasizing that private images should not be shared.



Educate About Consequences

Teach them the emotional, social and legal risks of sexting, including how quickly material may spread in the digital world. Explain that minors shouldn't disseminate sexually explicit material because it's illegal.



Set Clear Expectations

Create a contract with your teen and set time and area limits for use of devices.



Discuss Peer Pressure

Talk about peers or unknown users with fake profiles who may pressure them to create or share explicit content.

You can also check out takeitdown.ncmec.org. This free service is one step people can take to help remove online nude, partially nude, or sexually explicit photos and videos taken before age 18.