
Sexting

Sexting is a significant issue for older teenagers and involves the sharing of indecent images of themselves with others. It may be the intention for the image to be shared only with one person, but invariably these pictures or videos are shared across the internet. Such images can be a part of the early stages of grooming, especially when the potential victim has only 'met' the abuser online.

Although sexting is a widespread phenomenon, it is illegal to send or be in possession of indecent images or videos of people under 18 (Protection of Children Act 1978 and Criminal Justice Act 1988). In the recent past, the police were giving 'words of advice' to under-18s about these images, but they are now more likely to record the offence as a crime, with the potential serious consequences that would follow a conviction of creating or possessing indecent images of children.

Why do people send 'sexts'?

- experimental phase prior to being sexually active
- as a joke or a dare
- fun or flirtatious
- in lieu of sexual activity
- to fit in
- proud of their body
- to show commitment to a relationship
- because they are 'in love'
- easy to do; anonymous

Why is 'sexting' such a problem?

- it is illegal to send or possess images of under 18s
- revenge or intimidation after a relationship comes to an end
- lose control of where the images or videos go
- lead to depression and suicide of victims

Resource: So you got naked online www.swgfl.org.uk/sextinghelp