



Peer-to-Peer Abuse: Sexting

What is Sexting? Sexting is sending sexually explicit texts, photographs, videos or messages through the use of cell phones or other information and communication technologies. **Sexting can be a form of cyber bullying or sexual harassment** and can have

serious negative consequences for the individuals involved, including **emotional and psychological distress**, social consequences and **potential legal charges** of the production/distribution of **child pornography!** Some states are passing laws that would incur penalties of minors found guilty of sexting! **Warning Signs: Changes in mood or behavior**, especially after online or cell phone use. **Sudden increase or decrease use** of the computer, cell phone or other electronic forms of communication. **Avoids talking** about what they are doing online or attempts to **hide their online activities. Withdraws from family or friends.** Avoids school, church or other peer activities. Shows signs of general distress, such as depression, change in sleep and eating habits, exhibiting physical ailments, change in school academic performance or activities, thoughts of self harm...

What can you do? Teach your children about the potential consequences of sexting. Talk about qualities of healthy relationships and mutual respect and what to do if someone sends them inappropriate online messages or pictures. Have clear expectations of appropriate online behavior.

For more information:

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