



# Oakfield Digital Guardian Council

Guide to:

*SEXTING*



Oakfield

HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE

# What is Sexting?

- ① Sexting or sending nudes is when someone shares a sexual message, naked or semi-naked image, video or text message with another person.
- ① It does not have to be a nude image of them and could be an image of someone else.
- ① Young people can send nudes or 'sext' using phones, tablets and laptops. They can be shared across any application, site or game, including during a live stream.
- ① The most common place to share them is on social media channels and online messenger services like Whatsapp.



# What are the risks?

- ⊙ It is important you talk to your child about the risks of sexting and let them know they can come to you if someone is pressuring them to send or share nudes. It is a criminal offence for anybody to share nude photos or videos under the age of 18.
- ⊙ The risks of sexting include:
  - Losing control of the image/video and how they are shared. Once it is shared online it is public and other people can save or forward the content to others.
  - Blackmailing, bullying and harm. Young people can have their image/video shared without their consent. This can lead to them feeling embarrassed, shame or distressed.



# Why do kids 'Sext'?

- ⊙ There are many reasons why someone may want to sext or send content. These include:
  - peer pressure
  - being blackmailed, harassed or threatened
  - to increase their self-esteem
  - to prove their sexuality
  - feeling worried about being seen as 'not sexy', or 'shy' if they don't
  - feeling confident about themselves – and wanting to share their confidence and pride with others
  - feeling like they 'owe' their boyfriend or girlfriend and being made to feel guilty if they don't
  - being in love with someone and fully trusting them
  - they're in a long distance or online relationship and want to have sexual relationship.





# How to support your child

⊙ If your child's been sending, sharing or receiving sexual messages, photos or videos, you may feel upset, angry or confused. It's natural to feel like this. Your children may also feel anxious talking about what's happened, but there are ways you can reassure them.

- trying not to shout at them, or make them feel like it's their fault. They're probably worried and need your help and advice.
- reassuring them and offering support – remind them they can always talk to you, another trusted adult, or [Childline](#).
- asking open questions such as "what happened?" rather than asking "why have you done it", as this may stop them from opening up to you.
- talking to them about how to treat others online and what is and isn't appropriate online behaviour.
- reminding them that people might not always be who they say they are online, so they should be careful about talking to anyone they don't know.
- telling their school, if your child agrees. Schools can keep an eye on the situation and help stop images or videos being shared. They can also support any other children who've been affected or have a counselling service children can self-refer to.
- exploring the social networks, apps and [games](#) they're using together.





# How to report it

- ① When reporting, never ask to see the image, screen shot it or forward it on as you can be reported for creating explicit content of children.
- ① To report it you can either:
  - Report to a school safeguarding lead
  - Contact the police
  - Contact CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)





# Useful Links

- ① <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/>
- ① <https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/sexting/>
- ① <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/>

