



PROJECT SAFE CHILDHOOD: Keeping Kids Safe and Secure Online

Sexting

Sexting is the sending or receiving of sexually suggestive or explicit images, messages or videos. It can be uncomfortable talking to your kids about sexting and its consequences but establishing a trusting, open dialog early on can go a long way in preventing your child from sexting in the first place. So, talk to your kids before it happens!

- Let them know they can come to you or another trusted adult if someone is pressuring them to send or share inappropriate photos
- Remind them that once they send an image to someone, where it ends up next is out of their control forever
- Discuss the consequences:
 - disciplinary action from school, work, legal
 - emotional and self-esteem issues
 - isolation from friends
 - bullying
 - harm to reputation
 - unwanted sexual solicitations from peers or predators
- The grandma test: Before your children post anything online, send a photo, video or text, have them ask themselves, “Would I be okay with my grandmother seeing this?” This is a good rule of thumb for adults too!
- Discuss the consequences and have them make the decision today that if they get asked for an inappropriate photo next week, next month, next year, they have already made the decision their answer will be NO!

If you know of a child in immediate risk or danger, **notify law enforcement right away**. Online child exploitation can be reported to your **local police department** or to the

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children’s

CyberTipline: www.CyberTipline.com or by calling 1-800-843-5678

Resources:

www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/topics/sexting

www.commonsemmedia.org/blog/talking-about-sexting

