What's it about?!

Sexting is a term which describes the sharing of intimate images of yourself with others. using technologies like MMS, IM, BBM and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Flickr, YouTube etc

It can often happen when your judgement is clouded (eg pressure from someone else, alcohol or drugs) and can result in you:

- sending accidentally
- being brave about a naughty photograph
- feeling sexually confident
- feeling less inhibited and less aware of risk and consequences
- doing it as a dare
- thinking that it is a good laugh and there is no harm in it

Is it illegal?

It is illegal, but the police have stated that young people should be treated as victims in the first instance and not usually face prosecution. The police's priority is those who profit from sexual images of young people ... not the victims.

So if this has happened to you try not to panic... it is not the end of the world. It just needs some thought on how you can minimise the effect of your mistake.



The first steps:



First off, are you OK? Do you need support?



Find the best person to support you right now... friends, family, school?



Telling your parents may be your worst nightmare, but how are they going to help you if they don't know?



Be honest about what has happened. People are only able to help you when they have all the facts



Don't wait. The quicker you deal with it the more control you have.



If someone is pushing or forcing you to get naked online, you should report them to the Police. Not only is it illegal but you may also be preventing them from doing it to someone else.

Take control...



If you posted it onto a social networking site, then remove it as soon as you can



If you sent it to someone else, you need get in touch with them as soon as possible and **ask them to delete it** before it goes any further.



If you think it has been shared wider, you might want to **turn to your friends for help.** Your close friends will often be able to help you manage the situation



If the image is posted by someone else on a social network site (eg Facebook) then report it.

- You need to use the site's reporting tools
- It's not enough just to say "I don't like it." If it is a naked or semi-naked image of you, tell them it breaks their terms and conditions.

Take control...



Check other places your image might be by searching for your name or username.

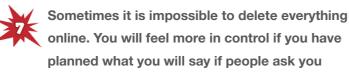
- Use different search sites
- Put your name in inverted commas ("Jane Smith") It's more accurate!
- If you have a popular name, use an additional help word ("Jane Smith" + Croydon)
- Repeat the search regularly using services such as Google Alerts. This will email you when new info about your name appears online http://www.google.com/alerts



Bury the bad stuff:

- Increase your positive online presence
- Set up a blog and write a few posts
- Make comments on online news articles and websites

- Engage positively with your social networking site
- Contribute to a few other different social networks
- The more positive stuff you add, the further down the search lists the unwanted content will be.
- Check your privacy settings and take control of what people can see



about it:

l've made a mistake

I've been really stupid

- I've learnt by it
- I've moved on



There are lots of places you can get help:

Childline www.childline.org.uk

Cybermentors www.cybermentors.org.uk

ThinkUknow www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Or you can download the Zipit app from the Childline website (Supported by IWF)

For more information visit:

www.saferinternet.org.uk/sexting







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