



# SEXTING

## BRIEFING SHEET FOR SCHOOLS and PARENTS



Sexting refers to the exchange of sexually explicit images through messages, social media or web cams. This includes pictures of a person (male or female) either naked or wearing just underwear.

It has become apparent that there is an escalating concern regarding children regularly, consensually or through pressure, exchanging such images which are, on occasions, resulting in them being shared with others and sometimes uploaded to the internet.

It is therefore essential that parents/carers and teachers understand the implications of sending a sexually explicit image to another person to help educate and safeguard vulnerable children.

It is a serious criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act for a person to take, hold or share an indecent image of anyone under the age of 18 years regardless of consent. This is

an offence which can lead to a term of imprisonment and can result in being placed on the Sex Offenders Register.

Children need to be educated that once an explicit image has been sent it is no longer in their control and can end up on the internet and viewed by others including friends, family and peers. This can be humiliating to the person concerned and occasionally followed by bullying and intimidation by other school pupils.

It is important that all parents/carers are aware of Sexting and are being open in discussions regarding this with the children in their care.

#### Key Points for Discussion

- **Consent** - no one should ever feel pressurised into sending an image to another.
- **Consequences** - what can happen to an image once it has left the control of the sender.
- **Criminal offence** - the law regarding possessing and distributing indecent images.

#### Reference Material

For further information and useful advice and guidance for children and parents please visit one of the following websites:-

[www.bbc.co.uk/webwise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

*7<sup>th</sup> May 2016*  
*T/Inspector Julia FINCH*  
*Tending Community Policing Team*  
[Tending.csp.hub@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Tending.csp.hub@essex.pnn.police.uk)  
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