

So you got **naked** online...

A resource
provided by SWGfL



So you got **naked online...**

This booklet is about sexting. It will help you understand what sexting is. It also tells you what you can do if you or a friend are worried about sexting.

If you picked this up, maybe you've done something online that's worrying you? Or you want to help someone else? Nakedness or something sexual may feel more serious than other things online.

But don't stress.

This is the right place if you want help. Read this booklet to help you understand more. And make better choices for yourself or your friends.

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Help with some of this booklet's language

We explain here what some specific words used in this booklet mean:

Sexting	sending sexually explicit photographs or messages via mobile phone
Consensual	when two or more people agree to something
Naked	a person or body without clothes
Hacked	unauthorised access, stolen data
Live streaming	to deliver digital data (such as audio or video) continuously — usually intended for immediate processing or playback
Illegal	not allowed by law

Regretting	feeling sadness or disappointment – sorry about doing something
DM	a direct message sent privately to an individual or group
Exploitation	non-consensual abuse or someone taking advantage of another person's sexuality for their own sexual pleasure
Reputation	what others see, know or think about you
Screenshot	copy the screen to make a picture

What does sexting mean?

'Sexting' means sharing naked photos or videos online. You might call it something else. It could involve flirty texts, naked photos or videos. Often it happens between partners. But people also do sexting in groups and different online spaces.

Sexting isn't always about sex. Some people use it to abuse, harass and bully others.

And sexting isn't always agreed to. Sometimes people are forced by others to share a naked photo or video.

Is the sexting agreed to or not?

You might think you know what sexting is about. But you might not understand something that has happened to you as sexting. When sexting is in the news we're likely to hear it's bad. It's often gone wrong and those involved are in trouble or upset. This isn't always true though. Sexting can be quite complicated.

Most sexting happens in a healthy relationship. And both people agree to it. Maybe you shared your naked photo or video with your partner? And they shared theirs with you too? It's when pictures get shared in other places that things can get scary.

Let's say you shared your naked photo or video with someone. And they then shared it with others without asking you. You didn't agree to it. So they've broken your trust – and the law.

Sometimes people share a naked photo or video without wanting to. Someone may have bullied them to do it. It might start with flirty texts. They then ask for a selfie. You send one and they ask to see more. And they say you can't talk to them anymore if you don't send anymore.

Or someone might start being mean and call you names. They then pressure you to send a more revealing photo or video. You might already have sent one. But that doesn't give them the right to expect or ask for more.

With sex and sexting you can change your mind at any time. No means no.

NO means NO

Dos and don'ts

Don't

- X Ask anyone to send more naked photos or videos of themselves if they say no or don't want to.
- X Tell anyone that you won't speak to them or call them names if they don't want to send you naked photos or videos of themselves.
- X Send naked photos or videos of yourself to someone if they've asked you not to.

Do

- ✓ Ask for help from a teacher or friend if you're worried about something.
- ✓ Be polite but firm if asking someone to stop if they send you naked photos or videos you don't want to see.

Sexting by mistake

If you've had alcohol or taken drugs, sexting by mistake is more likely. Also if people are pushing you into it. It might not feel like such an important decision at the time.

These are examples of sexting by mistake:

- Getting confused and pressing the wrong send button
- Feeling brave about taking a risky photograph
- Feeling extra confident
- Being encouraged by mates to do it as a dare
- Thinking it's a good laugh and there's no harm in it.

Naked photos or videos can arrive unexpectedly

Sometimes you might receive naked photos or videos you didn't ask for or expect. From someone you know or a stranger. They might like you. And they think they're flirting with you. They want your interest and hope you'll send naked photos or videos in return.

Or somebody might send you a naked photo or video of someone else that you both know.

Photos you've taken or shared might be revealing but innocent. Maybe they show weight loss, modelling or swimming. Other people may then take them to share and cause trouble.

Celebrities have had naked photos and videos hacked, stolen and published. It can happen to anyone.

These situations are complicated. But there are positive ways to handle them.

How you can protect yourself and friends

Sharing naked photos and videos in a safe relationship is not new. What has changed is the speed you can share them. And with many people at once.

Getting live followers and seeing your streaming numbers grow can be very exciting. But taking your top off or exposing yourself is not how you should attract more followers.

It's easy for people to take a screenshot when you're live streaming. They can save it. And then sell it to those sexually interested in children.

Getting 'likes' might make you feel happy, but don't share too much. There are other things that people can like about you, such as your hobbies and interests.

Don't expose yourself or share naked photos or videos to get new followers.

Trust

Do you trust the person you sent your naked photo or video to?

Mostly, people share naked photos and videos in a relationship. And the images don't go any further. Even when the relationship ends.

But when people break up, we sometimes see a different side to people. Jealousy and anger may make people break your trust. They then act differently to normal.

You can sometimes trust the person you share naked photos or videos with. But you don't have to share naked photos or videos with anyone, if you don't want to.

A good partner will be OK if you say no and will respect your decisions.

But if someone gets angry or upset when you say no, this is not OK. It shows they don't respect your decision.

Be careful who you share your naked photo or video with.

What if other people see your nude photo or video?

- It depends how the naked photo or video was shared. If you sent it directly to someone and have had second thoughts, you need to talk with them as soon as possible and ask them to delete it.
- If someone has put the photo or video directly on social media it makes it harder for you to get back control. Direct messages and snaps can feel like a less risky way to send naked photos or videos. But be aware that naked photos or videos seen in this way can be saved or screen shot by the person you sent it to.
- Beware: Snapchat will tell you if someone takes a screenshot. However, there are apps that will take the screenshot of your snap without telling you. On Instagram, direct messages do disappear after a while. But they can also be saved or screenshot and Instagram will not tell you.

What you can do if your naked photo or video is posted online

1. Use the site's 'report abuse' option. Don't just choose 'I don't like it'. You must let the site know it breaks their rules.
2. Sites like Facebook and Instagram don't allow naked photos or videos. So reporting there is easy.
3. See page 27 for links to other reports you can make.
4. Ask a teacher or adult for help if your report doesn't work.
5. Ask someone you trust to help you remove stuff you've posted online you have now changed your mind about.

Friends

Sometimes we add friends online because our other friends know them. But your friend might have added them because their friends did – and so on. Just because someone is friends with your friend, this does not mean you can trust them right away.

People sometimes meet their partners online. But you should do some checking before you trust someone you have no 'real-life' connection with:

- Do their pictures look real – not changed using filters and other tools?
- Do they have pictures with other friends you know?
- Have any of your friends met them in real life?

It's easy for anyone to use other people's pictures and make profiles that are not who they really are.

Manage who sees your profile or your posts

Ask a teacher or an adult to help you look at the website's privacy settings and use them. We've created privacy checklists for lots of social networks. View them on [our website here](#).

What you can do if a friend needs help

You might have noticed your friend is having a hard time. Something may not be right. Signs your friend is upset could be:

- Not wanting to do usual activities
- Not talking much
- Not eating much – or eating more than they do normally
- Generally seeming down and depressed.

You can help them by:

- Asking how they are – away from other people. That way they don't have to share with anyone they don't want to.
- Reassuring them you'll support them to get this under control.
- Following the steps on page 18 to make sure they're getting the help they need.

What you should do now

Well done for asking for help. You're a strong person. And this is the first step to getting this sorted.

Are you OK? You'll need someone to help you. A friend. Or someone in your family or at school.

There's a list of places at the end of this booklet that can help too.

Sometimes asking for help is difficult. Make notes first to help you remember everything you need to say.

Will you get in trouble?

The law is on your side when you've made a mistake and want help. It's there to deal with people who choose to trade or make money from sexual photos of children.

But the law was written in 1978 when mobile phones didn't exist. Police and lawmakers today understand it wasn't made for sexting and selfies.

If you're under 18, a naked photo or video of you is treated as an indecent image of a child. But the police have said they will treat young people as

victims if their naked photo or video is shared.
Only in extreme cases will it be different.

In 2016 the police launched 'Outcome 21'. This allows the police to record a crime but not charge anyone if it's not in the public interest.

Remember, the police are there to protect and safeguard you.

Who can help me?

School

If you're worried about telling your parents, tell your school first. It might seem hard but your welfare is their number one aim.

Your school will be able to help you and support you to talk to your parents if needed. And it will have trained staff who can also access other help. Telling your school is much better than dealing with it on your own.

Parents and carers

Telling your parents or carers that you shared naked photos or videos may be difficult. But they will help you, so it is good to tell them.

If you think telling them could put you in danger, first ask for help from someone at school. They may then need to tell your parents. But they will know how to handle things in a way that's best for you.

IWF – the Internet Watch Foundation

This UK organisation is able to remove naked photos or videos of people under 18 if they're hosted in the UK. If your naked photo or video has been posted online and you know where it is,

you can report the link to the IWF. It will review the photo or video. If it is illegal, they will remove it.

CEOP – Child Exploitation Online Protection

This agency was set up by the government in 2006 to help protect UK children from online perpetrators. CEOP helps police forces to bring these people to justice. It can help provide advice to you and your parents when something like this happens.

You can report something to CEOP at: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Get-help/Reporting-an-incident/>

There's advice for parents and carers at: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Concerned-about-your-child/>

Local police

Police may possibly need to be involved if what has happened is having a negative impact on you and other people, or there are any other worrying factors. They can also help you if you feel in danger. Or if you're being forced into sending nude photos when you don't want to.

How to help yourself with self-care

You've got some help and your photos are deleted – or someone is helping get it under control. Now you can take a break from the situation to help yourself feel better. Here are some suggestions for what you can do:

1. **Accept what's happened**

No one is perfect and everyone makes mistakes. Try to focus on what you're doing to make things better – like asking for help.

2. **Enjoy nature**

Fresh air and exercise can help improve your happiness and feeling of wellbeing. It will also help you get a good night's sleep.

3. **Connect in real life**

Have a break from social media every now and then. Use this time to meet up with friends or family – and keep phones out of reach.

4. **Find some positive social media influencers**

Follow people you think are inspirational and positive. You can learn good things from them and it might help you feel better.

5. **Learn to love yourself**

Try to find an activity or hobby that will make you feel proud without needing likes and followers online.

Will this affect my future?

Mostly, posting more positive things about yourself online will help push away the content you don't want others to see.

But there's no guarantee that others won't see the pictures later. If this includes future employers, college, or friends, it could affect your reputation.

Most people will be understanding though. They know this could happen to anyone.

Do you know what's online about you?

Check what others can see about you. Put your name into a search engine. Google doesn't always show you everything. So try using others like 'Bing' or 'DuckDuckGo'.

If you find anything about yourself that needs removing, report it to the hosting site immediately. It will need to break the site's terms and conditions to be removed. If it's a nude photo of you, it's highly likely it will. The legal implications mean the site host is likely to remove it quickly once they know it's there.

Bury the bad stuff! Increase the good stuff!

Sometimes you just can't get stuff online removed. For example, if your photo is on a porn website hosted outside the UK. If this has happened, we recommend burying it.

The best way to do this is to set up social networking accounts and leave your name publicly searchable. You don't have to use them. You can also comment on news articles and forums – three to four times a day if you can. Creating a short blog is also helpful. The more you post, the further down the search lists the unwanted photo or video content will be.

Other help organisations

Sexting issues can be very upsetting. But remember that help is out there.

Talking to someone about what's happened might help you to deal with this and move on.

Call or contact these support services online:

Childline is open all day every day (24/7) to help and support children and young people anywhere in the UK. Call 0800 11 11 or visit its website which offers one-to-one chat with a counsellor:

www.childline.org.uk

The Mix provides free, confidential emotional support for those aged 16 to 25. The helpline is open from 5pm–11pm on 0808 808 4994. Visit its website for more information and to speak using webchat: **www.themix.org.uk**

Young Minds operates a free, 24/7 crisis messenger for under 18s to get support if they're experiencing a mental health crisis. Access the crisis messenger by texting YM to 85258. Find out more at: **www.youngminds.org.uk**

Young Minds Parents Helpline. This can advise parents and carers worried about a child or young person under 25. Call 0808 802 5544 or find the page via the main Young Minds website at: **www.youngminds.org.uk**

Links to help you report a photo or video

Report on Facebook

https://www.facebook.com/help/1432374603715654?helpref=faq_content

Report on Instagram

https://help.instagram.com/contact/383679321740945?helpref=page_conten

Report on Snapchat

<https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/report-abuse-in-app>

Report on Twitter

<https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/intimate-media>

Now you've read this booklet, you should know what to do if you're worried about sexting.

If you're still unsure:

- Talk to a teacher or parent
Stay calm and show them this booklet.

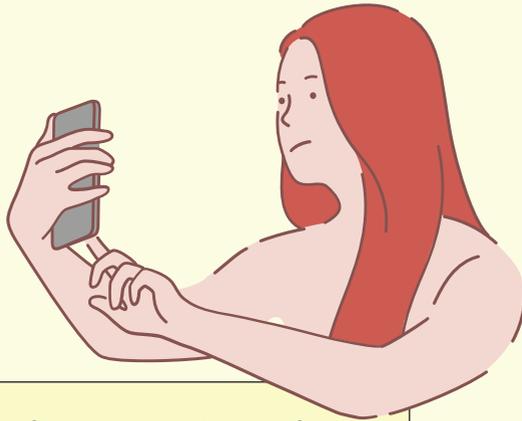


Heather and Michael are happy in a new relationship, exploring their sexuality together.



Michael has been pressuring Heather to send him naked photos. He said "If you loved me you would send them to me."





Heather gives in and decides to take some naked photos which she then sends to Michael.



Michael betrays Heather's trust and sends the photos to his friends, to show off. The images get shared even further and before the end of the day lots of people in school have seen them.





Heather is really upset that lots of people have seen her naked photo, and that Michael has broken her trust like this.



Heather's little brother Josh is in a younger year and has seen that the photos are being shared in groups. He is worried about his sister and knows he needs to help her.



Josh has found the 'So you got naked online...' resource in school and starts to read it.





After reading the advice Josh knows that his sister needs to get some help from a trusted adult and so they go together to tell a teacher about what has happened.



"Don't worry, now we have got the help we need this will get better."



About this resource:

This resource was developed by SWGfL and experts. It is part of a project to support children and young people living with vulnerabilities, in partnership with Internet Matters and is funded by the Home Office.

Visit www.swgfl.org.uk/sextinghelp for more information.



www.internetmatters.org/inclusive-digital-safety/



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