

# Chapter 3:

## Sexting and Peer Exploitation

### EDUCATOR FACILITATION GUIDE

#### PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

To provide practical tips and instructions for engaging students and handling difficult discussions on the topic of sexting and peer exploitation.

#### MAIN OBJECTIVES

- ▶ For students to understand when sexting becomes exploitation.
- ▶ To engage students in critical thinking around common excuses that lead to victim blaming.
- ▶ To convey that significant harm can be done with non-consensual intimate image sharing.

#### CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ Emphasize respectful communication and confidentiality. It is important to listen and value each other's perspectives even if we don't agree with them.
- ▶ If your students have lots of questions or seem restless, take breaks in between the videos to debrief.
- ▶ Offer emotional outlets such as doodling or colouring sheets during the videos.
- ▶ Let your students know that if they feel triggered, they can leave the room and/or go speak with the counsellor.
- ▶ Identify any local support resources and organizations on the issue ahead of time, so that you can readily refer students who may need additional support.

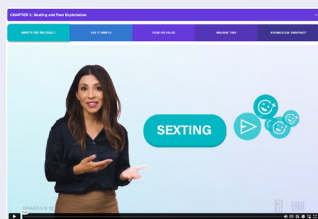
#### MODERATING DISCUSSIONS

- ▶ Ensure that all students have the opportunity to speak.
- ▶ Maintain a non-judgmental tone.
- ▶ If a question is inappropriate or derails the discussion, gently redirect it back to the main topic.
- ▶ If you don't know the answer, it's okay to admit it! Provide additional resources or take note to look into the question later.

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

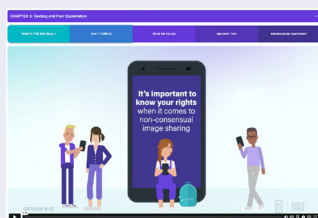
- ▶ Sexting is a sexual act and is intimate even though it is behind a screen.
- ▶ If there is any pressure, breach of trust, coercion or exchange, sexting becomes exploitation.
- ▶ Sexting is a form of sexual activity and therefore, consent must be involved from all aspects.
- ▶ “Child pornography” is defined as any visual representation that shows a person who is or is depicted as being under the age of 18 years and is engaged in explicit sexual activity or any written material or audio recording that advocates or counsels sexual activity with a person under the age of 18 years. It is an offence to produce, distribute, transmit, make available, or sell child pornography. It is an offence to possess child pornography. [Section 163.1]
- ▶ Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images is an offence committed when someone knowingly publishes, distributes, transmits, sells, makes available, or advertises an intimate image of a person knowing that the person depicted did not give their consent to that conduct. [Section 162.1]
- ▶ By Close-in-Age Exemptions laws, a 14- or 15-year-old can consent to sexual activity with someone less than five years older. A 12- or 13-year-old can consent to sexual activity with someone less than two years older. [Sections 150.1]. However, when it comes to sexual activity digitally, by law it would be illegal amongst two minors.
- ▶ In 2020, Statistics Canada reported an 80% increase in incidents reported to police of non-consensual sharing of intimate images across the country compared to the previous five years. (<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024AG0004-000096>)
- ▶ Typically, youth sexting occurs in three contexts:
  - Instead of sexual activity for younger adolescents who are not yet physically sexually active.
  - To show interest in someone a teen would like to date.
  - For sexually active youth, as proof of trust and intimacy.
- ▶ Young people’s perceptions of how common sexting is have been identified as one of the strongest factors influencing whether they send sexts. Although 93% of youth think people their age send sexts at least occasionally, just 41% have ever sent one. (<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexts.pdf>)
- ▶ Boys and girls are equally likely to send nudes of themselves, however, boys’ nudes are more likely to be forwarded.
- ▶ Sexting is most likely to have negative consequences when the person sending the sext has been pressured into doing it.
- ▶ There are three main factors that influence non-consensual sharing behaviour:
  - **Gender stereotypes:** Boys are cool if they have girls falling at their feet, girls have to be sexually desired to be of value.
  - **Moral disengagement:** Agreeing with statements that justify sharing nudes.
  - **A culture of sharing:** Together, gender stereotypes and moral disengagement contribute to a culture of sharing among roughly a third of youth who see sharing sexts non-consensually as normal, acceptable and even positive.

## FACILITATION TIPS FOR CHAPTER 3



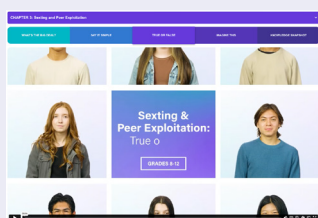
### What's the Big Deal?

Start a discussion with teens about their perceptions of sexting and peer pressure. Encourage them to share their thoughts on the risks involved and how they can protect themselves and their peers from exploitation. Use open-ended questions like: What are some ways peer exploitation can happen? How do you think sharing intimate images without consent can affect relationships?



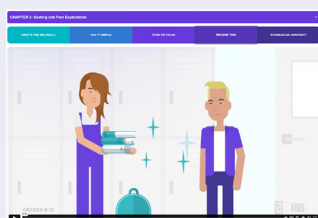
### Say It Simple

Initiate a conversation about the importance of consent and respecting boundaries in digital communication. Encourage students to reflect on their own experiences and discuss strategies for setting boundaries and maintaining privacy online. Ask questions like: How do you define consent in the context of sexting? What steps can you take to ensure that your digital interactions are consensual and respectful?



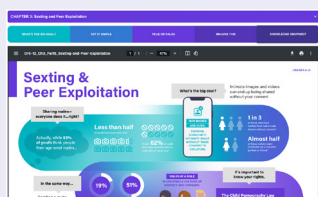
### True or False

Use this interactive segment to engage students in critical thinking and discussion about sexting and peer exploitation. Pause the video after each question to allow time for reflection and group discussion. Encourage students to consider the implications of their digital actions and the importance of consent in all aspects of relationships.



### Imagine This

After watching Jesse's story, facilitate a discussion about the risks and consequences of sexting. Encourage students to reflect on the emotions and challenges faced by Jesse and brainstorm strategies for protecting themselves and their peers from exploitation. Use prompts like: How can we support friends who may be experiencing similar challenges?



### Knowledge Snapshot

Use this summary to reinforce key takeaways from the chapter and encourage students to advocate for their rights and well-being in digital spaces. Provide resources and support for those who may have experienced peer exploitation, and emphasize the importance of seeking help from trusted adults or professionals. Encourage students to take an active role in promoting healthy relationships and digital citizenship among their peers.

## FAQ'S AND RESPONSES TO GET YOU THINKING

### Q: What should I do if I receive a nude?

**R:** If you receive an unsolicited nude, delete it right away. You can also ask the sender not to send more if you feel comfortable doing so. If they continue sending unwanted messages, block the sender and tell a trusted adult. If you receive a wanted nude, never share or forward the nude to anyone. For more information, check out the Teacher's Resources from Media Smarts under supplementary materials in this guide.

### Q: What if someone sends a non solicited nude and then accuses me of having it in order to get me in trouble?

**R:** Technically, by law, if you kept the photo on your device and the police show up, they could place a charge. The best thing to do is to never keep and always delete any content of that nature on any device or social media platform.

### Q: What if two teens are sexting, would they get in trouble?

**R:** If they are within the age related consent laws and both of them are consensually agreeing to it, they will not be charged. However, if one party decides to report that something was not consensual, police involvement can lead to a charge.

### Q: What if it is a photo I took of myself, would I get in trouble?

**R:** While legally, it would be considered Child Pornography, unless you shared it with someone who did not ask for it, you would not get in trouble.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Conduct a debate on whether current laws around sexting are fair and effective
- ▶ Have students research the consequences of non-consensual intimate image sharing from an emotional, social, and psychological perspective.
- ▶ Task students with compiling a list of resources (hotlines, websites, etc.) for non-consensual intimate image sharing that are then shared within the school.
- ▶ Continue learning - build on the material from the previous chapters and introduce [Chapter 4: Exploiters and Predators](#) to understand what makes somebody predatory or exploitative.

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS



To access the following resources, scan the QR code or [click here](#).

### Animated Videos

- ▶ "But I Said Yes"
- "Sexting: What Should You Do?"

### Articles and Cases

- ▶ Famous Quarterback charged for sharing CSAM on Discord
- ▶ Quebec Teens Arrested for Possession and Distribution of Child Pornography
- ▶ Nova Scotia Teens Charged with Child Pornography

### Other Educational Resources

- ▶ Teacher's Resources from MediaSmarts

## DISCLOSURES AND REPORTING

- ▶ By addressing these topics and opening up the space for discussion, an individual may feel safe to come forward with a disclosure
- ▶ It takes courage and a lot of trust in someone to share something like this. Thank them for sharing with you and trusting you with that information. Prove their trust right by being non-judgmental, and emotionally measured in your response. Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to come forward and that you are there to help in any way you can.
- ▶ Ask them if anyone else knows about this already. Find out what their needs are. Do they need an empathetic ear? Do they need assistance with reporting? Do they need to be connected with resources?
- ▶ Encourage them to report to a confidential and safe resource, or connect them with a counsellor. Have these resources prepared/ available ahead of time.
- ▶ If they are currently at risk of harm, let them know that it is your duty to report and that you can accompany them or find someone to support them during this process.
- ▶ If a minor is currently at risk of harm or is being harmed, it is your duty to report it to your local child welfare services.

### KIDS HELP PHONE (24/7)

- ▶ Call 1-800-668-6868
- ▶ Text "CONNECT" to 686868

### NEEDHELPNOW.CA

- ▶ Help with removing sexual pictures/videos

### CYBERTIP.CA

- ▶ Report about shared intimate images