

CYBERBULLYING

AVOID GOSSIP.

Everyone's bound to get a little excited by those oh-so-dramatic high school scandals, but that doesn't mean you have to text the latest rumor to everyone you know.

DON'T FEED THE CYBERBULLIES.

Ignore mean or threatening messages. Block the sender and file a report with the website, cell phone service, or police.

BYSTANDERS ARE GUILTY, TOO.

If your friends are cyberbullying someone and you stay silent, you're just as guilty as they are. Speak up and keep your friends in check.



ONLINE PREDATORS

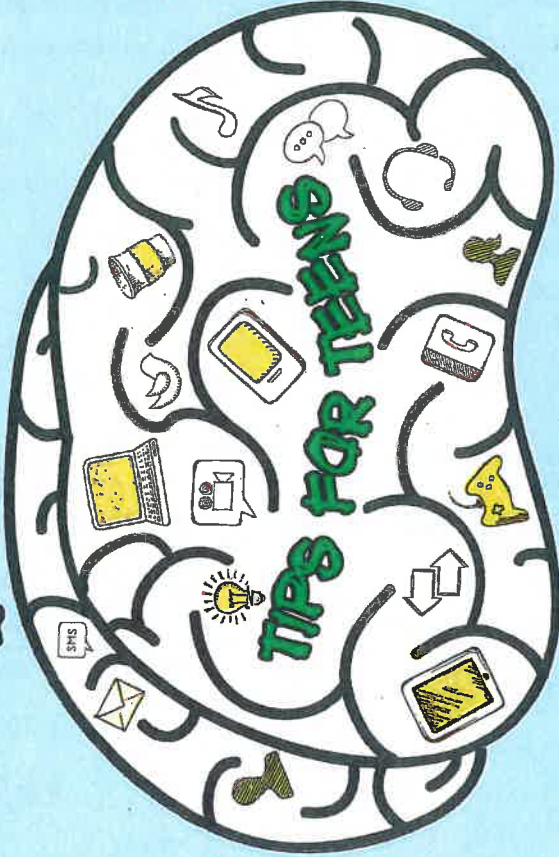
RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CUTE AND CREEPY.

Think about it – an older guy who wants to date someone younger is just creepy. It's not flattering; it's illegal! So don't friend them and don't meet them offline.

DON'T JUST SIT THERE - REPORT!

If you or someone you know has been victimized by someone you met online, report them to the police and www.cybertipline.com.

GOT NETSMARTZ?



SHARING TOO MUCH

INITIATE OPERATION PROFILE CLEAN-UP.

Scrub your page of everything, too personal, embarrassing, and illegal. Those pictures of you passed out next to the empty bottles are not going to look so cool when you start applying for college.

STOP. THINK. PUT YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON!

You know those pictures of you wearing next-to-nothing and making kissy faces or flexing in the mirror? You might think it's sexy, but the law doesn't, so do yourself a favor – don't send them; don't forward them.

PROTECT YOUR SPACE.

Use privacy settings and don't accept just anyone as a friend. Do some investigating – Who are they? Why would you hang out with them?

TRUSTED ADULTS

NetSmartz® Workshop
A PROGRAM OF THE
NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN®

Watch Real-Life Stories videos at NSTeens.org

Copyright © 2010-2012 National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. All rights reserved.

TALK TO YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS. THEY'RE NOT AS UPTIGHT AS YOU THINK.

Sometimes adults freak out about what you're doing online because you never tell them anything. Keep them in the loop so they know they can trust you.



Many teens believe that anything they want to do with *their* bodies and *their* phones is *their* business. They enjoy the privacy and freedom that cell phones give them from their parents and guardians, but what happens when they use their cell phones to explore their sexuality?

Sexting is the sending or distributing of nude or partially nude images. Scary headlines may lead you to believe this is a common practice among teens with extreme consequences. Although the actual numbers vary, many researchers agree that most teens are not sexting, and those who are usually aren't subjected to harsh penalties. However, there are still risks to consider for teens who sext. These tips will help you talk about sexting with your teen so you're both prepared if it ever becomes an issue.

Psychologists like Dr. Abigail Judge advise parents to make discussions about sexual behavior, including sexting, a regular occurrence so teens will be better prepared.

"...research suggests that parents should address the topic of sex with their children—and by extension, digital media and its use in the home—not through a one-time conversation, but through an ongoing dialogue that should begin early and occur often, across developmental time."

Dr. Abigail Judge,
Harvard Review of Psychiatry, 2012

TALKING

TO

TEENS

ABOUT
SEXTING



THE RISKS

Teens who take, send or forward sexting images may face:

- Embarrassment if their picture is shown to family, friends, classmates and even strangers.
- Bullying or harassment from peers who judge them for sexting.
- Trouble at school if they have violated a school policy. Some teens have been kicked off of athletic teams or suspended from school.
- Future consequences if the image follows them for a long time. It may be seen by college admissions officers or even potential employers.
- Trouble with the police. In extreme cases, kids can be charged for sending or forwarding nude images of minors.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT

- Ask questions to make it clear you're comfortable discussing it. "Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to sext? Have you ever received a sexy picture from someone?"
- Discuss what characterizes a healthy relationship. "Any person pressuring you to sext isn't someone you should trust. Boyfriends and girlfriends come and go, but a sexual image of you can stay around forever."
- Explain how quickly images can spread online. "Once the photo is sent, it's out of your control."
- Emphasize the importance of not forwarding sexts they receive. "You do not have the right to decide who should see someone else's body. Forwarding images is a major violation of trust and exposes the person in the picture to potential ridicule. Imagine how you would feel if someone betrayed your trust by sharing a nude photo of you."

IF YOUR CHILD'S IMAGE IS ALREADY OUT THERE

- Help them report it to the websites/apps where the image is posted. Make it clear your child is a minor, and it was posted without his or her consent.
- Talk to school officials so they can help stop the spread of the image and any harassment that may be happening.
- Contact the police if your child is being blackmailed, harassed or if it involves an adult.
- Above all, offer support. Assure them that you'll get through this together. Consider seeking professional counseling if they need help coping.

A program of the

NetSmartz® Workshop

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN