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:

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

2 **Find the best person to support you** right now… friends, family, school?

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

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

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

6 **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…

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

2 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.

3 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

4 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...

5 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**

6 **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

7 Sometimes it is impossible to delete everything online. You will feel more in control if you have planned what you will say if people ask you about it:

- I've made a mistake
- I've been really stupid
- I've learnt by it
- I've moved on

Can I get help?

There are lots of places you can get help:

Childline   www.childline.org.uk

Get Connected   www.getconnected.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

SOUTH WEST **GRID** FOR LEARNING

UK Safer Internet Centre

It is produced by the South West Grid for Learning and UK Safer Internet Centre and co-funded by the European Union.

so you got **naked online...**

A resource provided by the South West Grid for Learning