

## Time to complete

50 minutes

## Description

Students explore the influence technology has on their ability to make healthy and safe choices in relation to sexuality and risk taking.

## Learning focus

Identifying strategies to reduce the emotional and social impact associated with communicating through mobile phones.

## Key understandings

- There are many advantages and disadvantages of communicating through mobile phones.
- Understanding the potential social and legal consequences of sexting.
- Strategies can be used to reduce the risk of your own and others' emotional and social wellbeing.

## Materials

- Student Activity Sheet: *Make cyberspace a better place - What do you think?* [one set of A3 sheets]
- Student Activity Sheet: *What would I do?* [one per student]
- Internet access

## Before you get started

- Communicating sexually online or with a mobile phone is increasingly accessible and socially acceptable for young people today. 82% of Australian teenagers aged 14 - 17 years see the internet as very important in their lives and 72% go online more than once a day. While entertainment is the most popular online activity, 62% use it for communication. Blogging and online community activities via mobile phones increased significantly in the period from 2009-2013, surpassing the proportion of teenagers performing these activities using a computer. (Australian Communications and Media Authority. [Aussie teens and kids online](#). Accessed 7 July 2016).
- It is important that the positive aspects of online communication (such as influencing social development, maintaining long distant relationships with family and friends, forming relationships with like-minded people, documenting events and raising awareness of important issues) are highlighted as strongly as the potential issues.
- The most important lesson for young people is that they learn to be responsible with mobile technology and know how to use it safely. Refer to the [Social Media: Sexting](#) Guide for further information.

# Sexting

## Year 9 Learning Activity

---

- It is possible that a student has been involved in a traumatic experience relating to sexting. Teachers should be familiar with the Guide: [Dealing with disclosures](#) and have a risk management strategy in place.

## Learning activities

### Whole Class

Students develop an understanding of what sexting is and how it can impact on people socially and emotionally.

1. Ask students to listen as you read out each of the following facts and to stand up if they think they know what concept or term you are referring to.
  - *Partners in committed, existing relationships are more likely to do this but not everyone does it.*
  - *You really need to trust and respect the person you do this with and give consent for it to occur. If it happens without your consent it is a breach of trust and may potentially exploit others.*
  - *50% of all 13-18 year olds have done this.*
  - *Can impact on a person socially, emotionally and legally.*
  - *Usually involved mobile phones but can involve computers.*
  - *Once it is done it usually leaves a permanent digital record.*
  - *The greatest motivation for this happening is that it is fun and flirty.*
  - *It can be illegal if it involves a person younger than 18.*
  - *Is the exchange of 'sexy' photos and messages.*
2. Once the majority of the class has stood up, ask a random selection to name what it was you were referring to: Sexting. Young people do not typically use the term 'sexting', so may instead use the terms 'naked selfies', 'nudies' or 'banana pics'.
3. Clarify that 'sexting' or sending 'sext messages' is when nude and/or sexually explicit images are taken on a mobile phone, tablet, web-cam or other device. **Sexting is the 'digital recording of nude or sexually suggestive or explicit images and their distribution by mobile phone messaging or through social networking'**. (Australian Institute of Criminology, [Sexting among young people: Perceptions and Practice](#). Accessed 7 July 2016). The term 'sexually explicit' can mean different things to different people, but is generally described as an image designed to initiate sexual excitement for the person receiving the image.
4. Discuss the fact that in Western Australia, it is against the law to take, look at, keep or send sexually explicit photos or images of someone under the age of 18. Laws around sexting mean that young

people have been charged by police with child pornography offences. If charged, a person could be listed as a sex offender on the Australian National Child Offender Register.

5. Watch the YouTube clip [Make Cyberspace a Better Place - Amy - Sexting](https://youtu.be/BOWQf81Aon8?list=UUEFrX1hl8tOBLUQ4aVwFS5A) (https://youtu.be/BOWQf81Aon8?list=UUEFrX1hl8tOBLUQ4aVwFS5A) [2:12min].
  - Ask students to reflect silently on the clip.

## Independent or Small Group

Students explore the consequences of sexting on self and others.

1. After viewing the *Make Cyberspace a Better Place* YouTube clip, place students in seven groups and give each group one of the A3 printed Student Activity Sheets: *Make cyberspace a better place - What do you think?*. Ask students to respond to the questions in their groups with one person scribing everyone's responses in the space around each question.
  - Each group has two minutes to write their responses after which they will pass their sheet to the next group.
  - If a group sees a response already written that they agree with, ask them to place a 'tick' next to that response.
  - After each group has had a turn, ask for a spokesperson from each group to summarise the responses for each question they have in front of them. Possible responses are listed below.

*What are some risks that Amy took when she sent the naked photos?* (the photos could be forwarded to people she knows or doesn't know; the photos may be posted online; she may be bullied online or in person; If reported, she may have been charged with a criminal offence for taking the photos and sending the photos to someone under 18 years old)

*Why do you think Patrick forwarded the photos?* (because it's fun; to be flirty; to be cool; peer pressure; to embarrass or hurt Amy; because he received one)

*What do you think Patrick should have done with the naked photos?* (deleted the images and not forwarded them to others)

*If Amy was your friend, what would you do?* (suggest she talks to a trusted adult about the situation; delete any images you have received; help to hunt down the images and remove them from social networking sites)

*If Patrick was your friend and he sent you these images of Amy, what advice would you give him?* (Inform Patrick that you don't want to receive photos like these; If the texts keep coming, block Patrick's phone number and unfriend him from your social networking account)

*How might this experience affect Amy in the future?* (It may affect her self-esteem; she may have distrust of other people which may affect her future friendships and relationships; the photos may be posted online which could damage her reputation; if the police become involved, it could result in penalties)

# Sexting

## Year 9 Learning Activity

---

*How might this experience affect Patrick in the future? (Trust may be affected in his future relationships; his friends may distance themselves from him; if the police become involved it could result in penalties).*

2. **Reflective question:** Ask the class what they would do if they received a naked photo of one of their friends. How would it make them feel? Would it change the way that they view their friend? What do you think the person sending the photo would want you to do with it?
  - Explain to the class that sometimes people will receive sexual images from someone without asking for it or even wanting it. If a person receives an unsolicited image then they should delete it and tell a trusted adult. It is never okay for people to send you images that make you feel uncomfortable.

**Additional activity:** Have students complete the Student Activity Sheet: *What would I do?* individually. After students have answered the questions, provide them with possible answers from the teacher answer sheet. Explain the suggested answers may not be the best answers for everyone and it will depend on the person and the situation but they do provide some simple tips for dealing with the possible effects of sexting.

### Reflection

1. Discuss trusted sources/people in a young person's life who could provide support if needed, e.g. family members, school staff.
2. Show the students recommended websites and resources that can provide young people with more information and further support (e.g. [Kids Helpline](#), [esafety](#) website, [Think U Know](#)).
3. Finish the lesson with the short YouTube clip [Alarmed](#) [0:54 min]. Remind students that while sending photos of themselves or others not fully dressed may seem like harmless fun, once sent, they become part of their or their friend's **digital footprint** and this lasts forever.
4. The key message of *Alarmed* is: Your nightmare could become your reality if sexts get around school. Stay smart and keep your private parts private!
  - Ask students to individually design their own slogan/key message about sexting to add to a class PowerPoint (slides can be printed off as a class display).

### External related resources

[The Office of eSafety Commissioner](#) website offers:

- an online reporting for [image-based abuse](#), [cyberbullying](#), [offensive and illegal content](#)
- information sections for [parents](#)
- free [classroom resources](#)
- guidance for [policy writing](#) and implementation

### Related assets (links to sections within GDHR site)

#### Teaching Note

[Dealing with disclosures](#)

# Sexting

Year 9 Learning Activity

---

## FAQ

[Is sexting illegal?](#)

## Background Note

[Sexting](#)

## Teaching resources

[Make cyberspace a better place. What do you think  
What would I do](#)

## Date printed

21 May 2022