

MOUNT PROSPECT POLICE DEPARTMENT

112 E. Northwest Highway, Mount Prospect, Illinois 60056



Michael Semkiu
Chief of Police

Crime Prevention
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Prevention Tips and Talking Points Pertaining to “Sexting”

With recent reports of teens being charged with possession of child pornography for allegedly texting sexually explicit photos and video of fellow students to other students, the Mount Prospect Police Department would like to provide parents and teens some tips and talking points to discuss with their children about appropriate technology use:

- Talk with your student and set guidelines on appropriate use of their phones. This means no inappropriate texts or embarrassing photos or videos. **Photos and videos have lasting effects when shared via social media.**
- Tell your teen that sexually explicit material of any kind is not allowed. Have your child “friend” you or allow you into his or her social media circle (Facebook, Instagram, KIK etc...). This will allow you to monitor for questionable activity.
- While they may not think it is a good idea, you must look through your child’s phone and monitor his or her usage. If the device contains a passcode they should provide you with access.
- Establish real consequences when parental rules or boundaries are broken, and enforce them. A parent can cancel or suspend access to cell phone service if a child does not follow the established rules.
- Teens should always **THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES** of taking, sending or forwarding a sexual picture of someone underage, even if it is of themselves. Students can be removed from sports teams, face humiliation, lose educational opportunities and get in trouble with law enforcement.
- Teens should **NEVER TAKE** images of themselves they would not want everyone –classmates, teachers, family or employers – to see.
- **BEFORE HITTING SEND**, teens must know they cannot control where an image may travel. What is sent to a boyfriend or girlfriend could easily end up with other friends and their friends and their friends.

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- If a person forwards a sexual image of someone underage, that person is as responsible for this image as the original sender. A distributor in this instance could face child pornography charges, go to jail and be required to register as a sex offender.
- Teens must **REPORT** any nude pictures they receive on a technology device to a trusted adult, such as a parent or a school counselor. They should not delete the message. Instead, they should involve parents or guardians, teachers or school counselors immediately.

Any parent or teen with any further questions regarding “sexting” and prevention tips can contact the Crime Prevention Unit at 847-870-5650.

