

PARENTS MAKE

A Difference

Helping our teens by learning from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey of CESA 3 students

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Teens & Explicit Use of Cell Phones

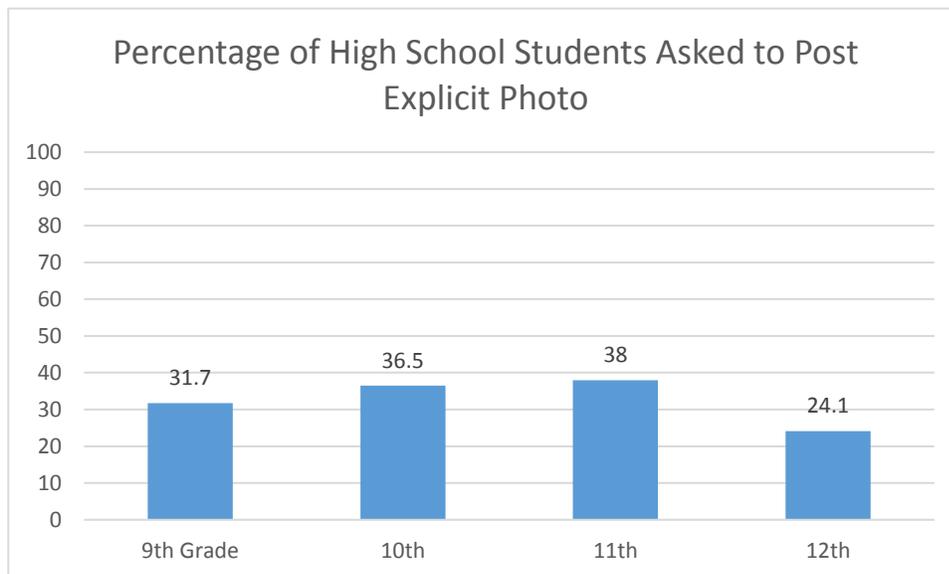
Should you be concerned that your teen is sexting? As youth [increasingly carry cell phones and use tablets](#) that connect to social media, apps, and messaging, the risk that they will send or receive sexually explicit content has become a concern for parents, teachers, and law enforcement.

Sexting – sending sexually explicit messages, photos or videos via the cell phone.

Teens in Southwest Wisconsin

According to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) of 5,952 students in 7th to 12th grades from 26 school districts in southwest Wisconsin, many of our teens are “growing up fast”. This survey was conducted in the fall of 2017, with a few of the results of our young adolescents in southwest Wisconsin below:

- 36.4% of high school students reported they **have been asked** to send or post a sexually explicit photo of themselves
- 17.8% of high school students **have sent or posted** a sexually explicit photo of themselves
- 3.4% of the middle school students **have sent or posted** a sexually explicit photo of themselves



2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 5,952 students in 7th – 12th grades from 26 schools in southwest Wisconsin.

Why Sexting?

- The prevalence of sexting by underage teens and children is a matter of ongoing study. It is often done as a joke, a way of getting attention, or as flirting.
- Adolescence is getting longer, expanding well beyond the traditional years of 13 to 19. What was once a relatively short stage of life has nearly doubled in the past 60 years. Children today engage in teen-like behaviors at younger ages than previous generations.
- As stress increases with our young adults, teens turn to technology to “reach out” to others for help, attention and to make friends. Unfortunately, this is not always the best way to reach others.

REMEMBER – PARENTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The explicit use of cell phones isn't necessarily something to immediately panic over, but it is an issue you will want to consider discussing with your tween or teen — especially when they have easy access to the Internet or get their first smartphone. ([What is Sexting and Why Is It a Problem?](#))

Talk to your teen about the fact that photos can be shared with people beyond the intended recipient.

SnapChat allows users to snap a picture of themselves, and send it to another SnapChat user. Once the photo reaches the other user, they can only see it for a brief moment before it is deleted and disappears. This false sense of security makes teens feel like SnapChat is a safer sexting option since the receiver of the photo can't keep or save it; or can they? A study published in 2015 showed that SnapChat elicits more jealousy than FaceBook. “Findings show that the main difference in motives were that Snapchat was used more for flirting and finding new love interests, whereas Facebook was still the main social networking site used for keeping in touch with friends. Further, when presenting users with a series of potentially jealousy provoking scenarios, Snapchat elicited higher levels of jealousy than did Facebook” ([Snapchat Elicits More Jealousy than Facebook: A Comparison of Snapchat and Facebook Use](#)).

Together, we can make a positive impact in youth's lives! As a parent, make sure to monitor what your teen is doing on their phone, and be an active part of their decisions on proper phone etiquette. Employers are watching out for social media – and some frown upon too much personal information on the web.

To learn more about issues affecting teens and preteens, consider joining the “Parenthetical” online community. “Parenthetical” features weekly postings about parenting topics based on research and the collected lessons and wisdom of parents and can be accessed at <http://myparenthetical.com>.

“Parents Make a Difference” is a product of the Southwest Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a program of the Department of Public Instruction, University of Wisconsin-Extension and local school districts. This newsletter is adapted from the UW-Extension newsletters “Whose Kids?...Our Kids!” This issue of “Parents Make a Difference” was adapted by Lori Wick, UW-Extension Lafayette County from various sources, including: <http://myparenthetical.com>; <https://nobullying.com/sexting-on-snapchat/>; <https://www.thespruce.com/what-is-sexting-problem-1258921>; and <https://www.verywellfamily.com/digital-parenting-101-4038621>; <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/cyber.2014.0479>. This issue was reviewed by Bev Doll, UW-Extension Grant County; Amy Mitchell, UW-Extension Crawford County; Chelsea Wunnicke, UW-Extension Richland County; and Sarah Weier, UW-Extension Iowa County. Thanks are extended to the 5,952 7th to 12th graders from Southwest Wisconsin who participated in the 2017 YRBS survey. Contact UW-Extension for further information: Grant County (608) 723-2125; Lafayette County (608) 776-4820; Crawford County (608) 326-0223; Iowa County (608) 930-9850; or Richland County (608) 647-6148. Or visit our website at <http://www.cesa3.org/yrbs.html>

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