

Why do young people send nudes?

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'Sexting' means sending sexually explicit photos, messages or videos (also known as 'nudes') online.

They can be sent via text or email, or posted on social media. WhatsApp and Snapchat are two of the apps most commonly used to send nudes.

There's not just one reason why children start sending nudes:

- It can be a way to **get attention** or **boost self-esteem**.
- Social media can encourage young people to do it to **become popular**: "more skin means more likes."
- Many children hear about their friends doing it or see it in the media, and **think it's acceptable**.
- Teenagers in relationships do it to **experiment** or **show their interest and commitment** to each other.
- It can make some young people feel like they're in an **impossible position**: not sending nudes means you're a 'prude', but doing it makes you 'easy'.
- Children can be **tricked** into sending nudes.

What are the consequences?

It can be a huge burden on mental health.

The fear of punishment or embarrassment can keep children from turning to trusted adults like teachers or parents if they have a problem.

It can take a dark turn.

Your child may feel like they can trust somebody enough to send explicit images, but when the relationship ends, the images could be used to cause embarrassment or shame. This is known as revenge porn.

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It's illegal.

Under the UK Protection of Children Act 1978, it's against the law to create, share or own explicit images of anyone under the age of 18. This applies even if a child willingly takes an image on their own and decides to share it with their peers.

It can affect your relationships.

Explicit content can spread quickly, and images can stay on the internet for a long time. This can damage a child's reputation among their friends, but also hurt their future education or employment prospects.

Where can I go for help?

1. **The Internet Watch Foundation** lets you report explicit images you find online. Go to their website to fill out a report, or call 01223 20 30 30
2. If your child has sent images to an adult, you must contact the **Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre CEOP** (which is part of the National Crime Agency). Both allow you to report explicit images online.
3. Children can call **Childline** on 0800 1111 for free, confidential advice.
4. Adults who are worried about a child can contact the **NSPCC** on 0800 800 5000.

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