

## More Important Information on Online Safety

Following on from our previous Parentmail about online safety, we wanted to approach the related topics of **sexting and sextortion**. Again this will not be a light read, but we feel it is important to provide you with information and support so that together we can protect all of our children. The following message, and attached information, helps explain these important.

Much of the information in this article and the attachments has been sourced from the highly recommended **internetmatters.org** and **parentinfo.org** websites. If you want to know how to protect your child or how to support them when online activity goes wrong, please visit:

[www.internetmatters.org/issues/sexting](http://www.internetmatters.org/issues/sexting)

[www.parentinfo.org/article/sexting](http://www.parentinfo.org/article/sexting)

[www.parentinfo.org/article/what-parents-need-to-know-about-the-online-blackmail-known-as-sextortion](http://www.parentinfo.org/article/what-parents-need-to-know-about-the-online-blackmail-known-as-sextortion)

There are many reasons why young people might get involved in sending self-generated sexually explicit pictures/videos of themselves. Sharing of this kind of explicit material is called 'sexting'. Exploring sex and relationships is a natural part of adolescence and young people often feel they love and trust their partner and want to express their sexual feelings. Sometimes children might be put under pressure to either take pictures of themselves or pass on those taken by others. They may want to please a demanding boyfriend or girlfriend or do what they think everyone else is doing. They may have even been talked into it by an adult or someone they've met online. As children have no control over how and where images and messages might be shared by other people, sexting can leave them vulnerable to bullying, humiliation, and embarrassment, or even to blackmail [see sextortion article].

What can you do in the first instance?

- Talk to you child about the fact that images, once online, are there for all time, and you have no control over what happens to them.
- Urge your child to think before they post.
- Warn them against passing on images of others.

The attached articles:

\*provide a detailed look at sexting and sextortion and give parents/guardians the tools to discuss these sensitive topics as well as support a child victim.

\*Internetmatters.org 2020 Cybersurvey – the Word document provides a headline overview, and the PDF document is the entire survey report.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ms Wiltshire (01245 353510 ext 8156

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Kind regards

**Ms Wiltshire & Mr Milliken**