



GCAPP PARENT TOOLKIT:

Parent Toolkit Sexting

Sexting: What Is It?

Sexting is the sending, receiving, or sharing of sexually explicit messages, images, or videos through electronic devices.

When it involves anyone under 18, it is illegal even if both individuals consent or are in a romantic relationship.

What Parents Need to Know:

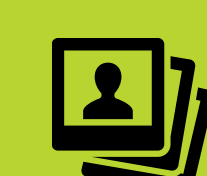
19.3%

of teens have sent sexually explicit images, videos, or text messages.



34.8%

received sexually explicit photos, videos, or text messages.



14.5%

of teens have forwarded sexually explicit images, videos, or text messages without consent.



Sexting and the Law in Georgia

Sexting may seem harmless to teens, but Georgia law views it seriously. Under state **child pornography laws**, any sexually explicit content involving minors (under 18) is illegal even if the participants consent or are both under 18.

Possible legal consequences include:

- Misdemeanor or felony charges
- Fines, probation, or prison time
- Mandatory sex offender registration in severe cases

Even when two teens are legally allowed to date or engage in consensual activity (age of consent: 16), **sending or possessing explicit images** is still considered child pornography.

Common Charges Related to Teen Sexting

Possible legal consequences include:

- Sexual Exploitation of Children
- Electronic Furnishing of Obscene Material to Minors
- Child Pornography Possession or Distribution
- Violations of the Computer/Electronic Pornography and Child Exploitation Prevention Act of 2007

Potential Penalties for Teen Sexting Offenses in Georgia

Possible legal consequences include:

- **Misdemeanor Penalties** – May include fines, probation, community service, and other restrictions.
- **Felony Penalties** – Can result in prison time, long-term probation, heavy fines, and in some cases, mandatory registration as a sex offender.

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Protecting Your Teen from Sexting Charges

Parents play a key role in helping their teens navigate digital safety. Private photos can spread quickly, leading to emotional, social, and legal consequences.

How to Prevent Sexting

- **Keep communication open:** Encourage honesty without judgment.
- **Set clear boundaries:** Explain the reasons behind rules on phones and apps.
- **Use parental controls:** Guide and monitor device and app use.
- **Teach about privacy:** Once shared, images can't be taken back.
- **Discuss peer pressure:** Remind them it's okay to say no.

Questions to Ask Your Teen

- Has anyone ever sent you a sext?
- Has anyone asked or pressured you to send one?
- Do you think it's okay to forward explicit images? Why or why not?
- What could happen if you send or forward a nude picture?
- How could a private photo sent to one person end up being seen by many?

Key Discussion Points

- Sexting can cause embarrassment, loss of opportunities, or legal issues.
- Forwarding explicit images without consent is illegal and harmful.
- Encourage empathy ask how someone might feel if their photo was shared.
- Remind teens to tell a trusted adult if they see or receive explicit images.

What to Do If an Image Has Already Been Shared

- Offer support: Stay calm and reassure your child you'll handle it together.
- Report it:
 - Take It Down (NCMEC) – for online image removal
 - CyberTipline – to report exploitation
- Contact the school to stop further sharing.
- Involve law enforcement if your child is being blackmailed or harassed.

Advice for Parents

- Talk regularly about sexting and its consequences.
- Emphasize that sexting involving minors is illegal—even if consensual.
- Remind them: Once an image is sent, it's out of their control.
- Encourage them to report any explicit photos they receive immediately.

SOURCE: TEAM GCAPP & GEORGIA CHILD PORNOGRAPHY LAWS.

- <https://www.abtlaw.com/blog/2025/june/understanding-teen-sexting-laws-in-georgia/>
- <https://takeitdown.ncmec.org/>
- <https://www.parentslead.org/special-topics/bullying/sexting>

VIDEOS:

- <https://youtu.be/TJyHmoSeHog?si=mJapCcUE61P6WypN>
- <https://youtu.be/PGf6ohRTgGE?si=3WdJLB1Hf6HfisOL>

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