



# LESSON PLAN

## Sexting

**Target audience:**  
12-16

**Duration: 45 mins – 1 hour**

### Lesson Aims

- To help raise awareness of potential risks, especially around sexting, when using communication technologies including mobile devices.
- To help learners to reflect on their own behaviours.
- To empower learners so that they are able to prevent themselves from getting into risky situations online.

### Curriculum Notes and Resources

This lesson seeks to raise awareness among young people of some of the issues around sexting.

Sexting (a portmanteau of sex and texting) refers to the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between mobile phones.

Sexting is becoming more and more prevalent in teenagers with many young people engaging in this risky activity. A recent survey by the charity Beatbullying found that 1/3 of young people had received a message, and 1/4 had received an image on the subject of sex. 85% of these “sexts” were sent from someone that the recipient knew – which clearly shows that children and young people are also instigators as well as victims.

Very often sexting can lead to cyberbullying as photos are often distributed to a wide audience using the internet. In the most extreme cases, they can lead to offline encounters and statutory rape.

The important point in this lesson is to ensure that pupils realise that there are consequences to what they post online – once something is posted, it is impossible to get it back – although it is never too late to report a problem.

### Pupil Opportunities

- To be able to understand the various types of online relationships that can occur from online communication
- To be able to understand the potential consequences of the materials that they post online.
- To understand the implications of the sexting process and willing participation in risky online behaviour

### Desirable Outcomes:

- Learners will be independent and discriminating when using ICT.
- Learners will be able to reflect on the process of participating.
- Learners will be able to recognise and manage risk and make safer choices.
- Learners will recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and well being and will develop effective ways of resisting pressure, including knowing when and where to get help.

**Technical Vocabulary:** grooming, sexting, predator, cybercrime

**Preparation:**

Sexting is becoming a common phenomenon in schools in the UK. It is highly likely that one or more of the pupils in the school will have sent or received a sext. It is important to recognise that they may not refer to the process as “sexting” but will almost certainly be aware of the implications.

This lesson is based around two videos. *Matt thought he knew* and *Claire thought she knew*. The first film can be viewed as part of the Think U Know presentation, the second can be accessed from the TUK website.

It is important to watch the videos in full before showing them to pupils. The films can be quite hard hitting so we advise you give a health warning before playing the film. Warn that some people may find the film uncomfortable or upsetting and let them know that you are going to discuss some of the issues after playing the film. It is important to let the young people know which member of staff they can talk to if they want to discuss anything further, we recommend giving the name of your child protection lead.

**Matt thought he knew** – depicts a teenage boy who enters into an online relationship with someone he thinks is a teenage girl. Although this video depicts grooming, there is also a very important message about the dangers of sexting and this lesson will focus on this aspect.

Matt was asked to share pictures of him with his shirt off and we are led to believe that other things may have happened too. Matt was happy to do this as he believed he was sharing these images with his online “girlfriend”. When Matt went to meet “her” he was met by a much older man who said he would show everyone the pictures if Matt didn’t go with him. The film implies that Matt was then raped or abused. This is one of the real risks of sexting. Once someone else has the inappropriate or embarrassing pictures then they have power over the victim. Matt should have told someone sooner and the real message is that having this sort of a relationship online is a bad idea.

**Claire thought she knew** – shows a similar story, this time of a teenage girl (younger than Matt) who also engages in an online relationship – this time with a man who is older than she is. She is aware of this, yet is still seemingly happy to send inappropriate (naked) images to him. She then eventually goes to meet him, feeling that she must do what he asks otherwise everyone will see the embarrassing images.

Once again, the message is that engaging in this sort of behaviour is a very risky business and can lead to devastating consequences.

Both videos demonstrate the difference that reporting a problem can make and it is important to emphasise the CEOP Report Button to the pupils.

This can be found at [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) and is also embedded in sites such as Bebo and MSN. It is possible that children may already be familiar with this and the TUK presentation covers it in more detail.

**Activity:**

Show the video to the pupils and ask them for comments or questions. Are they aware of this sort of activity? The consequences of their behaviour were devastating for Matt and Claire, can the pupils think of any other possible outcomes? It is important for pupils to consider why children and young people are sending this type of image in the first place. Is it really acceptable? Can this type of image be trusted with anyone?

**Discussion Points:**

Lots of young people send inappropriate photos to their friends, boyfriend or girlfriend. Discuss the potential risks of this; could these people forward the photos on to somebody else? What if they had a fight with their partner? What if they lost their phone and someone else found the photos?

The story of Jessica Logan is a tragic case of a girl who sexted and was then bullied as a result. She ultimately took her own life, being unable to deal with the constant taunting and verbal abuse. Pupils who have posted or sent images that may be deemed to be inappropriate need to recognise that something which starts out as “a bit of fun” can sometimes have far more serious consequences than they might have imagined.

Ask the pupils to work in smaller groups to carry out some research into sexting – what can they find online? Are they shocked or surprised by anything that they discovered? Reiterate the fact that once an image is online it can never be retrieved – how would they feel if someone discovered such an image of them in 10 or 20 years time? It may be appropriate to look at the video “The Photo Album” which can be found at [www.dubestemmer.no](http://www.dubestemmer.no) . This looks at our digital footprint and how the future will see us.

**Discussion Points:**

It is worth expanding the discussion on digital footprints and encouraging pupils to be aware of the information that exists about them online. We know that admissions officers in universities and colleges in the UK are carrying out online searches to find out extra information about candidates and then making decisions on whether to offer a place based on what they find.

**Extension Activities:**

Sexting is a growing problem and most schools have had to deal with this in recent months. Discuss with the pupils whether *they* think that this is a problem. Has the lesson changed their view? How would they get this important message across to others?

**Links to National Curriculum:**

Online safety is relevant to three key areas of the national curriculum for Key Stage 3, citizenship, ICT and PSHE.

**Citizenship:**

Key Processes 2.3 Taking informed and responsible action

Pupils should be able to:

- a. explore creative approaches to taking action on problems and issues to achieve intended purposes
- b. work individually and with others to negotiate, plan and [take action](#) on citizenship issues to try to influence others, bring about change or resist unwanted change, using time and

- resources appropriately
- c. analyse the impact of their actions on communities and the wider world, now and in the future
  - d. reflect on the progress they have made, evaluating what they have learnt, what went well, the difficulties encountered and what they would do differently.

### Curriculum Opportunities

The curriculum should provide opportunities to:

- i. use and interpret different media and ICT both as sources of information and as a means of communicating ideas.

### ICT

#### Key Concepts

##### 1.4 Impact of technology

- a. Exploring how ICT changes the way we live our lives and has significant social, ethical and cultural implications.
- b. Recognising issues of risk, safety and responsibility surrounding the use of ICT

#### Key Processes

##### 2.3 Communicating information

Pupils should be able to:

communicate and exchange information (including digital communication) effectively, safely and responsibly. **“Safely and responsibly” is defined as:**

**when using digital communication, pupils should develop an understanding of safe practices and follow them. For example, they should be cautious about sharing personal information and viewing and uploading digital content. They should also recognise the need to show respect towards others.**

#### Range and content

The study of ICT should include

- d. developing an understanding of the need to:
  - Keep information secure – for example keeping copies safe, backing up work and protecting passwords or PINs to avoid identity theft.
- e. the impact of ICT on individuals, communities and society, including the social, economical, legal and ethical implications of access to, and use of, ICT. – This could include, issues relating to ownership, copyright, plagiarism and privacy of information; effects on employment and working practices; effects on local communities; sustainability issues; the causes and implications of unequal access to ICT locally, nationally and globally; and the abuse of ICT, including the issue of cyberbullying.

### PSHE

#### Key Concepts

##### 1.3 Risk

- a. Understanding risk in both positive and negative terms and understanding that individuals need to manage risk to themselves and others in a range of situations.
- b. Appreciating that pressure can be used positively or negatively to influence others in situations involving risk.

#### Key Processes

##### 2.1 Critical reflection

Pupils should be able to:

- a. reflect on feelings and identify [positive ways of understanding](#), managing and expressing strong emotions and challenging behaviour
- b. develop self-awareness by reflecting critically on their behaviour and its impact on others.

## 2.2 Decision making and managing risk

Pupils should be able to:

- a. use knowledge and understanding to make informed choices about safety, health and wellbeing
- b. find information and support from a variety of sources
- c. assess and manage the element of risk in personal choices and situations
- d. use strategies for resisting unhelpful peer influence and pressure
- e. know when and how to get help
- f. identify how managing feelings and emotions effectively supports decision-making and risk management.

## 2.3 Developing relationships and working with others

Pupils should be able to:

- a. use social skills to build and maintain a range of positive relationships
- b. use the social skill of negotiation within relationships, recognising their rights and responsibilities and that their actions have consequences
- c. use the social skills of communication, [negotiation](#), assertiveness and collaboration
- d. value differences between people and demonstrate empathy and a willingness to learn about people different from themselves
- e. challenge prejudice and discrimination assertively.