



# Choices Topic for November: Sexting & Dating Violence

## What is Sexting?

Sexting is the act of sending sexually explicit photos, messages, voicemails, IM's, videos, etc., either via phone, computer, webcam or other device. Minor sexting is illegal! Sexually explicit photos, videos and communications, even when sent between minors, may be classified as child pornography, and the image taker, the image recipient, and anyone who disseminates the content may be charged and found guilty of crimes. Even asking another minor for sexual images may be criminal sexual solicitation. Remember, once a photo has been sent on the internet, control is lost. Photos may live on forever in cloud storage.

## What is Dating Violence?

DV is defined as physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence within a dating relationship, including stalking. It can take place in person or electronically and occur between a current or former partner.

**Safe Sexting? No Such Thing!**

**Your reputation?**  
It'll take a hit if your parents or employer (or enemies) find out.

**Privacy?**  
An illusion—phones get lost, texts get forwarded every day.

**A clean record?**  
Kiss it goodbye if pornography laws apply!

*Think B4 U Send!*

## The Dating Bill of Rights

- I have the right to:*
- ♥ trust myself and my instincts
  - ♥ be respected as a person
  - ♥ change my mind
  - ♥ express my feelings
  - ♥ refuse a date
  - ♥ not be physically, emotionally, or sexually abused

**33% OF ADOLESCENTS EXPERIENCE SEXUAL, PHYSICAL, VERBAL, OR EMOTIONAL DATING ABUSE. LOVE IS NOT ABUSE.**

## Discussion Questions, Information, and Research

### Students:

- What are attributes to look for in a healthy dating relationship?
- You notice your significant other becomes jealous easily. Do you talk about it?
- You feel uncomfortable while on a date. What do you do?
- Have you ever sent a sext? What was your motivation?
- Have you ever received a sext? Did you keep it or distribute it? Why or why not?
- Can you think of some ways a sext picture might come back to haunt you later in life?
- Would you send a sext picture if you knew anyone could see it?

### Early warning signs that your relationship could become abusive:

- Extreme jealousy
- Controlling behavior
- Quick involvement
- Unpredictable mood swings
- Alcohol and drug use
- Explosive anger
- Isolation from friends and family
- Using force during argument
- Blaming others for problems or feelings
- Verbally abusive
- Threats of violence

If you or someone you know needs help, you can call...

### A Member of the Choices Club

Patrick Hagler 832.738.5381

**Sexual Assault Hotline**  
713.528.7273

**Domestic Violence Hotline**  
713.528.2121

### Parents, Faculty and Staff:

- You notice your child's significant other is extremely possessive. What do you do?
- How open are you and your child about their dating relationship?
- What are your household rules about dating?
- Have you spoken with your child about the dangers of sexting?
- Does your child think that once a picture is deleted, it is gone forever?
- What are some ways a sext picture can come back to haunt your child later in life?
- What would you do if you found a sext picture on your child's phone?

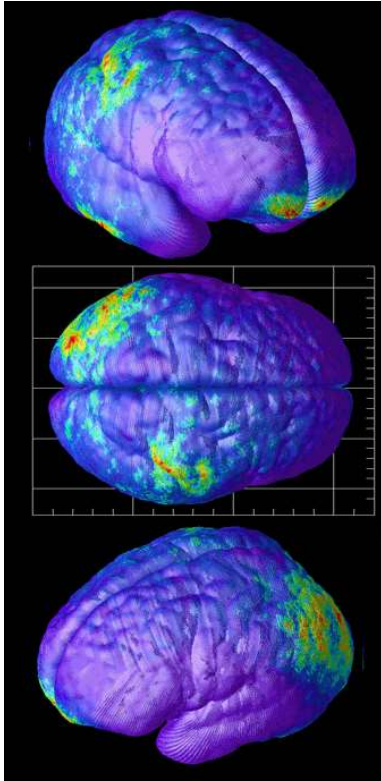
Resources: [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen\\_dating\\_violence.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen_dating_violence.html); <https://www.breakthecycle.org/learn-about-dating-violence>; <http://www.loveisrespect.org/resources/dating-violence-statistics/>; <http://ikeepSAFE.org/be-a-pro/relationships/whats-wrong-with-sexting/>



## **Dating Violence & Sexting**

Patrick Hager, Choices Counselor

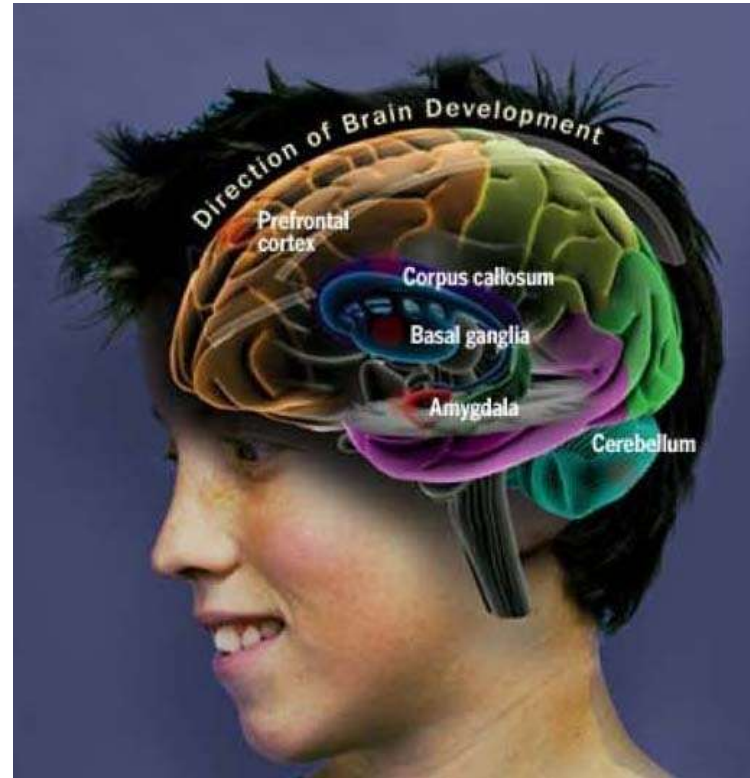
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuBxI5OGdlw>



How does brain science relate to teen dating violence and sexting?

*A teenager's brain "has a well-developed accelerator but only a partly developed brake."*

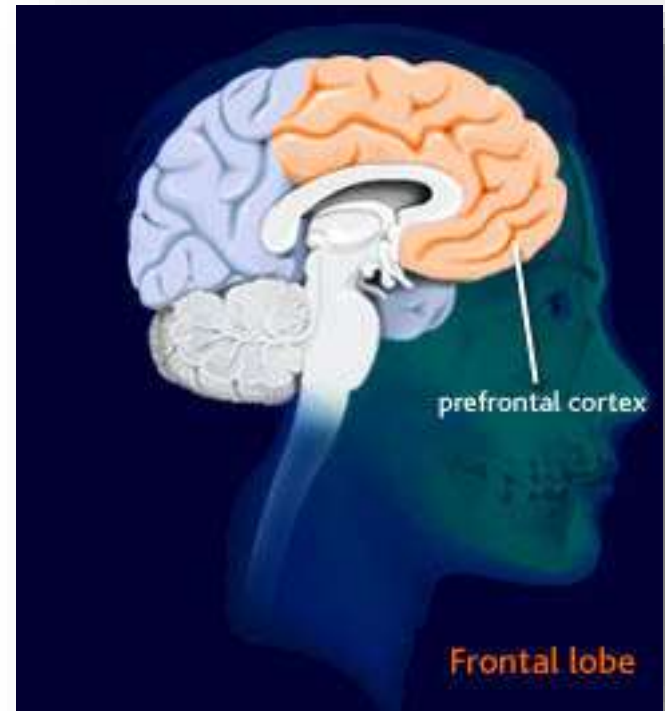
Laurence  
Steinberg



# TDV/Sexting and Brain Development

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- Adolescent brains are not fully developed-even if they know something is dangerous, they may still go ahead and do it
- Prefrontal Cortex
  - **Impulsivity**
  - **Interpreting Emotions**
  - **Judgment**
  - **Consequences of actions**
  - **Decision making**



# Prefrontal Cortex Thinking: The Executive Function Skills

- Abstract; conceptual understanding
  - Impulse Control
  - Problem-Solving
  - Decision-Making
    - Judgment
  - Emotion Regulation
  - Frustration Tolerance
- Ability to Feel Empathy

# What is sexting?

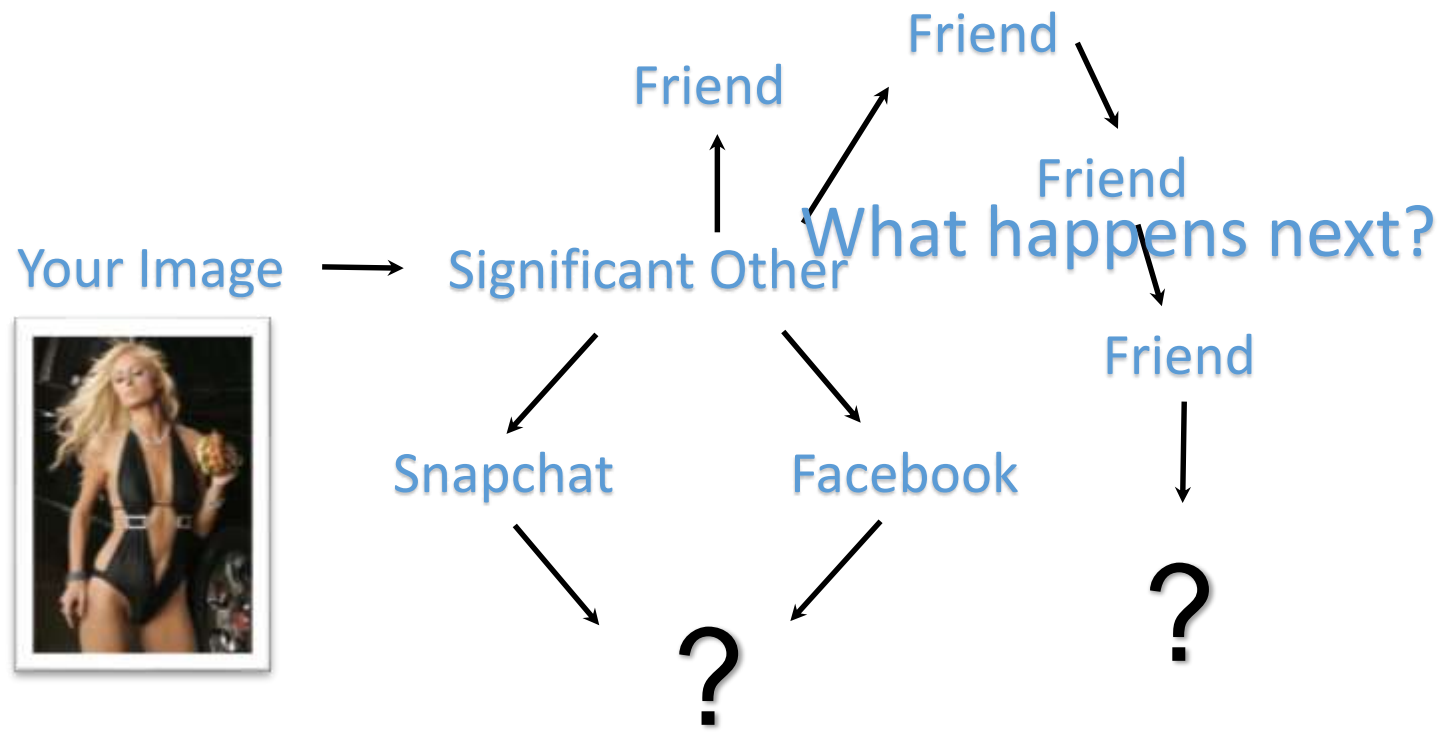
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“The sending or receiving of sexually-suggestive or explicit text or pictures via one’s cell phone, web cam, or other electronic means”





# How Far Will That Message Travel??



# What Happens After You Hit Send?

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Impact On:

*Job interviews*

*Security Clearances*

*Future Relationships*

# Woops...

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# What does the law say? SB 407

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- Prohibits minors from "intentionally and knowingly promoting or possessing text messages that contain explicit images of those 18 and younger." The new offense will be punished as a misdemeanor instead of a felony. First time offenders may face a class C misdemeanor, and repeat offenders can be charged with a class A or B misdemeanor.

# Jessie Logan

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- 18 years old
- Sent nude pictures to a boyfriend; the two broke up
- Ex-boyfriend sent the pictures to other girls in the school
- Jesse tragically committed suicide by hanging
- “She was tortured at school” – Cynthia Logan

# “Sextortion”

## Former New Berlin student pleads not guilty in sex assault case

By Mike Johnson of the Journal Sentinel

Posted: Mar. 9, 2009



Stancl

Stancl is accused of posing as a girl on Facebook, persuading at least 31 boys to send him pictures of themselves naked and then blackmailing some of the boys into performing sex acts under the threat that the pictures would be released to the rest of the high school, according to a criminal complaint.

All 31 boys attend New Berlin Eisenhower Middle/High School, Waukesha County District Attorney Brad Schimel has said.

At least seven boys, ages 15 to 17, were coerced into performing sex acts, Schimel said. The incidents occurred from spring 2008 until the time of Stancl's arrest in November. Stancl had 300 photos and movie clips on his computer of boys ages 13 to 19 from the school, Schimel said last month when charges were filed.

# What can parents do?

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- Talk about it! Don't wait for something to happen.
- Remind your kids that once an image is sent, it can never be retrieved - they lose control of it. Ask your child how they would feel if their teachers, parents, or the entire school saw the picture. It happens.
- Talk about pressures to send or receive revealing photos.
- Teach your children that the "buck stops with them". If someone sends them a photo, they must delete it immediately.
- Set rules. Do you allow your kids drive drunk? Do you let them ride in the car with no seat belts? Why give them something as dangerous as a cell phone and not establish rules? Start random checks of the phone (yes, you'll need to learn how to use it), and go through everything on it regularly.
- Replace the smart phone with a flip phone as an earned consequence if necessary.
- Deploy programs such as NetNanny, WebRoot, CyberPatrol, Auto Forward Spy, SurePoint Spy.

# Dating Violence



# What is Dating Violence?

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A **pattern** of repeated actual or threatened acts that physically, sexually, emotionally, or digitally abuse a dating partner. One partner attempts to establish **power and control** over the other through **abuse**.



# Prevalence

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**Half of teenagers** in relationships report being **controlled, threatened, and pressured** to do things they did not want to do by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

# Prevalence

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**1 in 3** adolescents is a **victim of physical, sexual, emotional or digital abuse** from a dating partner – a number that far exceeds other types of youth violence.

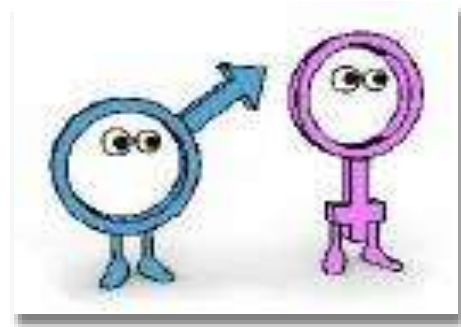


Partner Violence Among Adolescents in Opposite-Sex Romantic Relationships:  
Findings From the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health  
Carolyn Tucker Halpern, PhD, Selene G. Oslak, MPH, Mary L. Young, MS, Sandra L.  
Martin, PhD, and Lawrence L. Kupper, PhD

<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.91.10.1679>

# Why is it prevalent?

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- Gender hierarchies
- Views of “romantic” relationships
- Inexperience
- Independence
- Peer pressure



# Methods of Control

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**Physical**



**Emotional**



**Digital**



**Sexual**



# Sexual Abuse

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- Rape
- Unwanted penetration of any kind
- Battering that leads to rape
- Voyeurism
- Unwanted touching
- Unwanted kissing
- Sexual name-calling
- Sabotaging birth control



# Physical Abuse

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- Slapping
- Grabbing
- Punching
- Kicking
- Cutting
- Throwing objects
- Burning
- Scratching
- Pulling hair
- Forcibly restraining
- Stabbing



# Emotional Abuse

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- Yelling
- Threats
- Insults
- Invading privacy
- Isolating from others
- Public humiliation
- Possessiveness
- Destroying objects
- Lying
- Withholding affection
- Intimidation

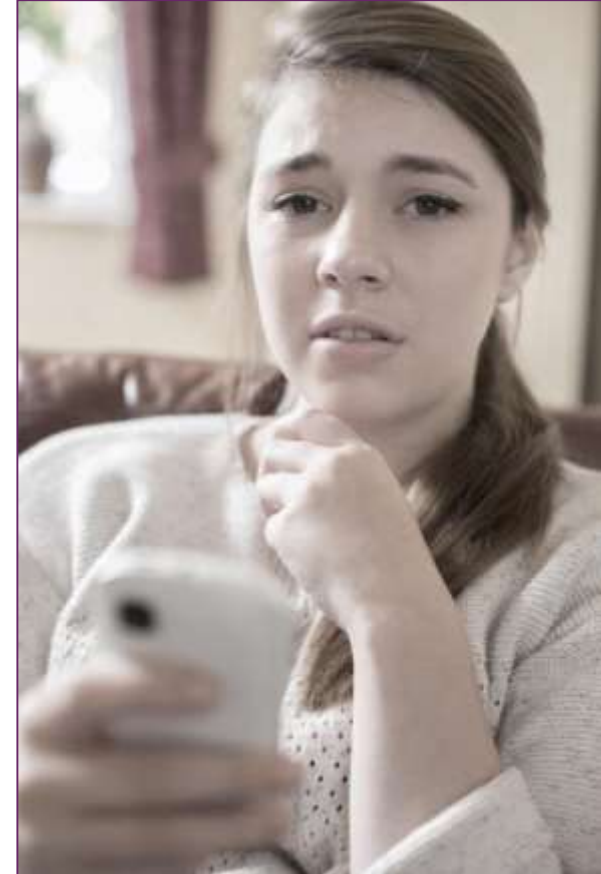




# Digital Abuse

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- Monitoring communications
- Demanding sexual photos
- Excessive texts/threatening texts
- Hacking/impersonating online
- Posting private images or messages (or threatening to)
- Demanding check-ins
- Tracking location
- Posting cruel things about a partner



# And Yet...

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**Less than 1/3** of parents **talk to their teens** about dating abuse.

Nearly **2/3** parents of teens in relationships **do not think their children are at risk** of teen dating violence.

# Teens Want to Talk to Parents

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**62%** of teens **wish** they were able to **talk more openly** about relationships with their **parents**.

**Parents** have the **biggest influence** on teen decisions about relationships and sex.



# Reporting Teen Dating Violence

- Only **1 in 11** episodes of dating violence reported
- Adult beliefs:
  - DV is not a teen problem
  - Fail to give **validation** to teens feelings for partner
  - Teen relationships are **not serious**, easy to get out
- Variety of reasons why teens do not report dating violence:
  - **Stigma**
  - **Self-blame**
  - **Denial**
  - **Unaware it is abuse**



# Consequences to the Victim

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- Injuries, Death, Suicide
- Mental Health
- PTSD
- Low self-esteem
- Declines in school achievement
- Engaging in unhealthy behaviors
- Increased risk of STIs
- Pregnancy
- Cycle of Violence



# Consequences to Perpetrator

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- Alienation from friends and family
- Expulsion from school
- Depression
- Criminal record
- Potentially build poor lifelong relationship habits



# Warning Signs

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- Extreme jealousy
- Constant put-downs
- Telling the other person what to do
- Explosive temper
- Threats
- Possessiveness
- Preventing the other person from doing what he or she wants to do
- Severe mood swings
- Making false accusations about the other person
- History of violence
- Isolating the other person from family and friends
- Seeking financial control over the other person

# Technology Abuse Stats

1 in 3 teens say they are texted 10, 20, 30 times an hour by a partner keeping tabs on them

68% of teens say boyfriends/girlfriends sharing private or embarrassing pictures/videos on cell phones and computers is a serious problem.

1 in 4 teens in a relationship say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cell phones & texting.



19% of teens in relationships say their partner has used a cellular device or the internet to spread rumors about

Nearly 1 in 4 teens in a relationship communicated with their partner via cell phone or texting HOURLY between 12 am & 5 am

71% of teens regard boyfriends/girlfriends spreading rumors about them on cell phones and social networking sites as a serious problem.



# Abuse or Not?

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**sexual coercion & peer pressure**  
We have been dating for 6 months and we haven't had sex, is there something wrong with me? Our other friends say they usually have sex after a few weeks.

**Isolation**  
Do you have to go to your friends b-day party, I wanted to spend time with you this weekend, I should be more important than your friends

**Threats**  
I love you so much that I don't want to leave you. I'll kill myself if you leave.

**Minimize, deny, & Blame**  
I didn't mean to hurt you,; You made me upset; You deserved it

**Anger/Emotional Abuse & Social Status**  
You are such an idiot, that's why I have to make all the decisions!

# Healthy Relationships

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# What You Can Do

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- Recognize Red Flags/Investigate
- Discuss/teach teens about healthy relationships
- Create an environment that makes communication easy
- Model respect at home (children watch everything!)
- Talk to your child about gender stereotypes, peer pressure, and their views on romantic relationships. Do they match your family values?

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