

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes guidance for Education



Not all young people send nudes and semi-nudes but many are asked to send them or receive images and videos of others with or without consent. Research by Revealing Reality in 2022 of 15 – 18 year olds found:

20% of girls and 13% of boys aged 15 - 18 had ever sent a nude picture or video of themselves

60% of girls and 31% of boys had been asked to share a nude or semi-nude

54% of girls and 30% of boys had experienced someone sending them a nude or semi-nude



Parents/carers should be:

- Given information about the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, what they can expect to happen next, and who will be their link person within the education setting
- Given support on how to speak to their child about the incident
- Advised on the law around the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
- Kept updated about any actions that have been taken or any support that their child is accessing, unless the child involved has specifically asked for this not to happen and is judged to be old enough to make that informed decision
- Informed about sources of support for their child, in case they are feeling anxious or depressed about what has happened. This could include speaking to a Childline counsellor online or on 0800 11 11, in house counselling services where available, or a GP. If they are concerned that their child is suicidal, they should contact 999

Responding

When an incident involving nudes and semi-nudes comes to the attention of any member of staff in an education setting:

- The incident should be referred to the Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) (or equivalent) as soon as possible
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team
- There should be subsequent interviews with the children or young people involved (if appropriate)
- A referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately if there is a concern that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process
- Appropriate emotional support should be put in place for the child

Delivering education safely

- **Safeguarding first.** Establish an emotionally safe learning environment and follow the education setting's safeguarding or child protection policies and procedures in the event of a disclosure
- **Promote dialogue and understanding.** Children and young people feel safest when they are listened to and understood – and know that they can ask trusted adults for help when they need it
- **Empower and enable children and young people.** Children and young people have the right to be protected from harm, and to be supported to build knowledge, skills and confidence
- **Challenge victim-blaming attitudes.** These should be challenged in a constructive and supportive way that encourages individuals to think critically about the language they use
- **Never frighten or scare-monger.** Alarmist education can be risky or worse, counterproductive. Avoid shocking or scaring children and young people, their families or other professionals



Support

When discussing the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, it is important that the DSL (or equivalent)/member of staff:

- Reassures the child or young person that they are not alone, and the education setting will do everything that they can to help and support them. They should also be reassured that they will be kept informed throughout the process
- Recognises the pressures that children and young people can be under to take part in sharing an image and, if relevant, supports their parents and carers to understand the wider issues and motivations around this
- Remains solution-focused and avoids any victim-blaming questions such as 'why have you done this?' as this may prevent the child or young person from talking about what has happened. For example, use questions such as 'describe what happened' or 'explain to me who was involved'

- discusses issues of consent and trust within healthy relationships. Explain that it is not ok for someone to make them feel uncomfortable, to pressure them into doing things that they do not want to do, or to show them things that they are unhappy about.
- explains the law on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. It is important to highlight that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them and should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them
- helps the child or young person to understand what has happened by discussing the wider pressures that they may face and the motivations of the person that sent on the image(s)
- Advises the child or young person to use Child-line's Report Remove tool to report an image that has been shared online: www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/report-nude-image-online/. NCMEC's Take It Down tool can also be used to help them to anonymously remove nudes or semi-nudes that have yet to be shared online but they think might be