

marri Findings

FAITH & FAMILY

Sexting Among Adolescents

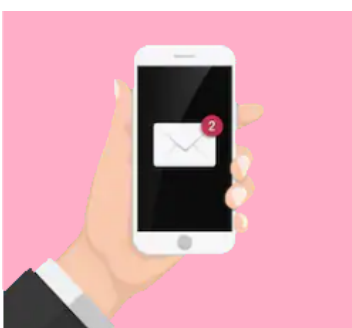
"Poster after poster, film after film, novel after novel, associate the idea of sexual indulgence with the ideas of health, normality, youth, frankness, and good humor. Now this association is a lie. Like all powerful lies, it is based on a truth... The truth that sex, in itself (apart from the excesses and obsessions that have grown round it) is "normal" and "healthy," and all the rest of it. The lie consists in the suggestion that any sexual act to which you are tempted at the moment is also healthy and normal." – CS Lewis

Sexting and Its Correlates



A 2013 [systematic literature review](#) of 31 studies on adolescent and adult sexting (defined as sending or receiving texts or photos of a sexual nature) found a greater likelihood of sexting among those who were female, African-American, older, LGBTQ, in a romantic relationship, or, for females, being employed or having a higher level of education. Those who engaged in sexting behavior were significantly more likely to be sexually active. They were also more likely to engage in impulsive behavior, consume alcohol or drugs prior to sexual activity, have more sexual partners, and were more likely to have contracted a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Finally, those who suffered from attachment anxiety were more likely to text to solicit sexual activity. Among adults the most common motivations for sexting were to be regarded as "sexy" or to initiate sexual activity. Among adolescents "experiencing pressure from a male" was the major reason and feeling such pressure was associated with excessive anxiety, prior dating violence, or the contemplation of and even the attempt at committing suicide.

Personality Traits Linked to Sexting Behavior



A [2014 Belgian study](#) of 1,028 secondary school students examined the association between personality traits and sexting. It found a significant link to sensation-seeking and experiential thinking traits (more likely to be reactive to one's environment, to play, browse or buy on impulse). The opposite type of thinking is "rational/logical/problem-solving". Also, sexting behavior was found to be linked to depression.

[Sexting Differs by Individual-Level and Contextual Factors](#)



A [2014 study](#) of sexting among 14,946 adolescents, aged 11 to 16 years, from 20 countries examined individual factors and some contextual (cultural) factors. On the individual level, age, sensation seeking, and frequency of internet use predicted sexting across all countries. On a contextual level, it found that adolescents from traditional countries such as Italy and

Poland were less likely to engage in sexual behaviors and that sexting is less prevalent.



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