

SAFEGUARDING

Sexting – London Grid For Learning Campaign

Not all sexts are created equal.

For adults, privately making and sending an intimate image is completely legal. Sharing that image without the subject's consent is a crime.

For under-18s, however, it's a different situation. If you are under 18 and have taken a nude image of yourself, you have created an indecent image of a child. If you share this image, you have distributed an indecent image of a child. If you keep it on your phone, you are in possession of an indecent image of a child. Yes, it's a bit of a peculiar law and, yes, it doesn't exactly make sense, but it exists with good reason. All of those crimes come under the [Protection of Children Act of 1978](#).

London Grid for Learning (LGfL) have created a campaign to help younger children understand how to keep safe and not be coerced into anything that puts them at risk.

Please read their message below....

For parents and teachers – what's this campaign all about?

Parents and professionals are often aware of issues around teens being coerced or tricked into getting undressed or revealing themselves online (or doing so consensually as part of [sexting](#)). However, what do we need to say to the youngest pupils, and why?

At LGfL, we want schools and parents to spread the message of *Undressed* to the very youngest primary pupils.

Why?

You can read more details on page 22 in our [Hopes & Streams report](#), or watch this [short video](#) (NB-made before we did the animation; we will update this video soon), but here are some key points at a glance:

- Law enforcement agencies such as NCA CEOP have repeatedly warned about sexual predators tricking young children into getting changed or undressed on camera by playing a 'game' or issuing a 'challenge' to see how fast they can get changed into different clothes or into a swimming costume. This might happen over video chat or livestreaming app; children often don't even know this has happened; videos are often taken and then circulated.
- That's why we asked 40,000 children in our [survey](#) if they had been asked to change or undress when using streaming apps and sites and found that nearly 1 in 10 pupils who video chat with people they haven't met have been asked to change or undress, and more than 1 in 20 pupils who livestream have been asked to change or undress
- [Internet Watch Foundation research](#) has shown that 98% of publicly available livestreamed child sexual abuse images involved children aged 13 and under; 28% were aged 10 and under!
- If you are still unconvinced, read these [case studies](#) (also IWF) of real children affected by this abuse strategy (the youngest was 7 years old but even younger children can be affected).

What next?

That's why we would love you to use the resources from this campaign in your school and ask teachers and parents to add the simple online safety message to others already effectively communicated to many primary pupils. You may want to explain to parents (send them here to undressed.lgfl.net if it is helpful) why this message is relevant to (especially) the youngest pupils who do not have the same capacity as older children to always realise when they are being tricked.

You will obviously need to be careful how you approach it (and if you aren't the Designated Safeguarding Lead, speak to them first), but if the youngest children have already internalised this simple message, then hopefully we make a difference.

Working together to keep our children safe and happy.

Halina Rooney

Deputy Head of Inclusion/SENCo