



Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexts

ABSTRACT

Nowadays it is very simple to abuse someone's sext or improper photography. The main goal of the research is to reflect behavior of Canadian youth and their reasons for sharing other's sexts. The study focuses on the issue of non-consensual sharing of sexts.

KEY WORDS

Sexting. Sexts. Canadian youth. Non-consensual sharing of sexts.

Canadian youth sharing other's sexts

In February 2018, by the research of the Canadian nonprofit center for digital and media literacy MediaSmarts, in collaboration with the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and Telus Wise Center which provides free workshops on digital technologies and online safety, attention to the issue of erotic photography sharing ("**sexts, sexting**") was drawn.

A survey sample consisted of 800 young people aged from 16 to 20.

The research results show that "**sexts**" are more received than sent by youth. The most widespread form of coming into contact with sexting is that the sext was shown to the concerned by someone else in person. The least common way is to publish sexts in public areas. Up to 42 percent of young Canadians have experienced that images showing their nude bodies (sexts) were spread without their consent. ("**non-consensual sharing of sexts**"). The results of the survey further indicate that 41% of youth have already sent one or more sexts, with boys and girls sending these photos roughly to the same extent. However, sexts were more shared by boys than girls.

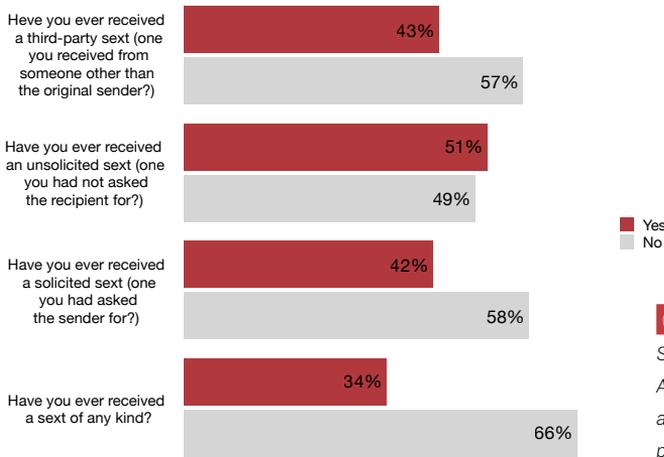


CHART 1: Receiving Sexts

Source: *Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexts: Behaviours and Attitudes of Canadian Youth*. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexts.pdf>>.

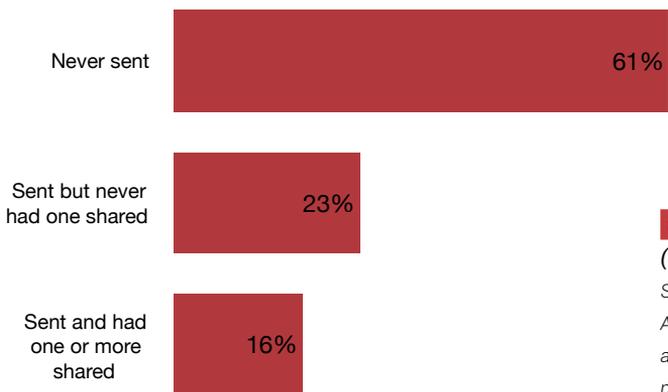


CHART 2: Experiences with having sexts shared (full sample)

Source: *Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexts: Behaviours and Attitudes of Canadian Youth*. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexts.pdf>>.

Based on the survey, the study reflects 3 fundamental factors that affect “non-consensual sharing behavior”. These includes “Gender stereotypes”, “Moral disengagement” and “A culture of sharing”. “Gender roles” and attitudes towards them play an important role in differentiating individuals. Young individuals who have agreed with statements as: “Men should be more interested in sex than women” and “Woman can not be really happy unless she is not in a relationship” were much more likely to share sexts. “Moral disengagement” is a well-known factor in cyberbullying, sexual harassment and attitudes that promote rape. The research has found that men ignore the consequences of sexting from the moral point of view. “It seems probable therefore that those youths who share sexts non-consensually may be engaging in moral disengagement to absolve themselves of responsibility.” In the research there occurred young individuals who agreed with such statements as: Sharing sexts is common, no one is dealing with anymore” or “If a boy receives an erotic photo and shares it with his ten friends who share it next, it is not a mistake of that first boy”. These individuals are more associated with sharing sexts (sexting). Gender stereotypes and moral disengagement contribute to a culture of sharing. Approximately one third of young people consider non-consensual sharing to be normal, common or even slightly positive.

It is also alarming for parents and teachers to find that current strategies to prevent and stop the spreading of erotic photos of other persons without their consent are inefficient. Young people are inadequately informed about criminal laws and educational programs at schools or in home education are also failing. According to MediaSmarts it is necessary to focus on preventing non-consensual sharing by boys. According to the research, the abstinence approach was more focused on girls that led to insufficient prevention of the illegal spreading of erotic photos.

Since most children do not have experience with learning, lectures or workshops on the topic of sexting, it is necessary to spread awareness about this issue more effectively. Telus Wise, in collaboration with MediaSmarts, has decided to create new tools for parents, teachers and teens to help all Canadian families provide the resources needed to prevent this type of behavior.

Bibliography and sources

Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexts: Behaviours and Attitudes of Canadian Youth. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexts.pdf>>.

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ABSTRACT

In the digitalization period projects to support the development of critical thinking are needed to maintain political and societal balance. Rapid changes in technology and information leave a space wherein can form many harmful groups or individuals to influence their respondents with false messages and hoaxes. It is necessary to develop the critical thinking of people from a young age, so the project Trust Me has been created. The aim of the project is to support the education of pupils of primary and secondary schools in the field of media literacy and critical thinking. Through two specialized curriculums students can understand the ways of manipulation with information and learn how to distinguish trustworthy contents on the Internet.

KEY WORDS

Digital age. The Internet. Critical Thinking. Media Literacy. Trust Me.