



## ***Activity: How Could This Have Happened?***

**Topics included:** Virtual Story – Losing Control of Content

**PLEASE BE AWARE: THIS LESSON MAY CAUSE YOUTH TO THINK ABOUT A SITUATION THEY HAVE ALREADY EXPERIENCED OR ARE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING. IF THEY HAVE HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE AS OUTLINED BELOW, THEY MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE TOLD A PARENT. PLEASE BE OBSERVANT AND NOTICE ANY CHANGES IN APPEARANCE, BEHAVIOR, OR MOOD.**

**ANNOUNCE THAT YOU ARE AVAILABLE TO TALK PRIVATELY AFTER CLASS WITH ANYONE THAT NEEDS HELP. TALK WITH ANY STRUGGLING STUDENTS PRIVATELY AND ASSURE THEM YOU CAN HELP. ALWAYS REFER STUDENTS TO THE APPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATOR IN THE SCHOOL TO HELP THE STUDENT AND ALWAYS NOTIFY A PARENT.**

### **Lesson Overview:**

This lesson is designed to show students how easily a sent text, message, or photo can end up in MANY, unintended hands. It's also designed to assist students in understanding the legal issues around "sexting" and how to find someone who can help if they do send an inappropriate picture that is shared with others who were not intended to see it.

### **Key Ideas:**

- A. Being smart about sending texts, messages, and photos
- B. How a text, message, or photo can get into many hands very easily
- C. Consequences for the initial text, message, or picture and for those sharing it with others

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### **Instructional Activities:**

Use the following scenario with students:

*Crystal (age 16) sends her boyfriend, Sam (age 16), a nude photo because he's been asking for a while. She asks him to delete it as soon as she sends it, and he says he will. Guess what? He doesn't delete the photo. Crystal and Sam break up a few weeks later. Sam thinks it's a good idea to share the photo and sends it to a few buddies.*

*The next day in school, Crystal notices kids pointing, whispering, and laughing in the hall. She assumes it's just because she and Sam broke up, and they're all jerks. She's right about part of that...they are jerks! One of Sam's friends deleted the picture, but the other 2 forwarded it to 10 guys in each of their contact lists. So Crystal thinks the picture, meant only for Sam's eyes, had*

*been deleted, but in actuality, about 30 people have seen in it in the 48 hours since she and Sam broke up.*

*Sam is feeling a little guilty and asks his buddies to delete the photo. They tell him they will, but they also tell Sam that they've forwarded it. He gets angry and tells them to tell their friends to delete it. They say they will.*

*Too late! Brad, someone who got the photo from one of Sam's friends, dislikes Crystal because back in 4th grade, she beat him in a race. His friends still make fun of him for losing, so he posted the picture on his social media. He has 850 followers.*

*Sam convinces Brad to take the picture down, but after being up for about 12 hours, approximately 600 people saw the photo and a few creeps saved it. Now there's no control over who sees, forwards, or posts the photo that was originally meant for one person - one person Crystal thought she could trust.*

*Crystal now understands why everyone in school is whispering and laughing at her. She's humiliated, angry, and worried about if she will get into trouble and what her parents will say...and she doesn't know what to do.*

You see how one “innocent” act – sending a picture to someone you trust – can spiral out of control. This story could go on, and an exponential number of people could potentially post, share, and see Crystal's photo.

Instructor:

1. Discuss how someone might feel and deal with the ramifications of this scenario.
2. Share the following legal information that is imperative for students to understand. Discuss the Pennsylvania sexting law (18 Pa.C.S. Section 6321) as an example: “Knowingly transmits, distributes, publishes or disseminates an electronic communication containing a sexually explicit image”  
**Resource:** <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTM/18/00.063.021.000..HTM>
3. If appropriate, discuss the federal law surrounding child pornography. “Federal law prohibits the production, distribution, reception, and possession of an image of child pornography...” It is illegal to take a pornographic photo of someone under 18 years old. It is illegal to share the photo, receive the photo or be in the possession of the photo. If appropriate for the class, open the link and discuss what's contained.  
**Resource:** <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ceos/citizens-guide-us-federal-law-child-pornography>
4. Discuss legal ramifications for others who received the picture of Crystal.

#### **Additional Resources:**

Sexting laws by state: <https://cyberbullying.org/sexting-laws>

Sexting: Advice for teens: <https://cyberbullying.org/sexting-advice-teens>

**Social-Emotional Learning:**

Instructor: *How would you help a friend who found themselves in this type of situation?  
Who would you ask for help for yourself or a friend in this situation?*

**Lesson Assessment:**

- A. Why should you never share a nude or questionable photo of yourself?
- B. What are the legal ramifications of “sexting”?
- C. What are some constructive uses of sending pictures to friends?

**Additional Resource:**

Where to report online abuse:

<http://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/cybertipline#collapseHowtoPromotetheCyberTiplineonYourWebsite201906130048>

Resources on Revenge Porn: <https://cyberbullying.org/revenge-porn-research-laws-help-victims>