

garylowe

From: "Niki Delson" <niki@delko.net>
To: <ATSALIST@ATSALIST.COM>; <discussion@ccoso.org>
Sent: Friday, October 10, 2008 7:45 PM
Subject: [Discussion] News to Muse - From Legal Info blog

Sexting and minors: child pornography, not child's play

October 8th, 2008 ·

By: LISA R. WILSON

It's the newest, latest trend among school kids, and it's not downloading songs on iPods or playing the current edition of Grand Theft Auto. It's called "sexting"—sending graphic images and pornographic videos via text message to friends. It's becoming such a problem that major metropolis cities, such as San Diego, have an entire team on their police department dedicated to sexting and internet crimes—often working on 60-70 cases at a time.

Although in this context sexting is generally done between school friends, it's important to note that no matter the circumstance, it is illegal to possess, distribute or manufacture pornography involving anyone less than 18 years of age. Therefore, students who are minors themselves and are found distributing or possessing such images can be found guilty of child pornography... and can face up to 10 years in prison.

On October 3rd, police in Newark, Ohio, arrested a 15-year-old girl on juvenile child pornography charges for allegedly sending nude cell phone photos of herself to classmates. Authorities are also considering charges for students who received the photos.

In La Crosse, Wisconsin, a 17-year-old boy recently was charged with child pornography, sexual exploitation of a child and defamation for allegedly posting nude photos of his 16-year-old ex-girlfriend on his MySpace page. The girl had taken the pictures with her cell phone at her mother's home and e-mailed them to the boyfriend, authorities said.

Under federal law, child pornography is a criminal act, and is defined as a visual depiction of any kind, including a drawing, cartoon, sculpture, or painting, photograph, film, video, or computer-generated image or picture, where it depicts a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct and is obscene. These illegal images can be produced and presented in various forms including print media, videotape, film, CD, the internet, and yes, cell phones.

Parents today face many challenges staying abreast of their child's involvement in all things, legal and otherwise. However, something that appears as innocent as texting can in fact be a catalyst to a world of legal woes. If you have a teenager in your household who does have a cell phone and does engage in texting (this is probably redundant), it is recommended to talk with your teen and make sure that the images and photos that come to and from his or her cell are within legal boundaries. Being busted for child pornography, when a person is a minor themselves, is not something to be taken lightly. Even if the intentions were without intent to harm, being convicted of such a crime is not mere "child's play"—and can cause irreparable

10/11/2008

damage to a budding future.

Discussion mailing list

Discussion@ccoso.org

http://ccoso.org/mailman/listinfo/discussion_ccoso.org