



City of
BROOKVILLE
POLICE
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A proactive and educational approach vs. enforcement of criminal violations involving the use of social media and “Sexting” within our community and across the nation by our teens.

The City of Brookville Police Department, Clay Township Police Department, Perry Township Police Department and the Brookville Local Schools are taking a proactive approach towards social media and “sexting” concerns within our community. In today’s society, we are experiencing a technological overload i.e. smartphones, tablets, iPods, iPads and laptops which provide countless avenues to access social media outlets for our teens. These means of communication allow our teens to communicate, share information and images amongst themselves and in many cases, without the knowledge of their parents.

We strongly encourage parents to monitor, discuss and explain the dangers associated with electronic devices and social media outlets with their teens. By parents taking a proactive approach now; it will prevent us from taking an enforcement approach later. We are often faced with rumors and allegations of wrongdoing by our teens. Recently, we were alerted to a possible problem amongst our teens related to sexting. Our preliminary investigation did not provide any physical proof to support these rumors or allegations. Therefore, we have chosen to take an educational and proactive approach towards the issue of sexting and the negative use of social media outlets.

What is sexting? Sexting is the sending or receiving of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive images, messages, or video via a cellphone, internet or any other electronic device. Examples of sexting include: the sending of nude or nearly nude photos or “selfies,” videos that show nudity, sex acts, or simulated sex, and text messages that propose sex or refer to sex acts. In many cases, our teens send these images to boyfriends or girlfriends and in some cases as a joke or to seek attention. Unfortunately, these images are then forwarded to unintended persons which can ultimately lead to bullying and in some cases suicide or suicidal thoughts by teens.

When does sexting become a crime? Since we can’t control what other people send electronically; it only becomes a crime when the image is either “retained or forwarded.” For reference, here are some Ohio laws related to sexting which include: Illegal Use of a Minor in Nudity Oriented Material 2907.323, Child Endangering 2919.22, and Disseminating Matter Harmful to Juveniles 2907.31. Both possessing child pornography and possessing nude images of a child are both felonies in Ohio. A child is considered to be someone under the age of 18. Let’s make sure that our teens know the severity of their actions.

According to a study published in the journal of Pediatrics; approximately 20 to 25 percent of American teens engage in sexting. For more information on sexting go to www.DoSomething.org and search “11 Facts about Sexting.” We are having a community event on sexting at The Ridge Church located at 7555 Brookville-Phillipsburg Rd. Brookville, Ohio 45309 on Monday, February 23, 2015 at 7pm. If you feel that your teen is a victim of sexting, have any concerns in general about sexting or the use of social media by your teens; contact your local police department.