Sexting among young adolescents – focusing on sexting under pressure and secondary sexting.

# Details

## Year

2018

## Scope

National

## Countries

Belgium

## Type

Empirical research – Mixed methods

## Methodologies

Survey

## Researched Groups

Children

## Children Ages

Other

## Other Childrens Age Group

10-15 years old

## Funder

BOF (Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds) UAntwerpen

## Funder Types

Regional Government

## URL

https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/staff/joris-vanouytsel/research/

# Goals

Sexting can be defined as the sending of self-made sexually explicit pictures. Sexting is a normal part of adolescents' development. Given the risk for reputational damage and the associations with other risk behaviors for those that engage in the behavior, it remains, however, also an important public health issue. More research remains needed to minimize the potential risks of youth sexting. Current research on sexting has suffered from three major limitations. First, almost all studies employ a cross-sectional design. Second, there is hardly any research on the sexting experiences of young adolescents (10-15 year olds), as most research focuses on older adolescents (16-18 years old) or college students. Especially these younger adolescents could be more vulnerable for the negative consequences of sexting. Third, the current research has mainly focused on the sending of sexting images. There is a lack of research that focuses on the motives and characteristics of youth who pressure others to engage in sexting, or those who engage in the non-consensual sharing of sexting pictures (so-called 'secondary sexting'). The purpose of the proposed project is to address these three crucial gaps in our current knowledge on sexting by gaining an in-depth understanding of sexting among younger groups of adolescents (10-15 years old), using a longitudinal and a mixed-methods design. Within this project, we will specifically focus on the characteristics of youth who pressure others to engage in sexting and those who engage in the unauthorized distribution of sexting pictures. The project will comprise of a qualitative investigation of young adolescents' perceptions on sexting. This will form the basis of a three-wave longitudinal survey in which demographic, personality and social characteristics of sexting among young adolescents and problematic forms of sexting will be investigated. The survey design will be guided by the Social Learning Theory and General Strain Theory. The results of this research will provide new insights on how to prevent and address problematic forms of sexting among a vulnerable age group.