Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexually explicit text messages, photos or videos with others through electronic devices like smartphones or computers. This type of behaviour has become more common with the widespread use of technology and the internet. As a parent, it's important to talk to your children and adolescents about sexting, what it is, and what it means. It's a sensitive topic, but having an open and honest conversation can help your child understand the potential consequences of this behaviour and make responsible decisions. Additionally, discussing the dangers of sexting can help them understand the importance of privacy, consent and good digital citizenship.

Empower confidence.
Start the conversation using these strategies:

1. Definition of sexting
Explain what sexting is and the types of content that fall under this category.

2. Consequences of sexting
Discuss the legal, social and emotional consequences of sexting and how it can have a lasting impact on a person's reputation and relationships.

3. Privacy and consent
Emphasise the importance of respecting others' privacy and obtaining consent before sharing explicit images or messages and that the consequences of doing so without their consent is illegal.

4. Digital footprint
Explain how images and messages shared through sexting can be easily spread and shared, even if the person who shared them intended them to be private.

5. Pressure to participate
Discuss the pressure that they may feel to participate in sexting and the need to resist this pressure.

6. Cyberbullying
Explain how sexting can lead to cyberbullying, including online harassment and the spreading of explicit images without consent.

7. Emotional impact
Discuss the emotional impact including feelings of shame, embarrassment, and humiliation, and how this can affect a person's mental health and self-esteem.

8. Communication
Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult if they receive explicit images or messages from someone else.

9. Critical thinking
Encourage your child to think critically before they send or share explicit images or messages and to consider the potential consequences of their actions.

10. Digital citizenship
Emphasise the importance of being responsible and respectful when using technology and the internet and the need to make smart and safe choices.