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Nudes and NZ teens: New research sheds light on the online experiences of young NZers.

New Netsafe research reveals how NZ teens aged 14-17 are behaving online – and it's not what you might think.

New research from online safety organisation Netsafe reveals that one in four girls and nearly one in seven boys have been asked to share a nude or nearly nude image of themselves. However, despite the frequency that young people were asked to share nude images, only 4% of respondents had shared a nude image in the last 12 months.

"What we've found in the research is that although teens are being asked for nude images, only a minority are actually sending them," said Martin Cocker, Netsafe CEO. "However, the research shows that the likelihood of sending a nude image does increase with age, so it's important that parents are having conversations with their kids early."

The findings showed that girls were more likely to receive requests for nude images than boys, but were no more likely to share nude or nearly nude images than boys. The research also revealed that young people believe sharing nude or nearly nude images is commonplace, with about half of all respondents saying sharing nudes happens "often" or "very often".

"There is a strong misconception that everybody's doing it, and it's something that we need to address. The research shows young people may feel pressure to send these images as they believe sending nudes is commonplace, but it's important to let them know that this actually isn't the case."

"Sending nude images in itself is often not the problem, it's what can happen once those images leave your control. It's important that young people understand the potential risks before they get to the point where they're making the decision to engage in the behaviour. Our advice to parents is to talk to your kids about it now, so that they're prepared to make the best decision they can at the time."

The research also highlights that not all young New Zealanders have the same experience, with differences between genders, ethnicities and those identifying themselves as having a long-term disability.

Netsafe's research is the first representative survey into teenage "sexting" behaviour in New Zealand and was conducted in conjunction with the Ministry for Women's "Insights into digital harm: The online lives of girls and boys" report which was released last week. The Ministry for Women report found many young people preferred to turn to a friend rather than a parent or teacher because of concern for being judged.

The report also found that there was a gendered experience of online harm, with girls reporting to be at higher risk of bullying via group chats, having hate pages created about them, having nude images of themselves being shared without their consent and receiving unsolicited nude images.

Netsafe provides free and confidential advice and support for anyone experiencing online abuse or harm. Netsafe's helpline is open seven days a week from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am-5pm weekends and public holidays. Call 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723) or email help@netsafe.org.nz.

For help with making an online safety plan with your child visit www.netsafe.org.nz/make-a-plan.

The full report is available at <https://www.netsafe.org.nz/teens-sexting-report>

Key findings from Netsafe's 'Teens and "sexting" in New Zealand: Prevalence and attitudes' report:

- One in four girls (24%) and nearly one in seven boys (14%) have been asked to share a nude or nearly nude image in the last 12 months.
- 4% of young people have shared a nude or nearly nude image in the last 12 months.
- 54% of young people cited peer pressure, social approval or attention as reasons for sharing nude or nearly nude images.
- 55% of respondents believe sharing nudes happens "often" or "very often".

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About Netsafe

Netsafe was appointed as the approved agency to receive, assess and investigate complaints of harm caused by digital communications under the Harmful Digital Communications Act in 2015. The free service is available to all New Zealand internet users experiencing online harassment, offering help and advice to resolve complaints.

Netsafe is an independent, non-profit New Zealand organisation focused on online safety. Netsafe provides online safety education, advice and support for people in New Zealand. Taking a technology-positive approach to the opportunities and challenges digital technology presents, Netsafe works to help people in New Zealand make the most of digital technology by providing practical tools, support and advice for managing online challenges.

Netsafe's helpline is open 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am-5pm weekends and public holidays.

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