



The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and CosmoGirl.com Reveal Results of Sex & Tech Survey: *Large Percentage of Teens Posting/Sending Nude/Semi Nude Images*

By Linda Lowen

December 10, 2008

One in five teen girls (22%) -- and 11% of teen girls ages 13-16 years old -- say they have electronically sent, or posted online, nude or semi-nude images of themselves. According to the results of a survey released today by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and CosmoGirl.com, these racy images are also getting passed around: One-third (33%) of teen boys and one-quarter (25%) of teen girls say they have had nude/semi-nude images -- originally meant to be private -- shared with them.

The survey of 1,280 teens and young adults -- conducted online by TRU, a global leader in research on teens and 20-somethings -- indicates that 15% of teens who have sent sexually suggestive content such as text messages, email, photographs or video say they have done so with someone they only know online.

Teen girls are not the only ones sharing sexually explicit content. Almost one in five teen boys (18%) say they have sent or posted nude/semi-nude images of themselves. One-third (33%) of young adults -- 36% of women and 31% of men ages 20-26 -- say they have sent or posted such images. What teens and young adults are doing electronically seems to have an effect on what they do in real life: Nearly one-quarter of teens (22%) admit that technology makes them personally more forward and aggressive. More than one-third of teens (38%) say exchanging sexy content makes dating or hooking up with others more likely and nearly one-third of teens (29%) believe those exchanging sexy content are "expected" to date or hook up.

"Teenagers are early adopters of technology--from the latest social networking sites to the hottest new cell phones," says Susan Schulz, Special Projects Editor, Hearst Magazines.

"While this tech savvy can be seen as a positive, our study reveals there's also a negative side. Teenagers should be aware of the real consequences to this type of behavior and we need to provide them with guidance and encourage them to make smart choices."

"That so many young people say technology is encouraging an even more casual, hook-up culture is reason for concern, given the high rates of teen and unplanned pregnancy in the United States," said Marisa Nightingale, Senior Advisor to the Entertainment Media Program at the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. "Parents should understand that their own notions of what's public, what's private, and what's appropriate, may differ greatly from how teens and young adults define these concepts."

Other findings from the survey include:

- Sending sexually suggestive messages is even more prevalent than sending nude/semi-nude images. Nearly half of young people (49% total, 39% of teens, 59% of young adults) have sent sexually suggestive text messages or email messages to someone.
- Even more have received sexually suggestive messages: 48% of teens and 64% of young adults (56% total). Fully one-third of young teen girls (ages 13-16) have received sexually suggestive messages.
- Teen girls who have sent or posted sexually suggestive content provide a number of reasons why: Two-thirds (66%) say they did so to be "fun or flirtatious," half (52%) did so as a "sexy present" for their boyfriend, and 40% as a "joke."
- Even though nearly three-quarters of young people (73% total, 75% of teens, 71% of young adults) say that sending sexually suggestive content "can have serious negative consequences," nearly one-quarter (22% total, 19% of teens and 26% of young adults) say sending sexually suggestive content is "no big deal."

Please visit www.thenationalcampaign.org/sextech and www.cosmogirl.com/sexsurvey for more information about the survey, tips for parents and teens, and other related materials.

About The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy: The National Campaign is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization that seeks to improve the

lives and future prospects of children and families. We support a combination of responsible values and behavior by both men and women and responsible policies in both the public and private sectors.

About CosmoGirl.com: CosmoGirl.com empowers and inspires young women to be leaders in all aspects of their lives. From setting the latest trends to standing up for what they believe in. CosmoGirl.com is a part of Hearst Magazines Digital Media, launched in March 2006, and a unit of Hearst Magazines. Hearst Digital Media is dedicated to creating and implementing the digital online and mobile strategy for Hearst's magazine brands and other sites which serve the company's consumers and audience.

The unit has launched, re-launched or acquired 24 Web sites and nine mobile sites for brands such as Cosmopolitan, Esquire, Good Housekeeping, Marie Claire and Seventeen, as well as non-magazine brand sites such as Delish.com, a food site launched in September 2008 with MSN; TheDailyGreen.com; MisQuinceMag.com; and MyPromStyle.com. During this time, Hearst Digital has also acquired the eCrush Network (eCRUSH.com, eSPIN.com), Kaboodle.com, RealAge.com and Answerology.com to round out its growing portfolio of interests for teens and women.

About the survey: This survey was conducted online by TRU (www.tru-insight.com). At present, it is estimated that about 90% of teens and young adults are online. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have volunteered to participate in TRU's online surveys. Respondents were stratified according to the U.S. census and the data have been weighted to reflect the demographic composition of teens and young adults. Respondents do not constitute a probability sample.

SOURCE National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy