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Cell Phone Safety Tips

The Tucson Police Department recently investigated a case in which a 13-year-old female sent a nude photograph of herself to one of her friends via her cellular phone. That friend distributed the photograph to other males at her school (via text messaging.) Those males in turn began showing friends the photo using their cellular phones. Upon investigating the incident, two of the teen males admitted to sharing the photos with others and both males were arrested.

The Tucson Police Department Internet Crimes Against Children Unit would like the community to know that these crimes have serious implications. The boys, who merely believed they were exchanging photos with friends, were in fact committing a crime. The girl who sent the picture never believed her photograph would be so far reaching. We want teens in the community to realize that once that photograph is sent, there is no way of getting it back. That photograph is forever trapped in cyberspace, never to be eliminated. Below are some safety tips to assist in protecting children from being involved in or becoming a victim of a cell phone crime.

Dangers of 'sexting'
- Potential criminal charges
- Photo distribution on the Internet
- School Suspension
- Public humiliation when photos end up in the wrong hand

Tips for Parents
- Talk to your children about cyberspace
- Place limits on electronic communications
- Set expectations and make sure you are clear about what inappropriate electronic behavior is.
- Check your child's cell phone messages randomly to ensure there in no inappropriate behavior

Tips for Teens
- Once a photograph is sent, it is trapped forever in cyberspace and can not be eliminated
- Don't assume anything you send or post is private
- Don't give into pressure from others to do or send something inappropriate

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