

# Non-Consensual Sharing of Intimate Images:

## BEHAVIOURS AND ATTITUDES OF CANADIAN YOUTH

### Methodology

800 young people aged 16-20 years across Canada were surveyed in August of 2017:



15 trans, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, non-binary or other

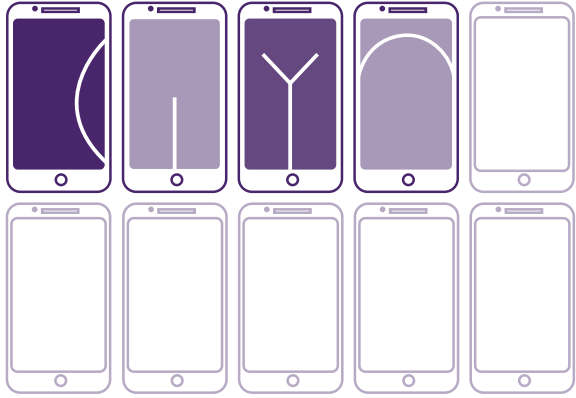
### Definitions

- “Sext”** means a sexy, nude or partially nude photo
- “Sending” sexts** refers to the creator of a sext sending it to a recipient
- “Sharing” sexts** refers to distributing them to unintended audiences without the original sender's consent

### Research partners



### Sending and receiving sexts



**FOUR IN TEN** (41%) have sent a sext  
**TWO IN THREE** (66%) have received a sext

26%

of 16-year-olds have sent a sext

55%

of 20-year-olds have sent one

Half of 16-year-olds have received a sext (53%) while three-quarters of 20-year-olds have received one (78%)

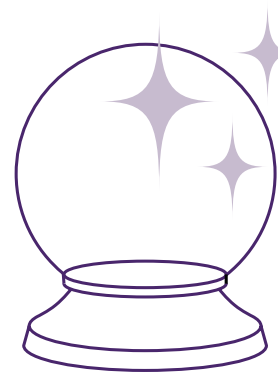
16 20

### Non-consensual sharing of sexts



46%

of youth who've received sexts have shared one  
More boys (53%) than girls (40%) have done so



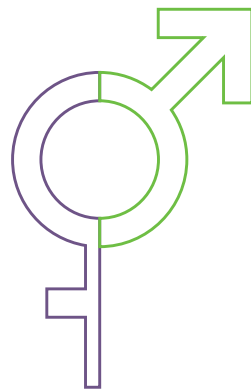
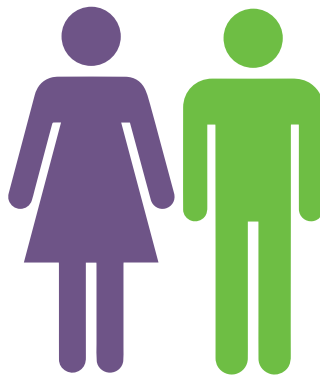
**AGE IS NOT A PREDICTOR** for whether someone will share a sext

### Factors associated with youth being more likely to share sexts

#### GENDER STEREOTYPES

Youth who believe in traditional gender stereotypes are significantly more likely to share sexts:

- 53%** who scored **highest** in these beliefs have shared a sext
- 18%** who scored in the **medium** range shared sexts
- 9%** who scored in the **lowest** range shared sexts



There is a strong gender difference: **boys** who held these beliefs were much more likely to share sexts than **girls** who did

35%

**MORE THAN A THIRD** of participants felt that a girl “shouldn't be surprised if it gets around” if she sends a sext to a boy she isn't in a relationship with

29%

**ALMOST A THIRD** of participants felt that “nobody should be surprised if boys share sexts with each other”

#### MORAL DISENGAGEMENT



#### Moral disengagement mechanisms:

- Finding a way to justify an action** as being actually positive, e.g. “When a girl's sext gets shared, it shows other girls the risks”
- Denying the harm of the action**, e.g. “Sharing sexts is so common, nobody cares about it”
- Shifting responsibility** to someone else, e.g. “If a boy shares a text he received with one friend and that friend shares it, then it isn't the first boy's fault”
- Blaming the victim**, e.g. “A girl shouldn't be surprised if her sext gets shared after a breakup”



#### There is a strong correlation between these attitudes and sharing sexts:

- 53%** who scored in the **highest** range have shared a sext
- 17%** who scored in the **medium** range shared sexts
- 11%** who scored in the **lowest** range shared sexts

Unlike gender stereotypes, this correlation was as strong for girls as for boys

#### Some of these attitudes were held by a worrying number of youth:

- almost half (46%)** felt it was the original sender's fault if a sext was shared
- more than a third (38%)** felt that there's nothing you can do to help when a sext is being passed around
- more than a fifth (21%)** felt that a girl shouldn't be surprised if her boyfriend shares her sexts after they break up

#### A CULTURE OF SHARING

Peer pressure to share sexts they receive can lead youth to see sharing as **normal** and **expected**

**79%** of youth who **expect** their friends to **share sexts** with them have shared a sext

**35%** of those who **do not expect** their friends to share have shared sexts

