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# “Sexting,” Text Message Dependence, and Intimacy among College Students

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“Sexting,” Text Message Dependence, and Intimacy among College Students  
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According to a recent survey conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy (2008), “sexting” (sending sexually explicit material via text message) is fairly common among U.S. young adults; 59% reported sending sexually explicit text messages, and 33% reported sending sexually explicit pictures or videos. Although much media attention has been directed towards the possible legal implications of sexting, little known empirical work has examined the psychological characteristics of “sexters.” Thus, it is presently unknown whether sexting is just a normal part of young adult social development in this changing landscape of interpersonal communication or whether sexting is more common among individuals with certain psychological characteristics. This study found that sexting appears to be more common among those who are dependent on text messaging to communicate and among those who have anxious attachments to their partners. These findings suggest that those who engage in sexting may feel a need to stay constantly connected to individuals and a need for reassurance from relationship partners. Efforts to curb sexting should take these psychological characteristics into account.

