

CELL PHONES & PHOTOS 1:00:20

Funding for NetSafe is provided by the Utah State Legislature through a grant on the Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. In proud partnership with these other organizations...

NARRATOR

It is said the cell phone is the fastest growing portable technology in the world. In fact, there is currently one cell phone for every two humans on Earth, Less than five years ago; cell phones cameras were introduced making it possible for instant recording of events and photo sharing among friends. Seemingly harmless, this enormously popular device in the hands and pockets of half of the world's population can preserve some of life's most memorable moments.

KATIE

The photos I take with my cell phone are usually if I see like a funny moment when I'm out with my friends, like something that makes us laugh. We just want to take a picture to make a memory I guess.

CAPT. RHETT MCQUISTOR

Teenagers deal in short term time blocks. They don't understand what forever means, they don't understand how long a photograph on the Internet can be. We see MySpace pages, Facebook pages, be created where they distribute these photographs everywhere. One thing that our teenagers do not understand is that once those photographs are out there on the Internet, they are out there for all time. There is no getting them back.

NARRATOR

Indeed, anything is possible.

CAPT. RHETT MCQUISTOR

Individuals will take their camera phones into either school locker rooms, rec center locker rooms, places where individuals are changing their clothes, dressing rooms in the mall for example. A lot of places on their own have banned cell phones from dressing rooms, changing rooms etc. because on the Internet photos are popping up.

PAIGE

Some boys were talking about it in my math class, this photo that was going around that were actually of girls at our school. And I just feel bad for the girls that got themselves in this position and I don't know if people realize you know the real effect that it will have when they take these photos and when they are spread throughout the whole school. They were just with one of their friends and just figured "oh well this is just for him, no one else will find out about it". But you know it goes to one person and that person will send it to

another person's phone and they'll send it to all their friends. So within two days it was all around the entire school.

COLTON

I really don't think they think about the future when they take those kind of pictures. I think it's more like a direct satisfaction. Like as a joke or, you know what I mean. Not so much that they are doing it for any benefit or anything like that but they are doing it as just like a joke or something funny.

NARRATOR

Regardless of whether or not it is a girl peer-pressured into taking inappropriate pictures of herself or to comply with the request from a boyfriend, or kids just thinking it's a fun thing to do, these photos can be circulated throughout the school, indeed the world.

CAPTAIN RHETT MCQUISTOR

Where children are engaged in exchanging inappropriate images of themselves or their classmates, this is in fact a felony charge in the state of Utah and is considered child pornography.

NARRATOR

In the years before cell phone cameras and digital cameras, an incriminating photo could be taken, then retrieved and destroyed along with the negative long before it was bound for circulation.

BOY

"Do you want to send that to Amber?"

GIRL

"Yeah, let's send it to Amber".

NARRATOR

Now all you have to do is hit the "send" button and it is up, up away, gone for good.

SPECIAL AGENT ZACHARY SNOW

Children need to understand you are opening yourself up to a lot of liability. Let's say you take a teenager, or a child takes a picture of himself nude, that's considered manufacturing or producing child pornography. And then once it's sent that's distribution of child pornography, then once your friend receives it and has it on their phone, that's possession on their phone of child pornography. And so it's a serious issue. And I don't think that kids understand that. At this point, I think it really needs to get out there. Awareness and education, needs to be in the schools and they need to really explain the whole process about the Internet and the cell phones to the children.

CAPTAIN RHETT MCQUISTOR

One thing that teenagers don't understand is they think it's a harmless joke or a prank when they take photos of themselves in inappropriate positions or photos of other teenagers. However once they send it either through the Internet, or through text messaging, there is no getting that photo back, ever. It's out there for all time. It's forever.

For more information go to netsafeutah.org

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