

Snapchat app trend not all about sexting

Written by Grace Johnson, Columnist
Wednesday, 06 February 2013 11:14

Have you ever looked around campus just to see students holding their smartphones up and taking a photo of themselves?

Welcome to the world of Snapchat!

Three months ago, I hadn't heard of this app. And now, it's difficult for me to go a day without sending one or two of my own snaps, even though they only last a few seconds.

The problem with Snapchat is that it gets such a bad rep. A few weeks ago, I had coffee with my friend Jesse, and she told me that one of her professors asked if the students in her class had this app. And if they said yes, the professor asked what they use the app for.

The Huffington Post, ABC News and CNN have published articles about the number of adolescents and young adults using this app for sexting. All of those articles mentioned that many of the people who fall in these age groups don't realize that the photos are still there, even if they can't be viewed. They're just out in cyberspace, and nothing ever disappears. It's like how your parents told you to be careful what you post online, whether on your Xanga in eighth grade or your Facebook page now that you're applying for jobs and internships.

But I don't think that the age group targeted in the article (ages 13-24) is all culprits of sexting via this app. My friends and I range in age from 19-22, and we don't send inappropriate photos. My boyfriend even has the app, but what do we send to each other? Goofy faces with colorful drawings since a "pen" is included in the app to edit the photo.

Not exactly criminal.

Snapchat app trend not all about sexting

Written by Grace Johnson, Columnist
Wednesday, 06 February 2013 11:14

I also believe that many of the younger people who do fall into the sexting category of users on Snapchat don't always think about the "screenshot" option.

Whenever someone sends a Snapchat, since the length of time for it to be seen by the receiver can be determined on a photo-by-photo basis, some of the options make it easier for a screenshot to be taken. For instance, sending a three-second Snapchat does not allow for as many attempts at a screenshot as a seven-second photo.

The issue with this feature is that the sender can look at the list of Snapchats and see which ones were screenshot by the receiver. While this is handy to know, it's not as though there is really a whole lot that person can do at that point, other than just ask the receiver to delete the photo instead of showing other people.

I don't mind (well, totally mind) when people take screenshots of the photos I send because they're just of my face. The only downside is that sometimes my friends and I like to play the "who can make the ugliest face" game, which can lead to a different sort of embarrassment from getting caught sexting.

I personally don't believe that Snapchat is initiating more sexting or encouraging it for young people. I think that the app is just for kicks and giggles. And it really annoys me to think that everything gets turned negative, even when it can be innocent.

I'm sure some people do send inappropriate pictures. But the truth of the matter is that people did that before Snapchat. It was bad then, and it is now. And it still will be in the future, when the Snapchat trend is over and the latest app is available.

But the important part of this equation to keep in mind is that sexting is like drugs. People will do it if they want to, no matter how many warnings they receive and no matter what consequences they have (whether legal or social).

Snapchat app trend not all about sexting

Written by Grace Johnson, Columnist
Wednesday, 06 February 2013 11:14

I think that a lot of people in their early 20s are smarter than what older adults make us out to be. We realize that the photos don't go away, and I don't think our age group has ever been especially prone to sexting, but perhaps those are just the friends I've chosen.

Snapchatting is probably just the latest trend in the world of apps and technology (actually, I don't even know if it's the "latest" anymore) and soon enough we will have another app to worry about. It seems pointless to spend your time worrying about a fad when another one will be popping up, possibly even worse than the last.

As with everything, it's important to be careful but still have fun. Just don't do anything stupid.

Grace is a junior publishing major and Editor in Chief of The Vidette. Questions or comments regarding her column can be sent to:
dvgvjohns@exchange.ilstu.edu