

CLARK COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION
JUVENILE SECTION

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Judge
Joseph N. Monnin
Magistrate
Brandin D. Marlow
Administrator
Wynette P. Carter-Smith

Dear Parents:

The staff of the Clark County Juvenile Court, along with other members of our community, have observed a disturbing rise in the number of inappropriate, sexually-based materials that are created by, distributed to, and feature the youth of our community, also generally known as sexting. The Clark County Juvenile Court is committed to strongly addressing this growing issue as part of the court's role in serving our youth. Sexting-related offenses are delinquent acts and most are classified as felony-level offenses.

In conjunction with the Clark County Prosecutor's Office and local law-enforcement agencies, the STOP (Stop Texting Obscene Pictures) diversion program has been created in an effort to stem the tide of sexting, identify the behaviors and circumstances that led to a child's involvement in sexting-related activities and to change those behaviors or circumstances. If your child is arrested or charged with a sexting-related offense, your child will be screened to determine if your child will be approved for STOP. If your child is not approved, it may be because the sexting is malicious in nature, he/she has already been through the program, or he/she has been through the juvenile justice system and has already demonstrated an inability to comply with such programs.

If your child is approved for the STOP diversion program, your child will have to:

- Admit to the behavior that caused your child to be charged;
- Turn over any and all electronic devices used by your child for examination;
- Agree to forfeit any device that contains child pornography;
- Meet with an assigned probation officer;
- Agree to comply with all rules set by the probation officer, which include turning over the usernames and passwords to all social media accounts, not using or accessing any social media while in STOP, monitoring all social media accounts, and not using any cell phone or internet (with some exceptions) while in STOP;
- Attend the requisite hours of STOP educational classes; and
- Complete all STOP requirements within 120 days.

As a parent, your attendance will be required for some portions of the program. You will be required to make sure that your child attends all programming and that the STOP rules are followed at home.

If your child successfully completes STOP, all charges will be DISMISSED and no additional court orders will be made. If your child is not approved for STOP or does not successfully complete STOP, your child's case will be prosecuted through the regular court process. If the court determines your child committed these types of acts, potential consequences could include, but are not limited to, probation, time in the juvenile detention center, or placement into the custody of the Department of Youth Services until your child turns 21. Additionally, in certain circumstances, your child may end up classified as a sex offender for the rest of his/her life.

If your child is 18, your child will be prosecuted for sexting-related offenses in the Clark County Common Pleas Court and would not be eligible for STOP.

Please take the time now to educate yourself and speak with your child about the dangers and consequences of sexting.

Sincerely,

Judge Joseph N. Monnin