



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## Summit County Prosecutor

### Newsletter

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## Message from the Prosecutor



Prosecutor  
Sherri Bevan Walsh

We've all seen them: teens furiously typing out cryptic messages on cell phones. It seems texting is the new mode of communication among teens and pre-teens. But there is a shocking phenomenon becoming more common with teens called "sexting."

Sexting is the act of sending or receiving nude or partially nude photos via cell phone text messages, and it has the potential to be a very serious crime. Surprisingly, it is quite common among youth – especially high school students – who frequently dismiss the act as "harmless flirting." It's not just those

in high school who are involved: kids as young as 11 and 12 have been discovered taking risqué photos of themselves and sending them off to a boyfriend, and a few cases have recently made national news. Not only can sexting ruin reputations, it can have very serious ramifications for those who participate in it. A few cases have made national headlines where participants in sexting cases have been charged with felonies for disseminating sexually oriented material involving minors. Sending or receiving naked images of those under the age of 18 is very serious. If caught, it can hinder a teen's chances for college entry or for landing a job, and, more significantly, can put a teen at risk for prosecution on felony child pornography charges and force them to be registered as a sexual offender.

It is important that parents communicate with their children the serious impact this crime can have on their lives. As the statistics below illustrate, sexting among teens is surprisingly common. **Teachers: If you have questions about laws concerning sexting or would like to set up an informational talk about sexting in your school, please contact my office.**

## Communicate to your kids the seriousness of sexting

- **Talk to your kids**, even if it's uncomfortable. It's better that uncomfortable topics come from you than someone else.
- **Talk to your kids early**. Statistics show kids are engaging in this activity as young as 11 years old, and experts suggest it's better to be proactive than reactive. Don't wait until you find pictures to talk to your kids about sexting.
- **Hear your child's thoughts**. Instead of the "don't do this" lecture, open up the conversation. "What do you think about this?" or "have you heard about this crazy thing I heard happening with kids your age?" might be good ways to open a conversation up with your child.
- **Talk to your child about privacy**. In an age where people announce their "status" to everyone on the Net via social networking sites like Facebook, it's likely privacy means something very different to your kids than it does to you. Let them know *nothing is ever truly "erased" in cyber space*, and that *includes images on cell phones*.
- **Set limits if necessary**. If your child must have a cell phone, opt for one without a camera or contact your cell provider and ask them to disable your child's "send" button on the camera feature; some cellular providers can do this.
- **Let them know your expectations** and that you will take charges of sexting very serious should they ever engage in this illegal activity.
- **Let them know what to do if they receive a text they think might contain nude photos**. Tell them to *immediately delete* anything they find suspicious. If they do accidentally open a text that contains a nude photo, they should tell an adult immediately—a teacher or parent—and *never* forward it to anyone else.
- **Most importantly, let them know sexting is illegal with potentially serious consequences!**



### DID YOU KNOW

A recent study of teen and young adults' behavior online was conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group. Here are the findings:

- **20% of teens, ages 13-19**, admitted to sending/posting nude or semi-nude photos or videos of themselves (22% girls and 18% boys)
- **11% of teen girls ages 13-16** admitted to sending/posting nude or semi-nude photos or video of themselves
- **51% of teen girls and 18% of teen boys** said they felt pressure from the opposite sex to send nude/semi-nude photos
- **15% of teens** who sent or posted nude or semi-nude images of themselves say they have done so to someone they knew only online
- Overall, **48% of teens** report receiving such text images
- **44% of both teen girls and boys** say it is common for sexually suggestive text messages to be shared with people other than the intended recipient

Questions? E-mail Laurie Cramer:  
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We're on the Web!

[www.co.summit.oh.us/Prosecutor/Index.htm](http://www.co.summit.oh.us/Prosecutor/Index.htm)

## Top Cops

Sergeant **KEN BUTLER**,  
Head of the Polygraph Unit  
at the Akron Police Department, and  
Detective **GARY SHADIE**,  
Akron Police Department



Nominated by: Assistant Prosecutor  
**Greg Peacock**

This month's Top Cops worked together in taking down child killer, John Ross. **Detective Shadie** was the lead detective in the case and **Sergeant Butler** obtained a confession from Ross. Shadie and Butler were instrumental in procuring a confession from the defendant which was a big force in helping us convict Ross, who was sentenced to 31 years to life for murdering his infant son.

Butler has made the difference in many child homicide cases by talking to suspects and getting confessions from them either before or after they take polygraphs. Butler is an incredible resource for our office and the Akron Police Department. Shadie is an experienced detective who makes an excellent witness. He is smart, has good instincts and knows how to testify in court. Without Ken Butler and Gary Shadie we may never have known what happened to baby John Ross, III. Because of their hard work a child killer is behind bars.

*Thank you, Top Cops!*

## GUILTY!!



Congratulations to Assistant Prosecutors **Jay Cole, John Green, Richard Hoenigman, Tom Kroll, Susan**

**Manofsky, John Mascolo, Angela Poth-Wypasek, Justin Richard, Michael Rickett, Dustin Roth, Norm Schroth, Jennie Shuki, Colleen Sims, Brian Stano, Mike Todd, Maggie Tomaro, Mike Tripi** and **Nikki Walker** who obtained guilty verdicts in 24 trials!

## Congratulations Highpoint Award Winners

### Deborah Boykin

Most of us know Deborah as the smiling face who greets us each morning at the front window. But she is much more than a receptionist. She has been involved in many activities that help the prosecutor's office run smoothly, including helping to log evidence in criminal cases, backing up the Victim's Services administrator, and assisting courtroom secretaries. Deborah is always a professional and pleasant team player who tackles assignments with a great attitude and smile.



Deborah (far left) and John Green (far right) pose with Sherri Bevan Walsh and CSCA employees Sharyn Weems and Kathy Sherwood during the Highpoint Awards

### John Green



John Green pictured left of Sherri Bevan Walsh poses with his posse from the narcotics team

A former Stuebenville Police Officer, John led investigations on narcotic-related cases and is a leader in prosecuting drug-related cases in our office. John has had over a 90% trial conviction rate for the last two years! He currently handles all ten courtrooms and

never misses a beat. He is a respectful but aggressive trial lawyer, is always prepared and confident when rushing from one courtroom to another. His trial record reflects the hard work and preparation he puts into his cases. His versatility and dedication make him a great asset to our office.

## Great job, Highpoint Winners!

## That's Outrageous!



**Michael Daniels** was sentenced to three years in prison for beating his pregnant, 16-year-old girlfriend when she was 25 weeks pregnant, saying he wanted the child to die. He said he was jealous of the attention his girlfriend was paying to the unborn baby. According to the victim, the baby was not injured. The girlfriend and her mom testified that this behavior was "out of character" and that Daniels should get a light punishment, arguing that he is "not the type that belongs in prison." The child's mother even brought the baby to court during the trial!

*Now that is outrageous!*