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Dear Parents and Guardians,

My name is Jeff Liacos and I am assigned as the Juvenile Detective for the City of Beverly. As many of you may recall I served as the School Resource Officer in the Public Schools from 2002 through 2006. During that time I, along with the School Department and several other agencies, monitored "at risk behavior" trends of the youth within our community. Working together, we addressed many topics such as substance abuse, gang awareness, bullying, and Internet safety to name a few. Today, I would like to make you all aware of another issue that has been brought to my attention.

A concerned parent who discovered that inappropriate pictures had been sent to her child's cell phone contacted me. These images were sent by another juvenile, and depict that youth in varying poses of undress. I have subsequently learned that this incident is not isolated, or uncommon.

Parents and the Police are constantly challenged by advanced technology and the accessibility of a wide variety of electronic mediums at our children's disposal and work diligently to keep kids safe on line. My concern is that this new "trend" of image sharing will end up somewhere on the Internet for anyone to view. These types of images are highly sought after by preferential sex offenders and by definition of law, child pornography. The sending and sharing of these images is also a crime by way of dissemination. I am well aware that youths involved feel that exchanging these kinds of images among themselves is harmless; and even "consent" to be photographed. No person under the age of eighteen may be photographed in the nude and have those images disseminated.

I urge you to continue monitoring your child's on line activities and to consider examining cell phones and other hand held devices for inappropriate images and text messages.

Thank you all for your attention in this matter, and I pledge to work with you to keep our children safe.

Serving you the community,

Detective Jeffrey P. Liacos
Beverly Police Department

References: Mass General Law Ch. 272 Sec. 29C
Mass General Law Ch. 272 Sec. 29B