

Children reported for nude cell-phone photos

Vanessa Miller
Boulder Daily Camera

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Boulder investigators were notified this week about an incident involving two elementary-school children snapping inappropriate pictures of each other with a cell phone, police spokeswoman Sarah Huntley said.

Parents of the 6-year-old boy and 11-year-old girl resolved the issue among themselves by agreeing not to let the children play together, but still reported the incident to a YMCA after-school program official. That official told the principal of the Boulder's Eisenhower Elementary School, which both children attend.

It was reported to police as a potential "sexual assault," Huntley said, but detectives are considering it an "incident" at this time. "At this point, it's just photographs," she said. "It's not clear whether there are allegations that anyone was touched."

According to the police report, Huntley said, the incident happened in June when the children were playing outside one of their homes in Boulder. They took photographs of each other partially or entirely naked on the 11-year-old girl's cell phone, Huntley said.

One of the parents found the pictures, she said.

The YMCA official had a legal obligation to report it to the principal, and the principal was obligated to contact police, Huntley said. Officers have notified the Boulder County Department of Social Services, and detectives will follow up with the agency.

"If it was determined the pictures led to some behavior, we could investigate that," Huntley said.

But, she said, police are limited in their involvement with children under age 10, so the matter probably will be handled by Social Services.

Wendy Ingham, a division manager for Social Services, said she can't discuss details of specific cases but said this incident doesn't appear to involve "abuse or neglect."

Eisenhower Principal Charles Serns said he can't comment about the off-campus incident but said he's noticed more cell phones at school.

Still, he said, there have been "little to no" cellular issues in the classroom or on the bus. The only incident Serns said he recalls happened three years ago when students snapping phone photos on a bus hurt some students' feelings.

Francie Anhut, chief executive officer for Impact on Education -- a nonprofit organization that supports the Boulder Valley School District -- said she believes fewer than 10 percent of elementary-age children in Boulder Valley have cell phones.

"Then it gets really common in middle school," said Anhut, whose seventh-grade daughter first asked for a phone in fifth grade.

When parents do give their children phones, Anhut said, it's imperative they establish rules around when and how they're used.

Teens can get in trouble for prank calls, cellular bullying and being a classroom distraction, she said.

They also can get into trouble for the content of their text messages, Anhut said. Students feel more free with the cellular technology to bring up topics and ideas they wouldn't normally talk about with their peers.

"(Text messaging) becomes a safer way to explore things that seem precocious to me," she said. "They have to understand there are consequences for that."

And, with cameras and the Internet now on many phones, parents have more to be concerned about, Anhut said.

"Everything parents worry about, with the Internet and predators and porn sites, is up for grabs," she said.

Contact Camera Staff Writer Vanessa Miller at millerv@dailycamera.com or 303-473-1329.

Archived comments

They are being far too easy the girl. Imagine if that 6 year old boy was actually 60. What kind of outrage would there be then??
!!

Adam_Baum

10/10/2008 7:42:24 AM

kids being kids...GEEZ!!!

these "officials" are WAY out of line.

Seems like the parents had it handled!

BroncoDano

10/10/2008 9:26:38 AM

Playing "Doctor" version 2.0

Darling1

10/10/2008 10:17:24 AM

this is not news - this is a parenting issue that maybe needed to be related to the school, but certainly not the newspaper!

legalalien

10/10/2008 11:08:11 AM

I am just that neither one has to register as a sex offender.

yaakovwatkins

10/10/2008 12:31:29 PM

Why is this in the paper?

Chill out!

These are kids discovering themselves and their parents get to deal with it.

This is not news!

asalvo@hotmail.com

10/10/2008 1:56:59 PM

If this happened during the summer away from the school, why did the school or after-school program have to get involved at all? Parents need to deal with this stuff without involving the school. The parents should have dealt with it and if necessary contact the authorities.

ette524

10/10/2008 3:43:26 PM

Not news? I guarantee you, if this hadn't been reported, some distorted version of this would have gone around the community and everyone would be asking "Why didn't the Camera tell us about this?" Better to get the facts straight at the start before the rumor mill gets going.

r0binh00d

10/10/2008 3:47:03 PM

Adam Baum - what?

monkeys

10/10/2008 4:32:46 PM

Things like this happen in Boulder.

Danimal

10/10/2008 4:37:58 PM

So when is it appropriate to give a child a cell phone, with photo capabilities? I remember having my first introduction to the female anatomy by the nice young girl across the street at about the same age as this child. Susie was just a tad younger than the young lady in this incident. When Susie's mother who did not work, as most house wives in that era did not, suspected something was amiss, She came into the room and interrupted the entire sorted affair. I no doubt would have had a sterling carrier as an OB GYN if allowed to go about my examination unhindered, BUT NOOOO. Well on a more realistic note, Susie's mother was quite diplomatic, and after a brief talking to, and some explanations from representatives from both families, the whole incident was resolved quite easily without the intervention of anyone from the outside. To this day the explanation that my father gave me regarding the weewee, and whuwu; the rules governing polite principals of discovery, basic usage, their designs, and intended purposes, have served myself and host of X old ladies, and extra X old ladies in navigating the sometimes shallow shark infested waters of relational seamanship. All with a minimum of disastrous groundings. At least groundings that couldn't be resolved by a normal tidal change. Please, lets just let these poor kids get on with their lives!

biker_joe

10/10/2008 6:21:50 PM

NO NO NO.....you're missing the point.

WHY IN HELL do kids this young need a cellphone anyway? It's a recipe for problems.

And biker_joe.....you are a pig and it's sad that your only great sexual fantasy happened when you were a child. You peaked at age 6. You can go away now.

pantherlady2@msn.com

10/11/2008 5:49:49 AM

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