



How Pornography Harms Children and Families— and What We Can Do

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INTENTIONAL PARENTING

- Increasingly, we are raising our children in a cultural context that cannot be counted on to support good character. Therefore parents have to be *more vigilant and more intentional* than in past generations.
- This means taking deliberate steps to *build close relationships, foster virtues, and create a positive family culture* that helps protect our children against the negative influences of the wider culture.





The Global Sexual Revolution

The sexual revolution is the dominant cultural revolution of the past half century.


“We are experiencing a cultural revolution that overthrows sexual morality—with severe consequences. As sex goes, so goes the family. As the family goes, so goes society.”

—Gabriele Kuby (sociologist), *The Global Sexual Revolution* (2016)

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- The sexual revolution normalized pornography.
 - The Internet made it ubiquitous.



11 years of age is now estimated by experts as the average age at which boys in the US and UK begin using Internet pornography.

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- By 2000, U.S. youth under 17 were spending 65% more time on adult pornography Internet sites than they did on game sites.
 - Four of the 10 youth who visited a pornographic site were girls.

“The Impact of Pornography on Children”

October 2015, www.acped.org/

- A comprehensive research review.

- It defined pornography as:

“the depiction of erotic behavior (sexual display in pictures or writing) that is intended to cause sexual excitement in the viewer.”



Findings:

- Pornography use by youth is linked to increased depression, anxiety, violent behavior, early sex, sexual promiscuity, and teen pregnancy.
- Children under 12 who view pornography are more likely to sexually assault peers.

Zillman & Bryant experiment

Journal of Family Issues, 1988

- Subjects were male and female college students and community adults, randomly assigned either to an experimental group or control group.
- The experimental group viewed non-violent pornographic videotapes for 1 hour a day for 6 weeks; the control group viewed non-sexual TV shows.
- At the end of the 6 weeks, all subjects completed a survey assessing sexual values and attitudes.



Compared to the control group, subjects exposed to pornography over 6 weeks:

1. Were more likely to consider promiscuity normal.
2. Considered the crime of rape less serious.
3. Became more interested in extreme and deviant forms of pornography.




5. Were more accepting of sexual infidelity.

6. Valued marriage less.

7. Among males, expressed a decreased desire for children.

8. Among female subjects, expressed a decreased desire to have a daughter.

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- After viewing pornography, men rate themselves as less in love with their partner and are more critical of their partner's appearance and sexual performance.
 - Pornography use is increasingly linked to divorce.

—David Perry, “The Impact of Pornography on Children,”
American College of Pediatricians (2015)





Internet Porn's Effects on Teens

“The Impact of Internet Pornography on Adolescents: A Review of the Research,”
Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity, 19, 2012.

- Examined studies in diverse cultures, including China, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.



The more teens view pornography, the more they:

- become distracted by thoughts about sex
- approve of casual sex and have early sex
- engage in higher-risk sexual behaviors (multiple partners, anal sex, sex on drugs)
- become more aggressive in their sexual behavior
- agree that it is “acceptable to hold a girl down and force her to have sex”
- Have difficulty forming close relationships with their parents.




Study's conclusion :

“The negative impact of Internet pornography on adolescent behavior appears to be a global trend.”

What Does Internet Porn Show?

- In a study of 50 of the most popular Internet videos, the female performers were abused physically or verbally an average of 12 times per scene. Gang rape and repeated anal sex by multiple men were frequently featured. Always, the female performers were depicted as enjoying the abuse.

R. J. Wosnitzer & A. J. Bridges, "Aggression and Sexual Behavior in Best-Selling Pornography: A Content Analysis" (International Communication Association, San Francisco, 2007).



How can families &
schools protect
themselves against
pornography?

Good Pictures Bad Pictures

by Kristen A. Jenson and Gail Poyner

In gentle language, teaches children a **CAN DO** plan if they encounter pornography:

1. **C**lose my eyes.
2. **A**lways tell a trusted adult.
3. **N**ame it when I see it.
4. **D**istract myself.
5. **O**rder my thinking brain to be the boss!



Suggestions for families &
schools:

Kristen Jenson's website:


www.DefendYoungMinds.org



For ages 12+:

Fight the New Drug
(www.fightthenewdrug.org)

- Includes short videos and links to studies showing pornography's harms.

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- *Fight the New Drug* offers a **Fortify App** with a “battle tracker” to monitor progress in quitting porn.
 - **Covenant Eyes** uses an accountability partner (www.CovenantEyes.com).



Time magazine cover story, April 11, 2016:

PORN

**Why Young Men Who Grew Up on It Are
Becoming Advocates for Turning It Off**

People Who Broke Free of Pornography

“Since I was a teenager, it had been a rollercoaster ride of shame and justification. Not until I realized the implications this had for my marriage and ability to father could I finally break free. I am now 2 ½ years porn-free, and it feels AMAZING.”

—Nick Willis, New Zealand champion long-distance runner and winner of Olympic silver medal



How to Explain Why Porn is Wrong

1. It has the bad effects shown by research, such as promoting the idea that women like being raped.
2. It puts images in the mind that may be difficult or impossible to get rid of.
3. It can become addictive, like a powerful drug.
4. For males, it's typically accompanied by masturbation, another habit that's hard to break.
5. Carried into marriage, it can cause a spouse to feel like the victim of adultery.
6. From a faith perspective, pornography is a misuse of something sacred: God's gift of sex.

Helps for parents:

- Internet filters like **Covenant Eyes**
- provider services like **Integrity Online**
- the app **Screen Time**
- **Canopy**, which uses AI to keep porn off computers, Smartphones, and tablets.

A FAMILY MEDIA PLAN

Have a family meeting to discuss, “What screens policies are best for our family?”

“The use of media in our family is a privilege, not a right. That privilege has to be exercised with parents’ permission—in a way that is consistent with our family values.

So, for any TV show, movie, magazine, music CD, video game, Internet site, or social media platform, here’s the question: *Is it consistent with what we value and believe as a family?*

Let’s come up with a **Family Media Plan** that will work for our family.”


- *See www.acped.org for recommended family policies.*



Explain Why You Set Limits


“We want you to be able to use good media. But bad media can stay in your mind for a very long time and affect you in ways you may not even be aware of.

“Parents who care about their kids set limits on these things. It’s because we love you.”



For anyone—adults or youth—struggling with a pornography problem, **Kevin Majeres, M.D., a Harvard Medical School psychiatrist**, offers free virtue-based modules that have proved helpful:

www.overcomingcravings.com



Psychotherapist Dr. Peter Kleponis, in his self-help manual *Integrity Starts Here!*, explains how emotional factors—loneliness, stress, anger, a lack of fulfillment, and wounds from divorce—can contribute to using and becoming addicted to pornography.

His **7-point recovery program** includes purifying one's life; support and accountability; daily prayer; stress management; and doing “virtue exercises” to keep from slipping back.

Society's Responsibility

- Some states, such as Utah and Louisiana, now protect minors by requiring pornographic websites to verify a potential user's age (18+).



Media Literacy/Digital Safety: What Schools Can Do

Help students learn to . . .

1. think critically about various forms of media and their messages.
2. think critically about their own media habits and develop healthy habits.



Thinking Critically about Pornography

1. How does pornography affect our respect for the dignity of other people?
2. How does it affect our self-respect?
3. Who are pornography's victims?
4. Why is it such big business?
5. What are gender differences in use of and attitudes toward pornography?
6. What rules should parents have about pornography?



*This PPT may be used without
restriction.*

For a subsequent talk in the same
conference session by Matthew
Lickona (Dr. Lickona's son and father
of 7), **"The Insidious Unreality of
Online,"** email: mlickona@gmail.com