

11 Startling Stats Every Proactive Parent Needs to Know



Protect
Young
Minds

11 Startling Stats Every Proactive Parent Needs to Know

How many children and teens are exposed to pornography?

- 11% of boys and 8% of girls have seen pornography before they were 10 years old
- 58% of boys and 38% of girls have seen it by age 14
- 85% of young men and 73% of young women have seen it by 18 years old¹

68% of adolescents have *unintentionally* encountered pornography and 37% have *intentionally* viewed pornography.²

57% of teens age 13-17 sought out porn at least once a month.³

10% of the visitors to porn video sites are younger than 10 years old. Children under the age of 10 account for 22% of the young people under 18 who are viewing online porn.⁴

What bothers children online?

A study of over 9K kids ages 9-16 found that their top online concerns are being exposed to pornography (named by 22% of children) and violent content (18%).⁵

How many teens are involved in sexting?

- Nearly 27% of teens receive sexts
- Around 15% are sending sexts
- 12% have forwarded a sext without permission
- 8% of teens had one of their sexts forwarded without their consent⁶

What are parents concerned about?

The major concerns for parents about their children's online use are online content (64%) and time spent online (32%). 56% of parents wish they had more control over content; 42% wish they had more control over time.⁷

What do parents do to keep their children safe online?

- 91% of parents set household rules
- 63% use at least one of a variety of parental control tools
- 64% frequently discuss online safety with their child⁷



Are parents aware that their child has seen pornography?

- 53% of parents know their children have been accidentally exposed to pornography
- 27% know that their children have been intentionally viewing pornography.⁸

How do parents respond when they find their young children have seen pornography?

Parents have 5 main reactions when realizing that their children had viewed pornography:

1. angry, shaming, or punitive
2. calm and factual
3. ignoring, minimizing, or denying that it happened
4. panic or fear
5. lying to the child about what the child viewed

Most parents react calmly, while a small percentage report that they hit, scolded, or shamed their young children for seeing the pornography. Many report not knowing what to say or do.⁹

What factors put kids and teens at greater risk of using pornography?

- More relationship problems with peers¹⁰
- Weaker ties to mainstream social institutions, including religious institutions¹⁰
- Most of the adolescent's friends are younger²
- Adolescents use the Internet at their friends' homes²
- Less satisfied with their lives²
- Poorer relationships and communication with their parents²

What factors help kids and teens use pornography less?

- Parents establishing restrictions and installing blocking software²
- Religious adolescents and those in religious schools use pornography less frequently^{2,10}

How do teens get help who want to quit using pornography?

79% of teens and young adults who want to stop using pornography say they have no one in their life helping them.³

How does pornography affect children and teens?

- Higher likelihood to have sexual intercourse and more experience with casual sexual behavior. This association is even stronger for girls.²
- Boys who view pornography exhibit more sexual harassment such as touching or brushing up against a schoolmate in a sexual way or cornering a schoolmate in a sexual way.²
- Girls who use pornography are more at risk of sexual victimization. They are also influenced by idealized body images shown in pornography and generally feel pressured by sexual messages in pornography.²



References

¹ Willoughby, Brian & Leonhardt, Nathan. The Myths and Realities of Modern Pornography Use. Book chapter in press at Wheatley Institute.

² Peter, J., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2016) [Adolescents and Pornography: A Review of 20 Years of Research](#). The Journal of Sex Research, 53, 509–531. doi: 10.1080/00224499.2016.1143441

³ Barna Group (2016) [The Porn Phenomenon](#).

⁴ Bitdefender (2016) [One in 10 visitors of porn sites is under 10 years old](#).

⁵ Livingstone, Sonia & Kirwil, Lucyna & Ponte, Cristina & Staksrud, Elisabeth (2014) [In Their Own Words: What Bothers Children Online?](#) European Journal of Communication. 29. 271-288. 10.1177/0267323114521045.

⁶ Madigan S, Ly A, Rash CL, Van Ouytsel J, Temple JR (2018) [Prevalence of Multiple Forms of Sexting Behavior Among Youth: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis](#) JAMA Pediatrics, 172(4):327–335. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2017.5314

⁷ Family Online Safety Institute (2018). Online Safety Across the Generations. <https://www.fosi.org/policy-research/online-safety-across-generations/>

⁸ Davis, Vauna (2012). [Interconnected but Underprotected? Parents' Methods and Motivations for Information Seeking on Digital Safety Issues](#). Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking. 15. 10.1089/cyber.2012.0179.

⁹ Rothman, Emily F. et al. (2017). [A Qualitative Study of What US Parents Say and Do When Their Young Children See Pornography](#). Academic Pediatrics, Volume 17, Issue 8, 844 – 849.

¹⁰ Alexandraki, Kyriaki et al. (2018) [Adolescent Pornography Use: A Systematic Literature Review of Research Trends 2000-2017](#). Current Psychiatry Reviews. Volume 14, Issue 1, 10.2174/2211556007666180606073617

