



**75% of 15-17 year olds say they have had multiple exposures to hard-core pornography.**

# PORNOGRAPHY

(information provided by [Illusionsprogram.net](http://Illusionsprogram.net))

Pornography has found a happy home on the Internet. It wasn't that long ago that young people's access and exposure to sexually explicit materials was fairly limited. With the meteoric rise of the Internet, however, the porn industry has exploded, with worldwide profits now exceeding \$57 billion!

The cause for concern is not just a matter of how many people are viewing it; it's who is viewing it. The 12-17 year-old age group is now the largest consumer of Internet pornography. According to research, 90% of 8-16 year olds have viewed porn online (most while doing homework). In fact, 70% of 15-17 year-olds say they have had multiple exposures to hard-core pornography.

Thanks to the Internet, porn is now available free of charge to anyone at any

time. And the negative impact it's having on our young people is devastating.

Porn objectifies women, reducing them to a collection of body parts. Through false images and manipulated media, pornography produces harmful messages about the way women should look, think and act. A 2005 poll by NBC and *Elle Magazine* found that 24% of men who viewed pornography say it influenced their idea of beauty. The same poll found that 28% of men who view pornography have asked their partner to get breast implants.

Pornography trivializes rape as a criminal offense and promotes outrageous fantasies that simply can't be fulfilled by reality. With its onslaught of unrealistic expectations and powerful ability to inhibit true intimacy, pornography sets

couples up for a lifetime of sexual dissatisfaction.

Though not widely discussed, pornography is highly addictive. It traps viewers into repetitive viewing habits that are very difficult to alter. The intense feelings of shame, helplessness and betrayal often destroy marriages and permanently deplete people's self-esteem.

Porn is also progressive in nature, requiring a steady increase of consumption and intensity to elicit the same response over time. A person trapped continues in a downward, out of control spiral that's extremely difficult to stop. And it's never been easier for young people to get dragged down the underworld of addiction.

## YOUTH, INTERNET PORN AND SEXUAL PREDATORS

The secret nature of pornography lends itself to staying hidden and dangerous, so be vigilant about guarding your child's online experiences. Here are a few signs that you may already have a problem:

- ➔ **Your child spends a lot of time in chat rooms.** Chat room participants are frequently solicited to visit pornographic sites, and are also easy targets for sexual predators. Risk runs higher during the summer months and school vacations (Christmas, Spring Break, etc.).
- ➔ **You find porn on your computer.** Online sexual predators use photos—especially those with sexual images of adults and children—to show kids that sex is normal behavior and to heighten their sexual curiosity. When checking for porn on your computer, be sure to check the browser history, as well as CDs, DVDs, flash drives and diskettes.
- ➔ **Your child begins receiving phone calls from adults—especially men—whom you don't know.** It can be very dangerous to give younger kids cell phones and private lines. They are far more difficult to monitor.
- ➔ **Your phone records show that your child is making calls, especially long-distance calls, to numbers you don't recognize.** Remember, even if a child has not given out your phone number, there's nothing stopping a predator or phone sex talker from giving your child his or hers.
- ➔ **Your child begins receiving anonymous gifts through the mail.** It is not uncommon for a sexual predator to send gifts such as jewelry, CDs, DVDs or even plane tickets to lure a child into a personal encounter.
- ➔ **Your child shuts off the computer monitor when you enter the room or quickly closes windows on the computer.** Look for the use of secret language in your child's correspondence in chat rooms, instant messages (IMs) or emails. Some common ones are: POS (parent over shoulder), :oX = Shhh, PA=Parent Alert). Don't be afraid to ask your child what a symbol or abbreviation means. Better yet, learn the language yourself.
- ➔ **Your child becomes withdrawn, preferring the cyber world to the real world.** When your child begins to isolate himself, something is wrong. Look closely for what's luring him away from healthy social interaction

(Adapted from *Sex, Lies and the Media: What Your Kids Know and Aren't Telling You* by Eva Marie Everson & Jessica Everson)

The average age of first Internet exposure to pornography is 11 years old.

For more information, visit [www.therealmajority.com](http://www.therealmajority.com)