



Start a Conversation about... **Pornography**

We know that Satan works hard to destroy families, God's people, and the church. One of the tools of temptation used to accomplish this is pornography, and it is unfortunately rampant in today's culture. Porn impacts men and women, teens and adults, and those in ministry. Its effects are not to be taken lightly, and its power of addiction is strong.

The definition of pornography, from Greek roots meaning "prostitute" and "to write," is described as "material that depicts erotic behavior and is intended to cause sexual excitement or a quick emotional reaction." On the surface, it might seem like words or images can cause little harm, but porn leads to lasting damage.

In 2023, Pornhub totaled over 2.14 billion visits during a single month, more than Instagram, Netflix, Pinterest, and TikTok combined.[1] The average first exposure to porn is between 11 and 12 years old, but the reported numbers of usage by teens varies wildly. It is safe to say that most teens have had some exposure to pornography, some intentionally and regularly. Viewing pornography has been linked to increased permissive sexual attitudes, dominant or aggressive sexual behaviors, issues with body image, and changed attitudes towards in person relationships.[2]

In this conversation it is important to distinguish between unintentional exposure (a web search leads to unexpected results), forced exposure (someone directly sends unrequested images) and wanted exposure. The response from parents or youth leaders may be dramatically different depending on what kind of exposure youth experience. Youth may also be hesitant to admit seeing pornography online in any way if it means they will lose access to technology, social time with friends, or hobbies. Ask lots of questions, encourage honesty, and commit to working together to find safe and faithful ways to use technology together.

Youth ministry in partnership with parents should take time to address pornography even when it is difficult or awkward. More congregations can take up the conversation as only 10% of churches have a program specifically for those struggling with pornography.[3] God gave us our sexuality as a good gift, and our usage of it is not separate from our faith. It's essential to communicate with teenagers God's good gifts to them and the dangers of porn, and to equip youth with tools to avoid it and fight its temptation.

[1] Bordoloi M, Durkin I, Aggarwal A. Effects of Pornography on Youth: A Review. *Mo Med*. 2024 May-Jun;121(3):195-197. PMID: 38854615; PMCID: PMC11160374.

[2][2] Giordano , A.L. (2022) What to know about adolescent pornography exposure, *Psychology Today*. Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/understanding-addiction/202202/what-know-about-adolescent-pornography-exposure> (Accessed: 08 October 2025).

[3] Stumbo, N. (no date) The latest stats on pornography and why they matter, *Pure Desire Ministries*. Available at: <https://puredesire.org/blog/the-latest-stats-on-pornography-and-why-they-matter/> (Accessed: 08 October 2025).

Potential Activities

- There are three major factors that contribute to increased access to pornography: affordability, accessibility, and anonymity. Talk with both youth and parents about how technology has changed these for teens today. Have youth consider how increasing accountability and decreasing their personal accessibility may help them to avoid temptation.
 - Provide students with tools to avoid the temptations of pornography. Share trusted website blockers or programs that prevent unwanted ads or sites from appearing on a computer or phone.
 - Encourage the students to identify or request potential accountability partners who can be available for help and prayer in times of temptation or struggle. It's often best advised for these to be outside the realm of family or marriage.
- Partner with parents to host a family night that highlights the dangers of pornography. Perhaps you can lead it alongside teaching the sixth commandment in Confirmation or during February as a tie into Valentine's Day. Keep males, females, and age groups (middle versus high school) separate for such classes. Focus on the positive elements of God's design for sex and marriage and how they can be used for His glory. Review how pornography distorts His plans for our lives.
- Invite a speaker to address the group, perhaps someone who has dealt with pornography or who helps those that do. Allow time to connect with students and take questions and provide follow-up with small groups later.

Discussion Questions

- What does God tell us about our sexuality in the Bible? What are some ways we see people misuse their sexuality in the Bible?
- How does pornography violate God's plan for sexuality?
- What impacts might pornography have on our perceptions of other people?
- Why might pornography be difficult to talk about with adults or parents?
- What is the Gospel message for those dealing with porn addiction?
- What can you do if someone you care about is having a hard time staying away from porn?
- How can porn distort our thinking and expectations? How does it invade and interrupt our lives?
- What promises does God's Word give us about facing temptation?

Foundational Scriptural Truth

For these questions, refer to the scriptures below for guidance and direction.

Philippians 4:4-9

It is important to fill our minds with worthwhile and uplifting things. Looking at or dwelling on porn is not pure, lovely, honorable, etc., and will not draw us closer to God.

1 Corinthians 6:13

Our bodies are not made for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, who gives us the strength to live pure and decent lives according to His design.

Matthew 5:28

It is impossible to view porn without lustful thoughts. Lust (porn) is equated with adultery, a direct violation of God's Law.

Proverbs 6:25

Wisdom includes refraining from lust of the heart and chasing sinful desires.

1 John 2:17

The world passes away, but the will of God abides. As Christians, we are called to a deep devotion to God.

2 Peter 2:10

Pornography has the power to enslave us as it takes over our thinking. We must be on our guard to keep it from overtaking us.

Psalms 32:3-5

Pornography thrives in darkness, and isolation weighs down. Fighting addictions requires confession and willingness to come before God and others to ask for help.

1 John 1:9

God has promised to forgive our sins and to remove our impurities, when we confess them.

1 Corinthians 10:13

God gives us the strength to overcome temptation. God offers strength in the midst of temptation and gives us what we need so we can resist and endure temptation faithfully.

Other Resources**Lists of statistics and dangers of pornography use**

https://livefreecommunity.org/porn-use-statistics/?gad_source=1&gclid=CjoKCQiAvP-6BhDyARIsAJ3uv7YN2WJg8PIxu935o8UwtNYioNjS5DtxEkqn_aBiRiPir-Q7kwePnBwaAhuHEALw_wcB

Resources for those who struggle (some are more geared for adults than teens)

www.focusonthefamily.com/help-for-pornography-addiction/?gad_source=1

Website blocker that removes porn access and offers encouragement and help

www.covenanteyes.com/pornstats

