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TOGETHER WE CARE

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In support of HJ 2

Why is pornography a public *health* issue? Because it has implications for the deterioration of sexual and reproductive health, and violence prevention.

Of the **many** harms related to porn, I want to focus on three to highlight.

1. Its correlation to **child-on-child problematic sexual behavior**, exhibiting *learned* predatory behaviors that innocent children would never in a million years think up on their own, but which pornography teaches all too well. Today's mainstream pornography is not only free and easily accessible by children, but is drenched with themes of coercion, degradation, and violence. Too often, brutal and hate-filled pornography is becoming the worst possible facto sexual education for children, turning them into copycat predators.

2. The problem of **child porn** continues to escalate. 25 million images are reviewed by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children annually. That's 480,769 images of child exploitation per week. It comes at us and our children through a wide variety of internet technology, including websites, email, instant messaging/ICQ, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), newsgroups, bulletin boards, peer-to-peer networks, internet gaming sites, social networking sites, and anonymized networks. More recently, live-streaming sexual abuse has begun to surface. In these instances individuals pay to watch the live abuse of a child via a video streaming service. This type of abuse is incredibly difficult to detect, due to its real-time nature and the lack of digital evidence left behind following the crime. The creation, possession and distribution of child pornography is one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States, with a 2,500% increase in arrests over the last decade.

3. The unhealthy, sickening **violence** of much adult porn. 80 percent of the 15 most-viewed pornographic videorecordings portray women being hit, spit on, kicked, and called degrading names. These abusive, sadistic scenes often are perpetrated on women who are saying **no**, then they continue to be violently treated and penetrated, yet are shown as if they like it in the end. What message is this sending young kids, when, in the real world of relationships, they hear "no"?

For reference:

[“Children abusing children: Missouri hospital sees dangerous trend involving young kids and porn”](#) The Denver Channel News, Nov 30, 2018. Excerpts Almost half of our perpetrators are minors," said Heidi Olson, the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Coordinator. *...perpetrators are likely to be between 11- and 15-years-old. Victims are most likely girls around 4- to 8-years-old...about 1000/year; the number each year continues to rise. Many are violent sexual assaults. Nurses are also finding more and more that pornography is playing a role in these cases. That can include a victim being forced to see porn, a victim reporting that the perpetrator said they'd watched porn, being forced to do something shown in a pornographic video, or a victim being recorded doing a sexual act. Children are being exposed to porn at very young ages, around 4- or 5-years-old. They say a child can develop unrealistic and dangerous ideas about intimate relationships by being exposed to violent, graphic porn.*

[Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People's Intimate Relationships](#): A European Study, by Nicky Stanley et al. [Journal of Interpersonal Violence](#), Volume: 33 issue: 19, page(s): 2919-2944, Oct., 2018. From the abstract: presents findings from a large survey of 4,564 young people aged 14 to 17 in five European countries which illuminate the relationship between regular viewing of online pornography, sexual coercion and abuse and the sending and receiving of sexual images and messages, known as “sexting.” Also 91 interviews with young people who had direct experience of interpersonal violence and abuse in their own relationships. **Boys' perpetration of sexual coercion and abuse was significantly associated with regular viewing of online pornography. In addition, boys who regularly watched online pornography were significantly more likely to hold negative gender attitudes.**

[Adolescent Pornography Use and Dating Violence among a Sample of Primarily Black and Hispanic, Urban-Residing, Underage Youth](#) by E. Rothman & A. Adhia, [Behavioral Sciences](#), 2015. In a study of urban 16-17 year olds, 50% of adolescent dating abuse victims reported that they had been asked to do a sexual act that their partner saw in pornography, and 58% did not feel happy to have been asked.

Finally, to give an idea of how families are struggling to cope with these heretofore undreamed of challenges, see the nightmares now described in a Facebook group, Parenting in a Tech World, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/parentinggeeks/>, which currently has 64,764 members. They are sharing their stories, many of which would make your hair stand on end, hearing the risky, sexually explicit online behaviors by minors using sexting, as well as a variety of social media and apps. In this forum, many are asking for advice and help, because they truly feel they cannot keep up with the pace of technology, and the extremes of what use predators, and even their own, kids are making of it. When we reach this level of desperation, we do have a **crisis** on our hands.