

Local Government has a sacred duty to protect and defend the minds of youth to promote the next generation of healthy families. But many agendas are combining to exploit children for profit, political power and promiscuity. Generation X has been replaced by Generation XXX.

Institutions such as public libraries and schools act as arbiters of propriety by what is purchased, provided, and promoted to children. Small decisions such as purchasing and placing books can have huge effects on vulnerable kids. And those who want to profit from the sexual exploitation of minors, know the power of these decisions.

But you can protect children from these harms.

Research on youth (up to age 18) shows:

1. Reid and colleagues (2011) defined pornography as material that creates or elicits sexual feelings or thoughts and contains explicit images or descriptions of sexual acts involving the genitals (e.g., vaginal or anal intercourse, oral sex, masturbation, etc.).
2. Children and adolescents are widely considered the most vulnerable audiences to sexually explicit material because of their developing brains. Just as early cigarette smoking creates lifetime addiction, so early exposure to sexually explicit material can distort a child's mind for a lifetime.
3. The more frequently an adolescent is exposed to sexually explicit material, the greater their sexually permissive attitudes. Research also suggested that adolescents who were more frequently exposed to sexually explicit material had their first experience of sexual intercourse at an earlier age than adolescents who were not frequently exposed.
4. Even less-explicit, non-violent pornography promotes unhealthy sexual attitudes and behaviors, by encouraging males to view females simply in terms of sexual potential, not as entire beings worthy of mutual respect and regard.
5. Pornography is often sought in the formation of sexual identity, facilitating early sexual activity.
6. Higher acceptance of pornography is associated with increased alcohol usage.
7. Even non-violent pornography exposure is associated with sexual preoccupation defined as "a strong cognitive engagement in sexual issues, sometimes at the exclusion of other thoughts".
8. Childhood exposure to sexually explicit material may contribute "to antagonistic and psychopathic attitudes, likely the depiction of distorted views of human sexuality and glorification of promiscuity."
9. Predators and pedophiles use sexually explicit material to break-down the inhibitions of children who are their targets.
10. Sexual socialization theory suggests frequent exposure to consistent themes about gender and sexual behavior can affect a young person's developing sense of what is expected sexually for men and women and may also affect later behavior.
11. Having been exposed to pornography and perceiving pornography as realistic were associated with increased sexual aggression risk.
12. Studies suggest that youth who consume pornography may develop unrealistic sexual values and beliefs. Among the findings, higher levels of permissive sexual attitudes, sexual preoccupation, and earlier sexual experimentation have been correlated with more frequent consumption of pornography.

13. Higher risk adolescent males are “more likely to be exposed to such media but when they are exposed, they are likely to be changed by such exposure, such as changes in attitudes about the acceptance of violence against women.”
14. Youth who reported exposure to pornographic materials were 6.5 times more likely to report sexually aggressive behavior. Youth who reported exposure to nonviolent material were more than three times as likely to report sexually aggressive behavior, while youth who reported exposure to violent material were 24 times more likely to report sexually aggressive behavior.

The results are clear. Media influences attitudes and behaviors.

Joan R. Landes, MA, CMHC

Clinical Mental Health Counselor

License #8542770-6004 UT

Notes:

1. Reid, Rory & Carpenter, Bruce & Draper, Elizabeth & Manning, Jill. (2010). Exploring Psychopathology, Personality Traits, and Marital Distress Among Women Married to Hypersexual Men. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy*. 16. 36-8. 10.1080/15332691.2010.491782.
2. Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity, 19:99–122, 2012 DOI: 10.1080/10720162.2012.660431
3. Braun-Courville, Debra & Rojas, Mary. (2009). Exposure to Sexually Explicit Web Sites and Adolescent Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors. *The Journal of adolescent health: official publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*. 45. 156-62. 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2008.12.004.
4. Zillmann D 2000. Influence of unrestrained access to erotica on adolescents' and young adults' dispositions toward sexuality. *Journal of adolescent health* 27: 41–4
5. Bryant, C 2009. Adolescents, pornography, and harm. *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice*. 368: February.
6. Carroll JS, Padilla-Walker LM, Nelson LJ, Olson CD, McNamara Barry C & Madsen SD 2008. Generation XXX: Pornography acceptance and use among emerging adults.
7. Peter, Jochen & Valkenburg, Patti. (2008). Adolescents' Exposure to Sexually Explicit Internet Material and Sexual Preoccupancy: A Three-Wave Panel Study. *Media Psychology*. 11. 207-234. 10.1080/15213260801994238.
8. Hunter, John & Figueredo, Aurelio & Malamuth, Neil. (2009). Developmental Pathways into Social and Sexual Deviance. *Journal of Family Violence*. 25. 141-148. 10.1007/s10896-009-9277-9.
9. Langevin, R., & Curnoe, S. (2004). The Use of Pornography during the Commission of Sexual Offenses. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 48(5), 572–586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X03262518>

10. Brown, Jane D. and Kelly L. L'Engle. "X-Rated: Sexual Attitudes & Behaviors Associated With U.S. Early Adolescents' Exposure to Sexually Explicit Media." *Communication Research* 36, February 2009, 129, 133.
11. Wright PJ, Paul B, Herbenick D. Preliminary Insights from a U.S. Probability Sample on Adolescents' Pornography Exposure, Media Psychology, and Sexual Aggression. *J Health Commun.* 2021 Jan 2;26(1):39-46. doi: 10.1080/10810730.2021.1887980. Epub 2021 Feb 24. PMID: 33625313.
12. Owens, Eric W., et al. "The impact of internet pornography on adolescents: A review of the research." *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 19.1-2 (2012): 99-122.
13. Malamuth, Neil & Huppin, Mark. (2005). Pornography and Teenagers: The Importance of Individual Differences. *Adolescent medicine clinics.* 16. 315-26, viii. 10.1016/j.admecli.2005.02.004.
14. Ybarra, Michele L., et al. "X-Rated Material and Perpetration of Sexually Aggressive Behavior Among Children and Adolescents: Is There a Link?" *Aggressive Behavior* 37, 2011, 1, 3, 7.