



## REMEMBER

- Porn is a human issue that harms us all, not just Christians. God's heart is for us to flourish, and His ways aren't about holding us back but about releasing us. His way is a better way for all people - whether they know him or not yet. The impact of porn on our society provides an example of that.
- Pornographic images rewire how our brains view others; women are seen as objects to be used, not humans to be loved. This affects males and females. Porn can lead to a distorted perception of reality, a devaluation of human life, & a trivializing of violent behaviour. It creates abnormal expectations of relationships and sex.
- Hebrews 4:15 shows us that Jesus understands our struggles & is there with us in the midst; Romans 5:6 tells us that Christ died for us "when we were still sinners". He knows we're messy - and loves us anyway.



## RECOGNIZE

- 75% of teens see porn before they are 17; 58% came across it by accident; most are first exposed between the ages of 9-11. Boys ages 12-17 are the largest consumers of porn online. 90% of youth who view online porn have done so while doing homework.
- Although talking to a trusted adult about sex has happened for 75% of teens, only 40% have had a conversation about porn - but they want to. Almost half of 13-14 year old viewers say they want to talk but don't know how to start the conversation or who they could talk to.
- Teens often seek out porn to figure out sex more so than they do for sexual pleasure, but because of the neuroplasticity of the developing brain in adolescence repeatedly watching porn wires the brain around the values and ideas they may just be curiously exploring.
- Porn is highly addictive because it triggers a dopamine release just like drugs. Frequent porn use can also result in depression, anxiety, stress & social alienation.



## RESPOND

- **Bring it up.** Expect that most teens will be exposed to porn at some point. Teens need to know what they're up against - need to know about the presence and power of pornography before it becomes an issue. Help them create a plan of how to respond when they are exposed to unwanted porn.
- **Create places of authentic intimacy.** Give them something to measure the counterfeit against. In an incredibly lonely generation, pornography creates an illusion of intimacy without risk or effort.

### If they recognize that porn is dominating their life:

- **Learn Together.** Research how porn affects a brain & the scientifically proven impact of porn on healthy sexuality & relationships. Check out [www.fightthenewdrug.org](http://www.fightthenewdrug.org).

- **Identify triggers.** Help them figure out the time of day, place, and situations that lead to porn use and brainstorm ways to address these triggers and change what they can, so that porn becomes more difficult to access on their phone and computer. This probably involves an accountability app. If the student is resistant to this ask why - and keep suggesting it.
- **Make a list.** Invite them to create a list of their personal reasons to stop using porn, including ways they have changed since their involvement with porn.
- **Follow up.** Don't assume one conversation is enough. Notice the weight of shame and make your check-ins non-judgmental and open to minimize its destructive power. Shame can make it harder to change a behaviour and keeps a person from seeking help.
- **Look for the wins.** Get them to track wins on a calendar or with a nightly text. Celebrate marker points with them!
- **Tell the truth.** Demonstrate and remind them of God's unconditional love. It isn't a response to them "behaving", but a gift God wants to give them out of his huge heart. What they are doing is harming how they see themselves - but it isn't changing how God sees them.



## RESOURCES

**fightthenewdrug.org** - A comprehensive fact-based site on the impact of porn on our brains, lives, and world.

**www.doingfamilyright.com** - Search "recovery" for an entire podcast series to help understand/respond to porn/sexual addiction.

**everaccountable.com/blog/how-pornography-affects-teenagers-and-children** - Looking specifically at the impact of ports on teens. This link will introduce you to paid accountability plans for devices for accountability.