Pornography: The Antithesis of Healthy Relationships

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The elephant is in the room!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ya67aLaaCc
USE IT OR LOSE IT
PRINCIPLE

Pruning (Apoptosis) clears out unneeded wiring to make way for more efficient and faster information-processing (thicker myelin)

Rich experiences = Promotes building long chains of nerve cells needed for demanding problem-solving
AGE

11-12 → 24-25

200 → 100
Prefrontal Cortex Thinking: The Executive Function Skills

• Abstract; conceptual understanding
  • Impulse Control
  • Problem-Solving
  • Decision-Making
    • Judgment
  • Emotion Regulation
  • Frustration Tolerance
  • Ability to Feel Empathy
Dopamine-Releasing Behaviors

- Food/Bulimia/Binge Eating
- Sex/Relationships
- Pornography
- Control
- Gambling
- Cults
- Performance/Workaholism
- Collection/Shopaholism
- Rage/Violence
- Exercise
- Technology/Video Games/Internet/Social Media
“Dopamine...is dopamine...is dopamine. Any substance or activity that spikes our dopamine levels beyond the normal range arrests the development of the adolescent brain.”

Crystal Collier, PhD, Director of Behavioral Health Institute, Houston Council on Recovery
NOVELTY SPIKES DOPAMINE
Nerve cells that fire together, wire together!
HYPOFRONTALITY = PLEASURE

IN BETWEEN Age 11-25 = ARREST
“Most boys seek pornography by age 10”

-Simon Lajeunesse, PhD, University of Montreal
Research on Adolescents and Sexual Content

- Peter & Valkenburg (series of studies 2006-2009) found teens more exposed to sexually explicit Internet material (SEIM) to have more permissive sexual attitudes, be more preoccupied with sex, be less sexually satisfied, and have stronger beliefs that women are sex objects.

- Brown, Keller, and Stern (2009) who indicated that adolescents who witness high risk sexual practices in sexually explicit material, in the absence of education on the potential negative consequences, are more likely to engage in some form of high-risk sexual behavior themselves.

- Adolescents with higher degrees of social interaction and bonding were NOT as likely to consume sexually explicit material as were their less social peers (Mesch, 2009).

- Respondents described a decrease in the consumption of sexually explicit material as individual self-confidence increased (Lofgren-Martenson & Masson, 2010).
Research shows adolescents may develop:

- Unrealistic attitudes about sex
- Misleading attitudes towards relationships
- Increased belief that porn is like “real-world” sex
- Body-Image Issues
- Increase in substance use
- Increase in depressive symptoms
- Sex is primarily physical and casual
- Decreased belief that sex is affectionate and relational

Tsitsika et al., 2009
Why do they watch it?

- Curiosity
- Hormones
- Coolidge Effect

In biology and psychology, the **Coolidge effect** is a phenomenon seen in mammalian species whereby males (and to a lesser extent females) exhibit renewed sexual interest if introduced to new receptive sexual partners, even after cessation of sex with prior but still available sexual partners.

- Porn provides novelty, or “a new partner” at the click of the mouse.
- From an evolutionary perspective, the male porn viewer is biologically compelled to “fertilize” each new female image he sees on the screen. Digital harem. Instant novelty.
Without the Coolidge Effect....
Why is porn more dangerous now than a few years ago?

- **The availability of high-speed internet.** As soon as a user experiences a drop in dopamine, they can instantly click on a new stream of images and get an instant shot of dopamine. *They can control dopamine with a mouse!*

- Couldn’t do this with past versions of porn--magazines, VHS tapes, even slower-speed internet.
The Progression of Porn
Today...
“Arousal Addiction”

• You need different. Instantly.
• You REQUIRE novelty in order for the arousal to be sustained.
• Like with any addictive drug, the more you use the more you need to feel the same effect.
• Click. Click. New tab. Click.
Unlike still images, videos replace your imagination, and place you in the position of a voyeur (rather than a participant).
Symptoms of Arousal Addiction mimic:

- ADHD
- Social Anxiety
- Depression
- Performance Anxiety
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
Digital “Re-wiring”

• Alone
• Voyeurism
• Clicking
• Searching
• Multiple Tabs
• Constant Novelty
• Shock and Surprise
• Instant Gratification
Real Relationships

• Love
• Courtship
• Touching
• Being touched
• Intimacy
• Communication
• Pheromones
• Emotional connection
• Interaction with a person
• Language of face contact (non-verbal communication)
Times are changing...

• 54% of sexually active 16-21 year-olds reported sexual problems. This is higher than the rate for elderly men!
  
  Journal Sex Med, 2014

• 36% of 16-19 year-olds report NO INTEREST in sex in a recent Japanese survey.

How high is your bar?
A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDP) found that “frequent porn users are more likely to report depression and poor physical health than non-users, suggesting that by substituting for healthy in-person interactions, porn may start a cycle of social and sexual isolation.”

Zimbardo & Coulombe, 2015
“One patient out of four with newly diagnosed erectile dysfunction is a young man.”


“Internet Porn is Killing Young Men’s Sexual Performance.”

Survey by the Italian Society of Andrology and Sexual Medicine, February, 2011
“Men don't know the difference between making love and doing porn. The average boy now watches 50 porn video clips a week. And there's some guy watching a hundred, obviously. And the porn industry is the fastest growing industry in America -- 15 billion annually. For every 400 movies made in Hollywood, there are 11,000 new made porn videos.”

Cindi Gallop, CEO of *If We Ran The World*
Repeated use forms a preferred pathway in the brain “Hard-Wiring”
What can we do starting today?

• Be prepared
• Pay attention
• Help Protect. *External* monitoring-internet filtration system
• Set a standard. Create limits. No screens of any kind in bedrooms. Limit internet usage/gaming to common areas with prescribed time limit. *What is your family code?*
• Start a conversation with your child(ren). What do they think about porn use? Concerns? The Curiosity Myth.
• *Internal* monitoring. Built through regular talks, discussions, and sharing of information.

• *Family Council*. Weekly or monthly meetings. Family members share things they have seen related to bullying, vicious gossip, pornography, and dishonest or cruel behavior in others. Parents and children share experiences and then brainstorm about ways to respond to these things.

• Be an example
• Care4Teen
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4484F5ZD0U

• Covenant Eyes- monitors internet usage on mobile and PC. Each person must sign in with unique username. Monitors and records websites visited, search terms used, and Youtube videos watched. Reports apps used and for how long. $13.99/mo. Covers all devices. Generate usage report for each device.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8RnJga9qYE
Circle is a device that plugs into the wall and gives parents the ability to set up restrictions on all wi-fi connected devices in the home. Gives the ability to filter based on content, turn off internet per device at will from the mobile app, and allows setting of timers to cut off internet for each device at night. One time fee of $100.00 for the device.
1. Go to web site
2. Click “Personal” Tab
3. Click “Open DNS Family Shield” Setup Guide or “Open DNS Home” Setup Guide
4. Follow the Prompts

This allows your wireless router to automatically screen out any web sites with adult content that are accessed through Wi-Fi in your home, for FREE.
OurPact gives you the power to block internet and apps across any network, inside and outside of the home. Whether you’re looking for iOS or Android parental controls,
Phone and Computer Monitoring Software

www.mymobilewatchdog.com

www.webwatchner.com

www.teensafe.com

www.netnanny.com

http://mysocialsitter.com/
What if I suspect/catch my child watching porn?

- First and foremost, **do not over-react**. If your response is full of anger, fear and/or shame, it will very likely shut down any opportunity for honest discussion, teaching opportunities and actual behavior change in your child. Don’t judge!
- Give yourself a break! Pornography use IS NOT a reflection of your parenting!
- Have regular discussions with your child about healthy sexuality and its false counter-part, pornography.
- Be *Mentoring Parents*. Help your child understand how pornography can be damaging. Arm yourself with facts.
- Implement external/internal monitoring. Set boundaries.
- Use it as a teachable moment. Turn it into a positive.
- Make expectations/consequences crystal clear.
- Explain “trust”.


• https://store.fightthenewdrug.org/collections/books/products/the-guideline-pdf
Relax
“Exposure to sexually explicit material is a normative experience among adolescents who are following traditional developmental trajectories regarding sexual curiosity.”

Sabina, Wolak, & Finkelhor, 2008
Keep it Simple!

• The best filter isn't the one that runs on a device, but the one that runs on the computer inside the child's head!

• Recognize that conversations like this *are* part of parenting. Difficult as they are, they can ultimately be good for your children and your relationship with them.
“But who should care? The only people who should care about this is parents of boys and girls, educators, gamers, filmmakers and women who would like a real man who they can talk to, who can dance, who can make love slowly and contribute to the evolutionary pressures to keep our species above banana slugs. No offense to banana slug owners. Thank you.”

Phil Zimbardo, PhD, Professor Emeritus Stanford University, TED talk
yourbrainonporn.com
fightthenewdrug.org
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