

Talking with Young People About Porn

It's never too early or too late to start the conversation!

EDUCATE yourself first. Check out our [free courses](#) for parents and professionals!

- Be aware of the [harms of hypersexualized images and porn](#) on young people.
- Understand how porn shapes and influences young people.
- Use [facts](#) over myths to avoid scare tactics.

PROVIDE a safe space: Meet kids where they are.

- Be present and watch for [warning signs](#).
- Spend time online together to teach your kids safe, healthy behavior.
- Look for teachable moments in media to start conversations.

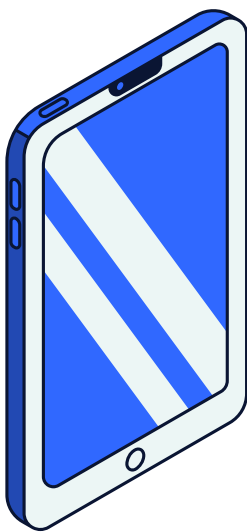
COMMUNICATE with tone and approach.

- Aim for open, short, and regular communication that encourages questions and supportive conversations, rather than shaming or blaming.
- Discuss how porn does not represent how people have sex in the real world.
- Listen and validate: Encourage kids to reflect on where their own expectations come from.
- Remember, this is about keeping your child safe!



MONITOR devices.

- Keep connected devices in a common area where you can monitor use.
- Do not allow devices to be in the child's bedroom at night.
- Check your kids' device privacy settings and parental control tools with an app such as [Canopy](#).
- Find out if any online protection is offered by your child's school, friends' homes, or any place where kids could use a computer without your supervision.



REPORTING

- Let your kids know that if an adult online asks them to keep secrets, they should always come to you.
- Take your child seriously if they report an uncomfortable online exchange.
- If your child discloses anyone sending, viewing, or distributing child sexual abuse materials (or child pornography) online, report it to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children online through the [CyberTipline](#).
- If your child has shared a sexualized image or video, you can take steps to get it taken down [here](#).

Suggestions to facilitate discussions:

- What does ___ (consent, sexting, healthy relationships, etc.) mean to you? Where did you learn this?
- Have you seen anything online that confuses you, upsets you, makes you feel uncomfortable, or that you don't understand?
- Has anyone shown you these types of images?
- Walk through some what-would-you-do scenarios to encourage critical thinking.
- Try having conversations in the car or while doing an activity together.
- Be prepared to revisit the topic of pornography at different times.
- Reduce the harms of hypersexualized media and porn by directing kids towards healthy friendships and activities that build peer communities.

TALKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT PORN

Ongoing conversations are essential to young peoples' ability to critically analyze the images they consume.

Conversation starters include:

- You can't unsee pornography.
- Pornography is scripted. It doesn't represent healthy sex. It does not portray emotional intimacy, connection, and consent — qualities that are central to healthy relationships.
- Porn can trigger a range of feelings including curiosity, confusion, disgust, arousal, and guilt.
- Porn depicts a power imbalance: women are the objects of degradation and violence.
- Just because something is arousing doesn't mean it is healthy.

TO LEARN MORE about having these critical conversations, explore Culture Reframed's [free online courses for parents](#)



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