

Teens & Internet Porn

Effects on their Relationships and
Development

Meagan Ramsey, MSW

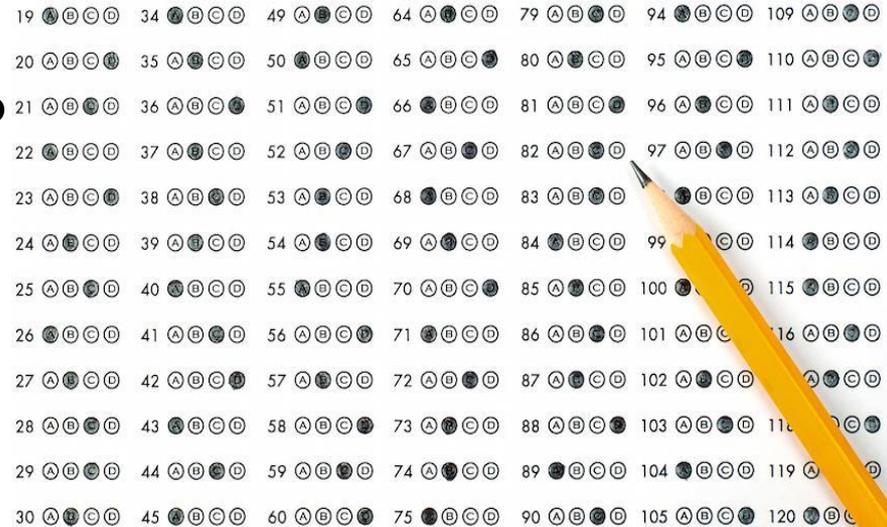
Margot Parker, MA

“The younger generations are, through no fault of their own, learning that sex is what they see in pornography – a medium that is, for the most part, violently misogynistic, devoid of intimacy, and completely unrealistic.”

– Erika Lust, founder of ThePornConversation.org

Quick Quiz

1. What percent of internet traffic is to porn sites?
2. What country has the most traffic to porn sites?
3. What is the average age of first exposure to internet porn for boys? For girls?
4. The top porn star in the US?
 - a) Susie Starlet
 - b) Riley Reid
 - c) Kim Kardashian
5. What does “fap” mean?



General Statistics (U. of New Hampshire, 2008)

- **BOYS:**
 - 1st exposure to pornography is between ages 11-13
 - 93% have seen online porn before age 18
- **GIRLS:**
 - 1st exposure is typically around age 14
 - 62% have seen online porn before age 18
- 57% of adolescents have viewed porn before having engaged in real world sexual activity, many before having their first kiss (2012 Australia)

First Porn Exposures

- Common routes to first exposure (as reported by 7th graders in my classrooms):
 - Social media accounts (ads)
 - Peers
 - Misspelling or auto-fill online search terms
 - Intentional (if innocent/age-appropriate) searches, i.e. “boobs”
- Common Reactions to First Exposure:
 - Grossed out/Disgusted
 - Scared/Ashamed
 - Curious/Interested
 - Excited/Turned On
- Sometimes they’re unaware that the pictures & videos they’ve seen are “porn”
 - Much mainstream media has now normalized what was formerly considered pornographic

The Porn Awareness Generation Gap

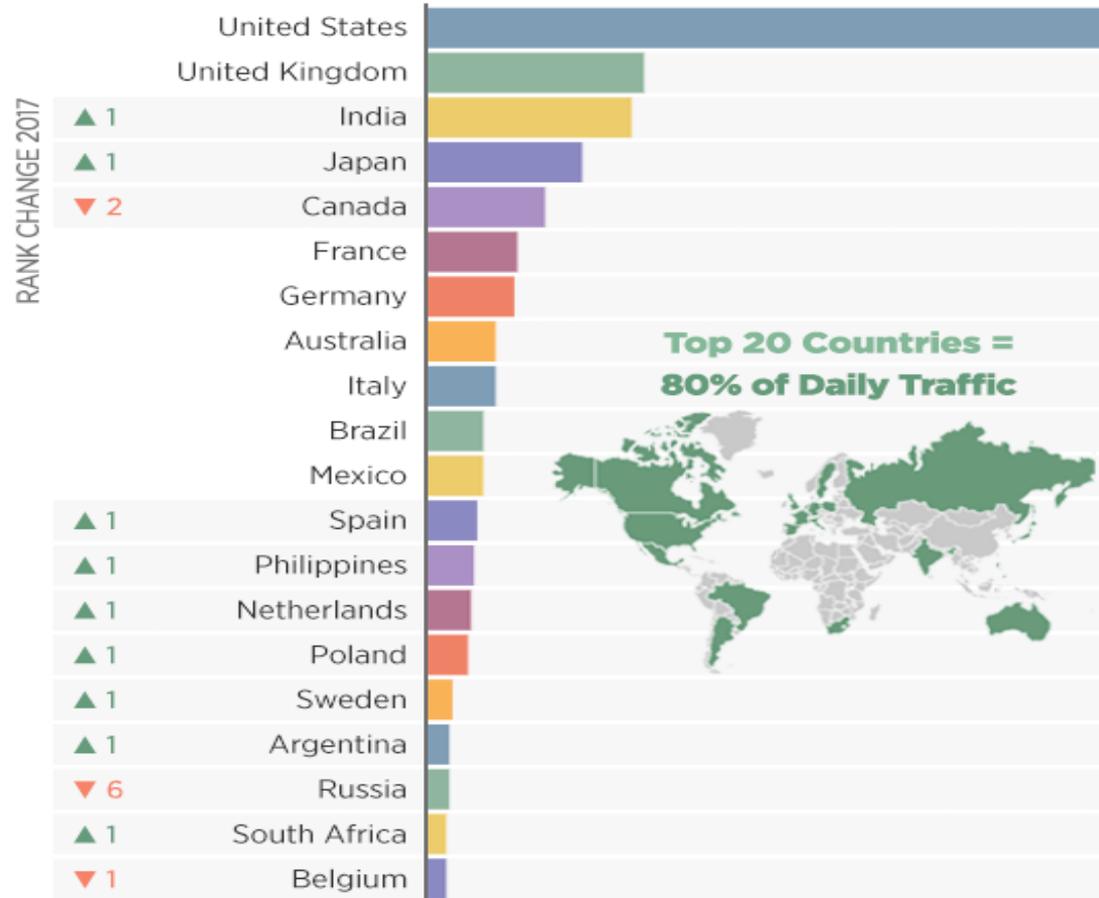
- Of 600 teens and their parents... (University of Indiana, 2016)
 - Half as many parents thought their 14-18 year olds had seen porn than had actually watched it
 - Depending on the sex act, parents underestimated how much their kids saw by as much as 10 times
- “Everything I need to know about sex, I learned from porn”: (Boston U., 2016)
 - High schoolers (age 16-17) said porn was their primary source for information about sex — more than friends, siblings, schools or parents

Prevalence of Porn

- The “parallel universe”: 33% of all internet traffic is porn
- Pornhub received in 2017: (Pornhub’s 2017 Year in Review report)
 - 28.5 billion visitors, an average of 81 million people per day
 - 24.7 billion searches performed on the site this year
 - 50,000 searches per minute
 - 800 searches per second
 - Their site receives more traffic than all streaming video services combined (i.e. Netflix, Hulu, YouTube, etc.)
- “For many people, using porn is as routine as brushing their teeth.”
– Alexander Rhodes



Top 20 Countries by Traffic



Largest Rank Changes of 2017

▲ 68 Ethiopia
▲ 49 South Korea

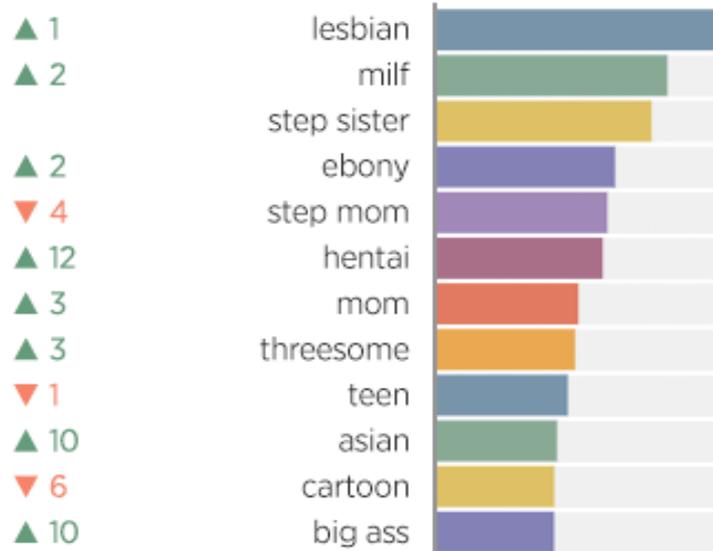
▲ 23 Sri Lanka
▲ 23 Pakistan

▲ 22 Libya
▲ 20 Singapore



UNITED STATES

Top Searches of 2017



Top Trending Searches

fidget spinner	► NEW
cheerleader	▲ 327%
3 girls 1 guy	▲ 257%
double penetration	▲ 198%
naked girls twerking	▲ 190%
femdom	▲ 152%
trans	▲ 124%

Top 5 Pornstars

- 1 riley reid
- 2 kim kardashian
- 3 mia khalifa
- 4 lisa ann
- 5 brandi love

Top 5 Categories

- 1 Lesbian
- 2 Ebony
- 3 MILF
- 4 Big Dick
- 5 Hentai

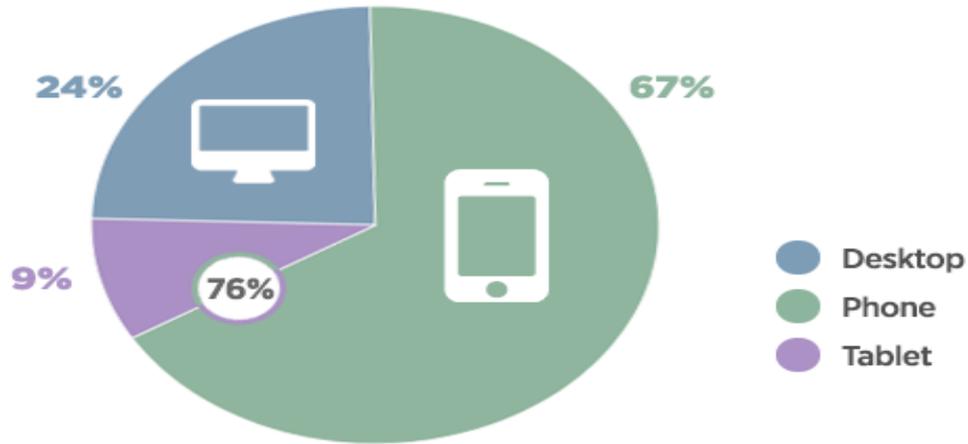
Top Relative Categories

Viewed % more when compared to world

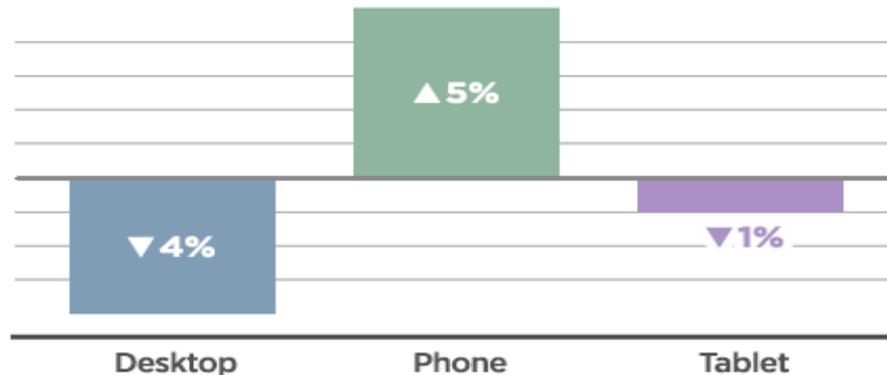
- 1 ▲ **58%** Ebony
- 2 ▲ **57%** Latina
- 3 ▲ **35%** Ass
- 4 ▲ **29%** Interracial
- 5 ▲ **22%** BBW



Traffic by Phone, Desktop & Tablet



Change in Traffic Share from 2016 to 2017

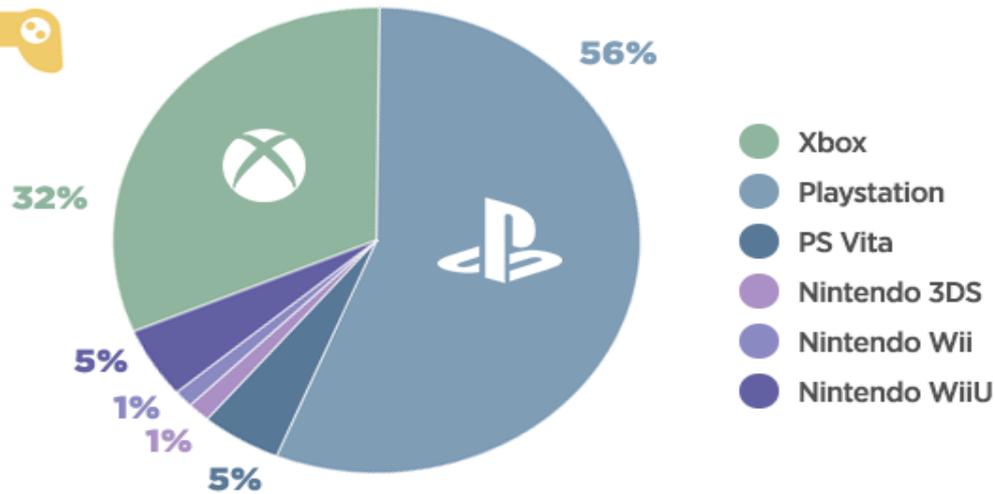


Countries with Increases in Phone Traffic Share

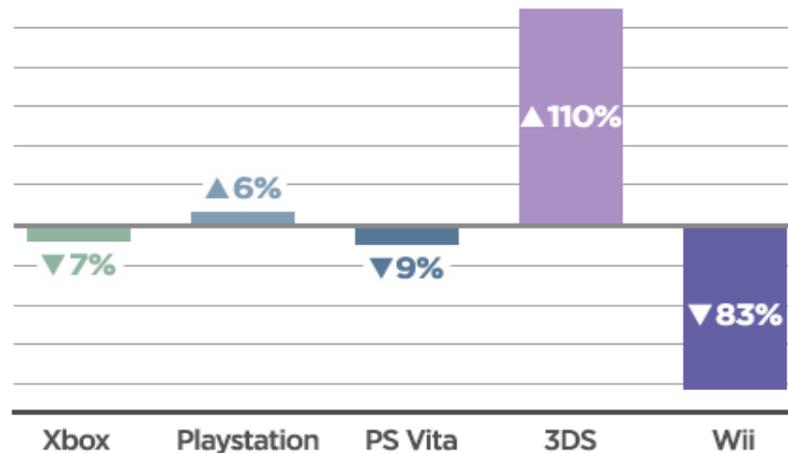




Traffic by Game Console



Change in Traffic Share from 2016 to 2017



Concerns regarding Teen Development: “IRL”

- Many teens unsure of what is real and what is fake
 - 53% of boys and 39% of girls aged 11-16 think porn is “realistic” (2016 UK)
 - 5-of-6 boys and 3-of-4 girls believe women in porn are actually experiencing pleasure (Indiana U. 2016)
- Porn separates sex from emotions/intimate relationships
 - Sex is a “thing” you “get” or “take” from another person
 - Common language in our society supports this: i.e. “hit that”, “get some”
 - The 1st porn generation (now 20s) is struggling with intimate relationships
- Porn consumption linked to peer harassment at school
 - Verbal & online slurs, pressures for nudes, forced porn viewing
 - “Revenge porn”
- Pornography Addiction
 - Works upon the same neural pathways as addiction to substances

Concerns about Teen Development:

“Signature Sex Acts”, porn bodies normalized

“Countless people are having their sexual tastes shaped by porn producers rather than real, human, experiences” – Alexander Gould

- Anal sex
- “Facials”
- Choking/slapping
- Female-to-male oral sex (the new “2nd base”)

Rothman study (2015) of 72 youth aged 16-18:

- 50%+ said they’d tried sex they’d first seen in porn
- 54% said they watch porn in order to learn about sex
- 51% were asked to watch porn by partner
- 50% asked to reenact something by partner (most reported unhappiness to be asked)

Body image anxiety, expectations regarding self & others

- More than 70% of teens of both sexes completely shave or wax their pubic hair (2012)
- Labiaplasty on the rise (2017) - up 45% (UK), up 80% (US)
 - 5% of those procedures done on girls under age 18

Concerns About Teen Development: Violence in sex normalized

- 2010 & 2007 studies:
 - 88% of scenes showed verbal or physical aggression, mostly spanking, slapping and gagging
 - If we combine both physical and verbal aggression:
 - nearly 90% of scenes contained at least one aggressive act, with an average of 12 acts of aggression per scene
- In both studies, women were on the receiving end of the aggression *more than 90% of the time*
 - In 95% of the incidents, the aggression was met with a neutral or pleased response by the women being aggressed
- Sex often described as “punishment” – i.e. “watch sluts get what they deserve”.
 - Some sites linger on physical damage done to bodies

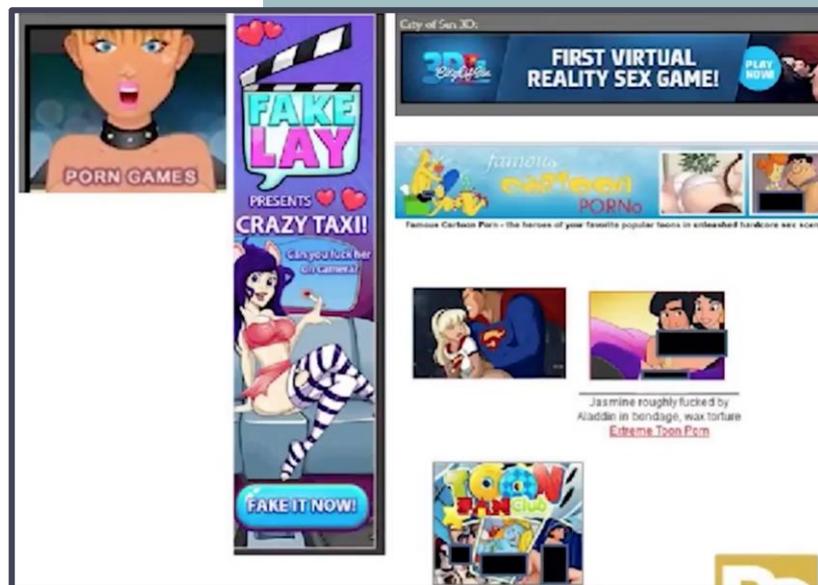
Future of Porn

- Virtual Reality

- (Already exists)
- Porn sites currently link to virtual reality pornographic video games (ads)
- Headsets/immersive VR experience - the technology exists, it's not mainstream yet (but it is the industry's goal – big \$\$\$ for them)

- Deep Fakes

- Started in porn - i.e. requests for porn videos of two celebrities
- Apps will make it possible for the average person to create deep fakes
- Potential to be a problem for civilization as a whole



The Conversations



The Conversation:

“The most important thing isn’t even what you say as much as how you say it.

Never get visibly flustered or embarrassed; never get irritated or angry; don’t shut them up, close the conversation down or leave the room. Instead, respond to them openly, honestly and straightforwardly.

By doing that, you open up a channel of communication between you that will always be there for them, and trust me — no matter how much they might appear to squirm when you talk to them frankly about sex and how to have a rewarding, healthy sex life, they will be secretly grateful to you for doing so.”

- Cindy Gallop, makealovenotporn.com

The Conversation

First: Self-care

- Much like the old airline adage “put on your oxygen mask before assisting your child”, take time to get yourself settled first
- Ask yourself *honestly*:
 - What are my thoughts/feelings about porn? Teenage sexuality?
 - Did my parents talk to me about this? If so, how did it go?
 - Am I open to having an honest conversation about this with my child?
- If feeling uncomfortable about porn, sex, and/or this conversation:
 - Process your feelings first – write, talk, therapy, etc.
 - Read/watch what you need until you have the information you need to feel confident
- Adult anxiety, anger, worry = teens hesitant to open up and engage
- Adult calmness and confidence = teens more able to open up and engage

How Can We Help?

Our kids need:

- the mental and emotional *tools* to navigate this world safely
 - Much like other tools we've given them:
 - Safe crossing of streets, swimming lessons, how to call 911
 - Tools include:
 - the ability to critically assess media, how to handle uncomfortable conversations/situations with peers, what your wishes are regarding their encounters with porn
- unhelpful interventions include:
 - Shame/Threats
 - Scare Tactics
 - Blocker software (this alone will not fix this problem)

How Can We Help?

They need to hear loud and clear:

- **Porn is not a learning tool. Do not copy it.**
 - Porn is a business, videos are extreme in order to get views and make money, not because it's what people do/enjoy
 - Treating partners in many of the ways commonly depicted without their expressed consent is at best harmful and at worst criminal
 - You are entitled to have your sexuality develop *as is right for you*, and NOT lose that right to porn producers who want to hook you on their product
- **Consent must be given by both people** for all sexual activity.
 - This is modeled *nowhere* in society. Teens need to be told it's ok to voice their wishes, and know how to ask partners about theirs
 - “Do you want to try...?”, “Can we try this instead”, “It's nice when we ___, do you want to do more of that?”, “I feel weird about that, let's stick to___, that's really fun”
 - Model boundary-setting, not rejection: “I love that you asked, I really like you and am so happy to be with you, I'm not ready to do that yet, but I'll let you know when I am”

How Can We Help?

They need to hear loud and clear:

- Porn sex is selfish, & divorced from connection between people
 - It reduces sex to a “thing” you “get” or “take” with little regard for your partner
 - Real life sex can be fantastic, but it can also be bad, & everything in between – porn shows (fake) enjoyment of almost anything
- Real men’s and women’s bodies look different than porn actors’ bodies
 - Adult human bodies are naturally hairy, especially genitalia
 - There are a variety of shapes to genitalia, especially in the teen years
 - Do not look to porn actors as guides for how naked bodies should look
- However you’ve felt about the porn you’ve seen is ok:
 - If you like it, it’s normal (reduce shame, provide corrective information)
 - If you don’t, it’s normal (praise assessment, equip w tools to maintain stance)

The Conversation

An attitude of curiosity is best, with the goal of:

- Finding out what they've seen
- Addressing concerns specific to their exposure

It's best to approach this as an ongoing DIALOGUE, not a one-time MONOLOGUE

Sample Conversation Starters: (from ThePornConversation.org)

- “Hey. Ya know, this is a bit embarrassing for me to bring up, but I’m a little worried about some of the stuff I’ve stumbled across on the internet recently, and I’m wondering if you’ve seen it too. When I go on the most normal sites to shop or on social media, I keep getting these pornographic pop ups and stuff. Does that happen on your phone too?”
- “You know when we watch movies and TV together, we see things that aren’t real, or things that are exaggerated and extreme? Well, that happens with sex too. People make movies and videos for entertainment that aren’t real. These can be quite confusing and so it’s a good idea not to watch them till you’re older—but if you come across these or anyone shows you anything that confuses you, tell me/us and we can talk about it.”

The Conversation: A General Guide

- Take a “no shame, no blame” attitude from the start so it’s a two-way conversation rather than a lecture.
- Acknowledge that what you are about to discuss may be difficult for both of you.
- Think about the message you want to convey before you start talking, but be ready to go where the conversation takes you — retaining the no judgment approach.
- Reference media or video games, but don’t denigrate them. Instead use them as a jumping off point to explore how your kid thinks the hyper-exaggerated violence and sex may influence other kids’ views of what healthy, mutually satisfying intimacy is.
- Remind kids that racy or not, both parties should enjoy sexual experiences and feel comfortable telling each other what they like or don’t like.

The Conversation

Open-ended questions are best:

- “What kinds of sexual images have you seen online?”
- “When people first see it, they can feel scared, or disgusted, or curious, or excited, or a combo of these – what did you think when you first saw this stuff?”
- “What kinds of sexual videos do you think other students watch?”
- “What do you think about those videos? Do you think they are good examples for how people have sex in real life?”
- “Why do you think businesses make porn?”
- “Why do you think they show the kinds of things they show?”
- “What makes the actors choose to be in these kinds of movies?”

Provide corrective information...

- “Did you know that... ?”
- Most people who watch porn don’t think about/know that...

...and/or the chance for them to look at information on their own

- Share resources on the list

The Conversation: In summary

Do:

Discuss: openly, without judgment or shaming (open-ended questions are best)

Encourage: understanding, critique, & analysis of what they are seeing

Teach: Provide the needed information & perspective to balance what they have seen

Check in periodically: dialogue not monologue, cover pieces at a time depending on their age and exposure levels

Also: if they come across videos that disturb them, ensure they know to stop watching and either flag and report them, or get you so you can do it. This includes porn, but also child abuse, beheadings, shootings, and other violence

Last Words from the Experts:

- **Alexander Rhodes:** Founder, NoFap.com
 - “Families need to educate their children about pornography – and they need to do so before the porn producers do, since right now minors are getting hooked on porn long before they are made aware of the potential negative effects.”
- **Maree Crabbe:** founder of It’sTimeWeTalked.com
 - “Tell them if you want to be a lazy, selfish lover, look at porn. If you want to be a lover where your partner says, ‘That was great,’ you won’t learn it from porn.”
- **Cindy Gallop:** founder of MakeLoveNotPorn.com
 - “Parents should want their teenagers to be generous lovers. Our parents bring us up to have good manners, a work ethic. But nobody brings us up to behave well in bed.”

Resource Guide

Will be shared by email - contains two pages of links to help with this:

- conversation tips
- articles
- books
- videos/TED talks

If I can help in other ways, ask me! 😊

- Email: meaganramsey@gmail.com