



# Pornography

18+

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**Most younger children will discover porn accidentally via search results or pop ups. This is something no parent wants to occur for their child, but a recent Australian study conducted in 2017 tells us that exposure to online porn is highly likely to occur.**

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Exposure to porn at a young age can have harmful effects on children. The most dominant is that accessible pornography contains messages about sex, gender and power that are problematic. It can be harmful to a teenager's sense of self, damaging to relationships and impact on their wellbeing.

Pornography is very accessible and can be discovered quite deliberately and easily. Often with younger children the discovery is made accidentally by a clumsy search, pop ups and video links. It's important to have safe search

settings on all devices to ensure the risk of accidental discoveries are reduced. There are other supports that can be put in place in the home to filter inappropriate content.

It is a vital conversation to have with your children. For younger children it is important to help them to understand what to do when they accidentally discover something online that makes them feel confused or uncomfortable and discuss ways to identify if something isn't right for them.



# Pornography

When having a discussion with your child about pornography it is helpful to place greater emphasis on what they thought and felt about it rather than them having to explain details of what they saw.

- Sometimes your body gives you a warning sign if you feel worried or scared about something you have seen. What are your warning signs?
- Do you know anyone else who has seen pornography online? Has anyone shown it to you?
- Talk about safe searching strategies and what to do if something is discovered accidentally. I.e. avoiding key words that may lead to explicit material.

## Lets talk about it! (for younger children)

- It's important to discuss with your child what to do if inappropriate things accidentally appear on their screens
- Ask your child if they have ever seen anything online that made them feel uncomfortable or confused? Have you ever seen anything on your screen that you knew wasn't appropriate for you?
- How do you know if you have seen something that is not appropriate for you? (playing on their mind or recurring thoughts, confusion, bad dreams, feeling uneasy, ashamed, embarrassed, guilty)

**For older children a more difficult yet equally important discussion needs to take place regarding the nature of pornography and it's unnatural portrayal of a healthy sexual relationship, it's harmful effects and addictive nature. You may have an opportunity to ask them about whether or not they are aware of any of their friends who have been affected by viewing porn. Conversations about pornographic content being inconsistent with healthy, loving relationships and often wanting to experiment with acts seen in pornographic material can lead to a range of physical and mental health risks and is a vital part of this discussion.**



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