

Have You Fallen Victim to This Rampant Deception Overwhelming the Country?

Access

It's easy to access pornography. You don't have to go to a shop; you just type what you want into your smartphone and get it. And **over 80 percent** of teenaged phone owners have smartphones.

Forget about filters and "safe searches." Children can get around them. Generation X had to learn how to use the internet. But the iGeneration grew up with it.

You don't even have to know what you're looking for. Just get in the ball park, then click, click, click the links and transport yourself to harder and harder content.

And it's so fast. There's no potential cooling-off period, no waiting until morning. Any time of day, any place on earth; if you've got an itch, scratch it.

You can have anything you want.

Cost

You don't have to pay for it. There's so much in front of the paywall. All you need is an internet connection.

You can even get past the paywall if you know where to look. People upload the content to huge video sharing sites (like YouTube, but for pornography) so you can get all the content you want, and you don't have to pay. There's no cost.

Or just turn on your TV late at night and watch the 'adult'

channels. It's free.

You can have anything you want, and there's no cost.

Privacy

No one will see you. You can do it all in private.

It's impossible to track who is watching what. And everyone's doing it, even if they don't talk about it. Your parents don't know what you're watching, and neither do your friends. You can be anonymous.

Ashamed of your past? Delete it with one click. Or make sure your actions are never recorded in the first place. Welcome to "private" browsing.

You can have anything you want, and there's no cost, and no one will ever know.

That's the promise, at least.

The Scale of the Crisis

Pornography is easier to access, easier to afford and easier to hide than it has ever been. And children are viewing it.

Last June some academics did a **study** looking at how pornography affects children. They spoke to 1,001 children aged 11-16. The NSPCC commissioned it.

The study found that by age 15, children were more likely than not to have seen pornography. 65 percent of 15-16-year-olds say they have seen it.

When they first see it, there is a mixture of reactions. Forty-one percent of the children in the study reported curiosity, 27 percent shock, and 24 percent confusion.

But when they view it repeatedly, they are desensitized. Thirty percent are curious, 8 percent shocked and 4 percent confused.

Fifty-three percent of boys think pornography is realistic, and 44 percent of boys and 29 percent of girls say they want to act out things they have seen in online pornography.

In March, **another study** was published showing that men who watch pornography are less satisfied in their relationships.

Broken Promises

These days, everything is measured by the standard of “empirical evidence.” But when dealing with a public health crisis, empirical evidence always arrives too late to the party. It’s an autopsy. The disaster has already happened, and the evidence simply states in cold numbers the mess that real people have been dealing with for years.

It’s a tragedy that these studies and inquiries are necessary to effect change in policy or social attitudes. The science is telling us that children’s exposure to pornography is a disaster. But we have always known this.

Pornography says you can have anything you want. But then you get addicted, and you can’t have anything else. It promises freedom, but gives you slavery.

Pornography says there is no cost. But the reality is it will cost you dearly. It will mess up your relationships and twist your view of sex. It will make you think violence and promiscuity are normal. It will cripple you with guilt.

Pornography says no one will ever know. But it will leave you with no one to help you. It will enslave you and silence you so that you cannot escape its grip. It will isolate you so that you hide from the people you love the most.

It promises so much, but underneath the bait there is a hook. And this is the root of the crisis. Not the internet, or pornography's availability or lack of education, but the fact that human beings love to swallow lies.

Unless we start here, we'll continue to reap the consequences and write post-mortem studies about it. {eoa}