

Gen XXX: Teens Addicted in a World Awash in Porn

When it comes to pornography, no one is immune. It affects men and women of all ages.

Today, teenagers are bombarded with these images like never before through the Internet. They're growing up in a world awash in X-rated material.

It's a \$97 billion business every year, making more than top tech companies Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, Netflix, eBay, Google, and Yahoo combined.

Roughly 12 percent of the world's websites, 4.2 million of them, offer the illicit material. About 2.5 billion pornographic emails whiz through cyberspace everyday—a whopping 8 percent of all the world's daily emails.

Possibly most astounding of all, 67 percent of men and 49 percent of women now say porn is acceptable.

The Porn Generation

As for young people, the average age they first see it is now 11 years old. Ninety percent of those 8 to 16 years old say they've viewed it online.

Many are now becoming addicted. It's an addiction that could ruin their future lives.

Former addict C.J. Hitz, from Colorado Springs, Colo., was first exposed to porn magazines at age 8, and it led to years of addiction to pornography.

"Our society is just saturated with it," Hitz, author of *Forgiveness Formula*, told CBN News. "Today's young generation receives more temptation per second than any other generation

in the history of mankind.”

Every second, 28,258 people are looking at X-rated material online. Every second, people are spending \$3,075 on such material.

“Before, pornography was like this dirty, secretive, dark subculture,” Aubrey Terry, with the Human Trafficking Task Force in Southern Colorado, said.

She blames the Internet for much of the present X-rated epidemic.

“Now it’s accessible to everyone. Now it’s everyday life,” she said.

Sex Trafficking

Terry knows the dark side of this world. Her sister was trafficked sexually. She herself was first exposed to pornography by a grandfather and an uncle who abused her sexually from when she was 2 years old till she was rescued from them at age 9.

Her first memory: “Having a bottle and being exposed to that kind of stuff,” she said.

Hitz’s wife, Shelley, co-authored the new book *A Christian Woman’s Guide to Breaking Free from Pornography*. She herself was once an addict and now admits it in talks she gives around the country.

She told CBN News that in today’s world of smart phones and handheld computers, young people are often using their own bodies in self-made pornography.

“I’ll have teenagers confess to me that they have their phones in the bed. And they’re sexting,” she said. “Sending pictures of themselves to others. They’re sending sexually graphic messages.”

Porn in the Church

This hyper-sexualization is hitting just as hard inside the Church as out.

Youth minister Andy Braner, author of the book *Alone: Finding Connection in a Lonely World*, learned that disturbing truth after criticizing a friend for offering porn channels at his Florida hotel chain.

“And he goes, ‘Well, to be honest with you, you know who the biggest consumer of this pornography is?’” Braner remembers his friend asking. “And I’m like, ‘What?’ And he named a certain denomination. And he said, ‘When they do their convention down here, my sales in pornography go through the roof.’”

When Promise Keepers conventions would come to cities, hotels in those towns would often see the use of their X-rated channels going up.

Braner ministers to tens of thousands of Christian teens on the road and at a youth camp he leads near Durango, Colo.

“Ninety percent of the kids who come to us, who come from Christian families that are interested in Christian values, that are learning about Christian worldview, 90 percent of those are deeply addicted to pornography,” he said.

Christian Girls ‘Sexting’

As Shelley Hitz did research for her book on this addiction, she surveyed Christian women and girls and was shocked to find how many were producing their own porn by sexting.

“They’re Christian girls,” she emphasized. “Twenty-one percent admitted to sending a naked photo of themselves to someone else through their cellphone.”

Aubrey Terry pointed out in today’s permissive culture, teen

girls are often pressured into sexting by young men.

"It's almost like, 'You don't want to send me that picture? Why? Everyone else does. I asked your friend. She sent it,'" she said.

And Shelley said her research showed many young women use sexting now to lure teen boys.

"I'm finding a lot of parents who are subsidizing smartphones for their kids and saying 'Here you go, have fun,'" Braner said. "They don't understand what they've just given their kids is a portal to whatever they want. And it's unbridled, just Wild Wild West, Internet stuff."

How Porn Addiction Works

In such a world, where pornography is used and consumed so commonly, it's easy to see why so many young people are becoming addicted. This addiction can be just as bad as the hardest drugs.

The group Fight the New Drug presents a video in talks at schools and churches and on their website about how this addiction comes about.

It shows the brain releasing addictive levels of pleasurable chemicals, like dopamine and oxytocin, when a person sexually satisfies themselves with porn.

Over time, synaptic paths in the brain call out for more and more of this satisfaction.

"A kid who's addicted to pornography or starts looking at pornography at 13, 14, 15 years old begins this synaptical connection in the brain," Braner stated. "It's like a muscle. It's like working out. It becomes stronger the more you work it."

The addicted brain then develops stronger cravings for harder

stuff to get the same level of satisfaction.

Sounding the Alarm

And nowadays, every kind of hard-core material is right there waiting on the Internet.

The Christian Witherspoon Institute tried to sound the alarm on this by bringing experts in the effects of porn addiction together for a series of lectures that can be seen at [.](#)

One of them, marriage and family therapist Jill Manning, pointed out, “A teen can access today hard-core material that 15 years ago a seasoned purveyor of pornography would have had a hard time to acquire.”

Manning related a conversation she had with a retired FBI agent who’d worked in the area of obscenity.

He told her, “The worst of the worst is online” – an online world accessible to almost all young people today.

“When they dial up pornography, it’s not ‘Playboy,’” Braner said of today’s teens. “They can dial up whatever word they want to use in a Google search. And if you have a chance to do this – which I wouldn’t recommend – you’ll see that it just gets nastier and nastier and nastier.”

And in her Witherspoon Institute lecture, Manning asked, “When is a human being ready to process a rape scene, torture, bestiality, incest, child pornography?”

Objectifying Women

It’s ruining the way many young men now look at women.

“There’s no question now a woman is something of conquest,” Braner said.

“We’re missing her spirituality. We’re missing her beauty.

We're missing her strengths because we're only desiring one piece," Terry said.

"They are more likely to have stronger notions of women as objects," Manning said of heavy porn-users. "This association is particularly strong with audio-visual formats, which is interesting because we know that teenagers have the most access through television and Internet."

Studies show it's making many men and women almost incapable of enjoying sex with their real-life partners.

Pennsylvania psychologist Mary Anne Layden has studied porn addicts for years.

"If they had to choose between an actual sex partner who is in the bed and waiting for them, and going online, they'd go online," she said.

"There is an increased risk of separation and divorce," Manning said. "There's less sensitivity in their marriages. There's decreased sexual satisfaction and decreased sexual relations."

So the teens of today in a world where pornography is available almost anywhere, anytime, need to realize they may be risking their own future marriages.

The Role of Parents

Braner said parents can have a huge role in helping their children avoid all this trouble. But it has to be more than just putting filters on their kids' computers because today's tech-savvy teens can often work right around those.

"I talked to a kid last week," Braner told CBN News. "And he says, 'Filter schmilter. I can get around that. I just Google it in French. And all of a sudden the filters that are exposed to the English language don't pick up on the French words.'"

"I think parents need to talk to their kids early and often about sexuality," he recommended.

He has four kids at home and said he warns them about the sexual dangers of the Internet all the time.

Because no matter how much parents want to guard their children, Braner warned, the kids are going to hear about sex.

"I want my kids to understand the truth," he said. "And I want it to come from me."