

Simple Steps to Protect Your Child from Pornography

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Have a Family Technology Plan in Place

1. Teach children about appropriate behavior online. (See resources below)
2. Decide where, when, and what technology may be used.
3. Where: Decide together where tech needs to be used, charged, and stored for the night.
4. When: Decide how much time or what time of day children may be on tech.
5. What: Decide what type of technology will be allowed based on family values and what parental controls are required for the privilege of using tech.
6. Create a family contract including rules regarding device ownership and use as well as consequences for when a rule is broken and/or rewards for obedience. Include a spot for signatures and dates.
7. Continue to discuss family tech concerns and needs. Make adjustments to the family contract as necessary to meet the needs of a changing world and a growing family.

Resources for Raising Digitally Responsible Children

1. 3 Ways to Mentor Responsible Digital Kids
<https://protectyoungminds.org/2017/01/26/mentor-digital-kids/>
2. Safe Online Surfing, an interactive game designed for students and teachers
<https://sos.fbi.gov/>
3. Install filtering software <https://endsexualexploitation.org/filtering-software/>

4 Steps for Children When They Encounter Pornography

1. Limit the time you see an inappropriate image: Shut your eyes, cover the screen, turn off the device, turn away; do whatever can be done to limit the time you actually see the images.
2. Call it like it is: Say out loud, whether as a whisper or a shout, or in your head: “That is Pornography” or “That is a bad picture.”
3. Go tell a trusted adult. They will help you know what to do.
4. Choose an activity that will distract your brain: Sing a song, finish homework, do a chore, serve a family member, etc.

Resources for Teaching Children About Pornography

1. Parents should preview all sites to ensure alignment with family values and age appropriate content.
2. “Good Pictures and Bad Pictures” is my favorite book for teaching young children about this issue. While it is not free, it is worth the price <https://protectyoungminds.org/good-pictures-bad-pictures/>

3. Focus on the Family has compiled a helpful article series titled “When Children View Pornography.” <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/love-and-sex/how-to-confront-children-using-pornography> This site includes introductory articles like, how to respond to your children about porn, advice for parents of teen porn addicts and preventing future use. You can find these articles here <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/sexuality/>
4. As Walt Mueller points out, access to pornography has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. As a parent, it's important to understand how this impacts your child. This primer includes info on what pornography is, what drives pornography addiction, its effect on teens and children, the signs of addiction, and what to do if you find out your child has been viewing pornography https://digitalkidsinitiative.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Parent_Primer_Internet_Pornography-Revised-September-2016.pdf

Helping Children and Youth Overcome Porn Habits

1. There is hope. You are not the first parent to face this issue. You won't be the last. You are not alone. With a few simple clicks, you can gain access to resources, tools, and support groups geared towards helping you understand what your child is going through and helping your family heal.
2. Keep calm. Even though you may feel fear, anger, or guilt, do not “react” in front of your child. Your initial response will determine how your child approaches you regarding this issue in the future, so you want to be sure you have the help of the Lord. Remember who the enemy is: Porn is the enemy; Not your child.
3. Collect your thoughts, if needed. Tell your child you love them and that you want to talk with them about this issue but that you need to take a few minutes to think. Say a prayer, read scripture, talk to your spouse, do what you need to in order to keep calm and feel the Lord's loving guidance.
4. Make a plan of action. Resources, provided below, offer insights and suggestions as to where to begin on your journey towards healing. These ideas are created by professionals and those who understand porn addiction. Seek the guidance of a loving Heavenly Father in deciding which strategies will best help your child and your family.
5. This article provides information and useful tips for parents who have recently discovered that a child or youth has seen or is viewing pornography <https://protectyoungminds.org/heal/>
6. This site provides free material, reading and apps, including the Fortify program, that help parents and youth fight porn addiction: <https://fightthenewdrug.org/get-help/>
7. NCSE offers a list of programs and groups that have been recommended to them for individuals who are struggling with pornography addiction. These programs are not endorsed, by NCSE or Nebraska Family Alliance. Learn more here <https://endsexualexploitation.org/resources-struggling/>