

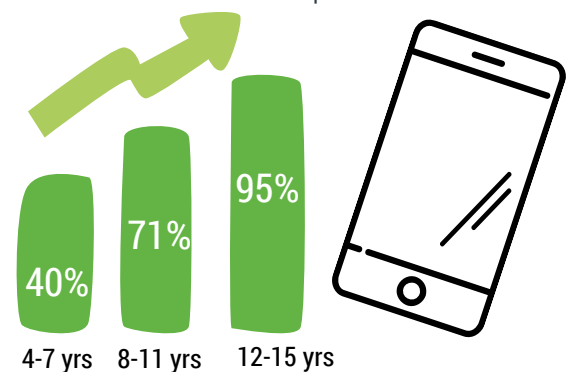
PORN ACCESSIBILITY AND ITS HARMS

Porn is accessible through any electronic device with internet access. The more portable the device, the more difficult it is to monitor and manage a child or young person's use.

Internationally, it is estimated that 1 in 3 internet users are under 18.



Estimated number of children who have access to a smartphone or tablet:



By age 13, around 70% of boys and 25% of girls have seen online porn.

Porn can be accidentally or deliberately viewed through sources such as:

- Google images
- Apps and chat rooms
- Peers or siblings
- Gaming
- Social media
- Youtube and Youtube kids
- Pop-ups
- Music videos
- Books/Kindle
- Airdrops, hotspots, emails
- Chat forums such as Reddit

OF THOSE WHO USE INTERNET CONNECTED DEVICES, MANY HAVE NO MONITORING ...



16% of 4-7 year olds
40% of 8-11 year olds
73% of 12-15 year olds



of students under the age of 8 years had attempted to access some type of online porn in the previous 6 months (according to a filtering company in 2019). This includes accidentally accessing porn through banners and pop-ups depicting sexually explicit images or videos.

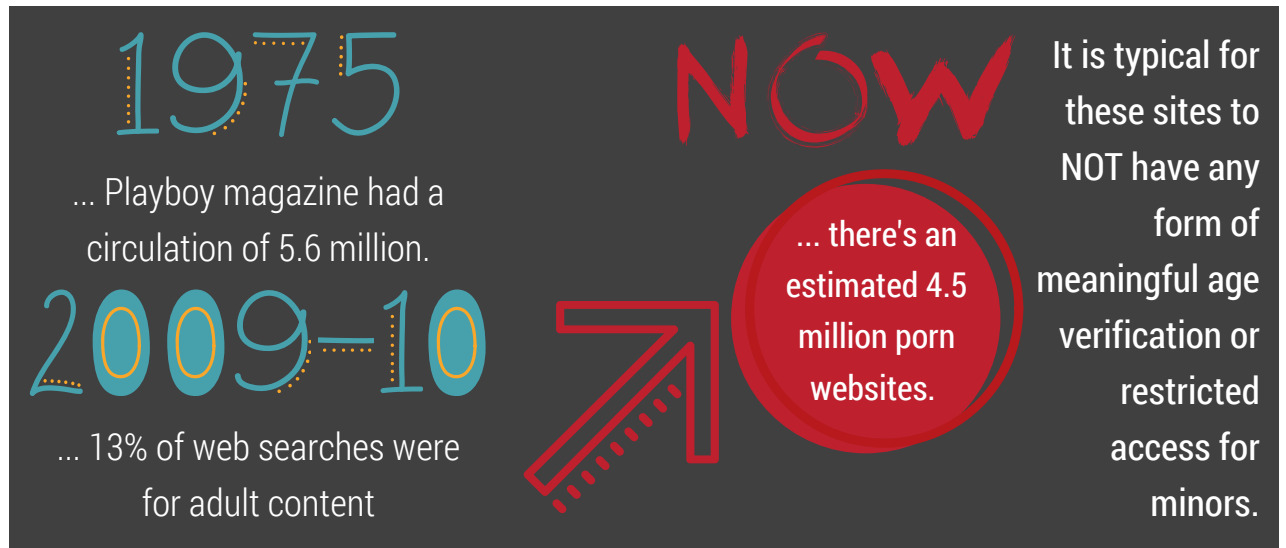


By age 13, almost 70% of boys and 25% of girls have seen online porn.



Around 15% of all teens have received an image or video of someone nude or nearly nude that they did not ask for.

PORN CAN ALSO BE ACCESSED THROUGH PORN SITES AND OTHER ADULT PLATFORMS SUCH AS PORNHUB, REDTUBE, BRAZZERS, X-VIDEOS AND MORE.



HOW CAN PORN HARM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

➔ A 2019 UK study revealed that children as young as seven are seeing aggressive, violent or degrading porn online (accidentally or deliberately).

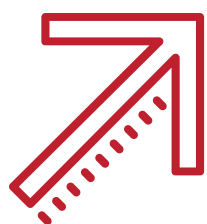
➔ Porn can influence the sexual scripts (or stories about sex) that young people believe—it promotes gender inequality and men's power over women rather than messages about what women may find pleasurable.

➔ Porn can also contribute to a heightened risk of grooming; child-on-child sexual abuse; sexual harassment and abuse—online and offline; the normalisation of sexting (sending and receiving explicit images); mental health concerns and addiction; porn-induced erectile dysfunction and arousal disorders; and escalation to extreme content.

According to the Australian Institute of Family Studies, ease of access to online porn has raised concerns about the impacts it can have on children and young people's:

- knowledge of, and attitudes to, sex;
- sexual behaviours and practices;
- attitudes and behaviours regarding gender equality;
- behaviours and practices within their own intimate, sexual or romantic relationships; and
- risk of experiencing or perpetrating sexual violence.

IN THE LAST DECADE, RESEARCH CONDUCTED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE HIGHLIGHTS INCREASES IN:



- Normalised sexting, sending nudes or pressuring others into sending nudes.
- Cases of young people recreating the violent, aggressive or degrading acts viewed in porn with sexual partners.
- Anxiety and self-esteem issues surrounding sex and body image.
- Compulsive sexual behaviours and porn-induced erectile dysfunction.

REGULAR ACCESS TO PORN CAN ALSO IMPACT MENTAL HEALTH

Regular porn viewing, particularly throughout childhood and adolescence, can impact mental health and lead to compulsive sexual behaviour disorder—often referred to as porn addiction.



Intentional exposure appears to be associated with overall negative psychological well-being. Regular porn use can lead to difficulties with concentration and academic performance and contribute to depressive symptoms, diminished life satisfaction and higher levels of sexually permissive attitudes. On the more extreme side, porn viewers may become fixated on sourcing sexual materials that are more and more violent, including illegal content that would not have originally appealed to them.

The Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation recommends that children and young people of all ages need the support, guidance and education of adults to stay safe online.

- Those of primary school age should always be overseen by an adult when online.
- Those in early teenage years should have their online activity monitored and supervised closely by an adult.
- Those in older teenage years should be educated about what to do to stay safe when they are online.
- Those with learning or other disabilities may require different levels of supervision and support based on their needs.

Parents, you can find help to safeguard kids for digital, relational, emotional and mental wellbeing by downloading our free kids & screens guide—a measured & balanced parenting approach for every age and stage. Find this and other recommended resources on our website: [Parent Help 101](#).



**YOUTH WELLBEING
PROJECT**

Educating for tricky conversations

The best way to promote safe & healthy relationships free from sexualised harms is through research-based education—schools partnering with parents. [Ask us how.](#)



Find all references and more fact sheets at youthwellbeingproject.com.au/fact-sheets