

Pornography Public Health Resolution

Resolution No.

Recognizing and finding that pornography is a public health crisis leading to a broad spectrum of individual and public health impacts and societal harms.

Pornography is creating a public health crisis and therefore its harms are beyond the capability of the individual to address alone. Rather, efforts to prevent pornography exposure and addiction, to educate individuals and families concerning its harms, and to develop recovery programs must be addressed systemically in ways that hold broader influences accountable in order to counter the sexually toxic environment it perpetuates.

Pornography is contributing to the hyper-sexualization of teens,ⁱ and even prepubescent children,ⁱⁱ in our society. Due to the advances in technology and the universal availability of the Internet, young children are exposed to what used to be referred to as hardcore (now mainstream) pornography at an alarming rate, with 27% of older millennials (age 25-30) reporting that they first viewed pornography before puberty.ⁱⁱⁱ This is leading to low self-esteem and eating disorders,^{iv} an increase in problematic sexual activity at younger ages,^v and an increased desire to engage in risky sexual behavior as young adolescents.^{vi}

Additionally, children and youth are exposed to pornography that often times serves as their sex education and shapes their sexual templates.^{vii} Because pornography treats women as objects,^{viii} and commodities for the viewer's use, it teaches girls they are to be used and boys to be users^{ix}.

Pornography normalizes violence and abuse of women and children.^x Pornography treats women and children as objects^{xi} and often depicts rape and abuse as if it were harmless.^{xii} Moreover, pornography equates violence towards women and children with sex^{xiii} and pain with pleasure^{xiv} which increases the demand for sex trafficking, prostitution, and child sexual abuse images/child pornography.^{xv}

Pornography has potential detrimental effects on the user such as: emotional, mental^{xvi} and medical illnesses,^{xvii} shaping deviant sexual arousal,^{xviii} difficulty forming or maintaining intimate relationships,^{xix} brain development and functioning,^{xx} and problematic or harmful sexual behaviors,^{xxi} and addiction.^{xxii}

Furthermore, recent research indicates that pornography is potentially biologically addictive which means the user requires more novelty, which is often more shocking material, in order to be satisfied.^{xxiii} This has led to increasing themes of risky sexual behaviors, extreme degradation, violence, and child sexual abuse images/child pornography.^{xxiv}

Pornography use has a detrimental effect on the family as it is linked to lessening desire in young men to marry,^{xxv} dissatisfaction in marriage,^{xxvi} and infidelity.^{xxvii}

In recognizing the public health crisis created by pornography the state of _____ is acknowledging the need for education, prevention, research and policy change at the community and societal level in order to address the epidemic that is harming the people of our state and our country as a whole.

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ⁱⁱ Marty Machia & Sharon Lamb, *Sexualized Innocence: Effects of Magazine Ads Portraying Adult Women as Sexy Little Girls*, 21 JOURNAL OF MEDIA PSYCHOLOGY, 15-24 (2009); Dennis Howitt & Kerry Sheldon, *The Role of Cognitive Distortions in Paedophilic Offending: Internet and Contact Offenders Compared*, 13 PSYCHOLOGY, CRIME & LAW, 469-486 (2007).

ⁱⁱⁱ Barna Group, *The Porn Phenomenon: A Comprehensive New Survey on Americans, the Church, and Pornography*, (forthcoming April 2016), <https://www.barna.org/blog/culture-media/barna-group/porn-press-conference#.VrS9OrSJndl>.

^{iv} Amy E. Bonomi, Julianna M. Nemeth, Lauren E. Attenburger, Melissa Anderson, Anastasia Snyder & Irma Dotto, *Fiction or Not? Fifty Shades is Associated with Health Risks in Adolescent and Young Adult Females*, 23 JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S HEALTH 720-728 (2014).

^v Gail Dines, lecture at the Pornography: A Public Health Crisis U.S. Capitol Symposium: Today's Pornography and the Crisis of Violence Against Women and Children (July 14, 2015); Joris Van Ouystel, Koen Ponnet, & Michael Walrave, *The Associations between Adolescents' Consumption of Pornography and Music videos and Their Sexting Behavior*, 17 CYBERPSYCHOLOGY, BEHAVIOR, AND SOCIAL NETWORKING 772-778 (December 9, 2014); Cicely Marston & Ruth Lewis, *Anal Heterosex among Young People and Implications for Health Promotion: A Qualitative Study in the UK*, 4 SEXUAL HEALTH 1-6 (2014); Eileen M. Alexy, Ann W. Burgess, & Robert A. Prentky, *Pornography Use as a Risk Marker for an Aggressive Pattern of Behavior among Sexually Reactive Children and Adolescents*, 14 JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC NURSES ASSOCIATION 442-456 (2009); Carol J. Pardun, Kelly Ladin L'Engle & Jane D. Brown, *Linking Exposure to Outcomes: Early Adolescents' Consumption of Sexual Content in Six Media*, 8 MASS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY 75-91 (2005).

^{vi} Gail Dines, lecture at the Pornography: A Public Health Crisis U.S. Capitol Symposium: Today's Pornography and the Crisis of Violence Against Women and Children (July 14, 2015); Cicely Marston & Ruth Lewis, *Anal Heterosex among Young*

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