

# Pornography Literacy for Adolescents

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The logo for Boston University, featuring the text "BOSTON UNIVERSITY" in white serif font on a red rectangular background, which is centered within a larger, dark blue, scalloped-edged circular seal.

BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY

The logo for the Boston Public Health Commission, featuring the text "BOSTON PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION" in white serif font, stacked vertically, above a gold shield containing a white cross. The entire logo is centered within a larger, dark blue, scalloped-edged circular seal.

BOSTON  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH  
COMMISSION



# START STRONG



## Healthy Relationships

Each relationship is unique, but healthy ones have a few things in common such as trust, support, respect, and equality.



## Violence Prevention

Gain insight into warning signs in a relationship, learn how to help a friend, and activities to identify unhealthy behavior.



## Media Literacy

Visual media can have an influence on our health and the health of relationships, it is especially important be a critical viewer.



## Original Content

Stream our new podcast, "[Real Love Real Talk](#)", hosted by Start Strong Peer Leaders and staff, or watch "[The Halls](#)" web series.

TheHallsBoston.com



# WHO'S BEEN LISTENING?

The New York Times Magazine



**NACCHO**

National Association of County & City Health Officials



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



**CNN**



# Research Informing our Work

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**What is pornography?**

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**How widespread is pornography use?**

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**When people say pornography is a public health crisis, what do they mean?**

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**Has the content of pornography changed over time—is it more violent?**

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**Is it true that people escalate to “harder and harder” pornography?  
(content progression)**

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**Is it possible to become addicted to pornography?**

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**What is feminist pornography?**

**Pornographies**

**Magazines**

**Literature**

**Films**

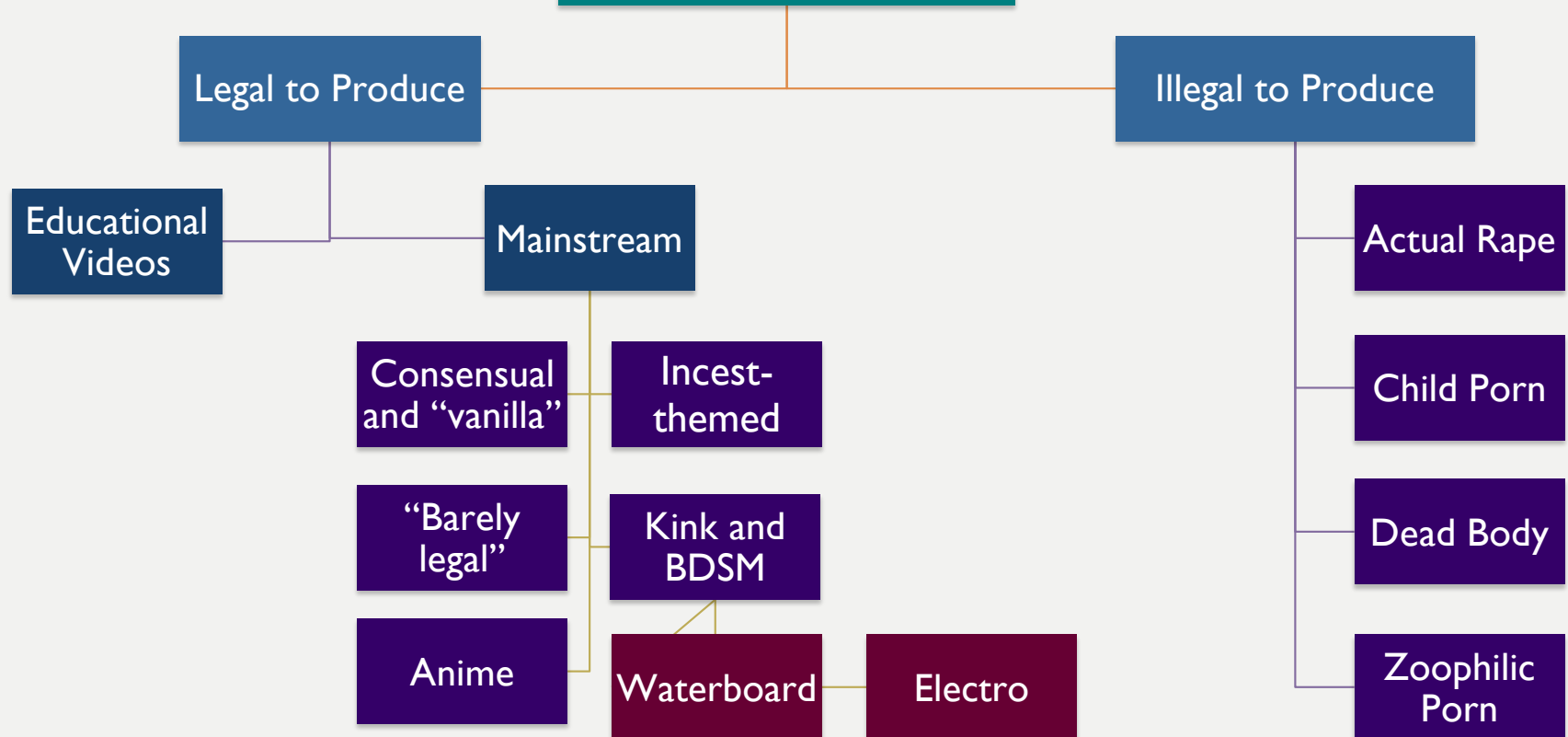
**TV Shows**

**Online Videos**

**Amateur**

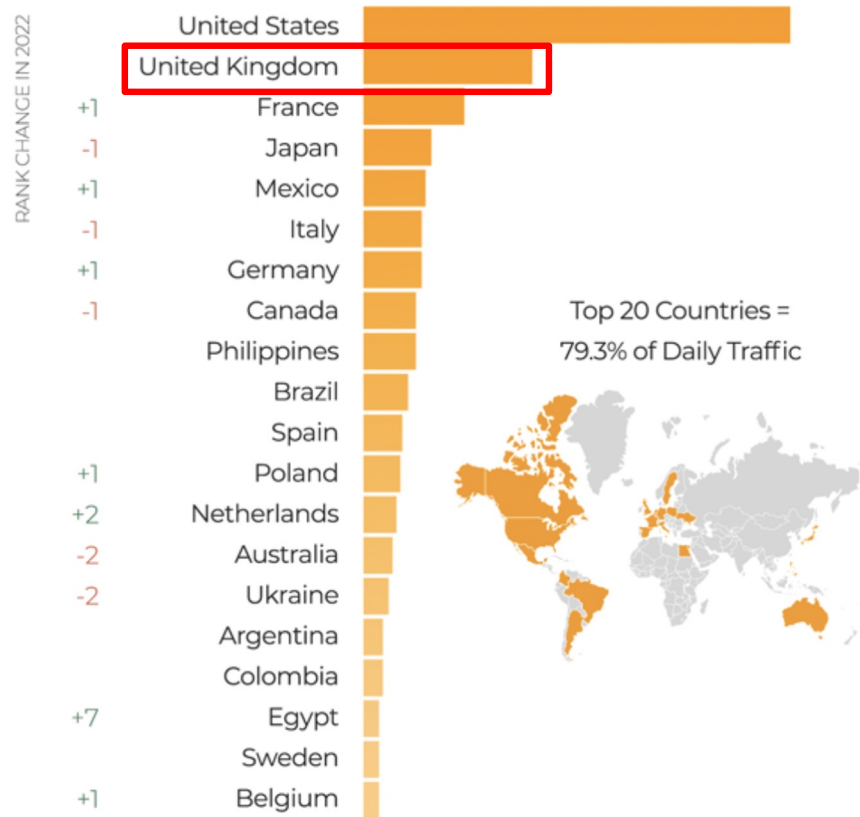
**Professional**

# Pornographies

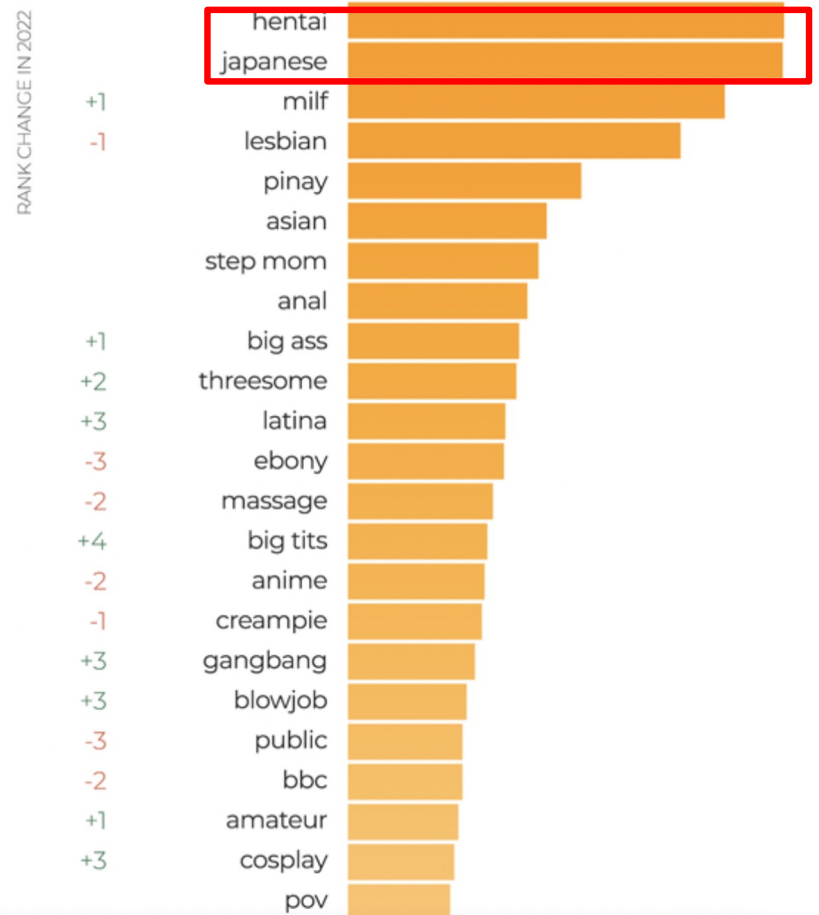




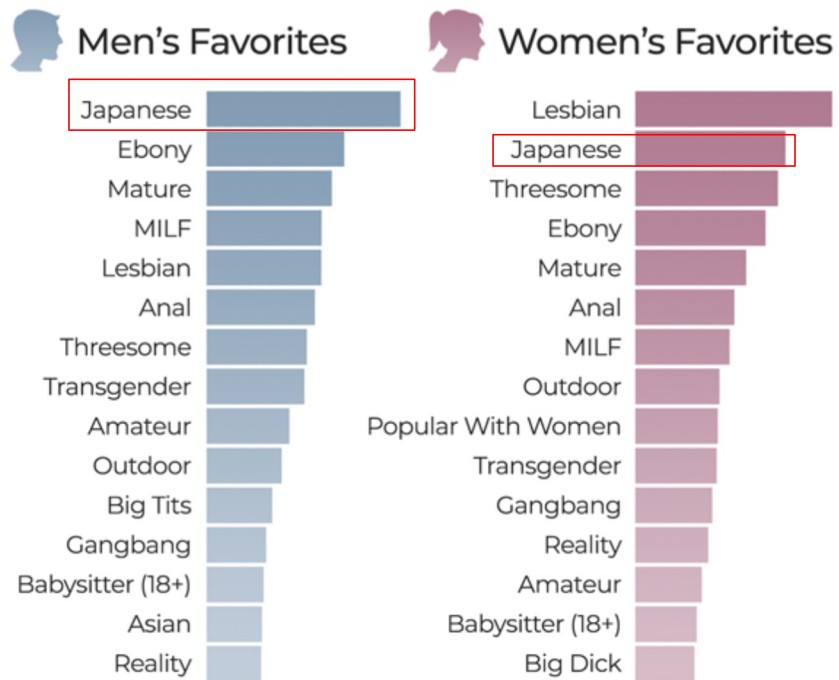
### Top 20 Countries by Traffic



### Most Searched for Terms of 2022



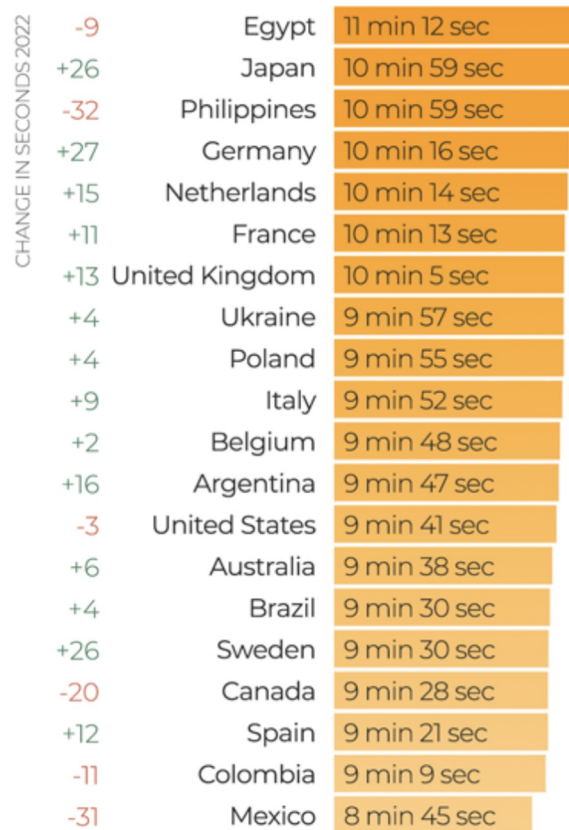
### Most Viewed Categories by Gender



### Viewed More by Women Compared to Men



### Time Spent Per Visit



**9 min 54 sec**

Average Visit Duration Worldwide

**-1 sec**

Decrease in 2022

#### Female Visitors

**+6 sec**

Compared to Male Visitors

#### Difference by Age

-58s	18 - 24
-16s	25 - 34
+14s	35 - 44
+44s	45 - 54
+62s	54 - 64
+73s	65+

## The Searches That Defined 2022

### #1 REALITY

The Reality category grew by +169% while "real homemade" searches grew by +179% worldwide and +310% in the U.S.

### 2 GENDER

The Transgender category grew by +75% to become the 7th most popular worldwide, and the #1 category in Brazil.

### 3 GROUP SEX

The Threesome category grew by +34% to become the 4th most popular worldwide, as well as a +133% gain for Orgy.

### 4 OUTDOORS

The Outdoor category grew by +121% to join the Top 10 worldwide. "Travel" searches grew +32% and "camping" +62%.

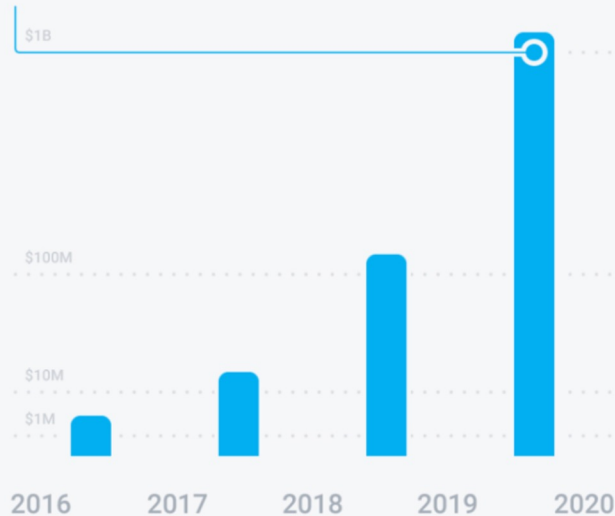
### 5 POSITIONS

"Scissoring" grew by +96% worldwide and +151% in the U.S.

Influence of Only Fans

MAY 14 2020

## First \$1 Billion creator payouts



## Statistics

The strongest engagement stats on social media!

To date, OnlyFans has paid out over \$3 billion in creator earnings and established itself as the go-to platform for over 100 million registered users and over 1 million creators worldwide.

## Company

Founded  
**2016**

Status  
**Private**

Paid out annually to creators  
**\$5,000,000,000+**

Owner  
**Fenix International Limited**

Employees  
**200**

Content creators  
**1,500,000+**

CEO  
**Amrapali "Ami" Gan**

Registered users  
**150,000,000+**



## Consequences of porn use for some adolescents

Negative attitudes towards women

View women as sex objects

Depression

Anxiety

Reduced self-esteem

Reduced well-being

Performative rather than authentic sex

Less satisfaction during sex

Preoccupation with sex

Earlier age of first sex

Non-condom use

Unhealthy dating relationships

Sexual aggression

Concern about one's body not being good enough

# POTENTIAL BENEFITS OR POSITIVE CORRELATES OF PORNOGRAPHY USE

## Youth

Body acceptance

Sexual orientation acceptance (McCormack, 2017)

Increased self esteem

Sexual techniques

## Adults

More egalitarian attitudes\*

More favorable attitudes towards birth control

Ability to articulate what you want during sex


Increased intimacy with partners

Tension relief

\*Kohut, T., Baer, J. L., & Watts, B. (2016). Is pornography really about “making hate to women”? Pornography users hold more gender egalitarian attitudes than nonusers in a representative American sample. *Journal of Sex Research*, 53(1), 1–11. doi:10.1080/00224499.2015.1023427

# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION

## A Pornography Literacy Class for Youth: Results of a Feasibility and Efficacy Pilot Study

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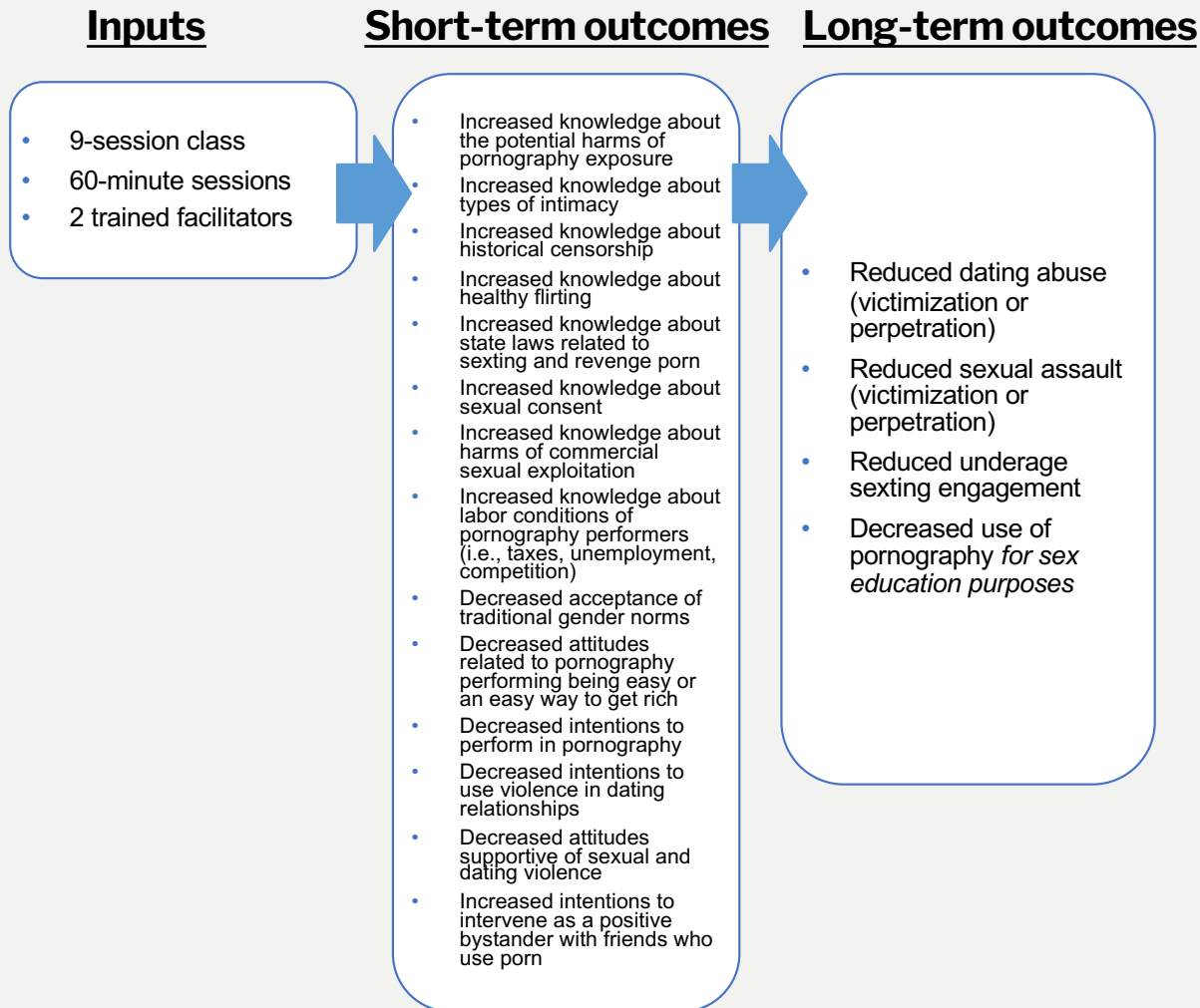
### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the preliminary efficacy of a media literacy curriculum focused on pornography among a sample of U.S.-based, urban-residing youth. Participants were 24 youth between the ages of 15–24 years old, although 65% were 17–18 years old. The sample was 43% female, 43% male, 9% transgender, 52% Black, 22% Hispanic, 13% other race, 64% heterosexual, 14% gay, lesbian or bisexual, and 18% other sexual orientation. Participants completed a pre-test prior to the first class session and a post-test after the fifth and final session. Pornography-related knowledge increased from pre- to post-test. A change in the anticipated direction was observed for some pornography-related attitudes, and some pornography-related behavioral intentions. Pornography-related behavior (e.g., seeking out pornography for the first time) did not change from pre- to post-test. The novelty of these findings are two-fold. First, the study demonstrated that it is feasible to implement a pornography literacy curriculum in a nonschool setting, and second, that this particular curriculum may have had some positive impact.

### KEYWORDS

Pornography; sexually explicit media; media literacy; sex education

## The Truth About Pornography: A logic model





**Table 2.** Comparison of mean average agreement score with pornography-related attitude and behavioral intention statements (pre- vs. post-test)<sup>†</sup>.

	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	t-test p-value
<b>Attitudes</b>			
● (1) Being in professional pornography is a good way to make a lot of money	2.6 (1.1)	1.5 (0.9)	<0.01**
(2) If my best friend watched pornography every day, I'd be fine with it	3.3 (0.6)	3.4 (1.0)	0.26
(3) If my boyfriend/girlfriend wanted me to watch pornography with them, I'd be fine with it	2.8 (1.0)	2.9 (1.2)	0.37
(4) If I found out that my boyfriend/girlfriend watches pornography without me, I'd be fine with it	3.5 (0.8)	3.4 (0.9)	0.33
● (5) Pornography is a good way for young people to learn about sex	2.2 (0.9)	1.6 (0.8)	0.01**
● (6) Pornography is harmless	2.3 (1.0)	1.9 (0.9)	0.08*
(7) Pornography is going to exist no matter what, so we might as well get used to it	3.0 (0.9)	2.7 (0.9)	0.17
● (8) Calling a girl "nasty" or "slut" during sex is something everyone does	1.6 (0.8)	1.2 (0.4)	0.03**
● (9) Most people like to be slapped, spanked, or have their hair pulled during sex	2.1 (1.0)	1.5 (0.7)	0.01**
(10) Pornography is realistic	2.0 (1.1)	1.1 (0.3)	<0.01**
(11) A lot of people think it is sexy when a girl cries, chokes, gags, or vomits during sex	1.7 (0.9)	1.8 (1.0)	0.37
● (12) Watching pornography makes me want to try what I see	2.3 (1.0)	1.9 (0.9)	0.08*
● (13) Pornography promotes unhealthy expectations of male and female sexuality	3.1 (1.1)	3.6 (0.9)	0.05**
(14) Most pornography helps show people consensual behavior	1.8 (0.7)	1.6 (0.9)	0.22
(15) One good thing about pornography is that curious people can see a range of sexual behavior	2.9 (0.9)	2.6 (1.0)	0.22
<b>Behavioral intentions</b>			
(1) I will probably watch pornography once a week or more often when I'm an adult	2.2 (1.2)	2.3 (1.0)	0.43
(2) It is my plan to never watch pornography	1.8 (0.8)	2.0 (1.1)	0.22
(3) If my boyfriend/girlfriend asks me to imitate things that they first saw in pornography, I will always say no	2.1 (0.8)	2.3 (0.9)	0.25

# REFLECTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS



<https://youtu.be/3cg|HHWYuK0>

# Present Day Youth

**Porn is very accessible, normalized, and there's a fetishization aspect to it.**

- On **snapchat** there are people who sell pics and videos and post teasers to make people buy their content
- Feels like it is **very normalized** especially b/c boys make jokes about it and think it's funny.
- **Boys in middle school would talk about their favorite porn stars**, little kids would post "mood" pictures of people having sex.
- There's a lot of **revenge porn**
- Non-sexual pictures of people that they'll get from someone's Instagram and say that they're a "smoochie...**it's like exposing but not using nudes.**
- On IG there are **sex bots liking posts**
- If you want a **sugar daddy** then you can partner with people on only-fans

# Adults Can Help and Harm

**A consequence that matches the action in order to reduce rape culture in the school space.**

- Wants people to **talk more about how adults watch the teen porn category** or have that kind of preference. A lot of times it **is group mentality**. No one points out that it's wrong. **There needs to be more accountability/more action**
- Wants **more education** in school but to a certain extent. Some schools don't really teach it a lot. **As a younger generation, learning the basic would help a lot.**
- **Teachers** don't help because they're **scared of the process**. Scared of reporting and doing paperwork; principal complains about all the paperwork they have to do to get someone suspended. They see it as a hassle.
- **Teachers** worry about **"ruining a potential future"** because they think they know the student based on how they act in the classroom

# Curriculum Core Values



Consensual Sex is Good Sex

Healthy Relationships Promotion Framework

Inclusive of all sexualities including asexuality

Work from an anti oppression model. Understand how sexuality, gender, race and class can play into the sex depicted in pornography

Non-judgmental to a point

Youth Development Framework: We are each others allies in this work (Youth to Adult = Adult to Youth)

Have Fun!

# SESSION 1: WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT PORNOGRAPHY?

## OBJECTIVES:

- Participants explore their own values related to young people viewing pornography.
- Participants discuss their perceptions of U.S. societal values related to young people viewing pornography.
- Participants understand what we mean in this class when we use the terms “pornography” and “sexually explicit media,” and how other people outside of the class might think about those terms.



# SESSION 1 INTENTIONS AND TAKE AWAYS

- **RAPPORT BUILDING**
- **CURIOSITY/OPENNESS**
- **SHARED LANGUAGE**
- -----
- **WHO'S IN THE ROOM**
- **WHAT INTERESTS THEM THE MOST**
- **WHAT INITIAL GAPS DID YOU NOTICE**



# SESSION 2: THE HISTORY OF SEXUALLY EXPLICIT IMAGES IN SOCIETY

## OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will consider whether their notions of beauty are being shaped by media (and sexually explicit media).
- Participants will learn about the history of obscenity and pornography in Europe and in the U.S., and learn that media can be classified as dangerous, acceptable, artistic, or obscene by those in power for a variety of reasons.





# SESSION 2 INTENTIONS AND TAKE AWAYS

- **MEDIA IS A TOOL**
  - **CULTIVATE CURIOSITY AND CRITICAL THINKING**
  - **UNDERSTANDING POWER AND CONTROL**
- 

- **WHO DEFINES BEAUTY?**
- **WHO BENEFITS FROM THESE DEFINITIONS?**
- **WHAT ARE SOME CONSEQUENCES?**
- **WHAT DOES CENSORSHIP MEAN IN TODAY'S AGE?**



# SESSION 3: NORMS RELATED TO VIOLENCE & DOUBLE STANDARDS RE: SEX

## OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will recognize that the sex acts depicted in some mainstream pornography can reinforce some traditional gender norms.
- Create empathy for actors and actresses who are in pornography, who typically work with physically challenging situations (bright lights, awkward positions), may receive relatively little money, must pay taxes, and may face costly or burdensome STI testing requirements.



## SESSION 3 INTENTIONS AND TAKE AWAYS

- **ROOT CAUSES OF VIOLENCE BEING GENDER AND RACE EXPLICIT**
- **BUILDING EMPATHY**

- 
- **GENDER AND RACE ARE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS**
  - **CONSEQUENCES OF THESE CONSTRUCTS**
  - **HUMANITY BEHIND THE SCREEN**

# Session 4: Healthy Intimacy

## Objectives:

- Increase positive attitudes towards respectful sexual and dating behavior

A close-up photograph of two dogs snuggling under a patterned blanket. The dog on the right is a golden retriever with its eyes closed, and the dog on the left is a black and white dog, possibly a pit bull mix, with its nose visible. The blanket has a wavy pattern in shades of brown, grey, and white.

# SESSION 4 INTENTIONS AND TAKE AWAYS

- **THE VALUE OF PREVENTION AND PROMOTION IN TANDEM**
- **HOW TO BUILD CONNECTIONS**

- 
- **UNDERSTANDING THEMSELVES, WHAT INTIMACIES THEY PRIORITIZE**
  - **REFLECT ON THEIR EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS**
  - **REFLECT ON HOW TO EXPAND CONNECTING WITH OTHERS**

# Session 5: HEALTHY FLIRTING, DATING, AND CARING FOR OTHER PEOPLE

## Objectives:

- Increase positive attitudes towards respectful sexual and dating behavior
- Talk about street harassment



# SESSION 5 INTENTIONS AND TAKEAWAYS: Healthy Flirting, Dating and Caring for Other People

- **UNDERSTAND THE GENDER DYNAMICS AT PLAY WHEN WOMEN AND FEMALE BODIED PERSONS ARE FLIRTED WITH IN PUBLIC**

- **THINK THROUGH THE WAYS PEOPLE FEEL UNSAFE WHEN ATTENTION IS UNWANTED**

- **EXPLORING HOW TO ACCEPT REJECTION**
- 

- **Explore ways to show someone attention in fun, healthy, and consensual ways.**
- **Be creative in thinking of ways to show interest in a person they would like to talk to and/or date.**

# Session 6: Peers and Pornography

## Objectives:

- Think about strategies to negotiate watching pornography if someone is subtly pressuring you to watch
- Think about the social pressure to watch pornography





Peer education is a powerful tool.

## Session 6: INTENTIONS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- **DISCUSS THE ROLE WE PLAY IN HELPING PEERS MAKE BETTER CHOICES**
  - **SUPPORT ADDRESSING WAYS TO HANDLE BEING PRESSURED TO WATCH PORNOGRAPHY**
- 
- **UNDERSTANDING WHAT REALISTIC WAYS PORNOGRAPHY CAN OR HAS ALREADY SHOWN UP IN THEIR LIVES**
  - **THINK THROUGH NEGOTIATE, DELAY AND REFUSAL TACTICS TO HANDLE PEER PRESSURE.**
  - **REFLECT ON THE WAYS THEIR ACTIONS CAN INFLUENCE OTHERS.**

# FACILITATOR TIPS

- Practice reflective listening and ask probing questions as needed when learning their perspectives on porn.
- Focus on the concept of radical respect. There are a lot of social norms that say it is okay to disrespect a partner that you aren't serious about. But regardless of the type of relationship it is important to have respect for a person.
- Be aware victim blaming will arise when discussing sexting. Eliminate victim blaming comments by encouraging participants to be curious about what factors helped determine the survivor's situation
- Practice reflective listening and empathy when hearing helpful and harmful coping strategies.

## SESSION 9

### Peers and Pornography

#### Objective

Increase perception that others support healthy dating and sexual boundaries

#### Participants' Objectives

- 1) Think about strategies to negotiate watching pornography if someone is subtly pressuring you to watch
- 2) Think about the social pressure to watch pornography

#### Materials

- Poster Paper
- Markers
- Copies of Refuse Delay and Negotiate station signs
- Evaluation-related post-test (see Appendix)

#### Activity 1: What Do Peers Say About Pornography? (35 min)

##### Directions:

- 1) Hang two posters on the wall. On one poster draw a plus sign (+) and on the other poster draw a negative sign (-).
- 2) Ask teens to get into small groups and write down what their peers are saying about porn, highlighting the positive and negative opinions.

##### Debrief Questions:

1. Why are there more comments on positive (or negative) side of the spectrum?
2. Why do you think so many people feel that way about pornography?
3. In your opinion is that a good or a bad thing? Why?

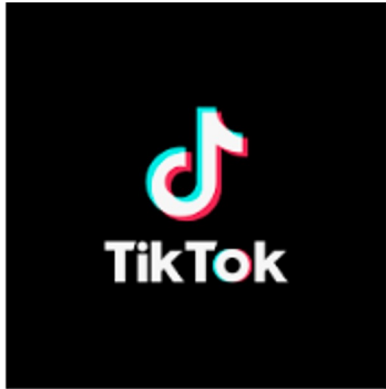
#### Activity 2: Upstander Techniques (15 min)

**Facilitator:** Today we are going to talk about how to navigate situations where either you, or people you know, are not interested in watching pornography. There are three basic techniques one can use:

1. **Refusal skills:** If you feel comfortable and safe, you can simply refuse to do it
  - a. You can say "no" and leave
  - b. You can explain why you are not interested
  - c. You can say "no" repeatedly until they give up



Questions?



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