

A new normal is here. Is our organisation meeting the challenge?

For young people growing up online, exposure to pornography is almost impossible to avoid. Pornography has become the most prominent sexuality educator for many young people. It is shaping their sexual understandings and experiences. But porn conveys a whole range of problematic messages – about bodies, gender, sex, consent, power and aggression.

Young people need help to navigate this new reality.

Many organisations are aware of the impacts that pornography is having on the young people they work with. More and more organisations are also keen to implement a broad, proactive approach to preventing the harms associated with pervasive and often-aggressive pornography, and to equip young people to navigate healthy development.

- Is our organisation supporting young people to develop healthy, respectful relationships in the twenty-first century?
- Do we address the influence of pornography with young people, when appropriate?
- Do our staff have access to professional learning and resources to support them to understand pornography's influence on young people and what we can do to address it?
- Does our organisation work together with parents and schools to support young people to navigate the challenges of new technologies, including the impacts of pornography?

It's time we talked has developed a suite of resources to support community organisations and schools to develop an approach to addressing pornography's influence that is tailored to your community and context.

For more information see itstimewetalked.com.

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What you need to know about young people and pornography

Young people see pornography at a formative stage

48% of boys have seen porn by the age of 13.
48% of girls have seen porn by the age of 15.

Pornography can be difficult to avoid

46% of boys and
56% of girls first saw porn unintentionally.

Many young men see pornography often

56% of young men use porn weekly and 17% use it daily.	15% of young women use porn weekly and 1% use it daily.
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Pornography is not the centrefold it used to be

Mainstream pornography often depicts aggression and problematic messages about consent.

97% of the aggression in pornography is directed towards women.

46% of pornography includes incest themes.

35% of pornography includes non-consensual behaviour.

Pornography has become a default sex educator

Pornography is shaping young people's sexual understandings and experiences.

60% of young men and **41%** of young women have used pornography as a source of information about relationships and sex in the last 12 months.

Boys are increasingly asking or expecting girls to follow the porn script in real life.

Pornography's influence has serious implications for young people's capacity to develop a sexuality that is safe, respectful, mutual and consenting.

Young people need support to navigate pornography's influence

Pornography is a sensitive and challenging topic, but it has become an issue we cannot afford to ignore.

Parents, schools, teachers and a range of other professionals all have critical roles to play.

Sources with links:

Our Watch, 2020

Fritz et al, 2020

NZOFLC, 2019

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Why do community organisations need to address pornography with young people?

Pornography is a sensitive and challenging topic, but young people's high level of exposure and access to pornography, as well as its impacts on young people, make it an important issue for community organisations that work with young people to address.

Young people need support from adults they trust to critique pornography's messages and to develop the attitudes and skills that underpin respectful relationships.

International guidelines recommend that accurate information about pornography should be a core component of relationships and sexuality education for young people.

Practitioners who work with young people are uniquely placed to support young people to critique the messages they receive from peers, family, the media and society about gender, sex and relationships. This role is particularly important for practitioners who work with young people who may have limited or unreliable access to school-based education, such as young people in out-of-home care or youth justice facilities.

It is critical that organisations that provide specialist services for young people who have experienced sexual abuse or assault, or who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviours, understand how pornography can contribute to and amplify these experiences.

Community organisations can play a valuable role in engaging and educating parents. By equipping them with appropriate knowledge, skills and resources, community organisations can build a partnership with parents, and assist them to develop the knowledge and confidence to talk with their children about pornography.

Community organisations can help build schools' capacity to address pornography and facilitate referrals to local services where relevant.

The ways that pornography reflects, reinforces and eroticises the drivers of gender-based violence, makes pornography an important issue for practitioners from community services to address with young people.

For more information and resources see [itstimewetalked.com](https://www.itstimewetalked.com)



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