

What rights do young people have to explore sexually explicit materials?

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Trends in relation to children and porn

- 1) pornography relatively cheaper to consume
- 2) more readily accessible and
- 3) easier to consume in privacy, or to consume more discretely
- 4) Larger proportions of young people accessing porn
- 5) earlier onset exposure to pornography
- 6) content becoming more mainstream and aggressive both physically and verbally

Potential benefits....

1. Young people who feel marginalized because of their sexual orientation can access information and feel more comfortable about their sexuality through viewing SEM (Kubicek, Beyer, Weiss, Iverson, & Kipke, 2010; Lumby, McKee & Albury, 2015; Hillier et al. ,2001).
2. SEM can help to fill in the gaps for young people who do not receive basic biological information about sex from schools or parents (Smith, 2013).
3. Studies have also shown that the consumption of SEM can be correlated with more relaxed and open communication about sex (Wentland, Herold, Desmarais, & Milhausen, 2009).
4. Researchers have found that consumption of SEM is correlated with a greater ability to accept that sex can be a pleasurable part of one's identity (Baćak & Štulhofer 2011).

....and possible harm

. Repeated exposure to pornography has been found to desensitise youth to the material viewed and to lead to distorted views of what are “acceptable” behaviours in relationships (Prescott & Shuler, 2011).

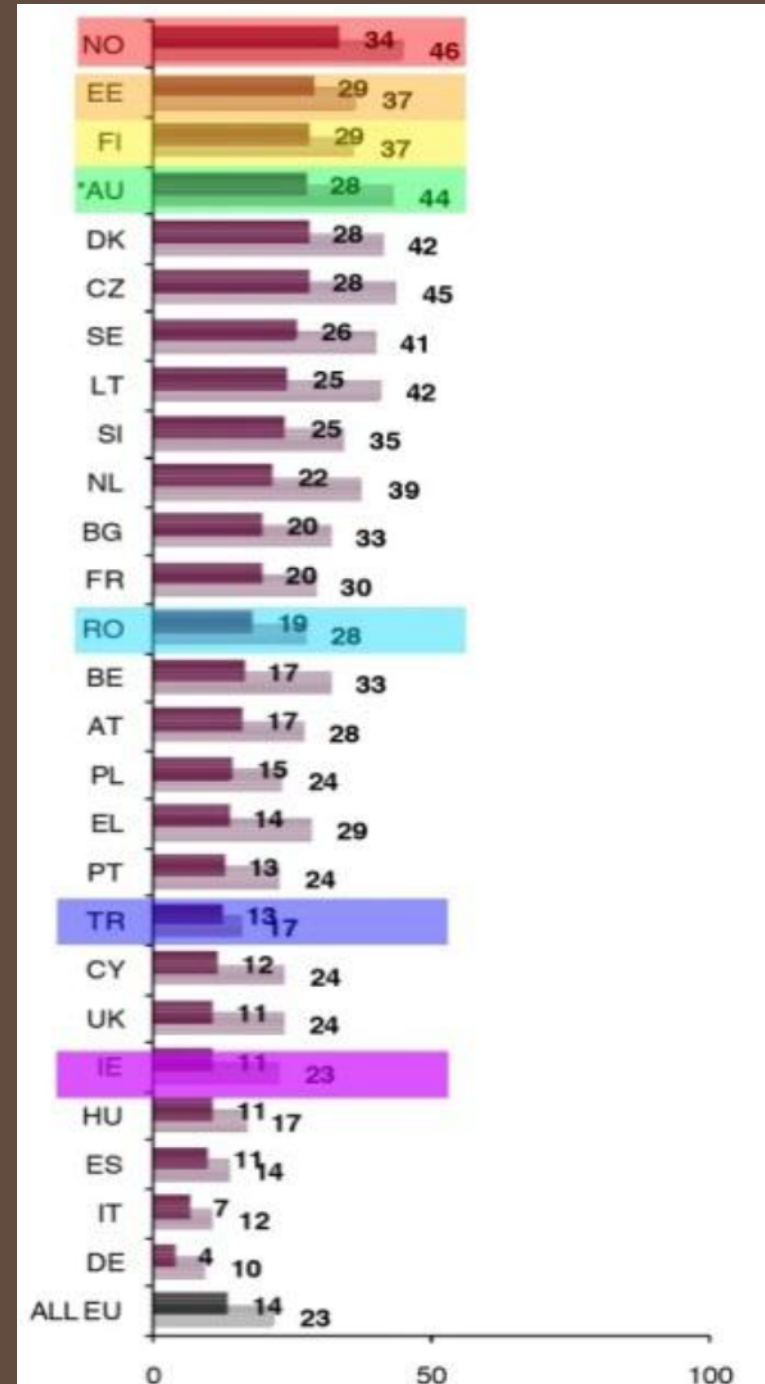
. Emerging evidence linking porn consumption to increased levels of sexual aggression and violence in adult samples (e.g., Malamuth et al.) indicates subtle but significant impacts on how men treat women in relationships. For example Some young men actually believe that what they are watching provides real templates for sexual. Young women, conversely, risk feeling pressured to go along with it, and to participate in sexual acts they may not feel comfortable with (Crabbe and Corlett, 2013)

. Research indicates that youth are engaging in sexual practices earlier, and that youth who view pornography engage in oral sex and intercourse at an earlier onset age, than those who do not view pornography, with consumption before the age of 12 found to be particularly problematic (Kraus & Russell, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2014; Skau, 2007).

Children viewing sexual images

% Seen sexual images on any website

% Seen sexual images at all, online or offline



Children bothered

- Seeing sexual images on the internet may be fine or may not be fine. In the LAST 12 MONTHS have you seen any things like this that have bothered you in any way? For example, made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen them (Livingstone et al., 2011, p56).

% %	All children who use the internet		Child bothered, of those who have seen sexual images online
	Child has seen sexual images online	Child bothered by seeing sexual images online	
EE	29	14	49
TR	13	6	49
RO	19	8	44
IE	11	4	38
*AU	28	10	36
DE	4	2	35
PL	15	5	33
ES	11	3	32
FR	20	6	32
AT	17	5	30
BE	17	5	30
HU	11	3	30
DK	28	8	28
CY	12	3	26
IT	7	2	26
SE	26	7	26
UK	11	3	24
CZ	28	6	23
LT	25	6	23
NL	22	5	23
NO	34	9	23
PT	13	3	23
FI	29	6	20
BG	20	4	17
EL	14	2	15
SI	25	4	15
ALL	14	4	32

Minimising risks

restrict access to sexual images online (especially for younger children)

education to assist young people to effectively and actively critique pornography

education and information for parents to assist them to navigate conversations about sex and porn with their children

‘The main difficulty for educators in the field of ‘porn literacy’, however, is that they may not legally distribute the object of study to their (minor) students, nor may they legally encourage students to develop alternative pornographic media as a means of developing literacy – a common strategy within mainstream media education. This means that porn education (for under-18s at least), neither permits close readings of actual explicit texts nor allows for direct discussions of specific texts” (Albury, 2013).

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Sexually Explicit Material

Sexually explicit material

- Pornography
- Erotica
- Sex education materials
- sexually explicit messages shared via text

Australian Censureship

The traditional Australian censorship system that classifies films and literature is largely redundant, as is the notion of a television programming watershed for X rated material – traditionally after 9.00pm. Despite ongoing calls to restrict and police the internet, the reality is that a wide variety of pornography can be found instantly online, and often via other media too.

Varying Outcomes

The link between exposure and feeling bothered is not a direct one, however. Norwegian and Finnish children are 1/26 and 3/26 in terms of their likelihood to have seen sexual images in the previous 12 months but 21/26 (Norway) and 23/26 (Finland) in terms of the likelihood that they have been bothered by the experience. The inverse correlation is also the case: Turkey (13/26) Romania (19/26) and Ireland (22/26) are all less likely to have children who say they have seen sexual images online in the previous 12 months, but they are more likely to have children who have seen such images saying that they were bothered by that experience in the order of: Turkey, 2/26; Romania 3/26; Ireland 4/26.

EU Kids Online and AU Kids Online Question

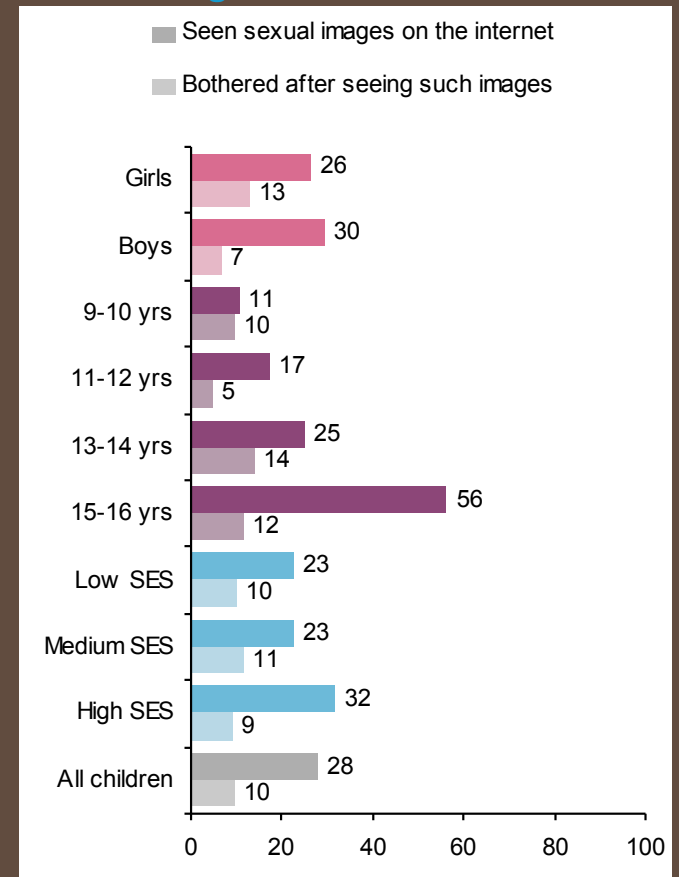
In the past year, you will have seen lots of different images – pictures, photos, videos. Sometimes, these might be obviously sexual – for example, showing people naked or people having sex. (Livingstone et al., 2011, p49)

AU Kids Online

Child has seen sexual images online and was bothered by t

QC131: Have you seen these kinds of things on any websites in the past 12 months? And QC134: In the LAST 12 MONTHS have you seen any things like this that have bothered you in any way? For example, made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen them.

Base: All children who use the internet. Only children who have seen sexual images online



The lack of a perfect technical or market-level fix makes the challenge for society that much harder. As a nation, British people are not great at having sensible conversations about sex. A cultural history of Carry On films and tittering at pantomimes is accompanied by a state education system where there still isn't statutory sex and relationship education in all secondary schools. Given that it's practically impossible to ensure children don't encounter pornography, surely it's time we spent more time talking about this – at home, in schools, and as a society in general? (Livinstone, xxxx)