



How to Talk to Kids about Pornography

If a child has access to the internet, they can and likely will see pornography (sexual material intended for arousal). Whether the child sees pornography by accident or on purpose, discussing it can be uncomfortable.

But it's important for caregivers to talk to children about what they've seen. Research shows that early exposure to pornography can negatively impact a child's development, leading to a greater acceptance of:

- * Sexual harassment
- * Sexual activity at an early age
- * Negative attitudes toward women
- * Unrealistic expectations
- * Body dissatisfaction
- * Depression
- * Skewed perspectives on gender roles
- * Sexual aggression
- * Rape myths (assigning responsibility for sexual assault to a female victim)
- * Relationship problems
- * Sexual risk-taking (ex. not using protection)

This happens because a child's brain is not equipped to process the adult experiences pornography depicts.

Before a child goes online

Talk about pornography in ways that are appropriate for kids. Say things like:

- * "Watching videos of people without clothes on is not for kids."
- * "If you see a video of naked people, close your eyes and tell me or an adult you trust."

If a child sees pornography

- * Stay calm — even if you are surprised, shocked or angry.
- * Remember and understand that children are naturally curious about sex.
- * After reassuring them they're not in trouble, ask questions about how they accessed the content and how it made them feel.
- * Give the child a chance to ask questions.

For Young Children

- * Before giving kids a device, explain that some content online is not for kids.
- * If they see pornography, answer questions simply and reassure the child they did nothing wrong.

For Tweens & Teens

- * Have regular conversations about sex and relationships.
- * Explain that what they see online is not a real relationship.
- * Educate the child about healthy sexuality, relationships, and respect for themselves.

Learn more at
<https://www.defendyoungminds.com/post/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-porn-7-top-tips-for-savvy-parents>



Our Kids is a Nashville-based clinic that provides expert medical evaluations and crisis counseling in response to concerns of child sexual abuse. For more, visit [OurKidsCenter.com](https://www.OurKidsCenter.com)