Converging social science overwhelmingly reveals that the pornography of today has created an unprecedented epidemic of sexual harm.

Once a social or health issue involves problems that affect individuals or groups beyond their capacity to correct – responsibility shifts from individual accountability to holding the forces and influences that cause it accountable.

This is why the National Center on Sexual Exploitation is leading the charge in calling for a public health approach to combating the harms of pornography. Public health approaches have proved effective with other major problems from smoking, to lead poisoning, and HIV/AIDS.

We plan to replicate these models to promote healthy sexuality devoid of pornography’s toxic influences.
Fast Facts on the Public Health Harms of Pornography

- **Young Age of First Exposure**: A study of university students found that 93% of boys and 62% of girls had seen Internet pornography during adolescence. The researchers reported that the degree of exposure to paraphilic and deviant sexual activity before age 18 was of "particular concern."\(^1\)
- **Both Genders**: While hardcore pornography users are typically male, use among younger females use is increasing. Teenage girls and young women are significantly more likely to actively seek out porn than women 25 years old and above.\(^2\)
- **Detrimental Impacts on the Brain**: Since 2011, there have been 30 peer-reviewed studies which reveal pornography use has negative and detrimental impacts on the brain.\(^3\)
- **Decreased Brain Matter in Key Regions**: A 2014 study of the brain scans of 64 pornography users found that increased pornography use (i.e. pornography dosage) is linked to decreased brain matter in the areas of the brain associated with motivation and decision-making, and contributed to impaired impulse control and desensitization to sexual reward.\(^4\)
- **Pornography Induced Dysfunction**: Historically, erectile dysfunction (ED) has been viewed as an age-dependent problem, with rates in men ages 18–59 as low as 2–5%.\(^5\) In 2011, among males aged 18–40 the Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behavior (GSSAB) found ED rates of 14-28%.\(^6\) This dramatic increase in ED rates among young men coincides with the sharp increase in the availability and accessibility of Internet pornography tube sites.
- **Teaches Users that Women Enjoy Sexual Violence and Degradation**: Analysis of the 50 most popular pornographic videos (those bought and rented most often) found that 88% of scenes contained physical violence, and 49% contained verbal aggression.\(^7\) Eighty-seven percent of aggressive acts were perpetrated against women, and 95% of their responses were either neutral or expressions of pleasure.
- **Link to Sexual Offenses and Accepting Rape Myths**: A meta-analysis of 46 studies reported that the effects of exposure to pornographic material are "clear and consistent," and that pornography use puts people at increased risk for committing sexual offenses and accepting rape myths.\(^8\)

Like other public health issues, not all exposed have the same response. However, science and research are revealing a wide range of harm caused by pornography.

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To learn more visit [EndSexualExploitation.org/PublicHealth](http://EndSexualExploitation.org/PublicHealth).

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