

7 STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM PORNOGRAPHY



The average age of first internet exposure to pornography is 11. Sadly, a recent survey of 14-16 year old students indicated that nearly a third of them had viewed pornography when they were 10 years old or younger. According to research in the Journal of Adolescent Health, using pornography leads to: beliefs that superior sexual pleasure is attainable without affection towards partners, beliefs that promiscuity is the natural state, and cynical attitudes about love. Despite these challenging times, there is a new explosion of positive and encouraging Catholic resources about love and sexuality that are bringing inspiration and providing “antidotes” to thousands of families! Here are 7 practical tips to protect your family from pornography and help them to experience happy and thriving marriages in the future!

1. Protect all internet devices - computers, cell phones, tablets, eReaders, iPods, MP3 players, video game systems, etc. - with filtering and accountability software such as CovenantEyes.com, EverAccountable.com, NetNanny.com and OpenDNS.com. Dads, think back to when you were growing up, and can you imagine how tough of a temptation it would be to have a smartphone or iPad in your room? Let’s do our children and teens a favor by making sure they keep internet devices in a public area of the house and outside of their room, especially at night. Let’s talk to our children and teens regularly about their internet accountability reports and help them turn in internet devices at a certain time each night. It is important to be very cautious about giving children and teens data plans on cell phones.

2. Provide positive “antidotes” with new & inspiring Catholic resources about love and sexuality! Positive and encouraging Catholic websites, CDs and books about love and sexuality have exploded in the last 5-10 years thanks to new teachings about sex and marriage from the Theology of the Body (TOB). Seriously parents, let’s all spend time with our teens on a monthly basis or more with TOB resources! Jason and Crystalina Evert, Leah Darrow, Matt Fradd, Sarah Swafford, ChastityProject.com and TOBforTeens.com have life-changing resources for teens and young adults. Christopher West, Mary Shivanandan, and Ron and Kathy Feher have incredible resources for young adults and adults.

3. Monitor all social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, tumblr, etc.). Be your teen’s friend on Facebook, follow them on Twitter, and monitor their email and social network sites. It is important to know all user names and passwords to email, social network sites, and every site that requires a user name and password for your teens.

4. Educate your teens at age-appropriate times about the damages of pornography. Archkck.org/SacredSexuality has helpful information for parents about pornography’s effects on the brain, surprising myths about the pornography industry, and research indicating that pornography decreases sexual satisfaction in marriage.

5. Screen movies and secure TVs and satellite radio. USCCB.org/movies and PluggedInOnline.com provide a detailed review of movies including a written summary of any nudity and sexually-inappropriate content. Block all “adult” or “mature” content on TV, as well as other channels that have inappropriate content. Family-friendly packages are available for satellite radio without pornographic content.

6. Get to know the parents of your children / teen’s friends, and encourage them with Theology of the Body and internet safety resources. Many Catholic children have needed counseling after being exposed to pornography at their friend’s house. Seriously parents, let’s not let our kids go over to their friend’s house until we know the internet devices, TVs, etc., are protected - even if they seem to have great Catholic parents.

7. Create a positive and encouraging atmosphere for your family with family dinners, lots of time together, and trips together. Let’s be encouraging to our children and teens, and affirm them often! Dads, let’s take our families to Mass every Sunday and to Confession often! Many parents have a devotion to St. Joseph and Mary, which is a huge help for protecting our families. Dads, check out the 90-day challenge at MimicDad.com.

Find more resources for protecting families along with tips for building passionate marriages and freedom from pornography at www.archkck.org/SacredSexuality. (The resources on this page are not specifically endorsed by the Sacred Sexuality Initiative.)

www.archkck.org/SacredSexuality

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