

Is Pornography Really So Easy to Find on the Internet?

Many people wonder how easy pornography is to find on the Internet, since there is a great deal of misinformation on the subject. Unfortunately, pornography is freely and easily available to children on the Internet, in both commercial areas on the World Wide Web and in non-commercial areas such as Usenet newsgroups.

In addition to pornography which would be considered legal for adults in print and broadcast media, children have access on the Internet to material which is illegal even for adults, such as obscenity and child pornography. Even worse, children can find this material intentionally or unintentionally.

Unintentional access to pornography

1. Stealth sites: There are numerous hard-core pornography sites on the Internet using “copycat URLs” to take advantage of innocent mistakes to bring traffic to their graphic sexual images.
 - a) Mirror sites: Children searching the Internet for the official web site of the White House can be confronted by hard-core pornography by mistyping www.whitehouse.com, rather than whitehouse.gov. The official NASA site has been similarly copied by pornographers.
 - b) Spelling errors: Children who mistype www.betscape.com instead of netscape.com, or www.sharware.com instead of shareware.com, will be confronted with live sex shows and other X-rated pictures.
 - c) Misuse of brand name: A key word search for “amazon.com” also yields links to the porn index “amazon-cum.com.” An innocent search on “Disney cartoons” can yield links to hard-core pornographic cartoons.
2. Key word search: Children using Internet search engines to look up innocent information will easily receive links to pornographic sites:
 - a) Innocent searches for toys, dollhouse, girls, boys, or pets can yield numerous links to sexually explicit sites, like www.boys.com, which features men and boys engaged in sexual activity.
 - b) Even more disturbing, searches on children’s favorites like Nintendo characters (such as Pokemon) can lead to porn locations. Are these hard-core porn sites deliberately targeting children?

Intentional access to pornography

Curiosity in children and teenagers is natural and healthy, but if you seek pornography on the Internet, it is almost impossible to miss. Youngsters seeking information about sexuality on the Internet will be confronted with pornography’s negative, anti-social messages that can forever alter their views of sexuality and relationships.

1. Key word search: Curious children and teenagers can easily find pornography using search engines and words like “sex”, “hard-core”, and similar terms.
2. Obvious URLs: Children and teenagers can guess at explicit web addresses such as www.sex.com and even www.bestiality.com and view graphic hard-core pornography.

Once children have been exposed to graphic sexual content on the Internet, their innocence can never be regained. The protection of children from pornography should not be entirely up to their own self-discipline.