Recommendations for Online Pornography Use

In this section, service providers will find a useful list of recommendations based on previous research and clinical practices they can use to assist families with problematic use of online pornography.

Recommendations for Service Providers

- Explore the meaning of sexting with youth and the role it plays [1].
- Include sexting and viewing pornography in assessment and treatment with youth. Use gender-neutral language for open, non-judgmental communication about the effect of sexual internet-based activities on healthy sexual relationships [1].
- Review relevant federal and provincial laws, as well as Alberta Health Services policies and guidelines regarding duty to report.
- Follow duty to report instructions from your professional regulatory association.
- Consult Alberta Health Services (AHS) management and the AHS legal team with any questions about duty to report.
- Explore youth's motivations for sexting, the nature of the relationship with the person they are sexting and the consequences of sexting [1].
- Complete a psychosocial assessment for symptoms of depression, hopelessness, social isolation, anxiety and suicidality, for youth impacted by non-consensual sexting [1].

As much as possible, to prevent online pornography issues:

- Increase resilience and mental well-being by promoting healthy habits, such as eating nutritious food, maintaining good sleeping habits, engaging in social interactions beyond gaming, and spending quality time with family and friends: https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/mental_health

For more information, contact Provincial Information and Child, Youth, and Family Initiatives Standards at informationandcyfistandards@ahs.ca.

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Recommendations for Families

- Communication is important; talk with your children about digital citizenship and sexual internet-based preoccupations, including sexting and pornography.
- Familiarize yourself with the language teens use to describe sexual internet-based activity.
- Familiarize yourself with social media applications, including Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Tinder and Instagram.
- Be vigilant about what your child is doing online and keep an eye on your children's browser histories.
- Be familiar with websites your children are visiting.
- Discuss appropriate online behaviours with your children.
- Keep devices in a public area of the home.
- Use resources to avoid self/peer exploitation from Canadian Centre for Child Protection [2] such as https://www.cybertip.ca/pdfs/SPEX_FamilyGuide_Web_single_en.pdf
- Tell your children that publicly sharing nude pictures of anyone under the age of 18 is illegal and considered child pornography.
- Seek professional support when needed.
- Utilize cyber security options on the devices, such as: setting up blocks, and filters; enabling "safe search" on the computers or smartphones, installing some blockers https://www.todaysparent.com/family/parenting/5-ways-to-block-porn-on-your-kids-devices/
- Increase opportunities for the family to spend positive quality time together on a regular basis.
- Focus on developing resilience and maintaining emotional and mental well-being of children and youth.

References

1. Holoyda, B., Landess, J., Sorrentino, R., & Friedman, S. H. (2018). Trouble at teens fingertips: Youth sexting and the law. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law, 36*(2), 170-181. doi:10.1002/bsl.2335

2. Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc. (2017, July). *Self/Peer Exploitation: It's Not OK. A Resource Guide for Families Addressing Self/Peer Exploitation.* Retrieved from https://needhelpnow.ca/pdfs/SPEX_FamilyGuide_Web_single_en.pdf