

15 Myths about Pornography for Youth

1. ***“Viewing pornography only affects me and does not affect others.”*** MYTH
As with other addictions, there is a ripple effect from the behavior and family members, friends and others suffer from the consequences of the addiction, and often times with the addicted person being too blinded by the addiction to realize this. Young people addicted to pornography neglect important relationships to pursue their addiction.
2. ***“Pornography is a good way to deal with sexual urges without being sexually active.”*** MYTH
Pornography always increases sexual urges and sexual drive and makes it more likely for sexual acting out to occur. Most people agree that there are numerous negative consequences from young people becoming sexually active at an early age.
3. ***“Pornography is a harmless way to relax and unwind.”*** MYTH
Studies have shown that pornography is highly addictive and mind altering. Using pornography as an “unwinding” or stress relieving activity prevents the development of normal coping skills for stress and anxiety. This is particularly harmful for young people who should be developing healthy coping skills to learn to deal with stress.
4. ***“Pornography is a good way to gain information about sex.”*** MYTH
Sexual scenes depicted in pornographic movies are often shown in an exaggerated way and are presented as extremely exciting and arousing. These scenes portray an inaccurate and unrealistic view of sexual experiences often leaving those that anticipate similar experiences disappointed. Young people who have an unrealistic view of sexual experiences because of inaccurate pornographic depictions may find themselves comparing their future spouses to what they saw in pornographic images which may interfere with achieving a fulfilling marriage.
5. ***“Viewing pornography has no impact on the significance and meaning of your sexual relationship with your future spouse.”*** MYTH
Viewing pornography will desensitize your future sexual experience and lessen the meaning of sex in your future relationships. Young people who refrain from viewing pornography will find that their sexual relationships with a future spouse will be more rewarding and fulfilling if they have not been desensitized from pornography.
6. ***“Pornography doesn’t depict the individuals portrayed as objects rather than people.”*** MYTH
Remember, each person that you look at is a daughter, sister, son or brother of someone. Would you want people looking at your own future wife, husband, daughter, sister, son or brother in a sexual way?

7. ***“Pornography will not increase my sexual urges.”*** MYTH
Viewing pornography will increase your sexual urges and thoughts. You will become preoccupied with sexual thoughts and find it difficult to focus on the things in your life that are really important.
8. ***“Viewing pornography has no impact on the conscience.”*** MYTH
Your ability and willingness to distinguish right from wrong are affected by viewing pornography making it easier to justify irresponsible and deceitful behavior. You may find yourself making excuses and deceiving yourself about activities in which you did not previously participate. During your youth, having a strong conscience is critical as you make important decisions that will impact the rest of your life.
9. ***“Pornography will not affect the priorities I have in my life.”*** MYTH
Viewing pornography will eventually become the most important activity in your life. The things in your life that should be most important such as family, school, socializing with friends, extra-curricular activities and participation in religious activities will become less important and a lower priority than your pornography addiction.
10. ***“Pornography does not influence my connection God and Spirituality.”*** MYTH
It becomes increasingly difficult to feel connected to God while viewing pornography. Feelings of darkness and discouragement will replace the light in your soul. This is especially important as developing spirituality as a young person will assist you in making many of the important decisions that you will be making about your future life.
11. ***“Viewing pornography does not have any impact on the structure of my brain.”*** MYTH
Recent scientific research is showing evidence that viewing pornography changes the composition of the brain in a manner similar to the effects that drugs have on the brain. Most young people realize the harmful effect of drugs on the brain, but far fewer realize that viewing pornography can have the same effects.
12. ***“Pornography can be viewed if it is done in way that doesn’t interfere with other life activities.”*** MYTH
Pornography is addictive to the point that you will begin to find yourself wasting hours in front of the computer or television and spending large amounts of time, energy and money supporting the addiction. You may be able to start out by occasional viewing, but in time, you will begin to neglect school work, spending time with family and friends and putting off other things in favor of viewing pornography.
13. ***“I can stop looking at pornography once I get into a serious relationship.”*** MYTH
Because of the nature of addiction, giving up the habit is more difficult than you think and will have an impact on your future relationships. In addition, if you are addicted to pornography,

you may miss out on the opportunities to develop the personal characteristics that will allow you to be a part of a successful relationship such as a healthy marriage.

14. ***“Viewing pornography won’t affect my self-confidence.”*** MYTH

The addiction cycle moves on a downward spin, and the level of happiness and life satisfaction decreases with continued addiction. Viewing pornography brings quick and fleeting pleasure, but after the euphoria of the moment is gone, it leaves you feeling depressed and discouraged about continuing to engage in the behavior when your intention was to stop.

15. ***“Pornography is not really addictive. You just have to decide to stop looking.”*** MYTH

While choosing to not look is important, the power of the addiction is strong enough that many young people continue to look at pornography despite attempts and efforts to stop looking. Young people who believe that they can simply decide to stop looking may be in denial about how strong the addictive nature of pornography actually is.