

# HOW PORNOGRAPHY IS AFFECTING SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

## Distorting the message

Joan Campbell feels strongly about porn and its negative affects on children.

She's also seen that parents are often too busy and don't realise how easily boys get involved in porn. "When I tell them, they can't believe it. They say, 'No ways, where did he get it?' Or, 'My child is not like that!'"

Of course, often it's the father's porn they find, and it's important that parents ask themselves what messages they are giving boys and how boys are being socialised. Campbell has found the following documented affects of pornography on young children:

- Children who watch pornography have gaps in their sexual knowledge of even the most basic aspects of sex, such as; what is sex for; how do people start sexual intercourse; how does sex finish.
- Pornography has a disproportionate and negative impact on children and adolescents' sex education.
- It can establish habitual patterns of abusive sexual behaviour.
- Establishes a preoccupation with deviant sexual fantasies.
- Entrenches beliefs and attitudes which support abusive and deviant sexual behaviour (for example, that sex with children is okay).
- Impairs the ability to see things from the perspective of others.
- Has a negative affect on the psychosexual functioning of the child, such as deviant sexual fantasies, incorrect sexual knowledge, cognitive distortions, abusive or psychotic sexual social skills, controlling behaviour to intimidate the sexual partner and deviant sexual gratification.
- Pornography glorifies incest, rape, sexual violence and sadomasochism.
- It promotes sexual aggression. Children learn to find sexual aggression attractive and to get sexually aroused through sexual aggression.
- Children do not learn internal control (ie, to respect verbal and non-verbal messages of their sexual partner).
- Porn gives the idea that women have no right to say "no" to sexual advances; that men are stalkers and women their prey.
- Children learn to degrade and objectify women. They misinterpret women's sexual behaviour, justify the use of force and reinforce a lack of open communication about sex.

· Youth sexual offenders have learnt sexually aggressive behaviour through their own sexual abuse or pornography.

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