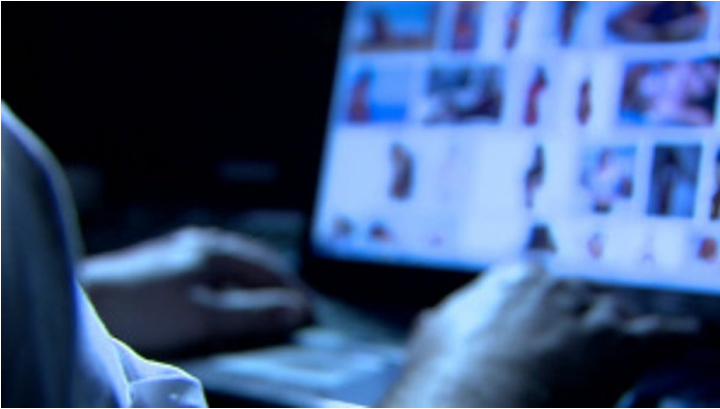


YOUTH TURN TO PORN DURING THE PANDEMIC



There was an 11.6% worldwide increase in porn consumption during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Times of uncertainty naturally intensify anxiety and powerlessness. It's normal for adolescents especially to turn to behaviors that provide relief from the difficulties they face, but many of the solutions young people choose only end up intensifying their original distress.

For example, porn offers two experiences in short supply during the coronavirus pandemic: relief and power. When we're anxious, our brains naturally seek out behaviors that provide us with relief. Porn gives the user a shortcut to a temporary calm and sense of control, all the while short-circuiting the motivation that could lead to the development of long-range coping mechanisms.

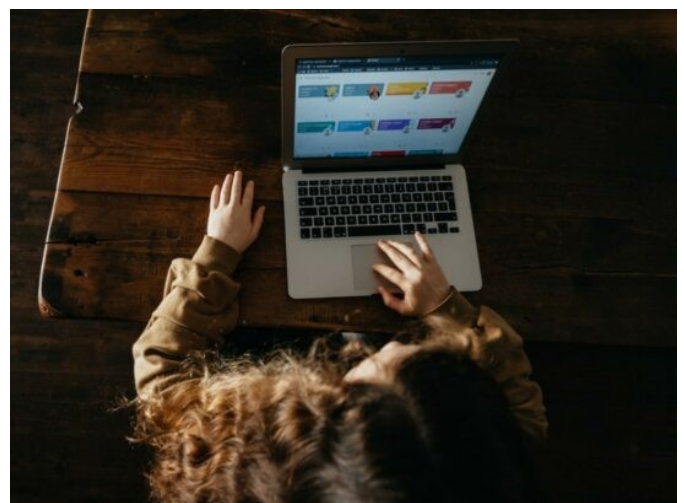
When porn is used to reduce anxiety, the brain forms new neuropathways to connect what you're doing to the pleasure you're feeling. A map of these experiences is formed in your brain, coded with powerful neurotransmitters like dopamine. Adolescent brains which are still developing, will get hard-wired by the use of porn, and it shapes their adult preferences. The widespread easy access to porn means there are no sexual acts or behaviors which are hidden from adolescents. And once having seen them, they cannot be unseen very easily.

Fighting the desire to use porn means transforming the key drivers that lead someone to use it. To acquire other coping strategies instead of turning to porn, according to Jay Stringer, the author of "Unwanted," requires finding purpose. Stringer's research shows when a person lacks a sense of purpose, they were seven times more likely to increase the amount of porn they watched. Attempts to stop using porn without creating a purpose often fail. In the end, it's not enough to just "eliminate porn," from your life.

It's a good tip for well-meaning parents who block access to Wi-Fi or remove electronics. These methods don't impact the pathways which have convinced the brain porn is a good coping strategy.

To overcome the need for porn, Stringer recommends helping a young person find or create a greater purpose.

Whether that is to push yourself to your best potential in sports, or serve the weakest in your community, when you maintain your integrity in the face of your anxiety, it builds confidence in your capacity to face the uncertainties that will lay ahead.

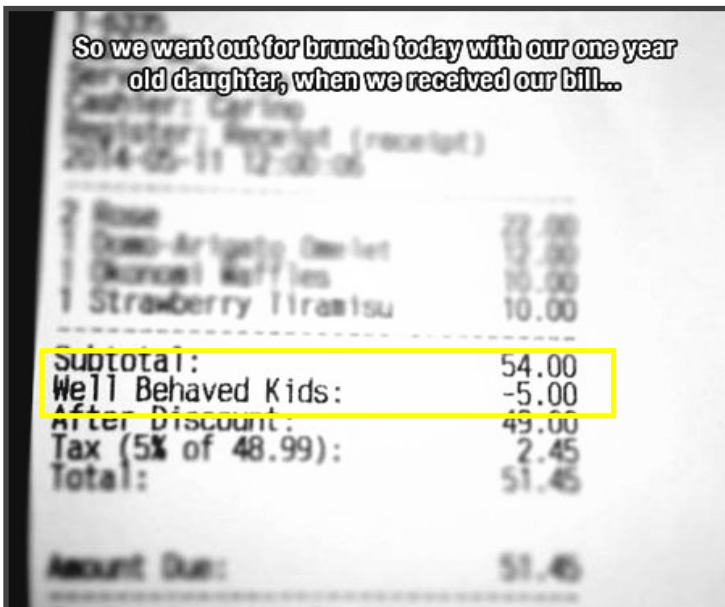


When your kids say "You never buy me anything"



Lucy Huber 
@clhubes

If you're wondering what things are like for parents right now, someone in my online moms group invited everyone to a Facebook event that is just going to an empty field and screaming and a LOT of people RSVPed yes.



COACH'S CORNER

A survey conducted by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty revealed 63 percent of respondents are convinced that "parents should have the final say in their child's education, and should be able to opt out of morally objectionable or inappropriate content." While 37% said, "public schools should have the final say" and disagreed with any "opt out" for parents.

Interestingly, whether respondents had children in the home or not had little impact on opinion—66 percent with children in the home held this opinion compared to 61 percent of those without children.

The question of "who decides what is taught" has been heating up since parents got a glimpse during lockdowns of what has been going in the classroom for decades. School boards made up of ideologues are being held accountable in ways they haven't previously. Some of them have gone so far as to pen op-eds saying, "I don't work for you" (meaning parents.)

It certainly looks like parental voices are being heard. Have you chimed in at your own school board meeting?

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