

Submission

I am the mother of a 17 year girl. She was first exposed to hard core pornography in the playground at the age of 11, while in Year 5. She was shown it by a boy in Year 4. The shock and anxiety this event led to her having suicidal thoughts and is still affecting her and our family to this day. The psychologist she saw (after she told a teacher about her thoughts of suicide) told us she believed our daughter had been 'sexualised' by this experience and we would need to be very watchful over her adolescent years. Sexualisation in this context is defines as when sexuality is inappropriately imposed onto a young person.

She has since been diagnosed with PTSD, has an eating disorder and suffers from depression. Our family believes her mental illness stems directly from this early exposure to pornography. Everything unravelled from that point and she went from being a happy-go-lucky innocent to a confused and ashamed child.

It has cost the Federal government thousands of dollars in subsidised therapy via Medicare, and the financial cost to our family has been considerable as well. She is still struggling, and her care will be ongoing for the foreseeable future.

There is no safe exposure to this material for young people and children. The fact that any child with access to the internet, on any device, can access the vilest, most depraved imagery alongside the less extreme material is a national disgrace.

I call on you to expedite legislation to make Age Verification for access to pornographic websites the law of the land.

To protect my daughter's privacy I request my name and any identifying details be confidential