

Please find below our submission to the committee.

We are greatly concerned about the ready accessibility that children have to pornography via the internet. Even those having little desire to view such material can now become ensnared in lust by accidental access or being shown pornography by a peer. And the ubiquity of smart phones and other portable internet devices, which are carried and controlled in ever greater numbers by children, magnify this problem.

Statistics back this up, showing that unwanted exposure to pornography among minors is increasing. For example, the number of 10-12 year-olds accidentally seeing porn rose from 9% to 19% between 2000 and 2005, and from 28% to 35% for 13-15 year-olds. In another study of 16-17 year-olds, a large number of both males (84%) and females (60%) had experienced unwanted exposure to pornography whilst online (<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/361-380/tandi368.html>).

The problems caused by this early exposure to pornography are manifold. Jesus Christ teaches us that looking at a woman with lust demonstrates the same heart attitude as the adulterer; and not surprisingly, the evidence of pornography's effect on our society shows us that it is the root of many other evils as well: fornication, sexual assault and domestic violence: (<http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/relationships/bad-in-bed-and-terrible-in-relationships-blame-porn/story-fnet0gt3-1226731336857>). The cumulative damage to individuals and to society as a whole must be staggering.

We therefore believe that regulations to curb the availability of internet pornography to children are now urgently needed; and we particularly urge the committee to support the British example, which requires Internet Service Providers to filter out pornographic material. We realise that such filtering is not perfect, but it is much better than nothing at all, and at least will mean a determined action by an adult is necessary to turn the filter off, ensuring a clean feed is provided to most children and to public wi-fi locations by default.

The American serial murderer, Ted Bundy, who was executed some years ago for his crimes, confessed before he died that his addiction with sexually abusing then murdering several women started with a pornographic magazine he found in a rubbish bin when he was 13 years old. These days, the internet acts as the magazine for other vulnerable people, and may one day lead them down the same path.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret and Bob LINEAGE