The Dangers of Pornography Grade 7

UNIT OVERVIEW

DURATION

- What Every Grade Seven Student Needs to Know About Pornography! 2 x 40 minutes
- What Every Grade Seven Student Needs to Know About Internet Safety! 2 x 40 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The first lesson (delivered in two sessions) will help students define pornography and understand why it is wrong and dangerous, and to become aware how pornography’s creeping domination and violence is evermore present in media, music, video games and advertising.

The second lesson concerns Internet safety.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of grade 7
Students will be able to:

- Recognize human intimacy and sexuality as God-given gifts, to be used as God intended (CGE 6b)
- Understand the negative, harmful and dangerous impact of pornography. (new)
- Apply a decision-making process to make informed choices that honour their own sexuality and that of others. (adapted from Healthy Living, grade 7. Ontario Curriculum, Health and Physical Education)

Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectation

A Reflective, Creative and Holistic Thinker Who:
Makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience

LINKS TO FULLY ALIVE AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

There are no direct links to these two programs, although Internet safety may be dealt with in Health or other subject areas. The Dangers of Pornography is a new topic, although it is grounded in the reverence, dignity and respect underlying both Fully Alive and the Healthy Living programs currently in effect for grade 7.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Today, with the proliferation of the Internet and the increase in domination and violence in media, music and advertising, specific lessons concerning the dangers of pornography are necessary. The following lessons are designed to help our students understand that pornography is a manipulative, exploitive, lucrative industry that does not reflect God’s vision for healthy and holistic sexuality.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church offers this wisdom:

2354 Pornography consists in removing real or simulated sexual acts from the intimacy of the partners, in order to display them deliberately to third parties. It offends against chastity because it perverts the conjugal act, the intimate giving of spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of its participants (actors, vendors, the public), since each one becomes an object of base pleasure and illicit profit for others. It immerses all who are involved in the illusion of a fantasy world. It is a grave offense. Civil authorities should prevent the production and distribution of pornographic materials.

This is the direction we take with our students: pornography is wrong because it leads us away from the wholeness of relationships that God intends for us.

Certainly, the late 20th/early 21st century did not invent trivialization of sexuality, degradation of women, violence, domination, and sexual exploitation of those deemed to be weaker (e.g., women and children).

However, what are new in this time are the accessibility and the pervasiveness of these attitudes towards human sexuality. A generation or two ago, young teens may have stumbled across pornographic magazines. (such as Playboy or Penthouse). Our grandparents thought National Geographic Magazines were risqué! Then came the Internet and technology developed exponentially. Now our youth can access the Internet from their personal cell phones. Truly, the Internet has changed the way we live in society and there will be no return to a nostalgic past. In fact, the innocent world of yesteryear never really existed; for every age has problems and issues that dehumanize persons: the witch hunts of the 17th century, slavery, the Holocaust, child labour, etc. In our time, we still must find ways to guide the next generation.

Although much of this information explosion is positive, there is a dark side to so much accessibility. Parents, guardians, teachers cannot always monitor what their children are watching. Therefore, in our sex-saturated culture, we owe it to our young people to help them become self-monitoring. It is not good enough to tell them ‘just say’ no; rather they need a safe place to ask questions and learn how to negotiate some of the murky waters they are exposed to through media, music, games and Internet. We need to guide them into their own reasoning with patience, firmness, love, and respect. Rather than lecturing or ‘preaching’ to students about the dangers of pornography, we appeal to what they
already know and help them to formulate their own responses to this huge, exploitive industry.

**ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

1. Poster making
2. Dramatization
3. Personal Internet Safety Codes
4. Rap, poem, acrostic, cartoon, dialogue.
5. Debate
7. Journaling

**SUGGESTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS**

As per individual student’s IEP’s such strategies as flexible groupings, less content expectations, scribing, rephrasing, retelling, quizzes done orally, less content expectations, posters rather than written work, etc. are some suggestions.

**BLACK LINE MASTERS:**

BLM I All About Me
BLM II Case Studies

**TEACHER RESOURCES:**

**NOTE:** Although the article below was written within the American legal and political context, there are many good ideas here. Please keep Canadian context in mind.

**PORNOGRAPHY: The Poison Pill**

Written by: Crosby, Fr. Michael OFM Posted on: 03/20/2003
Category: Christian Living
Source: CCN

Every once in a while we hear reports about some crazed person contaminating Halloween candy, or adulterating medicine on a drugstore shelf. We are outraged that familiar aids to feeling good have become deadly because someone injected them with poison. I feel the same way about crude violence and pornography being injected into entertainment. Very often they are unexpected ingredients in an otherwise enjoyable magazine, movie, or home entertainment channel. An ordinary enjoyment becomes a sick expression of the very depravities from which we seek protection. This is
entertainment? I think I am not a prude. I consider the human body a fascinating creation, and all its functions beautiful in proper context. My objection to obscenity is that it distorts this beauty, making it boring and even grotesque. I dislike unwarranted smut and brute violence because they spoil what promised to be a delightful presentation. It's like finding a bug in my soup.

To my mind, obscenity is whatever degrades human dignity and violates the trust basic to human relationships. So what critic and author Norman Cousins wrote about pornography applies also to stark violence, whether physical or psychological:

"The trouble with pornography is not that it corrupts, but that it desensitizes; not that it unleashes the passion; but that it cripples the emotions; not that it encourages a mature attitude, but that it is a perversion to infantile obsessions; not that it removes the blinders, but that it distorts the view. What we have is not liberation, but dehumanization."

Dehumanization is indeed a threat. Clinical psychologist Victor Cline, a professor at the University of Utah, reports research which “clearly suggests personal and psychological harm when individuals immerse themselves in pornography.” His research dealt with the effects of both the pornography of violence (e.g., the "slasher" films) and garden variety porn flicks. He found these patterns among frequent viewers:

"They became addicted by exposure to explicit sex and/or violence, because the appetite for thrills is increased rather than satisfied by viewing such material. They became desensitized by such exposure, so that what at first seemed gross and disturbing was gradually accepted as normal. They tended to be influenced to act-out the brutality portrayed, so that fantasy becomes reality."

Drugs that produce hallucination or artificial "highs" are routinely banned or at least controlled, especially when they prove to be addictive. What about material that produces an emotional addiction to destructive and anti-social fantasies? Surely we deserve protection against poisoning the wellsprings of morality. Such protection is not available in our common law because the courts tend to shield even gross pornography under the First Amendment, and perhaps wisely so, for government censorship has historically proven at least ineffective if not repressive.

So that puts the remedy squarely in the area of personal responsibility. It's up to each of us to acquire and use critical taste to discern the poison served up so frequently by our media. We need to clearly tag the crud for what it is, and encourage our families and friends to distinguish entertainment from pandering, art from degradation, and excitement from morbid fixation. Putting the proper label on adulterated products is the first step. Refusing to ingest them is our most reliable protection. Then we need to guard our loved ones from casual exposure to contamination as we communicate to them positive values and attitudes about respecting the dignity of the human person.

I'm delighted that a recent TV movie -- supposedly a comedy -- broadcast in prime-time and portraying graphically the seduction of a teen-ager by a middle-aged maid, drew the
outrage of many viewers and a reprimand from the FCC. Wide-spread public rejection of the channel and its sponsors was the best remedy against aggressive contamination of the family entertainment hour. That show and its sponsors received the ultimate statement of viewer disapproval: an empty chair and closed wallet.

I propose a similar solution for Christian outrage over a current movie that trashes traditional reverence for Jesus. Instead of engaging in demonstrations that serve only to hype the film, greet it with the protest producers fear most: utter silence. Show your disapproval by staying away. Ignore it into oblivion. These two instances of public rebuke for offensive entertainment indicate that the court of last appeal for censorship will always be individual responsibility. Moral choice cannot be abandoned in the name of fun and games.

WEBSITES FOR ADDITIONAL TEACHER RESOURCES

   www.rcan.org/archbishopjjm_letters/HumanBody.htm

   www.diocese-kcsj.org/Bishop-Finn/pastoral-07.htm

3. www.disciplesnow.com/life/sya_qa.cfm?id=4 and id=314 for two questions and answers about the Church’s teaching on pornography.
The Dangers of Pornography Grade 7

Lesson One

WHAT EVERY GRADE SEVEN STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT PORNOGRAPHY!

top

DESCRIPTION

- Session one begins with a personal inventory designed to show that we are all 3-dimensional people made up of many parts. A class list is then developed. Next, the what, who, why and where of pornography are defined and discussed.

- Session two continues from the All About Me exercise, with the class developing a list of reasons why pornography is wrong and dangerous.

MATERIALS

- BLM 1 All About Me for each student.
- Chart paper
- BLM 2 Case studies

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Students will be able to:

1. Appreciate the relational nature of human sexuality (Fully Alive)
2. Examine and apply reasonable responsible decision making when choosing various forms of entertainment – media, music, video games, books and magazines (adapted from 4.2 FA)
3. Understand why pornography is totally against God’s vision for human sexuality (new)
4. Develop some vocabulary and working definitions in order to talk about the dangers of pornography (new)

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. Design a Healthy Sexuality Includes: poster.
2. Dramatization case studies: BLM 2
NOTES TO THE TEACHER

1. It is important to reassure students that it is normal to be curious about pornography and that maybe they have encountered it already. It’s hard to escape noticing pornography because media, music and magazines are saturated with unhealthy images. But pornography is aimed at drawing people in, luring them into a very destructive way of thinking about human sexuality. Pornography warps understandings of what is normal.

2. Students may ask why most pornographic images are of women or if there is porn designed for women. Deep analysis is not necessary at this level but it is all right to explain that generally males are more ‘turned on’ visually or by what they see. Females are more ‘turned on’ by romance or relationships. Producers of pornography know this and use it to their advantage.

3. There is a disturbing trend in fashion magazines and teen girl magazines today. The advertising images often show women in degrading positions. An element of violence and sense of menace is evident. Also the ‘sexy young girl’, innocent yet provocative looks out from the pages. These magazines are aimed at girls and women, yet among the clouded messages they deliver is a strong message that they must be subservient to males if they want to be noticed.

4. Rather than giving students a list of ‘do nots’, it is more effective to help them do their own critique of the values present in their music, videos, games and magazines. Our goal is to give them the tools to listen, watch, and read with heightened awareness.

5. Pornography’s explicit purpose is to arouse sexual feelings in isolation – with no connection to relationship. This is totally against God’s purpose for human sexuality.

6. Before writing the word pornography on the board, tell the students that you are going to be discussing very mature, sensitive, serious subject matter. It will be normal for them to feel embarrassed or uncomfortable with the topic and there are okay ways to deal with those feelings. Blushing, avoiding eye contact, squirming a little are all acceptable and to be expected. Giggling for a bit is fine but that you know that they will be able to return to a calm, mature discussion of the topic. This topic is not for younger students, so that while they can discuss it in class or with older siblings, parents or guardians, it’s not playground talk. It is introduced in grade 7 because as young adolescents, they are gaining the maturity to deal with sensitive issues and that you respect their need to make sense of dangers around them.
TEACHING / LEARNING STRATEGIES

SESSION ONE:

1. Begin with BLM 1 All About Me.

2. Ask each student to give one quality from their page – list on the board.

3. Note the variety of qualities, discuss observations. Categorize the qualities: emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual, psychological.

4. Formulate a conclusion such as ‘Each of us is made up of a whole lot of different things – thoughts, feelings, likes, dislikes, shapes, sizes, colours, families, hopes, dreams, etc.’

5. Write the word Pornography (see #6 Teacher Notes) on the board and underneath the words ‘what, why, who, where.’ As the discussion proceeds, list a few key concepts under each section.

6. WHAT Make sure the definition includes the fact that pornography (sometimes just called porn) can be pictures or words that focus only on private parts or sex acts. (Refer to Notes to the Teacher).

7. WHY Students may have some idea that pornography is designed to arouse sexual feelings but will require help to articulate their insights. Pornography has nothing to do with love and everything to do with money. Producers make huge profits and will create all sorts of weird pictures or activities to draw (or lure) people in.

8. WHO Pornography most often shows women (and less frequently, men and boys), or parts of women, or young girls in poses that show only body parts rather than real, whole persons in real, loving intimacy of marriage. Any sexual activity portrayed is dishonest and false because love and real intimacy are not shown. This is not how real, loving people share their whole selves through sexual intimacy in a marriage.
   a. Violence and domination are also part of pornography. Sometimes it will show a man in a threatening position such as standing over the woman and treating her in a way that demeans her.

9. WHERE It is obvious that pornography is found in certain magazines, x-rated movies, and on the Internet. But lyrics in certain songs can be pornographic too. Think of words that treat women as sex objects and threaten to hurt them. Video games, too, can be pornographic in the way they depict women. Many ads verge on the pornographic because they depict women as things or objects. Fashion magazines often have disturbing images.
a. End by saying that in the next session; we will develop an understanding of why pornography is both wrong and dangerous. Our All About Me profiles and our What, Why, Who and Where definitions will guide our conclusions.

SESSION TWO

1. Begin by reviewing the two main points from yesterday: a) each of us is made up of a lot of thoughts, feelings, emotions, abilities, relationships, etc., and b) pornography shows people as objects and body parts.

2. Either as a Journal entry or small group discussion, have students complete the following statement: The trouble with pornography is that....

3. Share the journal entries (only those with new insights to offer – no need to have every one read) or group conclusions – post on chart paper.

4. Make sure they include facts such as: pornography doesn’t show whole people, no love, not God’s plan for the gift of sexuality, people are things, no relationship, involves power over someone else, often violence is included, dishonest, not the way real people express their love, it makes money by degrading human beings, etc.

5. Finally, develop a list of reasons why pornography is dangerous. You will have to guide this discussion to make sure the following points are emphasized:

   a) Pornography is dangerous because … it takes away from our dignity as people created in God’s image.
      i. Being created in God’s image means that we have been created to be in relationship, to love one another as God loves us. God has given us the most wonderful ability to be co-creators through the gift of human sexuality.

   b) Pornography is dangerous because… it only focuses on the act of sex.
      i. The reason that sexual intimacy (intercourse) belongs in marriage is because it is only there that each partner has the full freedom to share themselves totally. Along with the right to give their whole bodies to each other, marriage partners take on the responsibility to care for each other in all aspects of their being.

   c) Pornography is dangerous because… it portrays the gift of sexuality as a thing to be used.
      i. Pornography gives a distorted image of this gift of sexuality by making it only about body parts – breasts, vaginas, and penises. It denies the importance of the whole person.
d) **Pornography is dangerous because…** producers use it to get rich without any care for the damage they do.
   i. Producers of pornography make millions because they know it is possible to lure people (including youth) away from relationships into the isolation of porn.

e) **Pornography is dangerous because…** it leads away from relationships and healthy development.
   i. Teens have two huge tasks to accomplish as they grow into adulthood – one is to complete school in order to prepare for whatever their life work will be, and the other is to develop socially and emotionally through relationships.
   
   ii. If pornography becomes a habit, it takes the user away from relationships and reaching out, becoming involved, learning to get along, making friends, growing up. In other words, pornography could even become an addiction that stunts the user’s growth and development.
   
   iii. If pornography becomes a habit, it will shape the user’s thoughts without them even realizing it – will take away the dignity, reverence and respect that God gives to our bodies and that God wants us to give to our bodies and the bodies of others.

f) **Finally, pornography is dangerous because…** when one deliberately seeks it out, it leads away from wholeness.
   i. God’s call to each of you is to develop in all areas during your teen years. The danger with pornography is getting stuck in a very immature place.
   
   ii. It is important, as young teens, to know that pornography is out there and not to be totally shocked if you stumble across it by accident (especially on the Internet. The following lesson will focus on Internet safety). By the same token, you need to have enough information about these dangers of pornography so that you can make responsible choices about your entertainment. Your parent or other trusted adult will not always be able to make decisions for you. You have to start taking ownership for your own choices.

6. After the ‘pornography is dangerous because…’ discussions, divide the class into small groups. Present each group with a case study (BLM 2). They will work up a skit to present to the class that shows how they might handle these situations.
ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES

Search for Catholic Youth Update: type in the title then click on Archive for the following on-line publications:

1. The Entertainment Culture: How Does it Grab You?

This Youth Update probes the following questions:

- Is something O.K just because it's funny and gets a laugh?
- Is something O.K. because it's just a show (or a song or a game)?
- If entertainment reflects "real life," and shows the way things really are, does that make it all right?
- The film/CD/TV show has some good parts to it. Does that make something mostly crude suitable as a whole?

2. Wired Up and Plugged in: The Influence of the Media

This Youth Update asks:

- Is Media a Monster?
- Is all media to be mistrusted?
- Is media itself some great evil? No.

You have to sort it all out—just as you sort out other influences in your life. People create media. You know you are capable of both good and evil, right and wrong. So are the people who create media.

True, excellent movies, songs and publications are created all the time. Many teens, though, don't listen very closely to lyrics and don't think much about the underlying message of what they see and hear.

You can choose to be influenced by positive, life-giving thoughts—or not.
**ALL ABOUT ME**

1. My middle name is ____________________

2. My eyes are ___________________ and my hair is ____________________.

3. My favourite food is ____________________.

4. My favourite colour is ____________________.

5. I really dislike (cannot be a person!) ____________________.

6. My family celebrates at _________________________________.

7. I was born in ________________________.

8. Pets? ________________________________.

9. In my spare time I ________________________.

10. Instruments I play. ________________________________.

11. I’m really good at ________________________________.

12. Something that makes me happy. ________________________.

13. Something that makes me sad. __________________________.

14. When I grow up ________________________________.

15. My wish for the world is ________________________________.

16. Something that worries me. ________________________________.

17. To me, God is like ____________________________________.

18. Jesus guides me to ____________________________________.

19. My best subject is ____________________________________.

20. My hero or heroine is ____________________________________.
Case Studies

1. Four friends are walking through the park one afternoon when they come across a stack of porn magazines.

2. Four friends are having a sleepover. The parents have finally fallen asleep and one friend suggests watching a porn channel ‘because no one will ever know’.

3. You have just bought a CD of your favourite music. One of the songs that you never heard before talks about women in a terrible way.

4. You are doing some research on the net for a project when suddenly a porn site pops up.

5. You know one of your friends has been watching porn on the Internet for a while. Your friend keeps saying that it’s just funny, no big deal.

6. You and your friends really like a certain fashion magazine but lately the ads have been making you feel uncomfortable. The women look like plastic dolls rather than human persons. Sometimes the clothes or the poses the models are in show private parts.

7. One of your friends thinks the only way to avoid porn is to get rid of the TV, the computer, and the CD player.

8. Your friends are over for dinner and you begin to talk with your parents about what you have learned about pornography in Family Life.
The Dangers of Pornography Grade 7

Lesson Two

WHAT EVERY GRADE SEVEN STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT INTERNET SAFETY!

description

- This lesson helps students to develop their own personal code for Internet safety and to design a contract between them and their parents.

materials

- Access to computer lab
- Preview suggested web sites
- Decide if safety quizzes will be printed or given orally
- Discover the whereabouts of the Grade 7 CyberCops Mirror Image program (see Teacher Notes)

notes to the teacher

1. Check with your school/board to see if there is a program on Internet Safety that the students have been taught and that you can build on in the teaching of this lesson. Review of Internet issues is critical in order to assist more independent early teens in monitoring their own behaviour.

2. Knowledge about the dangers on the Internet gives power to avoid those dangers.

3. The Ontario government, in collaboration with OPHEA, has developed the CyberCops program - interactive CD-ROMs with accompanying Parent/Teacher guides. These programs have been distributed to all schools in the province which have grade 7 and 8. Mirror Image, the first game in the series was distributed for grade 7 in January 2006 and Air Dogs, for grade 8, in February 2007.

4. Police emphatically say NO WEB CAMS OR COMPUTERS IN CHILDREN AND TEENS’ BEDROOMS.

5. Review your own School Board’s policy regarding Internet Safety.

6. There are many wonderful Internet sites that deal with Internet safety that would be appropriate to view with your students. Some sites provide helpful quizzes that could even be done orally. Most local police services have some Internet safety information.
SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Students will be able to:

1. Recognize that negative, harmful and dangerous pressures involving pornography are present on the Internet and because of this, will develop a personal code of Internet safety. (new)

2. Understand that Internet pornography is a manipulative, exploitive multi-million dollar business designed to lure people away from healthy sexual intimacy. (new)

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. Group report on an Internet code of safety.

2. Individual student codes of Internet safety for a specific audience (self, class, younger siblings, younger students)

3. A rap version of Internet safety tips.

4. A poem, an acrostic, a cartoon or a 2-person dialogue that deals with Internet safety.

5. In Theme 4, Topic 1 of the current grade 7 Fully Alive, there is a black line master entitled Making a Decision (p. 105 Teacher’s Manual) which could be used for making positive Internet choices.

6. Oral Communication Debate: Now That We Are In Grade Seven, We Should Have Computers In Our Bedrooms: Pro and Con

7. Journal entry: What Does Internet Safety Have to Do With God’s Plan For Human Sexuality?
TEACHING / LEARNING STRATEGIES

1) Begin with what students already know about both Internet safety and the reasons that it is important. List their responses in two columns: WHAT and WHY.

2) Choose one or several of the listed sites to engage the topic.

Be sure to find and preview each site before using them with your students.

- **www.police.york.on.ca Be Net Aware** It has poster suggestions and a template for a Be Net Aware contract. It also includes a *Net Aware Child Exploitation Video*. Make sure to preview it first. The video shows the young teen imagining she is talking to a peer while on the other side is an older man luring her in. (The visual is more powerful than our words.) Grade 7’s need to be aware of these kinds of specific dangers and the classroom provides a safe context and guidance to discuss them in class. *Be Net Aware* is best viewed as a whole class activity with your supervision.

- **MissingKids.com** Internet safety quizzes for kids can be found at *Internet Safety Quiz* and clicking on *Internet Safety Quiz For Kids* or *SafeKids Quiz* which you could give orally. They might be a bit simple for grade 7’s but are excellent discussion starters.

- **http://techcorps.org/resources/Internetsafety/getnet.htm** has very good small group discussion scenarios plus a contract that may be printed for students and parents.

- **http://www.netsmartzkids.org/indexFL.htm** is a fun site using rap to develop Internet safety rules.

3) Follow-up the website interaction with or more of the following activities:
   a. Small groups of 4-5 develop a code for Internet safety. As each group reports develop a class code to be posted in a prominent place.
   b. Students can decorate their own copy of the code. These can be signed by themselves, parents/guardians, than laminated and posted near their computer at home. Even if they do not have a computer at home, this exercise is still valuable to share with parents/guardians.
   c. Students could write and perform, in small groups, their own rap versions of Internet safety tips. NetSmartZKids (see references below) provides a great guide for this activity.
d. Compose a poem, an acrostic, a cartoon or a 2-person dialogue that deals with Internet safety.

4) In Theme 4, Topic 1 of the current grade 7 Fully Alive, there is a black line master entitled _Making a Decision_ (p. 105 Teacher’s Manual) which could be used for making positive Internet choices.

5) Debate: Now That We Are In Grade Seven, We Should Have Computers In Our Bedrooms: pro and con

6) Have students develop a _Stay Safe_ code for younger siblings or primary students.

7) Journal entry: _What Does Internet Safety Have to Do With God’s Plan For Human Sexuality?_

**ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES**

1. www.torontopolice.on.ca/child Internet safety – excellent information
4. Contact CyberCops: CyberCops
   OPHEA
   1185 Eglington Ave. E. Suite #501
   Toronto ON M3C 3C6
   416 126 7120

**ADDITIONAL TEACHER RESOURCES**

1. The RCMP has good adult reference information at http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/mb/webpages/Internet_e.htm
3. www.oprah.com _Child Predator’s Watch List_ has a very powerful message which is best used as teacher reference.
4. Some sites provide excellent background information for teachers/parents/guardians but are too wordy for students. E.g. http://safeteens.com/ has information on how to recognize _grooming_ and _Teen Safety on the Information Highway_.

The Dangers of Pornography Grade 7 – Lesson 2 17