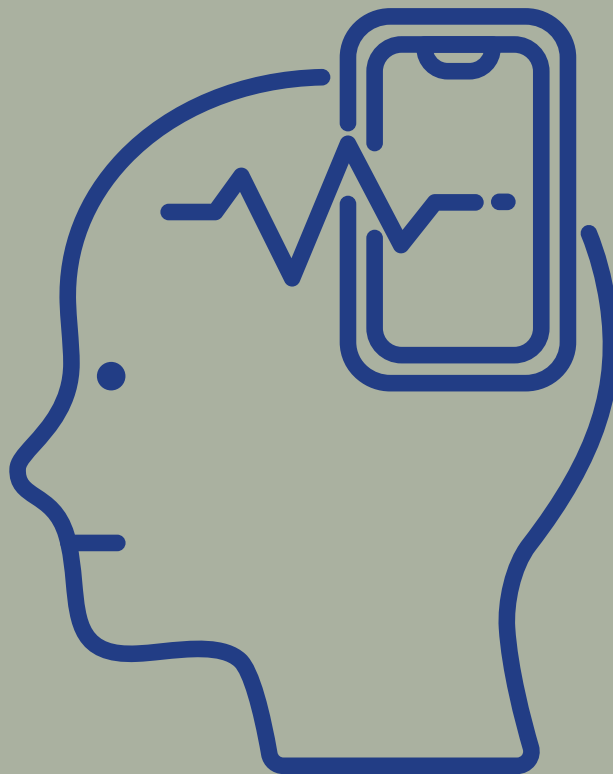


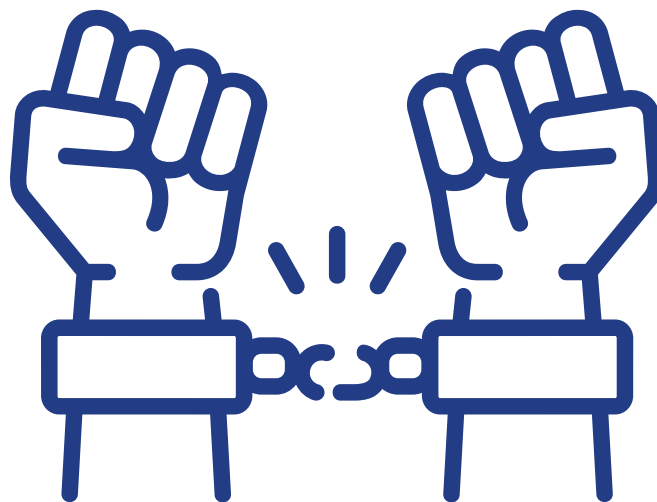
The Pornography Epidemic



THE BONDAGE OF PORNOGRAPHY

In the Church Ambassador Network, a ministry of The Christian Education League, we work to free people from bondage, defined as being captured, unable to escape from circumstance or behavior. There are many activities in our culture that may begin as a choice but become addictions, leading to bondage. Pornography has become an especially large problem in our society today. Many American men and a growing number of women are addicted to pornography. But perhaps most alarming is the number of minor children who are being exposed to pornography at increasingly younger ages, with some studies showing as young as 7 or 8 years old.

The Church Ambassador Network seeks to come alongside the State of Maine to help people break free from this bondage, as well as to prevent individuals, particularly minors, from ever getting addicted to pornography.





PORNOGRAPHY'S IMPACT ON YOUTH

With 84% of teenagers owning a smartphone and 53% of youth owning a smartphone by age 11, it is not a matter of **if** our young people will be exposed to pornography, but **when**. We must prepare our youth to know how to respond **before** they encounter it.

10

AVERAGE AGE KIDS IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE SEEN PORNOGRAPHY

"What Porn Does to Teen Brains—and How to Keep it Off Their Devices" Wallstreet Journal

60%


OF SURVEYED CHILDREN HAVE REPORTED SEEING PORNOGRAPHY FOR THE FIRST TIME AT HOME.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016

75%

OF SURVEYED PARENTS SAID THEY HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY WITH THEIR CHILDREN.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016



"A teen's brain is at its peak of dopamine production and neuroplasticity, making it highly vulnerable to addiction and rewiring as their brain is not yet finished developing."

Gary Wilson
yourbrainonporn.com

71%

OF TEENAGERS ENCOUNTER PORNOGRAPHY WITHOUT LOOKING FOR IT.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016, Page 41



47 Million

PORNOGRAPHY VIDEOS ARE VIEWED DAILY BY 7 TO 14-YEAR-OLDS IN THE UNITED STATES.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016



PORNOGRAPHY'S IMPACT IN THE UNITED STATES

With the creation of the internet, pornography has become extremely accessible, widespread, and very difficult to regulate.

2.4 Million

PEOPLE VISIT THE TOP 3
PORN SITES IN THE UNITED
STATES EVERY MINUTE.

"Top 100: The Most Visited websites in the US—2021 Top websites edition" Accessed on 28 March, 2022



A SURVEY OF ADULTS
CONDUCTED IN 2018 IN THE
U.S. FOUND AN ESTIMATED
91.5% OF MEN AND
60.2% OF WOMEN
REPORT THAT THEY'VE
CONSUMED PORN IN THE
PAST MONTH.

"Pornography Consumption, Modality and Function in a Large Internet Sample" Journal of sex research, Solano, I., Eaton, N. R., & O'Leary, K. D. (2020)

109 Billion

PORNOGRAPHIC VIDEOS WERE
VIEWED ON PORNHUB IN 2018.

Pornhub Insights (2018) - 2018 Year In Review

12,500 GB

OF PORNOGRAPHY VIDEOS WERE UPLOADED
EVERY MINUTE TO PORNHUB IN 2019.

Pornhub Insights (2019) - 2019 Year In Review

TODAY, PORN SITES
RECEIVE MORE WEB
TRAFFIC IN THE U.S.
THAN TWITTER,
INSTAGRAM, TIKTOK,
NETFLIX, PINTEREST,
AND ZOOM COMBINED.

"The Most Visited websites in the US—2021 Top websites edition" Accessed on 28 March, 2022



PORNOGRAPHY'S IMPACT ON THE CHURCH

With the creation of the internet, pornography has become extremely accessible, widespread, and very difficult to regulate.

41%

OF PRACTICING CHRISTIAN MALES 13-24 ACTIVELY SEEK OUT PORN AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016

38%

OF PASTORS SURVEYED SAY PORN IS A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM IN THEIR CHURCH.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016

7%

OF CHURCHES HAVE A MINISTRY FOR THOSE ADDICTED TO PORNOGRAPHY.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016

14%

OF SENIOR PASTORS STRUGGLE WITH PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION.

20%

OF YOUTH PASTORS STRUGGLE WITH PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION.

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016

MOST EFFECTIVE RESOURCES



**MENTORS
ACCOUNTABILITY
COUNSELING**

"The Porn Phenomenon" Josh McDowell, 2016



PORNOGRAPHY'S ADDICTIVE NATURE

Endless screen time has made pornography more accessible than it ever has been before. By providing millions of hours of videos constantly accessible just a finger click away, pornography has become one of the world's largest addictions, affecting all ages and people groups, regardless of class, race, ethnicity, or even sex.

Impact on the Brain

CHEMICALS
Pornography causes the release of pleasure chemicals like dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, and epinephrine in the brain.

REWIRING
The brain rewires itself to accommodate the extra chemicals.

FRONTAL LOBES
The area of the brain responsible for making decisions and logically thinking through situations and scenarios is the part of the brain most affected by addiction.

DEPENDENCY
The body builds up a tolerance to and a dependency on the chemicals. The brain goes from wanting the pleasure chemicals to needing them.

Fightthenewdrug.org and Josh McDowell Ministries

21% **63%**

21% OF WOMEN AND 63% OF MEN AGES 18-30 VIEW PORN MULTIPLE TIMES A WEEK.

Fightthenewdrug.org and Josh McDowell Ministries

64%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 13-24 ACTIVELY SEEK OUT PORNOGRAPHY WEEKLY OR MORE.

"The Nature and Dynamics of Internet Pornography Exposure for Youth" Chiara Sabina, Janis Wolak, and David Finkelhor



PORNOGRAPHY'S CONSEQUENCES

All bondage destroys far more than people ever imagine and eventually ends in spiritual death. Pornography is no exception to this. It ravages relationships all around, beginning with the addicted individuals themselves and rippling out from there, devastating others as well.

Destroys Relationships and Marriages

RESEARCH CONSISTENTLY SHOWS THAT PORN CONSUMERS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO LATER EXPERIENCE DIVORCE OR BREAKUP - EVEN AFTER CONTROLLING THEIR ADDICTION FOR THE SAKE OF MARITAL HAPPINESS, SEXUAL SATISFACTION, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Perry, S.L. (2018): Pornography us and marital separation: Evidence from two-wave panel data

Impacts More Than the Addicts

WOMEN WHOSE PARTNERS CONSUME PORNOGRAPHY TEND TO EXPERIENCE MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS, FEEL MORE OBJECTIFIED, HAVE POORER BODY IMAGE, AND ARE EVEN MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP EATING DISORDER SYMPTOMS.

Tylka, T.L., & Kroon Van Diest, A.M. (2015): You Looking at Her "Hot" Body May Not be "Cool" for Me: Integrating Male Partners

Hurts Mental Health

STUDIES SHOW THAT PORNOGRAPHY INCREASES LONELINESS AND THE DESIRE FOR SUICIDE, LOWERS SELF-ESTEEM, AND NEGATIVELY AFFECTS OVERALL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING.

Brown, C.C., Durtschi, J.A, Carroll, J.S., & Willoughby, B.J. (2017): Understanding and predicting classes of college students who use pornography



BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF BONDAGE AND ADDICTIONS

ADDICTIONS PROMISE LIFE AND ENTERTAINMENT BUT END ONLY IN BONDAGE AND LOSS OF CONTROL OF ONE'S OWN LIFE.

All addictions start the same. They promise life and entertainment, and at first, they provide a sense of that. This makes people want to go back and bring their friends along too. Vices seem harmless and cheap at first, and it all begins with a choice. But over time, that once-innocent choice becomes an addiction. Now, though some may desire to quit, they can't. They keep going back for more, even against their own will. The addictions are no longer entertaining, life-giving, or cheap. They now cost the addicts everything, including their time, resources, physical health, and relationships.



“Everything is permissible for me,” but not everything is helpful. “Everything is permissible for me,” but I will not be brought under the control of anything.” 1 Corinthians 6:12

ADDICTIONS ARE COSTLY FOR INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES.

Not only do addictions come at a financial or time cost, they also come at a great relational cost, which is the greatest cost of them all. Over time, addicts lose marriages, parental rights, and friendships. Those costs that were once only a personal cost now come at a great cost to the families and communities as well.



“But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.” James 1:14-15

FREEDOM REQUIRES A BROKEN HEART AND INTERVENTION.

It is very difficult to help those who neither want help nor desire to change. In the Scriptures, salvation follows repentance and recognition of a need of a Savior. Repentance is pulling a 180. It is recognizing our wrongs and wanting to do right. Being set free from addiction requires a humble, repentant spirit with a desire to change.



“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

THE LAW IS A TOOL AND A GUIDE TO PROTECT PEOPLE FROM BONDAGE AND ADDICTIONS.

The law cannot save people, nor can it eliminate wrong behavior. The law is not, and must not be, the final solution. However, it must be a part of it. The law has been used as a tool to serve and assist people for generations. Laws will never eradicate addictions, but they can guide people away from addictions and offer protection from those who desire to bring others into that bondage. Laws must continue to help people break free from their addictions and, more importantly, protect them from ever getting addicted in the first place.



“The law, then, was our guardian until Christ, so that we could be justified by faith.” Galatians 3:24



“What should we say then? Is the law sin? Absolutely not! But I would not have known sin if it were not for the law.” Romans 7:7



OPPRESSORS WANT TO KEEP PEOPLE IN BONDAGE

Oppression is when someone intentionally uses power and authority to keep others under their control. A lot of money can be made off of those who are addicted. They are guaranteed repeat customers who do not require clever marketing schemes or good service to maintain business. The first sale is all it takes, and they are sold for life. Companies or individuals who make money from seductive products have a vested interest in keeping people addicted.



“Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.” Isaiah 1:17



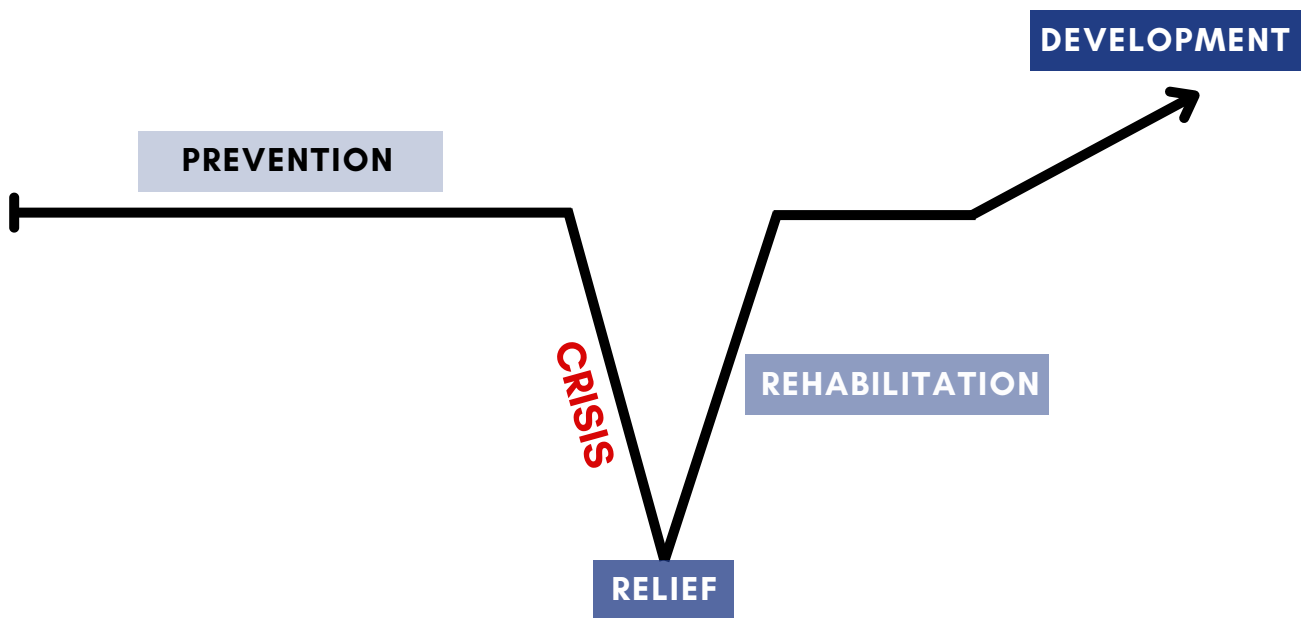
“Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth, or gives to the rich, will only come to poverty.” Proverbs 22:16



COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Pornography is poison to the mind, body, and soul and ultimately proves destructive and even deadly spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. Studies show increased levels, and even extremely severe levels, of depression, anxiety, and stress among porn users. Given the prevalence, popularity, and resulting negative effects of porn, we understand that pornography is a growing and serious cause of mental health crises in our society today that must be properly addressed.

In order to break bondage, including pornography addiction, it is essential that our Church and government strategies take a comprehensive approach, as illustrated below.



PREVENTION
Stopping potential crisis or trauma

RELIEF
Urgent and temporary provision of emergency aid to reduce immediate suffering

REHABILITATION
Restore people and their communities to positive elements of their pre-crisis conditions

DEVELOPMENT
Ongoing change that moves people closer to being in right relationship with God and others

WHAT CAN MAINE'S LEGISLATIVE BRANCH DO?

The Maine Legislative Branch can work to address growing pornography addiction, particularly with minors, by doing the following.

Device Filters



AGE VERIFICATION

Treatment Funding





WHAT CAN MAINE'S EXECUTIVE BRANCH DO?

The State of Maine can work to address growing pornography addiction, particularly with minors, by doing the following.

Study

COMMISSION A STUDY THROUGH ONE OF MAINE'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES ON PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION IN THE STATE OF MAINE.

Prevent

CREATE A PORNOGRAPHY PREVENTION PROGRAM THAT EDUCATES MINORS ON THE HARM OF PORNOGRAPHY AND HOW TO SAY NO WHEN THEY SEE IT ON THE INTERNET. PREVENTATIVE EDUCATION HAS PROVED EFFECTIVE REGARDING CIGARETTES, DRUGS, AND ALCOHOL.

Treat

ADD PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION TO ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, WHICH ALREADY INCLUDE ALCOHOL, DRUGS, GAMBLING, SUICIDE, AND MENTAL HEALTH.

Recognize

THE GOVERNOR OF MAINE CAN RECOGNIZE THE GROWING ADDICTION OF PORNOGRAPHY BY SIGNING A PROCLAMATION DECLARING A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS, PARTICULARLY AMONG MAINE'S YOUTH.



WHAT CAN CHURCHES DO?

With 93% of churches not having ministry resources to help those addicted to pornography, the goal of the Church Ambassador Network is to raise awareness of the pornography epidemic and to remove barriers for churches who wish to minister to those struggling with this addiction.

Educate

OUR GOAL IS TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND PROMOTE EVENTS THAT COMMUNICATE THE CURRENT STATUS OF PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION IN THE CHURCH, NATION, AND WORLD.



"Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible."

Ephesians 5:11-13

Inspire

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE STATE OF MAINE, THE CHURCH AMBASSADOR NETWORK WILL WORK TO INSPIRE THE CHURCH TO ENGAGE IN THE BATTLE OF PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION.



"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works."

Hebrews 10:23-24



Equip

AS PART OF EQUIPPING THE CHURCH, THE CHURCH AMBASSADOR NETWORK'S GOAL IS TO PROVIDE A RESOURCE TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS, PASTORS, AND MINISTRY LEADERS TO BETTER EQUIP THEM IN ADDRESSING PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION IN THEIR HOMES AND CHURCHES.



"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works."

Ephesians 4:16-17



AN INITIATIVE OF
THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION LEAGUE