

# The Internet and Pornography

## Introduction

Dear Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Major Superiors, esteemed colleagues and fellow participants, it is an honor and privilege to address you this day. Thank you for allowing us to present to you. In the words of his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, the new technologies pose a great opportunity and this age is being “transformed.” “It is an ever more commonly held opinion that, just as the Industrial Revolution in its day brought about a profound transformation in society by the modifications it introduced into the cycles of production and the lives of workers, so today the radical changes taking place in communications are guiding significant cultural and social developments. The new technologies are not only changing the way we communicate, but communication itself, so much so that it could be said that we are living through a period of vast cultural transformation. This means of spreading information and knowledge is giving birth to a new way of learning and thinking, with unprecedented opportunities for establishing relationships and building fellowship.” Let us take these words to heart!

## Today’s Focus

This time together must not only focus on the possibilities that modern technology pose for us and those we serve, but also the perils and problems associated with inappropriate, often troubling and possibly new addictive processes as well. His Holiness also challenges us and the young to be aware of the possible dangers that these new opportunities may pose to us and our very way of being, “Entering cyberspace can be a sign of an authentic search for personal encounters with others, provided that attention is paid to avoiding dangers such as enclosing oneself in a sort of parallel existence, or excessive exposure to the virtual world. In the search for sharing, for “friends”, there is the challenge to be authentic and faithful, and not give in to the illusion of constructing an artificial public profile for oneself.”

## Our Tradition

The focus for today must be about the safety and care of the children, the young adults, parents, the young and the old - all those we serve. This has been and is our tradition. The current crisis may challenge us in this regard, but let us be clear about this effort and this reality. It is always in our tradition to care for the “least amongst us.” [Matthew 25:40] Certainly these days pose new and challenging problems for all who use the Internet and technology, and we will by implication be specifically addressing these individuals who parent our children, teach our children, and pastor our children but they themselves as adults might be also overwhelmed by these challenges and opportunities and they too must be vigilant and sensitive to the possibilities and the problems today associated with the appropriate use of the Internet and technology. Research across cultures and countries indicates that the youth, college students and young adults are the primary users of these new technologies. We would be well served to enter it wisely, completely, and with due haste.

Our first and primary concern is safety. This has been and is central to our tradition. Children and adults often enter this world without formal education and training in the proper and appropriate use of the Internet and technology. Research into the negative effects of these gifts demonstrates that if we educate children and ourselves into the ways we might better use these realities, the possibilities of misuse and addiction decrease dramatically. Simply put, research demonstrates that “normal” Internet and proper use of technology must be a taught discipline like the ability to drive. By way of analogy, we must first be driven by an adult who has learned how to drive, we must feel safe and we must learn the rules of the “road.” In most parts of the world, we would never give a child keys to a car and place him or her behind the wheel without making sure that they are mature enough to see, to view the road, to learn how to turn the car, manage it properly, to know how to read a map, use speed appropriately, and how to safely park and maintain a car. Why do we do differently with the Internet, cell phones, and modern technology?

Clearly, in Rome, when you see how one drives here... many parents of Rome may have forgotten to educate their children properly or like many today with the Internet may have abandoned any formal education in the basics of how to use the roads and the information highway wisely and prudently... but this may not have been the wisest form of education for us who have to get out of their way ...

for fear, on the streets of Rome and/or on the information highway. Fear reduction and education in these matters is of paramount importance and is about safety on the roads of Rome and on the information highway in the new millennium.

### A New Way of Relating

The second key point in the use and the misuse of the Internet and technology is that we must see this gift in a different light than most other realities that we have seen and known. This gift, this reality, is evolving and changing as we speak. This demands a new way of relating and adapting. The minute we wrote this presentation, new technologies and new ways of driving on the Internet have been developed and are demanding different responses and additional guidelines. Most companies, governments, and most universities have what is called “planned obsolescence”... in other words; they know that as soon as a computer is sold and bought; the next version that is quicker and better is being prepared to replace the one you just purchased. You cannot manage research, you cannot manage business, you cannot keep pace with the new information that is changing and evolving, if you too do not adapt. This new reality, therefore, presents us with a dramatic and new way of knowing, relating, and being. If we fail to understand this new way and grasp its dynamic nature, our children, parents, priests, our people, and our Church will be at grave risk. Safety would be and could be placed in jeopardy. Again, basic safety, basic knowledge would be compromised and we would be left vulnerable. We can stay stagnant or we can have processes that change with these new modes or processes of informational and relational importance. Without careful attention to this dynamic, our theology and our sense of meaning could be discarded. Children, young adults, parents, teachers, and our priests could be used and discarded as mere objects much more quickly and more rapidly in an already materialistic, hypersexual, and rapidly paced age.

### New “Rules” for the “Road”

It is essential that any new manner of behaving and relating must also have new “rules” of using this technology. As such, the word, “rules” may not apply.

Attached to this presentation, please find one religious order's way of managing these new public domains and one Archdiocese's way of responding to these new realities. These are "Guidelines" and as such will change and need to change. As a caveat or concrete suggestion, use language that is adaptable. "Guidelines" or "Policies" is a word in English that connotes concrete suggestions without being set in stone or something that is and will be amended as technology and problems emerge. As we referenced before, speed limits and stop lights in Rome mean one thing here... (if there are any) as opposed to a speed limit in London or Berlin where say precision and attention to every detail and compliance take on new meaning and shall we say, enforcement? In technology and in the use of the Internet, one's "Guidelines" must be adaptable to the ever-changing advances in technology which occur and will occur frequently.

The University of Southern California (USC, the Annenberg School/Center for a Digital Future) is one of the premier centers in the world that manage and research international data on the use and trends within the Internet. They have extensive data about the Internet for businesses, users, and academic institutions, and they report, "Through 10 years of studies, we have observed one particularly fascinating constant: that online behavior changes relentlessly, and users and non-users develop attitudes and actions that are constantly in flux as technology emerges, and then thrives or withers, this report, the nine studies that preceded it, and those that will follow, are our ongoing attempt to chronicle this extraordinary interplay between technology and behavior." International data on the use of the Internet seems to indicate a tremendous ability to engage, relate and become healthier and connected to those we love and with whom we work, this new and reassuring data is useful and important.

#### A Gospel Understanding of the Gift

Few presentations start with this aspect of the giftedness of the Internet and the emerging role of technology, but this is essential in this presentation. New technologies and the Internet itself are truly incredible gifts. This "transformation," as His Holiness describes to us, is happening now and will be happening in the foreseeable future. Information exchange is enormous, ever-expanding and is more and more rapid. New cell phone technologies are helping in every aspect of the globe and helping rich and poor alike. Farmers in Africa are getting up to date prices to better anticipate their market needs while in their very fields that they are harvesting their crops. "Wall Street" and "Main Street"

are benefiting from immediate and an explosive, omni-present business and marketing information. Communication, classrooms, relationships, business meetings, conferences, information, entertainment that is convenient, immediate and universally accessible makes this new reality an ever-unfolding rich and seemingly endless possibility. It is also critical to not panic.

Additionally, Most researchers are finding healthy and appropriate use of the Internet leads to more social connection not less and healthier relationships, in general. One has to avoid what one researcher calls, “jovenoia” similar to the English word, paranoia. There is little evidence to suggest that the Internet or technology is “horrible, evil or awful” for our youth or us. Such language and such a panic are clearly unwarranted. In contrast there is growing data to suggest the opposite.

In the words of the Holy Father, we are undergoing another “revolution,” similar to many such revolutions in the history of mankind and our planet. This is the grace of this moment in history and this is also the very challenge and the very peril of this moment. If we fail to grasp this gift, we fail ourselves, our people in our care, and we fail our God, by not responding to the mandate of the Lord in the Gospel of John, “to care for those I have given you.” This is the Gospel understanding of this unique gift that we are presented with in the Internet and in the emerging role of technology. Early research across cultures and countries tends to support the simple yet central notion that the Internet enhances familial and social bonds. This data has now been replicated and is now becoming well accepted information about internet use. The “Arab Spring” is testimony to the possible benefits in the political arena of the use of technology and the Internet.

#### Understanding Tentative and New Data

As with any gift, there can be a dark side. Reliable information and news can often be sacrificed and research across cultures shows this suspicion of the Internet. Additionally, canon law and our Holy Father have made it clear that the parents must be the first teachers in all matters of sexuality. However, research across cultures clearly indicates that they are not doing this. This is a major international problem and concern. Bishops, pastors, and teachers need to be quite clear that they cannot talk about preventing child abuse until and if they know that the child has been taught of the essential God-given grace, beauty, and giftedness of sexuality. Research also indicates that if a child first views and or experiences

sexuality before understanding it from his or her parents, then sexuality is framed or etched into them in an unhealthy or maladaptive template. The Centers for Disease Control, the National Institutes of Health in the United States and International researchers across various countries have issued warnings to teachers and parents on the proper and controlled use of the Internet and technology, i.e. cell phones. Texting sexting and the improper use of these media is a growing trend and concern. Mobile “porn” is a new and dangerously simple form of sex slavery and trafficking with women and children. Parents and teachers need to exercise their traditional roles but now in a new medium with new approaches.

It appears that the brain and its development are being negatively affected by the use, overuse, and misuse of these realities. New data is emerging everyday and no one study has definitely defined the term or diagnoses of an “Internet addiction.” But early data is suggesting that too early use of technology and repeated overuse of technology could be having negative effects on the neuro-development of children and teens. Apparently, early data seems to suggest uncontrolled effects on children seem to inhibit more apparent and interpersonal relational abilities, eye movement and attentiveness, inability to maintain face to face communication, attentiveness, and verbal skills. Additionally, any predispositions to other mental disorders seem to become more exacerbated, e.g. depression or social deficit disorders. More strikingly, researchers are beginning to see neural pathways in the brain that mimic drug addictions and seem to indicate a more insidious and a new possible addictive nature in Internet pornographic use.

In summary, prevention measures to halt early exposure are essential but also early intervention is highly recommended in problematic use and behaviors before one sees a full blown addiction to the Internet itself and Internet pornography. Hence, the earlier the intervention is made with this disease, the easier the ability to treat and manage it. This point cannot be overstated. The good news in this reality is that we have managed well the addictions of alcohol and drugs in our church, in our clergy, and in our people; in this regard, we do not have to re-invent the wheel. We know this reality quite well. However, we have to utilize that knowledge that we already possess and use it earlier not later. This we know and this we have done well in our past. We cannot forget that as we talk more explicitly about all that we may not know.

## The Differences in this New “Reality”

Data across countries and cultures seems to indicate that the young in overwhelmingly large numbers are fully engaged in Internet use in academic and in home settings. Use varies according to availability and socio-economic realities but when it is available, the Internet provides for a new and extensive way of relating across age groups. It is also clear that the older the age, the less they use it; interestingly new cross-cultural data suggest consistent little interest in the older generations in the Internet’s utility. This is alarming data for this group since the information age may leave many behind. Interestingly, also, fewer people are finding the Internet a “good thing” for cultures and societies, in general (68% down to 57%).

In view of this, several new differences in the emerging use of technology may cause us to pause and have serious concern and alarm. One new and key difference in the use and abuse of the Internet is the fact that one’s basic sense of reality may often come into question quickly. Let’s discuss this a bit more. Several aspects of “reality testing” or to be “oriented” to reality might typically include the following:

1. Knowledge of current time and space
2. Conventional views of self
3. Accurate views of self
4. Ability to accurately interpret others’ presence
5. Ability to anticipate consequences of actions/behaviors
6. Think about and behave appropriately in various situations

The Internet – the overuse and constant use of it – puts many of these ordinary ways of relating to reality - self, others and the environment - into question. “I often feel like I am the only one in the world.” Often, Internet addicts or those engaged in problematic behaviors on the Internet become immune to the basics of time and space... Reality escapes them....

## Defining Problematic Versus Addictive Behaviors

Additionally, Internet addicts seem to lack the ability to know how to drive down this information highway without getting into serious trouble, without continuously falling into a pit or hole. They fail to literally “see” the road ahead of them. If we look at the very meaning of the word, “pitfall”, it is defined as such,

the Internet becomes a “Pitfall” or “Pit” to addicts because “it’s a trap that is carefully camouflaged and used to capture and hold men or animals., it can be and often is “a trap” or “snare” or a not easily recognized danger or difficulty.”

But, let’s not panic, we know this! Problematic users can and often do see that it is a problem. They see that they have fallen into a “pit” – they ask for help. They are able to climb out of the pit or ask for help in doing so. The key difference we see in addictive processes versus problematic processes is in the ability to see the need for help and to seek help. This self-reflective capacity can both be assessed and developed. Problematic behaviors may become addictive; addictive behaviors are clearly problematic.

What are the Common Symptoms of any Addiction?

- Denial - I can’t see it – “It’s not a problem.”
- Control - I can’t control my actions and functioning - “it” controls me.
- Time is irrelevant; I lose a sense of limit, sense of who I am, others, place
- Relationships are changed, damaged, neglected, and hurt
- Attempts to limit the behavior often fail
- Need more to get the same effect - tolerance
- Neglect of the normal day to day activities

The Use of Pornography (Please see Handouts for Statistics)

The Crimes against Children Lab at the University of New Hampshire recommends the following:

The publicity about online “predators” that prey on naive children using trickery and violence is largely inaccurate. Internet sex crimes involving adults and juveniles more often fit a model of statutory rape – adult offenders who meet, develop relationships with, and openly seduce underage teenagers – than a model of forcible sexual assault or pedophilic child molesting. This is a serious problem, but one that requires different approaches from current prevention messages emphasizing parental control and the dangers of divulging personal information.

Developmentally appropriate prevention strategies that target youth directly and focus on healthy sexual development and avoiding victimization are needed.



These should provide younger adolescents with awareness and avoidance skills, while educating older youth about the pitfalls of relationships with adults and their criminal nature. Particular attention should be paid to higher risk youth, including those with histories of sexual abuse, sexual orientation concerns, and patterns of off and online risk taking.

- Avoid descriptions of the problem that characterize victims as young children or emphasize violence and deception.
- Be clear about why sex with underage adolescents is wrong.
- Focus prevention efforts more on adolescents, less on parents, and frankly on concerns relevant to adolescents, including autonomy, romance, and sex.
- Focus prevention more on interactive aspects of Internet use and less on posting personal information.
- Educate youth about criminal behavior and child pornography.
- Develop targeted prevention approaches for the most at risk youth populations.
- Assess for patterns of risky online behavior.

What do we do in the face of these statistics?

It is essential to recognize the complexity of issues, be informed about this data, and relay this to our children, teachers, parents, and priests.

First, why is the Internet so problematic (Delmonico and Griffin)? It is:

1. Interactive - it seems relational
2. Inexpensive - nothing worse than seemingly free excitement
3. Imposing - there is so much to choose from on the web
4. Integral - it seems to be part and parcel of everyday activity
5. Isolating - hamper human interaction
6. Intoxicating - seems to affect part of the brain and body the same way as drugs

Some call this the Online Disinhibition Effect:

- You don't know me
- You can't see me

- See you later
- It's all in my head ( Fantasy-detached from reality)
- It's just a game
- It's just fun
- We are all equals

Some even suggest that there is an Internet Addiction Disorder – IAD and they even specify the subtypes within it, (if it exists, it may be likened to the following).

Four Subtypes:

1. Cybersex Addiction
2. Cyber-relational Addiction
3. Internet Spending, Gaming, or Gambling
4. Informational Overload

Clergy and the Internet

Clergy across faiths and across cultures are well aware of the struggles of their parishioners, students, and all those that they serve. Seminarians and clergy themselves are not immune to this problem. There is little research at this time to suggest any hard facts. However, initial impressions from some other denominations seem to indicate that those who struggle with other addictions might be more vulnerable – about 56% of clergy with other addictive disorders, 88% of these men report problematic use of the Internet, about 51% of working pastors from other faiths report being tempted by Internet pornography. Additionally, in this same sample, 37% of pastors report cyber-porn as being a current struggle. About 57% self-report compulsive cyber-porn use. The most significant signs of this vulnerability are issues related to loneliness and isolation, the lack of self-care, higher expectations of themselves, entitlement, and lack of education about this aspect of the Internet, and a significant ability to compartmentalize themselves - split between self-image and image of God, feelings of shame, hypocrisy, and unworthiness. If this data is supported in future research, it seems to suggest that clergy in the Roman Catholic Church will need better training and education on this issue.

Prevention

Prevention is essential to understand. Unlike any new invention that has occurred in these past centuries, the web and modern technology can help us in numerous known and yet to be seen efforts in our pastoral evangelization and in the pastoral care of those we serve. It also challenges us in these same ways. Travel that took months just a century ago, takes seconds; communication that was difficult and often laborious now is easy and immediate. Child abuse statistics across cultures and countries suggest the same reality about whom and where prevention needs to take place. Overwhelming data suggest the same people, the fathers, stepfather, uncles, boyfriends, mothers and sisters of the children being trafficked into child porn and into child slavery are being sold and used by the people they know and the people who are supposed to be caring for them. This fact needs critical attention and research.

Addiction to the Internet, technology, and in all of its manifestations seems to be like any other addiction that we have discovered in our societies. Education is paramount in prevention. Knowledge can and does lead to better and healthier use of these new forms of communication. Early interventions work best, but any intervention helps the individual in the bonds of this new form of an ancient struggle with the human spirit. Research is just beginning to comprehend this issue and more information is unfolding, as we speak. Certain cultures seem more vulnerable (Asian and American) and certain individuals with other co-occurring (Depression, ADHD, conflict in family life) or pre-existing conditions seem to be more at risk for problematic and addictive use of this new technology. These are early data results and must be seen, as such. Additionally, we know that women unlike men (25% versus 5%) who engage in cyber-relating/dating tend to actually meet up with these people outside of the “chat rooms” where increased physical and sexual violence happens more regularly. Our churches and offices filled with wonderful women need to be warned about this reality. Additionally, advocacy in the public arena is necessary to look at how much money is being made in the porn “industry.” Russia, USA, Germany, Sweden, and Spain seem to be the countries where the most porn is made and where the profits are going.

This presentation is also about ways that we can manage something new together. The family – the parents – determines the way each household is run. This is the basics in our own canon law and needs to be the first place where a healthy sexuality discussion must first occur. If children first hear and see pornographic images or even messages about child sexual abuse prevention - that is the template for their life. This fact needs to be clearly understood and

corrected. This becomes crucial now that we know that predators lure teens into meeting because they use their fascination with their sexuality against them. Teens were often not treated violently initially; the research indicates that they often are interested in sexual matters and this interest the predator uses against them. Prevention programs need to be aware of this data. But, we also know that child sexual abuse on the Internet is strikingly similar to most child sexual abuse in society. Parents, relatives, uncles, stepfathers, and individual who know these children well are the overwhelming numbers of “traffickers” these children. This is true in almost the same shocking numbers of 75-80%.

Most men and women across research samples and across cultures report that they did NOT learn about sexuality from their parents but from their peers, their friends or siblings, or their same-aged relatives. The Church can be a powerful example of cultural change by empowering parents to assume their natural role. Education on normal sexuality and healthy use of the Internet is essential to prevention efforts. The Internet provides us with the challenge and opportunity to protect each other and it also might be used for healthy education in these matters!

A growing number of people are promoting Internet safety education in an effort to help keep youngsters safe from Internet sex offenders. But some of the information in their lectures, pamphlets, videos, and websites does not reflect what researchers have learned about the important features of these crimes.

Here are evidenced-based suggestions of how to make Internet safety education materials more consistent with current research (Crimes Against Children Lab, University of New Hampshire).

- 1 in 25 youth in one year received an online sexual solicitation where the solicitor tried to make offline contact.
- Internet offenders manipulate young people into criminal sexual relationships by appealing to young people’s desire to be appreciated, understood, take risks, and find out about sex.
- According to research looking at crimes ending in arrest, violence occurred in only 5% of cases. In most encounters, victims meet offenders voluntarily and expect sexual activity, because they feel love or affection for the person they have been corresponding with. Typically, they have sex with

the adult on multiple occasions. Most of these crimes are statutory rather than forcible rapes.

- Internet offenders target teens who are willing to talk online about sex.
- Be careful about who you give personal information to and what kinds of things you share.
- Be very careful what you do with social networking sites or personal web pages. Although most victims go voluntarily to meet and have sex with Internet offenders, these are nonetheless serious sex crimes that take advantage of inexperienced and vulnerable young people.

(Prepared by *David Finkelhor, Janis Wolak, and Kimberly Mitchell of the Crimes against Children Research Center, University of New Hampshire*. For more information: [www.unh.edu/ccrc](http://www.unh.edu/ccrc) Research funded by *the U.S. Department of Justice, OJJDP, and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children*. Program support is provided by *the Verizon Foundation*.)

The following are some online safety tips to share with children:

1. **Set up rules:** Post clear, simple, easy-to-read rules on or near the monitor. Create your own computer rules or print out the Internet Safety Pledge from many good sites. You and your children should review this periodically.
2. **Use filters:** Consider using filtering or monitoring software for your computer. Look into safeguarding programs or options your online service provider might offer. These can include monitoring or filtering capabilities. Have your children use child-friendly search engines when completing homework.
3. **Guard Use:** As the parent, the Internet accounts should be in your name, and you should have the primary screen name and control passwords. Do not allow children to complete a profile for a service provider, and make sure their screen names are nondescript enough that a stranger may not know the user is a child. Sex offenders use sites regularly and pose as children and look for children
4. **Check out privacy policies:** Always read a privacy policy before you or your children provide any personal information. Also make sure that a Web site offers a secure connection before giving credit card information. Web sites for children are not permitted to request personal information without a parent's or guardian' permission. Talk to your children about what personal information is and why you should never give it to people online.

5. **Talk about the dangers of email and chat:** If your children use chat or email, talk to them about never meeting an online “unknown friend.” Women versus men are much more likely to meet up with someone online (25-30% versus 2-5%) face-to-face. Talk to your children about not responding to offensive or dangerous email and unwanted “chats.” Report any such communication to local law enforcement. Do not delete the offensive or dangerous email; instead turn off the monitor, and contact local law enforcement. Know whom your children are exchanging email with, and only let them use chat areas that you have visited. Parents and guardians, monitor online as you would on the playground!
6. **Know what is going on:** Keep the computer in the family room or another open area of your home. Let your children show you what they can do online, and visit their favorite sites or chat rooms with them. If you suspect online bullying or stalking or sexual exploitation of a child, report it to your local law enforcement agency. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) has a system, for identifying online predators and child pornographers and contributing to law-enforcement investigations. Leads forwarded to the site are acknowledged and shared with the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation.

By following these tips, parents can help keep the Internet a safe place for their children to learn, grow and play. Parents still need to be parents.

We end where we began, his Holiness says, “Believers who bear witness to their most profound convictions greatly help prevent the web from becoming an instrument which depersonalizes people, attempts to manipulate them emotionally or allows those who are powerful to monopolize the opinions of others. On the contrary, believers encourage everyone to keep alive the eternal human questions which testify to our desire for transcendence and our longing for authentic forms of life, truly worthy of being lived. It is precisely this uniquely human spiritual yearning which inspires our quest for truth and for communion and which impels us to communicate with integrity and honesty.”

As we have warned you, so we pray that you are careful in the streets of Rome but also on the new Information Highway.

Thank you.

## References

1. Wolak J, Mitchell K, Finkelhor D. Online victimization: 5 years later. Alexandria, VA: National Center for Missing & Exploited Children; 2006. Available at: <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV138.pdf>.
2. Wolak J, Finkelhor D, Mitchell KJ. Internet-initiated sex crimes against minors: Implications for prevention based on findings from a national study. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2004;35(5):424.e11-424.e20.
3. Wolak J, Finkelhor D, Mitchell K, et al. Online "predators" and their victims: Myths, realities and implications for prevention and treatment. *American Psychologist* 2008;63 (in press).
4. Ybarra ML, Mitchell KJ, Wolak J, Finkelhor D. Internet prevention messages: Targeting the right online behaviors? *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 2007; 161(2); 138-145.

## Some Basic Statistics:

In order to better understand these realities, let's begin by looking at some basic data. The following slides and details may overwhelm and hence you need to be warned that what you are about to view may disturb you enormously. Let us start with basic information about the use of the Internet and cell phones. In the United States, wireless Internet use rates are especially high among young adults, and the laptop has replaced the desktop as the computer of choice among those under age 30.

- 81% of adults between the ages of 18 and 29 are wireless Internet users. By comparison, 63% of 30-49 year-olds and 34% of those ages 50 and older access the Internet wirelessly.
- Roughly half of 18-29 year-olds have accessed the Internet wirelessly on a laptop (55%) or on a cell phone (55%), and about one quarter of 18-29 year-olds (28%) have accessed the Internet wirelessly on another device such as an e-book reader or gaming device.
- The impact of the mobile web can be seen in young adults' computer choices. Two-thirds of 18-29 year-olds (66%) owns a laptop or netbook, while 53% own a desktop computer. Young adults are the only age cohort for which laptop computers are more popular than desktops.
- African American adults are the most active users of the mobile web, and their use is growing at a faster pace than mobile Internet use among white or Hispanic adults.

Cell phone ownership is nearly ubiquitous among teens and young adults, and much of the growth in teen cell phone ownership has been driven by adoption among the youngest teens.

- Three-quarters (75%) of teens and 93% of adults ages 18-29 now have a cell phone.
- In the past five years, cell phone ownership has become mainstream among even the youngest teens. Fully 58% of 12-year-olds now own a cell phone, up from just 18% of such teens as recently as 2004.

Internet use is near ubiquitous among teens and young adults. In the last decade, the young adult Internet population has remained the most likely to go online.



- 93%-100% of teens ages 12-17 go online, as do 93% of young adults ages 18-29. One quarter (74%) of all adults ages 18 and older go online.
- Over the past 10 years, teens and young adults have been consistently the two groups most likely to go online, even as the Internet population has grown and even with documented larger increases in certain age cohorts (e.g. adults 65 and older).
- The new reality of cyber-bullying is devastating many teens and families with reported higher rates of suicide.
- Additionally, texting on a cell phone is a major problem especially when not supervised by parents. Early data suggest that just limiting the use and limiting when children use their phone prevents use in the middle of the night; it thus prevents prolonged periods of sleep deprivation, which many link to higher suicide rates in teens; controlling the use, timing and access to cell phones is crucial data here.
- Texting also presents new problems with overuse of the hand muscles, which is causing muscular problems in the hands, accidents on the road and on sidewalks.

## Handouts:

Some researchers indicate that the amount of pornography on the Internet can be difficult to fathom. A total of 4.2 million websites contain pornography. That is 12 percent (12%) of the total number of websites. There are 100,000 websites that offer child pornography and 1 in 7 youths report being solicited for sex on the Internet.

Internet Pornography Statistics	
Pornographic websites	4.2 million (12% of total websites)
Pornographic pages	420 million
Daily pornographic search engine requests	68 million (25% of total search engine requests)
Daily pornographic emails	2.5 billion (8% of total emails)
Internet users who view porn	42.7%
Received unwanted exposure to sexual material	34%
Average daily pornographic emails/user	4.5 per Internet user
Monthly Pornographic downloads (Peer-to-peer)	1.5 billion (35% of all downloads)
Daily Gnutella "child pornography" requests	116,000
Websites offering illegal child pornography	100,000
Sexual solicitations of youth made in chat rooms	89%

Youths who received sexual solicitation	1 in 7 (down from 2003 stat of 1 in 3)
Worldwide visitors to pornographic web sites	72 million visitors to pornography: Monthly
Internet Pornography Sales	\$4.9 billion

### Time on the Internet

Pornography Time Statistics
Every second - \$3,075.64 is being spent on pornography.
Every second - 28,258 internet users are viewing pornography.
Every second - 372 internet users are typing adult search terms into search engines.
Every 39 minutes: a new pornographic video is being created in the United States.

Pornography revenues are not necessarily ranked according to population. China topped the list in 2006 with more than \$27 billion in pornography revenues. However, South Korea, only the 26th most populous nation on earth according to the U.S. Census Bureau, is next in line with more than \$25 billion in pornography revenues. The Internet is not the most popular form of pornography in the United States. Video sales and rentals accounted for \$3.62 billion in revenue in 2006 while internet pornography raked in \$2.84 billion.

### Children Internet Pornography Statistics

Access to pornography is available from early on. The average age of a child's first exposure to pornography is 11-14 years old.

--

Children Internet Pornography Statistics	
Average age of first Internet exposure to pornography	11-14 years old
Largest consumer of Internet pornography	35 - 49 age group
15-17 year olds having multiple hard-core exposures	80%
8-16 year olds having viewed porn online	90% (most while doing homework)
7-17 year olds who would freely give out home address	29%
7-17 year olds who would freely give out email address	14%
Children's character names linked to thousands of porn links	26 (Including Pokémon and Action Man)

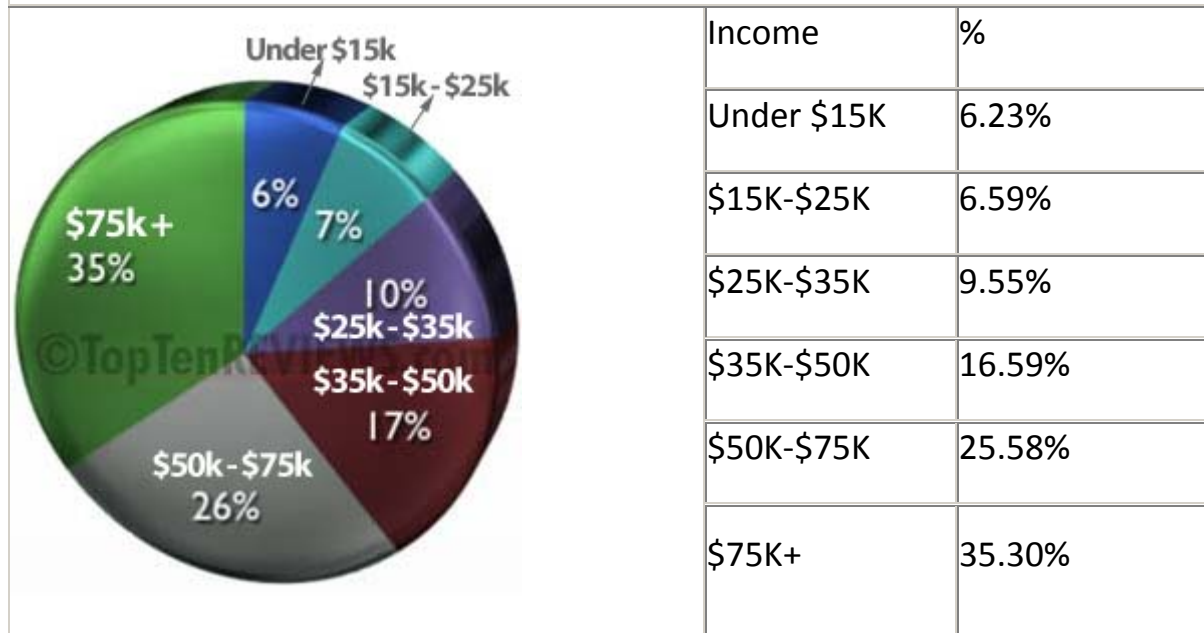
### Internet Pornography User Demographics

Pornography consumers are divided fairly evenly by age but not by income.

Those making more than \$75,000 a year represent 35 percent of those purchasing pornography. Another 26 percent of pornography consumers make \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year.

Age is not a major factor. Pornography consumers are fairly evenly divided. In the United States, individuals between the ages of 35 to 44 consume the most pornography (26 percent), and individuals between the ages of 18 to 24 purchase the least (14 percent).

### U.S. Adult Internet User Demographics – Income



### US Adult Internet User Demographics – Age

