

7 STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM PORNOGRAPHY

The average age of first internet exposure to pornography is 11, and a 2008 survey at a Catholic school revealed that 29% of freshman boys & 48% of senior boys were using pornography every week. Despite these challenging times, there is a new explosion of Catholic resources about love and sexuality that are bringing inspiration and hope to many families. Here are 7 practical tips to protect your family from pornography and help them thrive:

1. **Protect all computers, cell phones, and other electronics that have any internet access with filtering and accountability software. Keep these devices in public areas of the house such as kitchens and living rooms, and limit the time they can be used. Teens are better off without the internet on their phones.**

Computers - Use accountability and filtering software such as www.CovenantEyes.com, www.SafeEyes.com, and www.x3watch.com for computers, laptops, and iPads.

Cell phones - www.CovenantEyes.com has software for iPhones, iPod Touches and Windows Mobile 6 cell phones and PDAs, www.SafeEyes.com has software for iPhones, iPod Touches & Android phones www.x3watch.com has accountability software for Android phones, iPhones and iPod Touches.

Video Game Systems and Electronics with Wireless Internet Access – be very cautious with video game systems and other electronics that have access to the internet such as X-Box, Playstation, Wii, iPods, PDAs, etc. www.iphantom.com and www.opendns.com help to filter a home's wireless signal, but be careful since most neighborhoods have other wireless signals that this software will not protect.

2. **Have monthly discussions about love and sexuality with new and encouraging Catholic resources.** Inspiring Catholic books, CDs, and websites about love and intimacy have exploded in the last 5-10 years thanks to positive teachings about sex and marriage from the *Theology of the Body* (TOB). Parents are encouraged to spend time with their children on a monthly basis with age appropriate TOB resources. Jason & Crystalina Evert and TOBforTeens.com have great resources for children 12 years old and up. Christopher West, Mary Shivanandan, Carl Anderson and Dr. Janet Smith have great resources for older teens and adults.

3. **Monitor all social networking sites** (Facebook, My Space, xanga.com, etc.), and **know all user names and passwords** to email, social networking sites, and every site that requires a user name and password for your children / teens. Frequently monitor their email and social networking sites.

4. **Create a joyful and encouraging atmosphere for your family.** Have family dinners, gatherings and vacations together. Be encouraging to your children and teens. Affirm your children often and build them up through praying as a family and spending time together!

5. **Secure television & satellite radio and use Christian movie review websites to screen movies.**

Block all “adult” or “mature” content on TV, as well as other channels that have inappropriate content.

Movie review sites such as www.usccb.org/movies and www.PluggedInOnline.com provide a detailed review of movies including a written summary of any nudity and sexually inappropriate content. These reviews are great to read before watching movies, and can help people find family friendly movies.

Satellite radio - Family friendly packages are available without pornographic content.

6. **Get to know the parents of your children / teen's friends, and make sure that they are protecting their family from pornography. Encourage these parents to spend time with *Theology of the Body* resources.**

7. **Prayer:** Encourage all family members to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation monthly, and go to Mass as a family each Sunday. Foster devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph. Eucharistic Adoration and Mass during the week are tremendous blessings as well!



Find more resources and inspiring stories at www.MyHouseKansas.org

(The resources on this page are not specifically endorsed by the My House Initiative.)

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