

PART 1

Introduction

It sometimes seems that sexual images are all around us, from storylines of love, lust and betrayal on mainstream TV to seductive cinema adverts and raunchy music videos featuring scantily clad women and glistening, muscled men. Added to this, with just a few clicks on a PC, tablet or phone, intimate pictures and porn videos can be streamed or downloaded with ease any time, anywhere, any place – even within the safety of school and privacy of home.

Most young people are likely to encounter sexual images and porn in one form or another, whether they actively seek them or not. One of the big questions is: does it matter? Many would argue that viewing adult content is harmless fun, or simply part of the well-paved path to adulthood. Others say that its effects are dangerous and we should do all we can, as educators, parents and society, to protect young people from harm. My starting point for the months of research that underpin this book is to explore these questions:

Can a bombardment of provocative or sexual images, in some cases long before experiencing a real-life relationship, affect the self-image, romantic expectations and ultimately longer-term relationships of children and young people? After all, everyone knows porn is not real, don't they?

I think these questions should be explored as part of a robust whole-school and youth services approach to sex and relationships education (SRE). Educators, health and social care practitioners, parents and community leaders need to work together to challenge the growing influence of porn on young people, potentially affecting their values and attitudes to sex and relationships, and offer another perspective based on reality. Simply maintaining a wall of silence means that any negative effects and misinformation will go largely unchallenged. It may be an uncomfortable topic to discuss, but research suggests that watching porn can leave young people anxious about the sort of sexual activities they are expected to engage in, regardless of age, gender or experience, and confused about how real-life relationships work. This includes issues surrounding sexual consent, relationship bullying and newer concerns associated with social media including 'sexting', nude 'selfies' and revenge porn. Combined, these add to the existing well-documented stress of adolescence, threatening to impact negatively on the physical, spiritual, moral, cultural and emotional wellbeing of young people already struggling to make sense of the world around them.

As an alternative, this book aims to increase young people's understanding of how pornography can potentially distort views of what is normal – both in terms of body image, size and shape and relationships – and explore the myths behind the adult

entertainment industry to see where truth lies, meaning that young people get to make informed decisions, which has got to be a good thing.

So it seems the right time for educators to step forward to help young people understand some of the potential dangers inherent in viewing unfiltered material and discuss ways that porn can distort reality, including accepting Photoshopped pictures and routinely edited videos as the 'perfect' body.

In short, why should we leave it to the pornographers to do all the teaching?

Identifying the Need

Why do we need to talk about porn now?

Pornography is nothing new; it has been around for centuries with the historical evidence to prove it, meaning that generation after generation has grown up looking at sexual images, secretly or otherwise. In fact, lots of adults in the UK continue to watch and enjoy adult entertainment perfectly legally. To support this view, a journalist for the *Independent* newspaper researching for an article: 'The truth about pornography', undertook a 'Twitter and Facebook trawl of about 45,000 people [that] turned up a vanishingly small number of men – six – who never watched porn'.¹

So if porn is a well-established phenomena, legally enjoyed by thousands and written about openly in national newspapers, why do we need to talk to young people about it now? What has changed? Well, quite simply, the big change is accessibility. Back in 2009 the Terrence Higgins Trust/UNICEF survey, 'Young people's views on sex and UK sexual health services', found that three-quarters of young people said they would use the internet to get information on sex and sexual health.² Fast forward 15 years and with improved technology young people can, and do, regularly access pornography without any filters via the internet, smart phones and video streaming.

Pre-internet generations had to actively seek out porn and put some effort into finding it. 'Top shelf magazines', so called because of their shelf placement in a shop, were sold strictly to those over the age of 18 and so were less casually available. Visiting a sex shop in the 1960s and 70s probably involved going to a well-known area, such as Soho in London, and trying to sneak a look past the doormen, or staring at a poster outside, which was likely to have any nipple shots covered by a paper star (in line with decency laws of the age), until a potential customer had proof of being over 18.

Even the advent and rise of the video in the 1980s and 90s was reliant on a) being able to get hold of a film, b) having the money to pay for it and c) finding somewhere to watch it undisturbed. So, porn was harder to get hold of, though definitely not impossible.

Fast forward to today where young people are increasingly exposed to sexual images from a young age through the media, music and TV/films, everyday viewing of sexy underwear in the windows of established high street sex and lingerie shops, plus easy access to the internet via phones, computers, laptops and tablets. Although some porn costs money or needs a credit card to sign up for full access, there are still plenty of free websites available to anyone who says they are over 18, plus a wealth of material in the form of still photographs and computer games. Much of this can be streamed or

1 www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/the-truth-about-pornography-its-time-for-a-rude-awakening-8735043.html

2 <https://www.cornwallhealthyschools.org/documents/Sexual%20health%20rights%20and%20staying%20safe.pdf>

downloaded straight to a device of choice, often on a contract paid for by unsuspecting parents, thus removing many of the blocks to previous generations' viewing.

With numerous young people saying that indecent images have just 'popped up', without them doing or typing anything into the search bar, and anecdotal evidence suggesting that children sometimes find pornography by accident while looking for legitimate information about sex and relationships,³ I decided to do a bit of research of my own. I can now honestly say that the only way that I found access to porn was by looking for it. Type in 'porn' or 'sex' into a search engine and immediately there are thousands of results just waiting to be clicked on. Suspicious teachers, youth workers and parents can easily check the web history of any device to see which pages are being returned to most, and if a young person has deliberately cleared the history, then it does beg the question why.

However, just because it is out there and freely available doesn't mean that all young people are viewing pornographic material or reading erotic literature. A bit like sex and drugs misuse, it is important for young people to understand that not 'everyone' is doing it, and not everybody wants to do it. But with a 2014 BBC3 documentary 'Porn: What's the Harm?'⁴ identifying children as young as eight being regular viewers of online porn, it is clearly too important an issue to be ignored.

3 The Education Committee inquiry into Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in schools, <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/education-committee/pshe-and-sre-in-schools/written/10259.html>

4 'Porn: What's the Harm?' BBC3 (broadcast 16 April 2014), www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b040n2ph

Purpose of this Resource

The lesson plans in this book provide youth workers and teachers with a set of interactive materials with which to deal sensitively with issues around pornography and the impact that it potentially has on real-life relationships, body image and attitudes to sex. They contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils, as defined by Ofsted,¹ which all schools in England must demonstrate development in.

Intended for use with Key Stage (KS) 3 and KS 4 pupils, the activities, projects, quizzes and discussions are equally relevant in post-16 classes and informal education settings such as youth clubs. Each exercise has an age-appropriate recommendation, for example Years 8–13+, but this is dependent on maturity, existing knowledge and ability so is intended only as a guide.

The exercises for lesson plans are written with reference to the Sex Education Forum's core values for good quality SRE:

- mutual respect
- loving and happy relationships
- rights to information, safety and health
- equality; particularly on the basis of gender and sexual orientation
- responsibility for oneself and others.²

Context for learning

The National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) says more young people are educating themselves about sex online, which it anticipates will only increase as technology gets faster and easier to use.³ This suggests that although young people definitely want to learn, the sex education they currently receive from school, parents and youth services is not enough, or does not include the things they really want to know.

Pornography as an issue is a legitimate subject area for workers to discuss with young people because of the effect it can have on young people's sex and relationships education, their understanding of sex and sexual health and the impact on their self-esteem and body image.⁴

1 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMCS in schools – Departmental advice for maintained schools' – Department for Education (2014) p.5, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

2 www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/practice/faith,-values-sre.aspx

3 www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/20009247

4 'Young people and pornography: A briefing for workers' (Brook, Centre for HIV and Sexual Health, FPA, The National Youth Agency 2009)

A recent NAHT poll revealed parental consent for this addition to the content of SRE with 83 per cent of parents saying they want SRE lessons to address issues about pornography⁵ so that their children are clued up rather than reliant on hearsay, gossip and playground myths. Sex Education Forum policy adviser Sion Humphreys says:

We would support children being taught in an age-appropriate way about the impact of pornography as part of a statutory personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme.⁶

In addition to these collective concerns about the easy accessibility to porn and the potentially damaging effects it can have, mental health charity Young Minds engaged 5600 young people through focus groups, surveys and online consultations, revealing that easy access to explicit images adds to the stress and pressure of growing up, with over half of 11–14-year-olds saying that they had viewed online pornography, and four out of ten believing it has affected their relationships.⁷

National Curriculum links

This resource is primarily for educating young people at Key Stages 3 and 4 (11–19) through PSHE⁸ both in formal and informal education environments about the potential impact and influence of pornography on individuals and wider society. The Government's PSHE education review in 2013 concluded that PSHE would remain non-statutory on the National Curriculum, despite campaigns by educators (including the Sex Education Forum,⁹ Brook,¹⁰ the FPA,¹¹ and The National Youth Agency), the Association of Headteachers and parents who feel that it is an important part of preparing young people for the adult world. PSHE topics include drug and alcohol awareness, budgeting and finance, voting and democracy (through Citizenship), emotional health and wellbeing and sex and relationships education (SRE).

Though not statutory, the Department for Education (DfE) advice for local authority maintained schools (and recommended good practice for grant maintained or free schools) is that 'all schools should make provision for PSHE, drawing on good practice. Schools are also free to include other subjects or topics of their choice in planning and designing their own programme of education'.¹² This includes the addition of education about the potential impact of pornography on young people to SRE lessons.

Although SRE is a topic within PSHE it is also a statutory part of the curriculum in maintained secondary schools from the age of 11. However, not all topics are statutory and parents have the right to withdraw their children from those non-statutory lessons, which are often those that contain education about the emotional aspect of relationships rather than just the facts of reproduction.

5 National Association of Headteachers (2013). Research carried out in April 2013 by Research Now and commissioned by the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) and press released by NAHT in May 2013 www.naht.org.uk/welcome/news-and-media/key-topics/parents-and-pupils/parents-want-schools-to-manage-dangers-of-pornography-says-survey

6 Pornography impact lessons 'should be taught' in school – NAHT, www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/20009247

7 Young Minds Vs. Sexed Up (2013) www.youngmindsvs.org.uk/assets/0000/0136/YM_Vs_A4_SEXED_UP_info_sheet_INTERACTIVE.pdf

8 PSE in Wales

9 www.sexeducationforum.org.uk

10 www.brook.org.uk

11 www.fpa.org.uk

12 www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-social-health-and-economic-education-pshe

SRE can be delivered within a range of core curriculum subjects as well as through dedicated lessons. These include science, to learn about the biology of sex, religious education/ethics, to consider personal values and attitudes, and vocational subjects such as health and social care. Cross-curricular links can be made with other subjects, including drama, English, history and politics to enrich learning and add value so that young people see how SRE contributes to other areas of their life. This choice is dependent on the school, but must be delivered with regard to the Secretary of State's guidance.¹³ Academies do not have to provide SRE but if they choose to they must also have regard to the Secretary of State's guidance.

The main principles of SRE in schools are:

- Effective sex and relationships education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.
- The objective of sex and relationships education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.
- To help pupils develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy, independent lives.
- To learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society.
- To be given accurate information and helped to develop skills to understand difference and respect themselves and others.
- Sex and relationships education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school to prepare them for adulthood.
- Effective sex and relationships education does not encourage early sexual experimentation.

SRE should also enable young people to develop assertiveness skills, to understand the potential consequences of decisions made, to build a sense of personal responsibility and develop the ability to discern fact from fiction.

In the absence of a national DfE programme of study (PoS), the PSHE Association (the leading national support body for PSHE teachers), has developed a curriculum that includes a PoS for Key Stage 3 and 4 SRE that contributes to a whole-school approach across the UK:

- *England*: PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education)
- *Northern Ireland*: Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development and Religious Education)
- *Scotland*: Health and Wellbeing (Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood)
- *Wales*: Personal and Social Education (Health and Emotional Wellbeing).

This PoS is also useful for school-based youth workers who are increasingly tasked with supporting formal education by delivering high quality SRE to meet a wide range

13 Available to download from www.gov.uk/government/publications/sex-and-relationship-education

of learning styles and abilities, alternative education programmes for pupils requiring additional support and within pupil referral units.

This book is aligned to the PSHE Association's three overlapping core themes for PSHE Association Programme of Study in a number of ways:

1. **Health and wellbeing** e.g. by developing young people's ability to make informed choices and take personal responsibility for their own decisions about sexual health, consent and relationships; by encouraging emotional wellbeing and exploring trust, respect and sexual identity; by challenging negative ideas about body image and promoting healthy self-esteem.
2. **Relationships** e.g. by identifying what a positive relationship is and the difference between this and those that may be damaging or abusive; understanding that the media portrayal of relationships may not reflect real life; promoting healthy relationships based on trust and respect for all young people, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation; learning risk-management skills.
3. **Living in the wider world** e.g. by learning verbal and non-verbal communication skills, looking at the impact that greater access to pornography and erotic images can have in terms of altering social norms and learning how to get their opinions heard through youth democracy.

Whilst there are no formal attainment targets in SRE it is important to make baseline assessments of young people's knowledge, experience and understanding in order to ensure that education is age-appropriate and relevant. Tools for reflection and review to assess and reinforce learning are suggested at the end of each lesson plan within this resource.

The full PSHE Association guidance for schools, including a 2016 update, can be downloaded and read in full online and it is suggested that all teachers read this carefully as part of their planning process.¹⁴

Contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education

All state-funded schools must offer a balanced curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils and society. This aims to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. The lesson plans in this teaching resource contribute to SMSC education (as defined by Ofsted) by promoting:

1. **Spiritual development** e.g. through exploring and reflecting on beliefs and values about sex, relationships and pornography; understanding personal feelings and building empathy for those of others; considering how and why people may have different views on pornography and how these may impact on their behaviour.
2. **Moral development** e.g. recognising right and wrong and respecting the laws that govern sexual consent, appropriate and inappropriate online content and pornography; understanding consequences; investigating moral and ethical issues relating to sex, gender and porn; considering sexual stereotypes and learning to debate offering reasoned views.

¹⁴ Available at www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283599/sex_and_relationship_education_guidance.pdf

3. **Social development** e.g. through developing a range of social skills including communication, listening and assertiveness; recognising the right to have an opinion and appreciate diverse viewpoints; promoting respect of self and others; practicing resolving relationship conflict without resorting to bullying or aggressive behaviour; experiencing democracy through participation in a basic voting system and building respect for the law.
4. **Cultural development** e.g. by better understanding the impact of cultural influences on personal values; discussing how social norms are shaped by popular culture and the media; understanding more about different types of relationships and developing respect and tolerance for others and celebrating diversity.

To find out more about how exploring the potential impact of pornography on children and young people fits within SMSC read the Ofsted guidelines.¹⁵

Youth work curriculum and accredited outcomes

This is a resource that enables young people aged 13–19 (up to 25 with additional needs) to learn about the potential impact and influence of pornography, both on the individual and wider society, by exploring values and attitudes, as well as giving factual information and sparking debate. It is appropriate for use by school-based youth workers that contribute to formal education or those who work in community education settings, including outreach and detached.

The key focus of youth work is to ‘enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential’.¹⁶

This book aims to facilitate a dialogue between youth workers and young people about the impact pornography can have on real-life sex and relationships, encouraging them to explore the potential consequences of different actions before making decisions.

Youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning.¹⁷

‘Informal education’ certainly does not mean ‘unplanned’ and youth workers plan learning opportunities within a curriculum that meets the approval of Ofsted. This includes life skills, one of which is the ability to form and maintain healthy relationships and make informed decisions about when, where and with whom to have sex and to fully understand the concept of consent.

Personal and social development can be accredited through a range of different methods. These include:

- The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award
- Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) short courses

15 Guidance for inspecting schools under the common inspection framework from September 2015, with a myth buster document on common misconceptions, available to download at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015

16 National Occupational Standard 2008 cited in ‘A narrative for youth work today’: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210380/a-narrative-for-youth-work-today.pdf

17 National Youth Agency 2015, www.nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/The_NYA_Guide_to_Youth_Work_and_Youth_Services.pdf

- City & Guilds in employability and social skills (Unit 77546)
- Local awards
- AQA units
- UK Youth, Youth Achievement Awards.¹⁸

Examples of projects that could be accredited include peer education projects and awareness raising campaigns, for example about domestic abuse or the risks of engaging in nude self-made images or 'selfies'.

How Young People Learn about Sex and Relationships

In the UK, SRE teaches the facts about reproduction and sexual health, but not necessarily about the emotional elements of a relationship. This includes mutual respect and pleasure within consensual sex, building trust and falling in love, and on the negative side, learning the skills to cope with rejection, break-ups, peer pressure and understanding that sex in porn bears little or no resemblance to real-life relationships.

Positive sexual experiences are related to health and well being throughout the life course, and it's time for this to be given wider recognition by health workers, educators, and society as a whole. We need to do more to create an environment in which it is easier for people to discuss sexual well being as an integral part of the conversation we have with people about our health.¹

Parents can choose to withdraw their children from the non-compulsory parts of SRE² for a variety of reasons, including faith, culture or because they choose to educate their children themselves. While acknowledging that parents do have an important role to play in preparing their children for adult life, this can mean that young people are given different levels of information on which to base their choices.

It is generally recognised that talking about sex and relationships can be a daunting or embarrassing prospect for both young people and their parents, with many young people reporting that talk about sex is 'banned' in their house. Focus groups for this book said that periods, masturbation and pornography were also on the list of things never to be mentioned and that old-style double standards are often still applied to what is acceptable behaviour for sons and daughters to engage in.

So it is unsurprising that a recent YouGov survey confirmed that outside school more than a third of teens rely on getting advice about sex from their friends, the internet, magazines and via pornography.³ This raises concerns about the mixed messages young people are receiving as porn relationships bear no resemblance to fairytale happy endings or the Disney cartoons children grow up watching. The lack of romance in most porn is a sharp contrast to the quest to find 'the one' central to the plot of literally thousands of Hollywood 'rom-com' movies, all of which are quietly internalised by millions of young viewers worldwide. Although some erotic novels, dubbed by the media 'mommy porn',⁴ offer readers a marriage of romance and explicit sex, porn often depicts sex in ways

1 Professor Dame Anne Johnson. See more at www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/1113/26112013-Results-from-third-National-Survey-of-Sexual-Attitudes-and-Lifestyles#sthash.10NQ5NoO.dpuf

2 www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/other-compulsory-subjects

3 YouGov (2011)

4 www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Mommy+Porn

that are threatening, misogynistic, violent and without boundaries, leaving both young women and men feeling confused as they absorb conflicting information about sex and relationships from school, home, friends, faith, culture and the outside world.⁵

Further research is still needed to establish if there is a conclusive link between education and a reduction in the number of children and young people accessing pornography. However UK-based charity Safety Net claims evidence that pornography has a detrimental impact on children and young people, including premature sexualisation, negative body image and unhealthy notions about relationships.⁶

All of which adds weight to the Sex Education Forum's ongoing campaign 'SRE – It's My Right',⁷ supported by organisations including UK Youth, the National Union of Students (NUS) and the UK Youth Parliament, to include the effects of pornography in SRE and urging political parties to commit to statutory SRE in their manifestos.

Supporting LGBT+ young people

All young people are entitled to high-quality, age-appropriate SRE both in school and within other services for young people. However, research by the University of Cambridge for Stonewall revealed that more than half of LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans) young people say the focus of sex education remains firmly on heterosexual sex and traditional boy/girl relationships.⁸

Facilitators are reminded to think carefully about the language used within group activities and to be mindful that although some young people are open about their sexuality, others may be questioning, not ready to come out or simply don't want to talk about it. This book makes no assumptions about gender identity or sexual orientation and specifically uses the inclusive term 'partner' as well as offering examples of same sex couples for discussion scenarios. Using non-gender specific terms, for example using 'they' instead of 'him' or 'her' can also be useful.

The laws relating to lesbian and gay pornography are included alongside other legislation, and opportunities are created to challenge LGBT+ stereotypes and correct common mistakes, for example not knowing that the age of sexual consent in the UK is 16 for all.⁹

Challenging any homophobic comments, pointing out that this could be considered a hate crime or hate incident¹⁰ and is therefore unlawful, should make it clear that this behaviour will not be tolerated. Referring back to ground rules to remind everyone that asking personal questions and sharing details of intimate experiences is off-limits should mean that no one feels uncomfortable while learning.

The following organisations may provide useful information:

- The website for the charity Avert has a great section on 'coming out', giving information, case studies and support.¹¹

5 www.psychologytoday.com/blog/sex-lies-trauma/201107/effects-porn-adolescent-boys

6 www.safetynet.org.uk/thefacts.php#sthash.fMxj1GY9.dpuf

7 www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/policy-campaigns/sre-its-my-right.aspx

8 www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/The_School_Report__2012_.pdf

9 www.fpa.org.uk/factsheets/law-on-sex#age-consent

10 www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/hate-crime

11 www.avert.org

- Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides support and information to young people and their families, before, during and after ‘coming out’.¹²
- Stonewall is a UK organisation that campaigns for the rights of gay, lesbian, bi and trans people.¹³

SRE for young people with additional needs

Young people with disabilities have as much right to high-quality SRE as anyone else, including exploring the impact access to pornography can have on their self-image and expectations of sex.

Sex and relationships education should focus on dignity and respect, providing information on safe sex and making it possible for young adults with SEN to safely experience what millions of other young people take for granted.¹⁴

The word ‘disability’ is a collective term for such a huge range of physical, sensory and mental disabilities, including ‘invisible’ disabilities like diabetes and deafness, that it is impossible to prescribe for all. Along this continuum, pupils will have different learning needs and abilities, as well as differing levels of experience and understanding of sex, relationships and pornography.

This resource is not specifically aimed at students with special educational needs (SEN) but many of the ideas can be easily adapted, for example by swapping words for pictures, using a larger type font or inviting students to draw, not write, their discussions. In some of the lesson plans, specific additional suggestions have been included, while others will need individual adaptation.

For more information about teaching SRE to children and young people with additional needs please see the DfE website for guidance.¹⁵

12 www.fflag.org.uk

13 www.stonewall.org.uk

14 Quote from online article <http://senmagazine.co.uk/articles/896-sex-and-the-special-child-how-do-we-educate-young-people-with-sen-about-sex.html>

15 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283599/sex_and_relationship_education_guidance.pdf

Sex, Porn and the Law

Sex and the law

The age of sexual consent in the UK for men and women is currently 16 years old, which is reinforced throughout this book. In 2013 the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL) confirmed that the median age for people in Britain to first have sex is 16, which means that although ‘young people today have sex at an earlier age than previous generations did’¹ not everyone has sex underage. This suggests that for many young people their first encounter with sex of any kind will be through porn.

Another underlying message throughout this resource is that the decision to have a physical relationship, who to have it with and whether it includes penetrative sex or not, is a personal one. Abstinence should always be promoted as an option, along with the message that even if someone has had sex, they do not necessarily have to do it again if they aren’t ready or don’t want to. Coercion to engage in the taking and sharing of explicit pictures or films by using emotional pressure, aggressive tactics or deception is unacceptable in any form and could result in the law being broken.

Teachers should ensure they promote that a loving relationship does not have to be a sexual relationship and if one person says no, then that is what they mean and no attempt should ever be made to charm, bully or beg them to change their mind. No is always no, whatever the context and any form of sexual activity without the express consent of both partners is illegal. Activities to explore the meaning of consent, the impact that alcohol or misusing substances can have on decisions made and how to set and maintain relationship boundaries can be found in Chapter 4 of Part 5.

An overview of the UK laws governing pornography

In the UK there are laws governing pornography and the making and sharing of explicit images. These laws are there to protect children and young people, for whom pornography is deemed unsuitable. Basically you need to be over 18 to buy or view porn, for example going into an adult shop to buy films rated R18 (the ‘R’ means restricted) or membership of an online porn site. However, some porn is illegal to make, distribute or watch at any age in any format, regardless of who you are. This includes streaming or downloading images of extreme pornography, such as sex involving animals, children or extreme violence.

There are certain types of pornography that can only be described as extreme; I am talking particularly about pornography that is violent and that depicts simulated rape.

1 www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/1113/26112013-Survey-examines-changes-in-sexual-behaviour-and-attitudes-in-Britain#sthash.vlas0YbI.dpuf

These images normalise sexual violence against women and they're quite simply poisonous to the young people who see them.²

The Audiovisual Media Services Regulations 2014 introduced a series of restrictions on pornography produced and sold in the UK for online paid-for video on demand (VoD). This aims to bring British VoD up to the same standards that already apply to porn distributed on DVD, which must have an R18 marked clearly on it.³ This defines the film as suitable only for viewers aged 18 or over.

It is illegal to take a sexually explicit picture or to film anyone naked (or engaging in a sex act) under the age of 18, with or without that person's consent. This includes consenting young couples in an under-18 relationship who film or take intimate photos of each other, which amounts in law to creating child pornography. It is also illegal for those under the age of 18 to take 'naked selfies' even if they don't intend to share them and only mean to store them on their own phone.

It is also illegal to 'incite' underage porn in any way, including in the guise of a loving relationship or where the subject is complicit. The law is further broken if this material is shared with friends, for example via text, or posted online, and the perpetrator could be charged with distributing child pornography, even if they are under 18 too. Once shared a photo can very quickly go 'viral' and it is almost impossible to be 100 per cent sure that every copy is traced and removed, even if the original is reported to the website or social media company and taken down.

Please note that no money needs to exchange hands for any of the above to be considered a serious crime by the police.

Revenge porn is explored in more detail later in the book. However, it should be pointed out that it is not just teenagers creating this form of homemade porn, a *Daily Telegraph* article written to explain the change in law reported that a McAfee study (in the US) 'found that 36% of people have sent or intend to send intimate content to their partners, and that one in ten ex-partners threatened to expose risqué photos online – a threat carried out 60% of the time'.⁴ There have been high profile celebrity stories reported where pictures or sex tapes have been 'leaked'.

While it is arguable that engaging in sex tapes has enhanced not harmed the careers of some celebrities, many people come to regret their actions. This includes Kim Kardashian who, during an interview with Oprah Winfrey,⁵ confessed that she regrets the way she became famous after a sex tape she made in 2003 with then-boyfriend, musician Ray J, was 'leaked' online. 'It was a negative way, so I felt like I really had to work ten times harder to get people to see the real me.' She also talked about the impact it had on her family, admitting the X-rated clip was 'humiliating'. Now she is a wife, mother and reality TV star, but her explicit home-shot sex film is still regularly downloaded by millions and watched globally without her consent or knowledge.

In real life, it is unlikely that an online sex tape will enhance anyone's CV and it could present an additional challenge for those hoping to work in a teaching, policing or caring capacity, as well as create constant fear about who has seen it.

2 Cabinet Office, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and The Rt Hon David Cameron MP (13.07.2013) www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-internet-and-pornography-prime-minister-calls-for-action

3 For more information on this story go to www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/a-long-list-of-sex-acts-just-got-banned-in-uk-porn-9897174.html

4 www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/11531954/What-is-the-law-on-revenge-porn.html

5 *The Sun* wwwthesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/showbiz/4381835/Kim-Kardashian-admits-to-Oprah-that-she-was-put-on-birth-control-aged-14.html

Where to find more detailed information

Please note: all UK legal information is correct at the time of publishing but the law is subject to change, so check to ensure that it is up to date and/or relevant to your area before using.

- The Crown Prosecution Service – www.cps.gov.uk/legal/d_to_g/extreme_pornography
- UK Parliament website – <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN05078>
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) – <http://ceop.police.uk>