

**RBC SR HIGH Student Ministry
Pornography/Lust Support Guide
For Girls**



A student may come to you confessing a struggle with porn/lust. We are here to help. This document is to help and support you as you walk alongside your student through this struggle.

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First, to put your student's struggle into perspective let's look at a couple of statistics:

1. 90% of boys and 70% of girls reported to have accessed sexually explicit media.
2. On average, the first exposure to pornography among children was 11 years old.
3. Porn is the 4th most common reason for people visiting the Internet. It makes up 25% of all search engine requests.

Girls, Women Affected:

Whether or not this student has accessed pornography on her personal laptop or phone, she has more than likely been introduced to its concept through sexual advertising, word of mouth by classmates, or by modern (sexual) ideals of dating. Many girls feel the pressure from the cultural messaging around female sexuality, and unfortunately this drives them more towards pornography rather than further from it. Another reason as to why they may feel compelled to pornography may not merely be a physical temptation, but a deep root of shame, rejection, insecurity, and misplacement of love. She may seek romantic encounters through emotional messaging in pornography to fulfill her desire to be loved, accepted, and beautiful; then, a chemical, physical, addiction may begin.

The signs below will help you recognize if a female student is struggling with pornography:

Body Image Issues:

- a. *"The first thing that happens when girls turn to pornography... is that they instantly begin to compare their body to the bodies of women in pornography... This will communicate to teen girls that they must look like that to be sexually desirable or successful in a sexual relationship. One heartbreaking study found that teen girls compared themselves to women in pornography and felt "very unattractive" and that "[girls] do want to have these ideal bodies" (Lofgren-Martenson & Mansson 2010)"*

A Fear of Male Dominance/Authority:

- b. *"When troubled teen girls view pornography, the objectification of women can teach them that men will only see them as that – an object." (Havenwood Academy)*
- c. *"(Because of porn) teen girls may inaccurately assume that men do not connect emotionally with women in an intimate way, or that unattached, one-sided, or even violent sexual encounters are the norm for intimate relationships (Psychology Today)."*

The Desire to Appeal:

- d. Whether or not the boy she is trying to attract watches porn, the sexual messaging of a young boy's desire for a sexual young woman is so prevalent in our society that the young girl is taught "this is what every boy wants". This is damaging to the pure and godly relationship between a male and female. The female becomes dependent on her body to earn his love, and thus, the damaging comparison and insecurity is rooted within her.

Girls Struggling with Masturbation

Our world celebrates the act of masturbation, especially in young women; it has become a tool of “empowerment” for femininity and can make one “mature”. It has become impressive to masturbate. Yet, it is still seen as usually a secret act.

How does masturbation affect the one engaged in it and others? Regardless of one’s marital status, this act has the power to corrupt that one (perhaps future) healthy sexual interaction between a husband and wife as deemed in Scripture. It teaches the girl to satisfy and fulfill herself through an abnormal and spiritually unsatisfactory act, although our modern world deems it as “natural”, “healthy” and “fulfilling”. In making masturbation a practice, this sexual act steps outside the biblical guidelines for sexual satisfaction as found in 1 Corinthians 7.

“Now for the matters you wrote about: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. I say this as a concession, not as a command. I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” - 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Those caught up in masturbation may have a desire for a gratification they feel needs to be met, yet without an image to spur their lustful act. Because the practice of masturbation can be practiced without pornographic images, one may argue that this masturbation can be sinless, and even furthermore, a justified need. However, masturbation is still violating the boundaries of Scripture as found in the passage above. Masturbation serves as a gateway into the realm of viewing pornography and fantasizing over mental lustful images.

If a girl struggles with masturbation, she may feel crippled by shame, yet with her understanding this act is justified, she is left confused; not knowing what to do or what help to seek.

With that being said, we will take a look at the inward battle a girl may be struggling through to identify their need of help: 3 key strongholds that they may be battling their life due to these addictions:

The Inward Battle

Many people approach dealing with lust/the use of pornography from an outward perspective. With an outward perspective, one might ask a student to keep their phone out of their room or content restrictions may be put on their devices. While these are beneficial things for a student, solely an outward approach is temptation management; rather than attacking the root of the temptation.

Therefore, we will first address the inward battle and look at a few potential inward strongholds, then talk about the outward practical steps a student can take. The desire is for a change from the inside out.

A. Shame

“While we tend to think watching pornography will influence us to experience shame, the reverse is also true. The more we experience shame, the more we will be drawn to pornography. Although men and women do pursue compulsive sexual choices for pleasure and their corresponding neurochemicals, it’s worth considering that we can also pursue them for the purpose of self-condemnation. All of us know the experiences in life where we feel shame, but rather than turning toward love or self-care, we turn toward behavior or a substance that we know will amplify the toxic inner critic’s voice.” -Jay Stringer, author of Unwanted

Shame is the most likely tool used by the enemy to keep this student trapped in pornography. We must first disarm shame by affirming the student that they are loved by an amazing God who wants to use them and heal them! Shame is disarmed when our sin is brought into the light.

“Jesus said to her, ‘Go, call your husband, and come here.’ The woman answered him, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said to her, ‘You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.’ -John 4:16-18

Jesus was allowing the woman to find healing and freedom from shame through her sin being brought to the light. As you continue on in the passage you'll see that the woman who was crippled by shame and did not want to face another human being, immediately returns to her town to publicly declare Christ's goodness, bringing many to faith in Christ. There is immense healing once we disarm shame and bring our sin to light.

B. Temptation

The word "trial" is the same Greek word for "temptation" used in James 1: (Greek:πειρασμός) peirasmos; a putting to proof (by experiment (of good), experience (of evil), solicitation, discipline or provocation); by implication, adversity— temptation.

James tells us to *"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials (temptations) of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."* (James 1:2-3)

This isn't to say that temptation should be viewed as a good thing, instead, we must remember the encouraging truth that our trials/temptations serve a greater purpose in our lives, we have the hope of sanctification through the power of The Holy Spirit. James is saying to be thankful that God doesn't leave you where you are. That He's refining us, growing us, and sanctifying us. This is important for our perspective as we walk with our students in this issue. This is all about the sanctification process of becoming more like Christ every day. We will have ups and downs, but ultimately, God's purpose in it all is to make us more like Him. By His power, we can fight temptation and come out stronger: with steadfastness, rooted in faith.

C. The Science:

In terms of its effects on the human brain, Pornography addiction is startlingly similar to most drug addictions.

"Deep inside the brain, there's something called a reward center. The reward center's job is to release a pleasure chemical called dopamine into our brains in response to behaviors that we perceive as positive, like eating tasty food, getting in a good workout, or enjoying a kiss. Dopamine tells our brain, "Hey, this is a good thing! Keep doing this thing!" And it sends that message in such a powerful way we become hardwired to do whatever things trigger this process. Normally, it's a great system. The problem, however, is that this process can be hijacked. When someone uses an addictive drug, that drug uses the same dopamine process as part of the high, flooding your brain with

feelings of pleasure and positive reinforcement.” -Fight The New Drug, an anti-porn non-profit

We must keep in mind that while this is a spiritual and emotional battle, there is also a very real scientific/addictive factor that is incorporated. Finding freedom from porn can be a long healing process due to brain chemicals and a long-term reliance on the pornography involved. No one is ever “too far” for healing, but we must be prepared to play the long game and expect our students not to be perfect.

Now that we have looked at the inward battle, let’s now look at the outward steps we should take with a student when they come to us with a struggle.

The Outward Management

If a girl comes to you for help battling their porn or masturbation addiction, praise the Lord! It takes a lot of courage for anyone to bring their sin and shame into the light.

“Compulsive porn use is a problem far more commonly associated with men: at the Laurel Centre – a leading UK-based sex and porn addiction service – 95% of enquiries come from men. It’s hard to judge just how widespread the problem is among women, given that they often feel the shame and stigma surrounding compulsive porn use more acutely, which may prevent them from seeking help and appearing in data.”

Step 1: Listen

When a student has just told you they struggle, don’t react, but instead, say, “Thank you so much for telling me, I really respect you for opening up and being vulnerable with me.” Then, listen and allow the student to share more about their struggle. They are telling you because they have a desire to be heard and know they are not alone. Next, share John 4 with them (the woman at the well). Focus on how her sin being brought into the light healed her and killed shame.

Step 2: Ask Questions

Ask questions to get the full picture of their situation. This will also help them begin to process their struggle. Here are a few questions you can ask:

- How long have you had this struggle?

- How are you seeing this affect you?
- What made you be willing to come to me with this?
- When do you find you struggle most? (Time of day they normally do it, what emotions trigger the temptation etc.)
- What is one practical step you can take tonight to start fleeing the temptation?

Step 3: Prayer

Pray with them. Bringing the Lord and His power into this situation is huge. It also helps you to realize this struggle is not all on you to help them.

Step 4: Create Accountability

Offer to meet at a later date outside of typical student ministry time; schedule a specific time and place to meet so that it doesn't get pushed off and they have something to look into the future to as they battle this temptation. Before you meet, have them meditate on these scriptures (you can text them these verses):

- 1 Corinthians 10:13 (They are not alone in their struggle, God provides a way out)
- John 4:1-42 (Woman at the Well and how she was healed by her sin being brought to the light)
- Hebrews 4:15-16 (We have a savior that can empathize)
- 2 Timothy 2:21-22 (Flee from sin; evaluate where we practically need to eliminate temptation and replace that void with things that will honor the Lord)

Step 5: Follow Up

Meet with them and ask, "How have you been doing since we last spoke?" Go through the scriptures listed above together and see how God spoke to them..

Ask if they have talked to their parents about their struggle. If they have not, strongly encourage them to do so. As a student ministry, we minister to families overall, so our goal is for parents also to be involved in the student's healing process.

After the second meeting, pray about what is next. The Lord may be calling you to regularly meet with your student. Here are a couple of optional ideas on how to further support your student:

1. Weekly accountability texts. Please know you don't hold your student accountable; instead, they hold themselves accountable to you. This could be as simple as a weekly text from your student that says, "I've been accountable."
2. Go through a book about freedom from pornography together and discuss it.

3. Encourage them to talk to their parents.
4. Encourage them to be a part of a support group. You can let them know you will contact Christina Dillingham or Emily Fowler for more information on this.

Emily Fowler
emilyfowler@restonbible.org

Christina Dillingham
christina@restonbible.org

Your student needs you! Be there with them, and make sure they know that you are there for them through their struggles! Yet, also know you are not Jesus, and you cannot bear all their burdens. Please come talk to the ministry leader for support. Listed below are some external resources for you and your student. Some of which you could even go through with your student together!

Book Resources

Unwanted By Jay Stringer:

“Without rival, the best book on broken sexuality I have ever read.” —Dan B. Allender, PhD
Many of us feel ashamed and undesirable after years of sexual brokenness and addiction. The guilt and stigma surrounding sexual struggles can paralyze us and keep us from seeking help and healing. Author Jay Stringer approaches these sensitive subjects with gentleness and understanding.

<https://www.amazon.com/Unwanted-Sexual-Brokenness-Reveals-Healing/dp/1631466720>

Healing The Wounds of Sexual Addiction by Mark Laaser:

“With today's rampant availability of Internet pornography, sexual addiction has become a national epidemic that affects an increasing number of Christians, even pastors, and priests. As devastating as any drug habit, it brings heartbreak and despair to those it entangles. But there is help for men and women caught in sexual addiction's downward spiral.”

https://www.amazon.com/Healing-Wounds-Sexual-Addiction-Laaser/dp/0310256577/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1T048JEJ73JH&keywords=healing+the+wounds+of+sexual+addiction&qid=1665428682&qu=eyJxc2MiOilxLjcwliwicXNhIjoiMS40NSIsInFzcCI6IjEuNTUifQ%3D%3D&s=books&sprefix=healing+the+wounds+of+sexual+addiciton%2Cstripbooks%2C67&sr=1-1

Accountability Softwares

Covenant Eyes:

<https://www.covenanteyes.com>

Canopy

<https://canopy.us/>

Other Resources

The Conquer Series

<https://www.conquerseries.com>

A young woman's testimony on pornography addiction as a pastor's kid and a missionary kid – Cornerstone Chapel Young Adults

<https://youtu.be/gxBCWMo8Xj8?t=811>