

# LET'S TALK PORN

body image, self-esteem, communication, anxiety, pressure, fun, stis, fantasy vs reality, self-esteem, safer sex, safe, consent, anxiety, stis

## - TIPS for TEACHERS



Planning how to discuss porn, and topics related to porn, in an appropriate way can be daunting. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- 1 Give the full picture.** Teaching about topics related to porn should be done in the context of a well-planned programme of relationships and sex education (RSE) within the school. However, it may sometimes be appropriate to provide some additional support for students who might be struggling with some of the issues.
- 2 Be aware of what's going on in your students' lives.** Whether your students are looking for it or not, they will very possibly see some kind of porn. This could be through adverts or games, or they may be shown sexually explicit images or videos by classmates. They might be perfectly fine with this. But they might also have questions, or find they feel anxious or upset about what they've seen.
- 3 Set boundaries.** Set clear boundaries at the start of your RSE work, perhaps by a group working agreement or a set of class ground-rules. This will help build a feeling of safety and confidence in working on this topic and will help the lesson stay on track. The DO...RSE project has an example of a group working agreement here: [www.dosreforschools.com/resources-for-teachers/in-the-classroom-lesson-guidance/](http://www.dosreforschools.com/resources-for-teachers/in-the-classroom-lesson-guidance/)
- 4 Don't be afraid.** Once students realise that you are delivering information in a sensible, non-shocking way they will engage in the topic. Expect some laughter and silliness – this usually comes from embarrassment and fear and will calm down over the lesson.
- 5 Be open minded.** Being prepared to discuss pornography in a non-judgemental way is really important. One of the biggest barriers to effective communication with young people about difficult topics can be the adult's feelings about the topic. Reflect in advance about your personal feelings and your approach. It can also be helpful to chat with colleagues about how they feel, and how they approach the topic. DO has a series of exercises that could help you with this: [www.dosreforschools.com/resources-for-teachers/before-the-classroom-reflective-preparation/](http://www.dosreforschools.com/resources-for-teachers/before-the-classroom-reflective-preparation/)
- 6 Talk about it - don't watch it.** Never use pornography in lessons – you do not need to show it to reinforce your message. For some young people, perhaps those with learning disabilities, you may need to use explicit images to help them understand certain concepts – this is very different to using pornographic images.
- 7 Don't get personal.** As an adult it's your choice whether you wish to access legal pornography in private. You can reasonably expect your private sex life to remain private. Make an agreement with your students that none of you will talk about your own or others' personal lives, and will only use general examples.
- 8 Beat the awkwardness.** Practice explaining what words related to porn mean in a neutral way. Being able to use this technique comes with practice, so work out how to say things when on your own, or in supervision sessions or staff meetings.
- 9 Let them learn individually.** Give sources of good information, so students can look up information after the lesson if they want to.
- 10 Get the training you need.** Attend some really good training, such as FPA's one-day courses, Young People, Sexuality and the Digital World or Talking to Young People about Relationships and Sex.

# Did you know?

## **Talking about porn...doesn't have to be about porn**

The most useful thing about discussing porn as a part of relationships and sex education can be the other subjects it leads to, including a broader conversation about sexual wellbeing and happiness.

## **Most parents want schools to discuss subjects related to porn**

In a survey of over 2,000 parents, 78% told us that they thought schools should be talking to young people about subjects related to porn, such as body image, self-esteem, consent and communication.

And 81% of parents said that it's a good idea to talk to young people about subjects related to porn – in a way that's suitable for their age – before they turn 16.

# Useful resources and training

## **FPA training: Young people, sexuality and the digital world**

[fpa.org.uk/course/young-people-sexuality-and-digital-world-0](http://fpa.org.uk/course/young-people-sexuality-and-digital-world-0)

## **FPA training: Talking to young people about relationships and sex**

[fpa.org.uk/course/talking-young-people-about-relationships-and-sex](http://fpa.org.uk/course/talking-young-people-about-relationships-and-sex)

## **DO... RSE project resources for teachers**

[dosreforschools.com/resources-for-teachers/](http://dosreforschools.com/resources-for-teachers/)

## **DO... RSE project action plan toolkit**

[dosreforschools.com/action-plan-toolkit/](http://dosreforschools.com/action-plan-toolkit/)

## **We Need to Talk About Pornography by Vanessa Rogers**

Lesson plans, activities and photocopiable materials, published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Available from the FPA shop.

[fpa.org.uk/product/we-need-talk-about-pornography](http://fpa.org.uk/product/we-need-talk-about-pornography)

## **Planet Porn teaching resource, Bish training**

[bishtraining.com/planet-porn/](http://bishtraining.com/planet-porn/)

## **The Sex Education Supplement Porn issue, Sex Education Forum**

[flipsnack.com/flip-preview/fdtps1uz/](http://flipsnack.com/flip-preview/fdtps1uz/)

## **RSE advice for the 21st century, by Brook, the PSHE Association and the Sex Education Forum**

[brook.org.uk/our-work/sre-supplementary-advice](http://brook.org.uk/our-work/sre-supplementary-advice)

## **Porn education myth busting, Sex Education Forum**

[sexeducationforum.org.uk/policy-campaigns/myth-busting-about-pornography-in-sre.aspx](http://sexeducationforum.org.uk/policy-campaigns/myth-busting-about-pornography-in-sre.aspx)