

PORN - IS IT LEGAL IS IT RIGHT?

An activity looking at the law around porn and the ethics of what people do with porn.

This activity provides a brief factual analysis of current UK law around porn: please do not rely on this for legal advice. As you can see it may be possible that young people could be committing criminal offences in their use of pornography. As with many offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is not the aim to criminalise non-abusive consensual sexual activity with young people but that doesn't mean that offences aren't being committed. So young people should be made aware of their legal rights.

There are also lots of scenarios where the use of pornography by young people can be problematic: where ethics, morality and doing the right thing are all very important and possibly more relevant than whether something is legal or not. This relates to young people watching sexual images but also creating them. (You might want to use this in a lesson with the materials around '**SEXTING**')

I hope that the scenarios presented here are real and relevant to young people. They are based on stories and situations that I and colleagues have encountered working with young people: particularly to do with sexual activity, privacy, boundaries and examples of harassment. However they also raise questions around the ethics of looking at porn and questioning whether all porn is moral or even if it may be legal/available.

How to play

If you are using powerpoint you might want to display the '**IS IT LEGAL**' and then the '**REMEMBER**' slide for everyone to read. You will need to print enough copies of '**IS IT RIGHT**' for each group to have one or two copies. I ask each group to pick one or two scenarios that are interesting to them and ask them to follow the instructions on the handout and then feedback. Encourage a discussion as each group feeds back as many people may have different

opinions. Try to focus less on the legal aspects (which can get a bit technical and dull) but more on the ethical issues.

Learning outcomes for this activity include:

- An understanding of the UK law as it relates to viewing and creating pornography
- How pornography can be used to harass a young person or can be used as part of sexual abuse
- That many young people are perhaps unwittingly creating sexual images that are unlawful
- Privacy is very difficult to maintain in the era of the internet
- Just because porn is available and legal doesn't mean that it is necessarily right to watch it

Discussion points might include:

- If you had kids would you let them have access to porn?
- How might it feel to have a sexy image of you posted on the internet without your permission?
- Why do people take sexy pictures of or for each other? Is there a way to make this safer?
- Do you think that there should be an age limit for watching porn? How can it be enforced?

PORN LAWS



In the UK it is legal to look at porn so long as it does not feature: under 18s, sex with animals, torture, scenes of rape or sexual assault or violent scenes which are life threatening or likely to cause serious harm.

Porn that is made and made available in the US has to be certified that all persons were over 18 at the time it was made (known as 2257 information).

Porn can be shown on UK TV after 9pm so long as it does not show erect penises or close ups of genitals.

The legal age is 18 to buy porn magazines or videos: most porn websites try to prevent under 18s from accessing them, either through charging with a credit card or by a disclaimer on the front page.

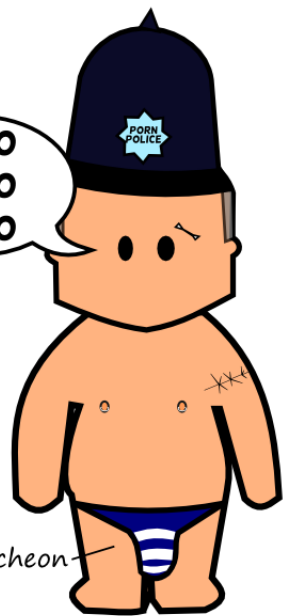
Young people under 18 who film or take sexual pictures of each other can be charged with child porn offences, even if they both agreed to it.

If someone makes a sex tape or photographs then they have copyright over the tape, so they can probably do whatever they want with it (share on the internet for instance), unless anyone in the video or image was not aware they were involved. Even then it can be very difficult to take something off the internet.

It can also be illegal to watch porn with someone under 18 (even they are both under 18 and both wanted to watch it), this is intended to prevent abuse of children and young people.

police *always*
say this

ALLO
ALLO
ALLO



truncheon

PORN IS IT RIGHT?

Pick one of these statements and decide for yourself

👉 is it legal?

👉 is it right (ethical, moral)?

Some of these might be illegal but you might think they aren't a problem. Some might be legal but not right. Some both. Some neither. It's up to you (it's meant to start a discussion about ethics and stuff).

A 36 year old family friend invites a 16 year old to sit down and watch porn.

A 17 year old couple film each other having sex.

Watching a glamour model's sex tape on the internet that her ex sold to a porn website: she has tried to have it taken down but can't.

A 19 year old shows his friends a naked picture of his 18 year old partner.

A 14 year old watching free porn online.

A 17 year old takes a picture of her breasts and sends to her 18 year old boyfriend.

Going on a porn site where it is not made clear that everyone is over 18.

Downloading a porn clip that someone else has uploaded illegally.

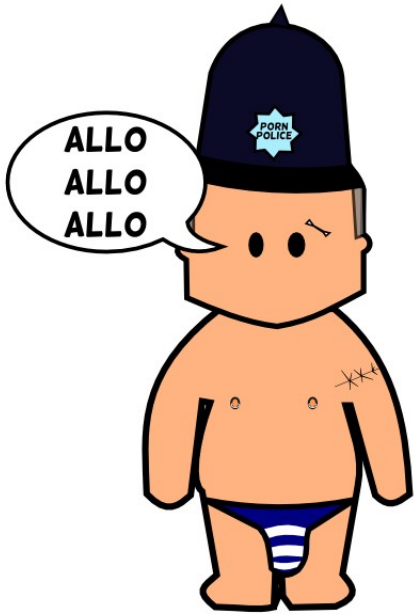
A parent buys a newspaper with naked women and allows kids to read it.

A 15 year old boy buying a 'Lads' Mag'.

Three 17 year olds chilling with a beer watching porn together for a laugh.

Someone sends a picture of porn involving an animal via bluetooth to a mate.

A 14 year old making someone at school look at an image on his phone.



REMEMBER

"children of the same or similar age are highly unlikely to be prosecuted for engaging in sexual activity, where the activity is mutually agreed and there is no abuse or exploitation." CPS Guidelines

**IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED, THREATENED, ABUSED OR HARASSED
YOU CAN STILL REPORT THIS TO THE POLICE.**

THEY'RE THERE TO PROTECT YOU: EVEN IF YOU'VE APPEARED IN A SEXT OR WATCHED PORN