Mercy Manor

Is now offering lessons from
the Esteem Program

Parent Night

Information

Packet

Workbooks can be previewed by visiting www.mercymanor.com/esteem

If you have any questions, please contact Mercy Manor.
Stephanie Fears, Program Director 903-932-9079
Kathy Weeks, School Coordinator 903-353-7707

Dear Parent/Guardian,

ESTEEM curriculum will take students on an illuminating journey to help them develop the life skills needed to become successful, healthy adults. This valuable program is evidence-based, medically accurate, proven effective, and adheres to the Texas Health TEKS.

EXCURSION — ESTEEM 4TH EDITION
5th Ages 10-11

ENVISION — ESTEEM 4TH EDITION
6th Ages 11-12

EQUIP — ESTEEM 4TH EDITION
7th Ages 12-13

EXPLORE — ESTEEM 4TH EDITION
8th Ages 13-14

EMBARK — ESTEEM 4TH EDITION
9th+ 14 and up

THE ESTEEM JOURNEY

- Is a Facilitator Friendly Curriculum
- Promotes Risky Behavior Avoidance
- Develops Healthy Relationships
- Offers Education Components for Parent Involvement
- Contains Up to Date Family and Criminal Law Lessons
- Focuses on Academic and Career Goal Setting
- Uses Interactive Scenarios and Games

DESIGNED FOR

- Public Schools
- Community Organizations
- Church Youth Groups
- Non-Profits and Social Services for High-Risk Youth
- Pregnancy Resource Centers

(903) 932-9079

Each 100-page workbook acts as an interactive personal journal to help students work through important life decisions. Parent/Guardian worksheets are sent home with every lesson or can be downloaded from the website.

info@mercymanor.com

MercyManor.com/Esteem

ESTEEM is a peer-reviewed curriculum that teaches the same core topics throughout all five grades/levels while appropriately increasing the maturity level of the content each year.

TOPICS INCLUDE:
Lesson 1: Goal setting for improved academic outcomes / Career planning
Lesson 2: How to navigate positive and negative media influences
Lesson 3: Puberty and human development / True cost of teen pregnancy / Understanding Fatherhood
Lesson 4: Explanation of the major STD's / Benefits of waiting / Character counts
Lesson 5: Legal consequences of cyberbullying, sexting, human trafficking / Child support / Family & criminal laws
Lesson 6: Dangers of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use / Brain development
Lesson 7: Peer pressure and refusal skills / Bullying / Depression, suicide, and self-harm
Lesson 8: Communication skills / Problem solving steps / Increasing emotional intelligence / Time-out set
Lesson 9: Real friendships / Gangs and cliques / Dating standards / Renewed abstinence / Abusive relationships
Lesson 10: Reviewing goals / Self-discipline / Having a growth mindset / True love, commitment, and healthy marriage

ESTEEM consists of optimal health messages created by a coalition of dedicated people, including science teachers, coaches, counselors, nurses, doctors, SHAC members, topic experts, parents and even students. Health is not just the absence of disease, it is complete physical, mental and social wellbeing in order for students to focus on their academic and personal goals.

The ESTEEM curriculum may be particularly useful for schools in Texas serving students from diverse backgrounds. Positive changes were most noticeable for the African American and Hispanic students using ESTEEM.

Success Sequence: If youth adopt these behaviors, in sequence, they risk only a 3% chance of living in poverty as adults:
1) Graduate, 2) Work full-time, and 3) Marry before having children.
"Only 9% of young men and women from lower-income families who follow the sequence are poor in their late twenties and early thirties compared to 31% who do not follow this sequence." - Murray, C. (1984). Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980. NY: Basic Books; Wang, W., Wilcox, B., (2017). The Millennial Success Sequence. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute; Wang, W., Wilcox, B., (2017). Marriage Matters. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute.

Teachers who are certified to deliver the ESTEEM program help youth make important decisions in relationships and life by encouraging wellbeing through primary prevention strategies. In addition, areas in the program related to abuse, neglect, violence, loss, grief, trauma, and suicide may directly affect some students in the classroom. Through the training process we equip the teacher to recognize signs of discomfort with instruction in these areas, students will be referred to the appropriate resource, identified ahead of the implementation, for additional help and support.

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info@mercymanor.com

Each 100-page workbook acts as an interactive personal journal to help students work through important life decisions. Parent/Guardian worksheets are sent home with every lesson or can be downloaded from the website.

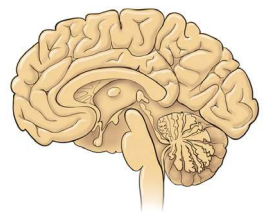**MercyManor.com/Esteem**
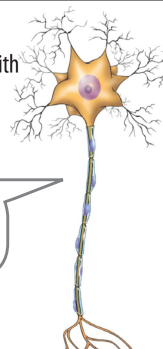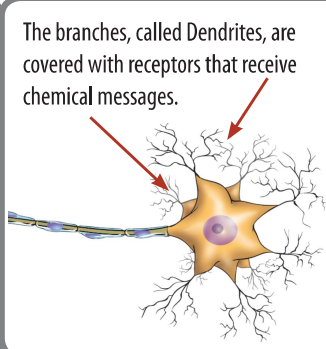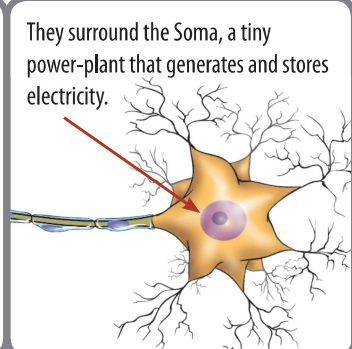
Understanding Brain Development
How the choices we make change our brain and make us who we are
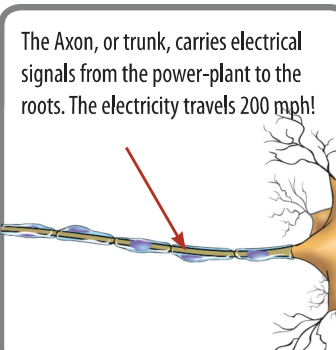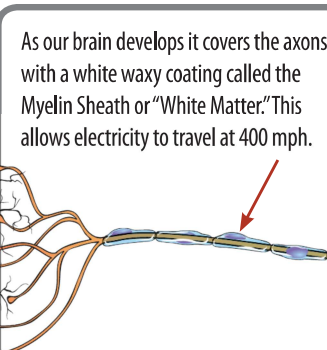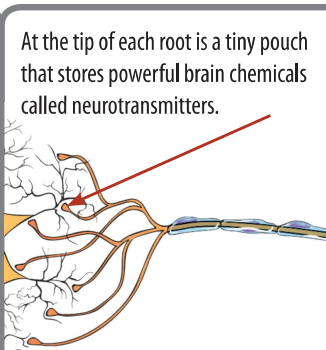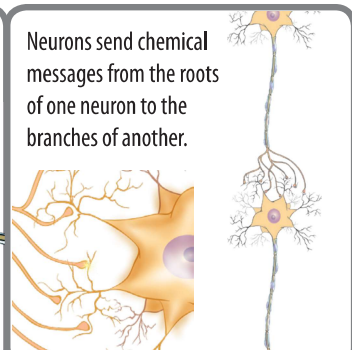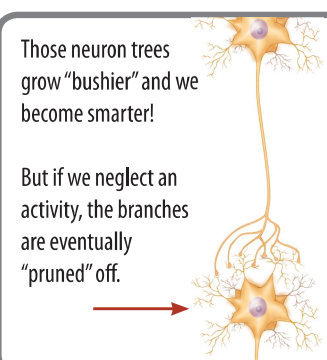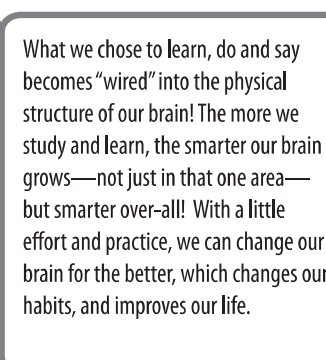
Strengthening Families Program by Dr. Karol Kumpfer
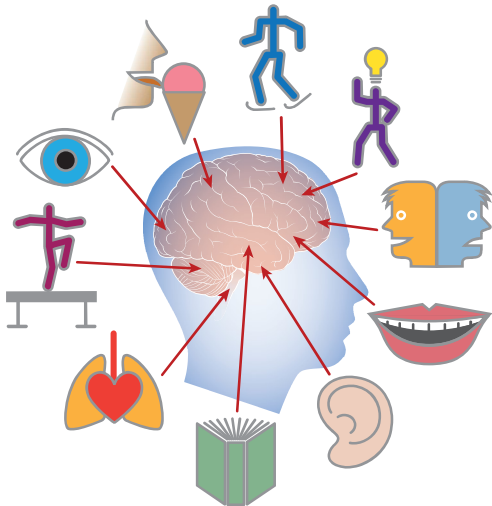
Our brain is the most amazing "computer" that has ever been created. It has billions of neurons that make connections and control hundreds of body functions—including everything we think, feel, say, or do—all at the same time! Forty percent of our neurons are "wired" or connected at birth. The other 60 percent are waiting to be wired by our learning and experiences. Everything we think, say, or do causes new neural growth which changes our brain structure. This means that teens can direct the development of their own brains. The ages between 12–25 is a critical time of brain development. Important connections are being made that link brain areas together, helping us become smarter and make better decisions. Alcohol suppresses brain activity, harming its development. It is essential to protect it from alcohol and drugs during this critical "wiring" period.

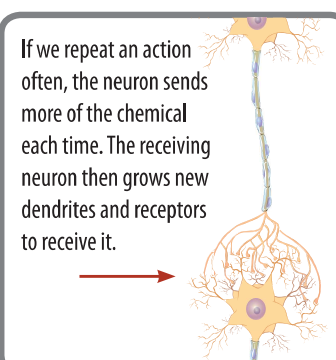**"Teens, through their choices and actions, have the power to direct the development of their own brains....[They are] laying the neural foundations that will serve them for the rest of their lives."**

- *Dr. Jay Giedd, MD, Chief of Brain Imaging, National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH)*

Your amazing brain has over 100 billion neurons that communicate with each other—and the rest of your body!

A neuron looks a little like a tree, with branches, a trunk, and roots.

Hi! I'm a neuron.

The branches, called Dendrites, are covered with receptors that receive chemical messages.

They surround the Soma, a tiny power-plant that generates and stores electricity.

The Axon, or trunk, carries electrical signals from the power-plant to the roots. The electricity travels 200 mph!

As our brain develops it covers the axons with a white waxy coating called the Myelin Sheath or "White Matter." This allows electricity to travel at 400 mph.

At the tip of each root is a tiny pouch that stores powerful brain chemicals called neurotransmitters.

Neurons send chemical messages from the roots of one neuron to the branches of another.

If we repeat an action often, the neuron sends more of the chemical each time. The receiving neuron then grows new dendrites and receptors to receive it.

Those neuron trees grow "bushier" and we become smarter!

But if we neglect an activity, the branches are eventually "pruned" off.

What we chose to learn, do and say becomes "wired" into the physical structure of our brain! The more we study and learn, the smarter our brain grows—not just in that one area—but smarter over-all! With a little effort and practice, we can change our brain for the better, which changes our habits, and improves our life.

Alcohol before age 21 slows down brain development. It damages White Matter, and can quickly create addiction.

Beer

How Family Dinners Improve Students' Grades

by Ann Dolin, M.Ed.

Believe it or not, your family's eating habits can have a profound effect on your child's academic success. The routine of preparing and sharing meals regularly creates a sense of family togetherness and unity. Though the hustle and bustle of everyday life can get in the way, it's important to carve out time specifically to sit down together around the table. Students who eat dinner with their families often are more likely to:

Do well in school (40% more likely to earn As and Bs in school)

Be emotionally content and have lower levels of stress

Have positive peer relationships and healthier eating habits

Refrain from smoking, drinking, and doing drugs

Believe their parents are proud of them

This time together has additional well-documented benefits that include:

Improved Achievement Test Scores — A University of Illinois study of 120 boys and girls ages 7 to 11 found that children who did well on standard achievement tests were those that had consistent quality meal time with their families.

Improved Vocabulary and Reading Skills — A study by Dr. Catherine Snow at Harvard's Graduate School showed that mealtime conversations teach children more vocabulary than when parents read to them. She followed 65 families for 15 years looking at how mealtime conversations played a critical role in language acquisition leading to improved vocabularies and better readers.

Greater Academic Achievement — A Reader's Digest survey of more then 2,000 parents compared academic achievement with family characteristics. Surprisingly, eating meals together was a stronger predictor of academic success than whether the children lived with one or two parents.

Higher Grades — Researchers at Columbia University found a striking relationship between frequency of meal times and grades. Teens who have fewer than three family dinners in a typical week are more than twice as likely to do poorly in school. Twenty percent of teens who have infrequent family dinners (three or four per week) report receiving mostly Cs or below in school, whereas only nine percent of teens who have frequent family dinners (five to seven per week) report receiving mostly Cs or lower.

Like anything else, eating dinners together does take practice. The less often a family meets to share a meal, the worse the experience is bound to be. So, plan on as many meals together as possible, even if you serve take out or only have a limited time available. Some things you might want to consider when getting ready are:

Turn off the TV. It prohibits meaningful conversation.

Use dinnertime to tell your child why he or she is a great kid.

Focus on the positives during dinners.

Refrain from discussing shortcomings or unfulfilled responsibilities.

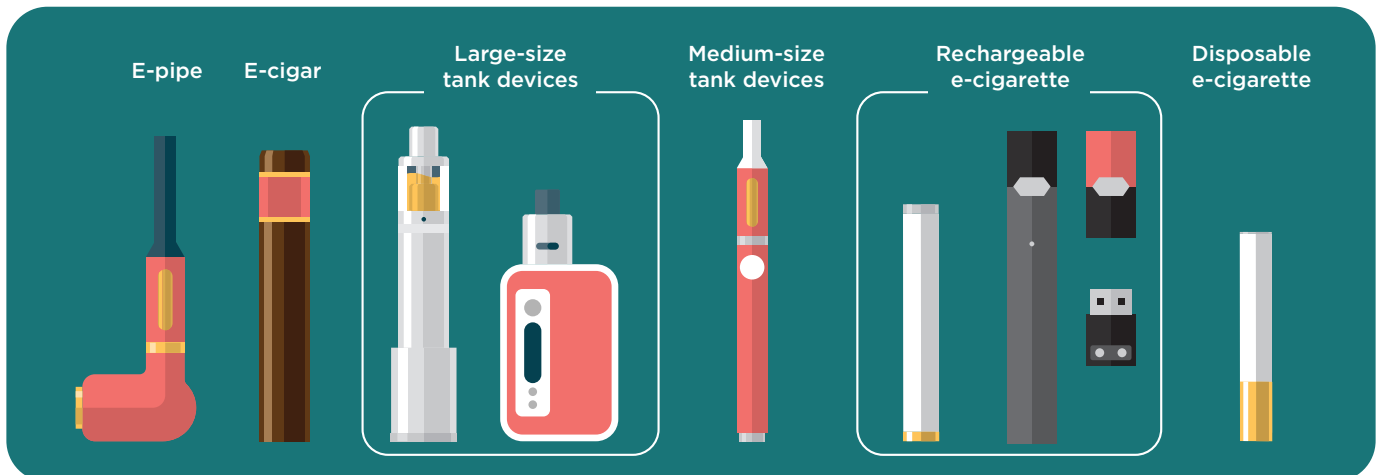Remember, family dinners are less about the food served and more about the time spent together. Use this time to talk and reconnect. Invite conversation. Ask open- ended questions and really listen to one another. Encourage your child to invite their friends to join in family meals. It is the simple act of being together that tends to increase a sense of security with children, not the elaborate makings of the meal.

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

» E-cigarettes have the potential to benefit adult smokers who are not pregnant if used as a complete substitute for regular cigarettes and other smoked tobacco products.

» E-cigarettes are not safe for youth, young adults, pregnant women, or adults who do not currently use tobacco products.

» While e-cigarettes have the potential to benefit some people and harm others, scientists still have a lot to learn about whether e-cigarettes are effective for quitting smoking.

» If you've never smoked or used other tobacco products or e-cigarettes, don't start.

WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES?

» E-cigarettes are known by many different names. They are sometimes called "e-cigs," "e-hookahs," "mods," "vape pens," "vapes," "tank systems," and "electronic nicotine delivery systems."

» Some e-cigarettes are made to look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some resemble pens, USB sticks, and other everyday items.

» E-cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine—the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products—flavorings, and other chemicals that help to make the aerosol. Users inhale this aerosol into their lungs. Bystanders can also breathe in this aerosol when the user exhales into the air.

» E-cigarettes can be used to deliver marijuana and other drugs.

| E-pipe | E-cigar | Large-size tank devices | Medium-size tank devices | Rechargeable e-cigarette | Disposable e-cigarette |

CS284159-B

WHAT IS IN E-CIGARETTE AEROSOL?

THE E-CIGARETTE AEROSOL THAT USERS BREATHE FROM THE DEVICE AND EXHALE CAN CONTAIN HARMFUL AND POTENTIALLY HARMFUL SUBSTANCES:

VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS

CANCER-CAUSING CHEMICALS

ULTRAFINE PARTICLES

HEAVY METALS SUCH AS NICKEL, TIN, AND LEAD

NICOTINE

FLAVORING SUCH AS DIACETYL, A CHEMICAL LINKED TO A SERIOUS LUNG DISEASE
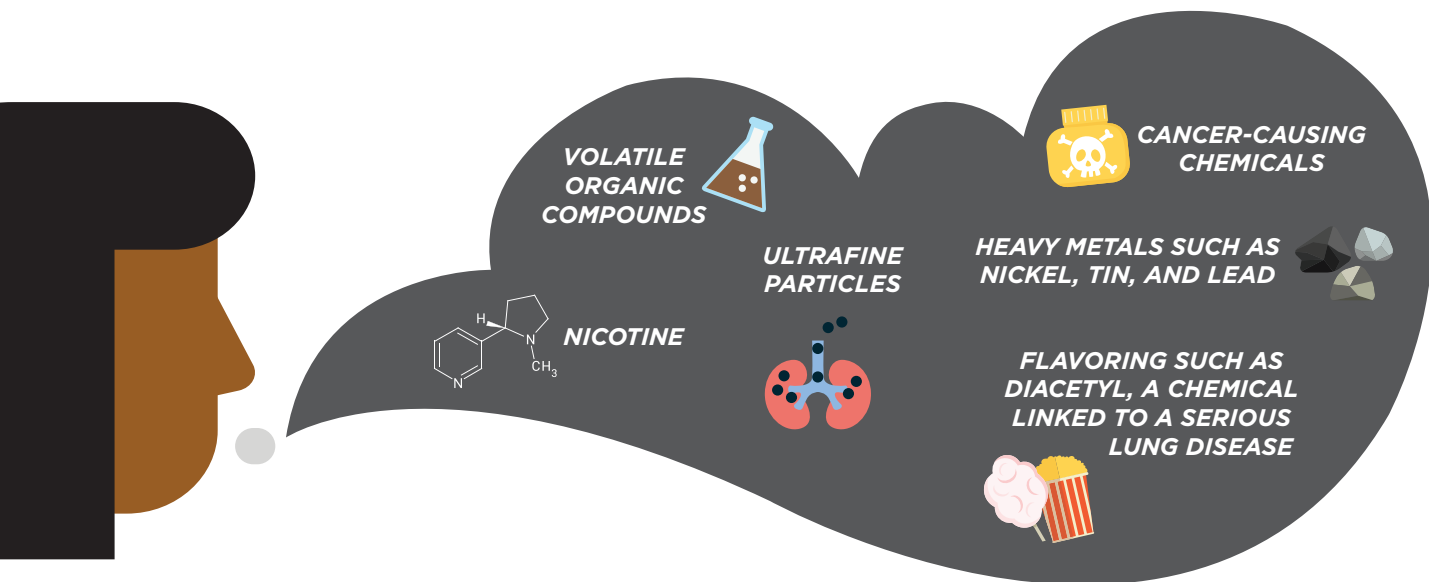
It is difficult for consumers to know what e-cigarette products contain. For example, some e-cigarettes marketed as containing zero percent nicotine have been found to contain nicotine.

ARE E-CIGARETTES LESS HARMFUL THAN REGULAR CIGARETTES?

VS

YES, but that doesn't mean e-cigarettes are safe.

E-cigarette aerosol generally contains fewer toxic chemicals than the deadly mix of 7,000 chemicals in smoke from regular cigarettes. However, e-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including nicotine, heavy metals like lead, volatile organic compounds, and cancer-causing agents.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF USING E-CIGARETTES?

SCIENTISTS ARE STILL LEARNING ABOUT THE LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS OF E-CIGARETTES. HERE IS WHAT WE KNOW NOW.

1 Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which has known health effects

» Nicotine is highly addictive.

» Nicotine is toxic to developing fetuses.

» Nicotine can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s.

» Nicotine is a health danger for pregnant women and their developing babies.

2 Besides nicotine, e-cigarette aerosol can contain substances that harm the body.

» This includes cancer-causing chemicals and tiny particles that reach deep into lungs. However, e-cigarette aerosol generally contains fewer harmful chemicals than smoke from burned tobacco products.
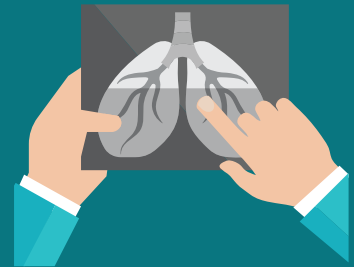
3 E-cigarettes can cause unintended injuries.

» Defective e-cigarette batteries have caused fires and explosions, some of which have resulted in serious injuries.

» In addition, acute nicotine exposure can be toxic. Children and adults have been poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing e-cigarette liquid.
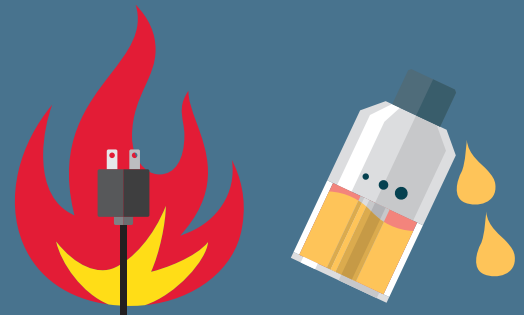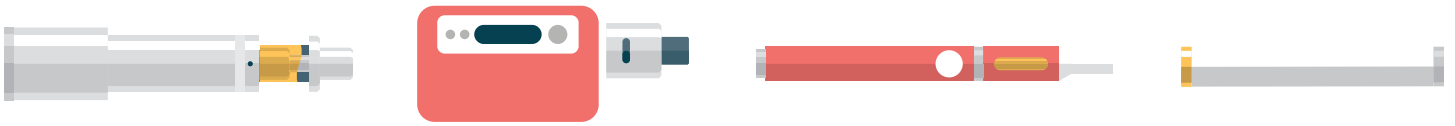
E-CIGARETTES ARE NOT CURRENTLY APPROVED BY THE FDA AS A QUIT SMOKING AID.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, a group of health experts that makes recommendations about preventive health care, concluded that the evidence is insufficient to recommend e-cigarettes for smoking cessation in adults, including pregnant women.

HOWEVER, e-cigarettes may help non-pregnant adult smokers if used as a complete substitute for all cigarettes and other smoked tobacco products.

TO DATE, THE FEW STUDIES ON THE ISSUE ARE MIXED.

Evidence from two randomized controlled trials found that e-cigarettes with nicotine can help smokers stop smoking in the long term compared with placebo (non-nicotine) e-cigarettes.

A recent CDC study found that many adults are using e-cigarettes in an attempt to quit smoking. However, most adult e-cigarette users do not stop smoking cigarettes and are instead continuing to use both products ("dual use"). Because smoking even a few cigarettes a day can be dangerous, quitting smoking completely is very important to protect your health.

WHO IS USING E-CIGARETTES?

YOUTH

E-CIGARETTES ARE THE MOST COMMONLY USED TOBACCO PRODUCT AMONG YOUTH.

In 2018, more than **3.6 MILLION** U.S. middle and high school students used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days, including:

IN THE U.S., YOUTH ARE MORE LIKELY THAN ADULTS TO USE E-CIGARETTE

4.9% MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

20.8% HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
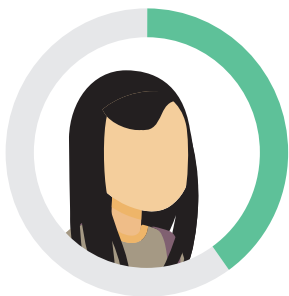
AMONG CURRENT E-CIGARETTE USERS AGED 45 YEARS AND OLDER in 2015, most were either current or former regular cigarette smokers, and 1.3% had never been cigarette smokers.

IN CONTRAST, AMONG CURRENT E-CIGARETTE USERS AGED 18–24 YEARS, 40.0% had **NEVER BEEN** regular cigarette smokers

ADULTS

In 2017, **2.8%** of U.S. adults were current e-cigarette users

IN 2015, AMONG ADULT E-CIGARETTE USERS OVERALL:

29.8% were former regular cigarette smokers

11.4% had never been regular cigarette smokers
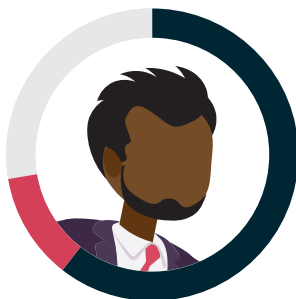
58.8% were current regular cigarette smokers
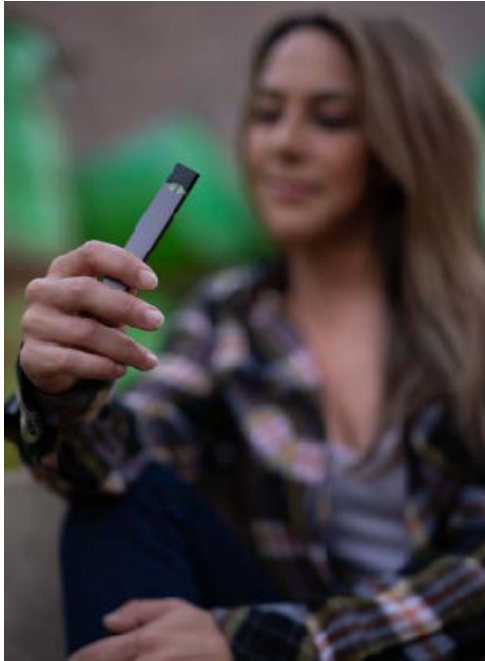
E-Cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) entered the U.S. Market place around 2007. Since 2014, they have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth. In 2018, e-cigarette use (referred to as 'vaping') reached **epidemic** levels.

What are e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes are tobacco products. Some resemble regular cigarettes, cigars, pipes and some have a modern, sleek design and look like writing pens or USB sticks. The products are commonly known as ENDS – electronic nicotine delivery system(s).

Other common names:

- Mods
- Hookah pens
- Vape sticks
- Personal vaporizers (PV)
- Tank systems
- Smoke Juice

Whether it's an e-cigarette, vape pen, e-hookah, using an electronic cigarette is called "vaping". Stores who sell mostly e-cigarettes and e-juice are called "vape shops."

How do e-cigarettes work?

Most e-cigarettes have a battery, a heating element, and place to hold a liquid (such as a cartridge or pod). As the user draws on the device, the battery heats the e-liquid to produce aerosol, not a water vapor. The aerosol is then inhaled into the lungs.

Contact Information

Tobacco Prevention and Control
Dept. of State Health Services
PO Box 149347
Mail Code 1965
Austin, Texas 78714-9347
Tobacco.free@dshs.texas.gov

For more information, visit:
dshs.texas.gov/tobacco

In Texas, an individual must be 21 years old to buy or own an e-cigarette.

Ready to Quit? Call the Texas Quitline at 1-877-YES-QUIT.

National Data

In 2018, 20.8% of U.S. high school students reported using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. This is a 9.1% increase compared to 2017. From 2017-2018, U.S. middle school students who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days increased from 3.3% to 4.9%.

Texas Data

According to the 2018 Texas Youth Tobacco Survey, **13%** of youth used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. This means that **18.9%** of high school students and **6.0%** of middle school students used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.

Associated Dangers

- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which can harm adolescent brain development. Using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.
- Some e-cigarette flavorings may be safe to eat, but not to breathe. This is because the gut can process more substances than the lungs.
- A common ingredient in e-cigarette flavoring, diacetyl, causes bronchiolitis obliterans, known as "popcorn lung".
- Defective e-cigarette batteries have caused fires and explosions. Some explosions have resulted in serious injuries and death.
- Children and adults have been poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing e-cigarette liquid through their skin or eyes.
- There have been reports of youth and young adults experiencing seizures after vaping. Seizures or convulsions are potential side effects of nicotine poisoning.

The Food and Drug Administration has not found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit.

If smokers are ready to quit, call the Texas Quitline at 1-877-YES-QUIT or talk with their doctor.

For more information, visit Dshs.texas.gov/tobacco.

**Sources for this document are available upon request.

TEXAS
Health and Human Services

Texas Department of State Health Services

dshs.texas.gov

13 Apps Every Parent Should Know in 2020

By Sierra Brann

We live in a world full of Apps! While some are harmless, others pose threats that we may not even be aware about. Popular apps can make our children easy targets for sexual predators, or may even expose them to explicit, unfiltered content. Do you know what apps on your child's device are safe? This article contains apps that may be potentially dangerous for this next year.

Social Networking Apps

MeetMe is a social app that advertises its ability to allow users to meet new people through messages, video calls, and live streams. Mainly used as a dating app, users are required to build a public profile that can contain sensitive information. With no option to make information private, users can freely view other profiles within their vicinity. The app also encourages reaching out to other users- particularly users of the opposite sex- and viewing profiles by offering incentives through in-app rewards.

Kik is an alternative, cross-platform messaging app that allows user to chat anonymously without the need for phone service. Along with being able to share most any digital media, users can also video chat with one another. According to Forbes.com Kik has had issues with child exploitation and sexual harassment for some time now. This includes spambots spreading graphic content to users and users themselves taking advantage of Kik's anonymity. This app also allows users to connect and chat with random users through special scannable codes that link to individual users and group chats.

Live.me is an app in which users view live broadcasts of other users. This app contains features allowing users to locate local broadcasts within their city or town, as well as being able to view broadcasts worldwide by selecting specific regions. There are multiple reports of sexual harassment, sexual content/partial nudity, and predatory behavior seen regularly within Google Play store reviews for the app. This app has a 17+ rating that can easily be falsified by users to gain access to the app.
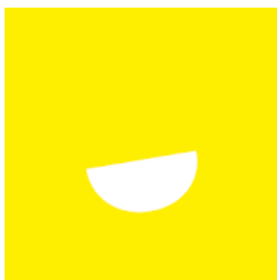
Yubo is an app that allows users to meet strangers online and video chat with them. According to a review published by WebWatchers, even though Yubo is advertised as a way to simply make friends, Yubo's design closely resembles the popular dating app known as Tinder. Connections made on Yubo offer users the opportunity to link one another through Snapchat. Newly connected users can then find one another's locations through Snapchat depending on their privacy settings. Though Yubo contains age restrictions, these restrictions are loosely monitored making it easy to falsify information.

Anonymous Messaging Apps

Whisper is an app that lets users post photos and videos completely anonymously. Users can interact with one another by commenting on posts or by messaging other users directly. Despite the site claiming that it regulates content posted, many reviews by users on the Google Play store report the app to still contain an abundance of nudity and other explicit content. It is also reported within Google Play reviews to contain users who abuse their anonymity to sexually harass other users. App wants users to be 17 and older but users can easily falsify information to make an account.

Chatruletka is a social, "cam-chat" app that connects users with strangers around the world via randomly selected video calls. This app follows the format of a similar service known as Omegle which also connects users at random for spontaneous one-on-one video chats. Omegle has been reported for sexual/pornographic content presented by some users.
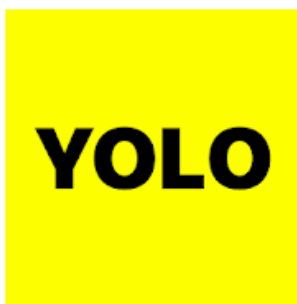
YOLO is an app that works in conjunction with the popular Snapchat app. This app allows users to comment anonymously on the stories of other users who also use the app depending on their privacy settings. It can be used to cyberbully people or be the victim of cyberbullying.

Holo is an app that allows users to utilize AR technology to include a selection of animals, popular characters, and celebrities in their photos or short videos. Content made with Holo can be shared just like any other photo or video through external messaging and social media. Holo is not filtered and can contain explicit pictures and pornographic content.

WallaMe is a little-known app that allows users to link short messages, phone-drawn graffiti, and images to locations in the real world with augmented reality. Using their device's camera, anyone with the WallaMe app can view public postings- "Walls"- in their location or on the app's public feeds that showcase the more popular Walls. Walls created can also be private so that only specified people can view them. Could contain explicit pictures.

BitLife is an app in which users are able to simulate living another life. Rated 17+, this text-based game allows users to decide how their character will grow and act. Contains mild sexual content and nudity; mature suggestive themes; simulated gambling and drugs; mild profanity and crude humor. Child playing games can seek aspects of game in their real-life or have a hard time differentiating which is okay or not in real life.

Apps to hide browser history

DuckDuckGo is a popular privacy browser app that allows users to browse the internet with more privacy and security than the standard browser/search engine. It is used primarily to prevent user information related to internet usage from being tracked, sold, or recorded by marketing companies. While ensuring the privacy of users, it does also mean that no browser history or cookies are saved. This means that the user can look at anything they want to on the internet without anyone being able to see what they saw. Can be used to access pornography and other explicit content.

Calculator- Photo Vault is an app designed to appear like a normal calculator. Requiring a password to access, this app allows users to hide photos, videos, and apps. Users can also hide their browser history when using the browser that comes built into the app. Similar apps exist that also utilize the guise of a calculator. Can be used to hide naked or inappropriate photos of people.

POOF is a small, knock off app of Snapchat. POOF lets users' message other users within visual range. It does not require an internet connection; however, users do still require shared wifi and Bluetooth connection. Messages in this app are deleted once users move out of range or are inactive for too long. Can be used by sexual predators to connect with your child or send them pornographic content.

Ways to keep our children safe:

- Regularly check what apps are on your child's device and talk to them about about them.
- Look at their messages to other people and see what they are posting on social media sites
- Check the devices browser history to see what they have been searching
- Sit down with your children and talk to them about concerns, explaining why.
- Discuss what can be done to resolve any concerns and keep it from happening again in the future
- Talk to them honestly about the consequences of inappropriate use of technology.
- Set boundaries and rules with them.
- Let your kids know that you love them, and you want what's best for them; let them know why you are monitoring their devices

Before I got my first phone, my parents printed out a phone contract that we both signed that contained rules and guidelines that went with having the device. Such rules and guidelines included turning the phone off every night at 10 pm, never saying anything over text that I wouldn't tell someone in person, always informing my parents of the password to my phone, never taking pictures of myself naked/sending pictures of myself to other people, etc. My contract was hung up in my room in a place where I would see it every day and remind myself of that agreement. Be proactive when it comes to your kids' social media use and digital safety; start having conversations with your kids today!

https://educateempowerkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Social_Media_Guide_Contract_Single_Pages.pdf

10 Most Dangerous Mobile Apps for Kids 2021

1. Houseparty

Houseparty is a video-chatting app that allows as many as 10 people to share a virtual hang. First released in 2016, it quickly gains its popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Though it is easy to use and makes virtual hang available for most people, yet it still can be termed as a dangerous app for kids. Houseparty uses a kid's personal contact list like phone/Facebook/SnapChat contacts to create its own contact list. Anyone on the above-mentioned lists can start a conversation with your kids without notice. Your kids may get exposed to improper content easily.

2. Ask.FM App
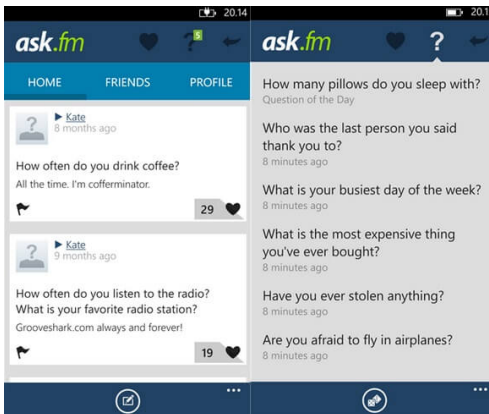
Ask.fm is a dangerous app and is a part of many controversies across various regions of the globe. When your kid is using the app, they can post their questions without mentioning their names, and the other can answer them without telling their identity. Parents should suggest their children from not using such dangerous apps for kids as it contains explicit content. And such posts can have content that is inappropriate for teens and growing kids.

3. Kik App
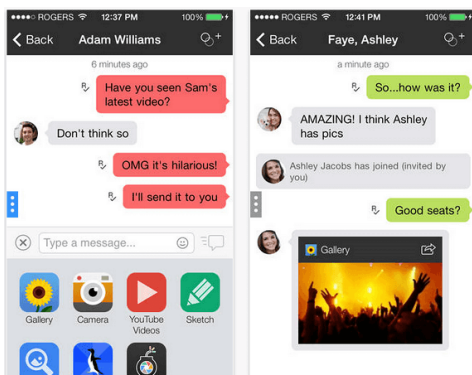
Kik is one of the most popular yet dangerous apps for kids these days. It is a messaging platform that allows the sending and receiving of messages to people who are using the same application. The app is said to be the most dangerous apps because of its privacy settings. Anyone can easily misuse the information linked with your kid. Also, the details connected with the senders and the receivers of the messages are complicated to access. Your child can receive texts through any random stranger, and that can be harmful to his mental health.

4. Snapchat
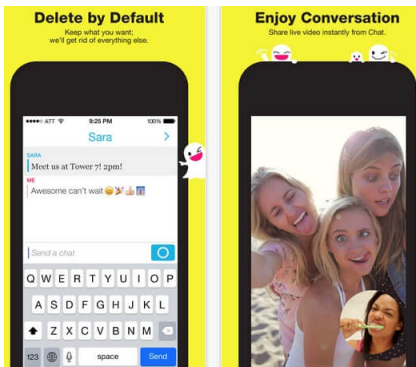
Snapchat is very popular among kids and adults of all ages. You can see people posting images and videos of their daily activities using various filters. This app has been mentioned under the dangerous app for kids' category as it can make your kids addicted, wasting valuable time. The images and messages get deleted instantly so people tend to use the app for unethical activities. You should not let your kids use this dangerous app as it can be harmful to their young minds.

5. MeetMe App

MeetMe is like other social media applications that help the users to connect to people via messages and also meet them personally if you wish to. After your kids have logged on to this dangerous app, they will see who all are online and the ones who are present in the near circle. The application uses GPS features for locating the device and helping the users to connect to those who are nearby. The app has been listed as a dangerous app for kids as they can be easily located by predators and taken advantage of. Moreover, the app uses no secure means to safeguard the personal information of your child.

6. Blendr App
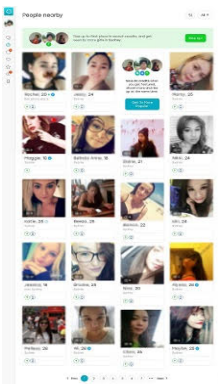
Blendr is one of the most dangerous apps for kids, as this allows users to share images and send messages to random individuals. Also, one can share the pictures and videos and rate them as per their hotness. It sounds to be weird for users below the age of 12. Your kid can fall into the prey to such dangerous apps as they want to boost up their self-esteem. The app makes use of your child's information linked with the location.

7. Instagram

It is a broad platform that brings together people of varying interests to share a common platform. Although it can be a very entertaining application, it can be a dangerous app in the hands of unprofessional and growing. The application is used for sharing images and having access to the pictures shared by others. However, not all the apps are safe from predators. If not carefully monitored, your child can be contacted by anyone for nudity and other unwanted content.

8. Vine App
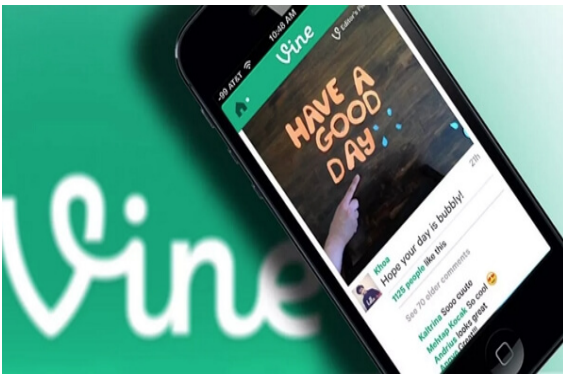
Vine is a dangerous app that is used for video sharing online. It helps the users to send videos with a length of six seconds on the online platform. The application also helps in video sharing with unknowns using the same platform. However, the application is meant for sharing inspirational or funny videos, but you cannot be entirely sure about the content shared. Several videos present here are not suitable for viewing by kids. Hence, this application is one of the dangerous apps for kids.

9. Whatsapp Messenger

Whatsapp messenger has been able to help people to connect with remote locations using text messages, voice messages, and even audio and video calls. You can stay connected with friends and families; however, without parental supervision, this can also cause potential threats. Any user can share unlimited videos, texts, and images for free. Although the app is safe, if left unmonitored, it can be a dangerous app for kids.

10. Whisper App

Whisper is yet another dangerous app that has many anonymous users. Your kid can connect with many unknown people using this application. Although the app prohibits usage for kids below 17 years of age, many people tend to install the same without complete knowledge of the content shared.

How Parents Can Protect Kids from Dangerous Apps

Parents nowadays remain unaware of their kids' social media whereabouts. They seem to show no interest in their kids' activities, and this is the leading cause of teens to use dangerous mobile apps. However, this can be sorted by taking the following steps towards your child's overall development. Parents can follow the following instructions to save their kids from using these unwanted and dangerous applications:

1. Stay up to Date

You, as a parent, should know that your kid is using something that is going to open new horizons for him. You can never be sure that the information available for him will fetch him only good results. Other than useful information, these cell phones open up an entirely different world and are a bank of unlimited knowledge. You should be aware that you are handing over a vast expense of information to your kid.

2. Let your kids know what is wrong

And talking to kids is the best way to protect them from using unethical information. You should talk to your kids frequently, knowing their whereabouts and the activities they are performing. Also, tell them that they should not search for irrelevant information. Moreover, you should teach them about cyberbullying and stop them from using dangerous mobile apps and get into talks with strangers.

3. Take help of technology: Parental Control App

And if in case you feel that you are not able to keep a strict eye on your kids, you can take help from various parental control applications for smooth monitoring. Your child will not be able to access any information without you getting to know about the same. When it comes to parental control apps, there are many options on the market, and parents will get lost easily. To save parents from the trouble of choosing the right app, we have handpicked one for you, and that's FamiSafe. FamiSafe is well known for its comprehensive features and compatibility. Compatible with Android, iOS, Fire OS, Windows, and Mac devices, FamiSafe supports 10+ different features that cover almost every aspect of parent's concerns.

Apps that make it harder for your kids to be sneaky online

If you've got a tween or a teen, chances are he or she has a smartphone ... or a tablet, or a laptop, or all of the above. Chances also are that your tween or teen is on his or her device of choice pretty much 24/7 -- doing, well, who knows what exactly?! We'd all like to think we know what our kids are doing on their phones or computers, but the truth is we can't keep watch on them all the time ... or can we?

Whether you're worried about cyberbullying, sexting, inappropriate content, or just the sheer amount of time your child is spending on social media or playing games, there's a wide variety of apps on the market designed to help keep parents in the loop -- and keep kids safe. Some of them are even free!

WebWatcher

Whether you're worried about what your kid is up to on Facebook, email, text, or even (God forbid) Tinder, WebWatcher gives you a way to record and monitor pretty much everything, even deleted messages. Available for Mac, Windows, iPhone, and Android. ($99.95, webwatcher.com)

PocketGuardian

We all want to know what our kids are doing on their phones, but some of us are uncomfortable with the idea of completely invading their privacy. Enter PocketGuardian, which sends parents alerts when content involving sexting or cyberbullying is sent or received -- but doesn't show you the actual content or tell you where it came from (meaning that yes, you'll have to have a conversation about it!). (Plans are either $9.99 per month or $12.99 per month after a 30-day free trial; gopocketguardian.com)

Net Nanny

If you have nightmares about what your kid might be googling, Net Nanny "allows the good, keeps out the bad" by letting you block pornography and other questionable content (as well as monitor social media activity and overall usage). (Prices range from $39.99 to $89.99 and vary depending on plan and device; netnanny.com)

Limitly

If the sheer number of potentially problematic apps on your kid's phone is stressing you out, Limitly will help you to view, restrict, and schedule the usage of acceptable apps -- as well as flat-out block the use of unacceptable options. For Android only. (Free, play.google.com)

Bark

Using a "watchdog engine" (that's why it's called "Bark" -- get it?), this service alerts parents when your kid's Internet activity includes potential issues involving cyberbullying, sexting, drugs, or depression/suicide -- and even offers tips on how to deal with the situation. ($9, bark.us)

Trackidz

The biggest perk of your kids' having a smartphone is that you can get in touch with them at all times -- but that still doesn't mean you know where they are, necessarily. In addition to giving parents a way to block apps and monitor usage, Trackidz also sends an alert whenever kids leave or enter the "Geo Fence" and features an "Emergency Message" tool that allows kids to send parents an alert when they can't call or text that will let them know their whereabouts. (Free for the first 15 days, monthly subscriptions range from $1 to $10 after that; trackidz.com)

VISR

Scrolling through your kid's multiple social media accounts with a fine tooth comb can be frustrating and time-consuming (and potentially invasive). VISR aims to take the grunt work (and the guess work) out of monitoring online activity by tracking a variety of categories (bullying, sexting, drug use) and notifying you only about the important stuff. (Free for now, will be $5 per month; visr.co)

SecureTeen

The aptly titled SecureTeen has all the Internet safety bells and whistles you could ask for: social media monitoring, app and content blocking, message logging, location tracking, and more -- for Android, iOS, and computers. ($39.99 per year for three devices; secureteen.com)

ParentKit

Control the kind of content your kid sees (and how frequently) with ParentKit, which allows you to set up both controls and schedules for your child's iPhone, iPad, or iPod from your own device. (First month free, $24.99 for six months, $39.99 for 12 months; itunes.apple.com)

Curbi

Concerned about if your tween or teen is sending racy selfies? Curbi gives parents a way to restrict camera access on phones (as well as Internet usage and those pesky in-app purchases!). (Basic plan free, upgrades range from $2.99 to $3.99 per month; play.google.com)

Tips for Parents on Sexting & Teens

The best tech safety policy is education, supervision and trust.

Make behavioral expectations clear to teens.
Have frequent discussions about the responsibilities and privileges associated with the use of technology.

Be familiar with technology teens are using.
Email, texting, IMing, chatting, gaming, social networking, web and cell phone cameras.

Become familiar with texting acronyms.
CTN=Can't Talk Now, TDTM=Talk Dirty To Me, WYRN=What's Your Real Name?, NIFC=Nude In Front of the Camera, pron=porn, 420=marijuana, 8=oral sex, zerg=to gang up on someone.
For more translations, visit teenluresprevention.com/parents

Use teachable moments.
Local and national news stories about Internet and electronic crimes provide opportunities to discuss these issues. Google "sexing news" for related articles.

Supervise teens online and electronically.
Let them know you are monitoring them because you love them and care about their future.
Don't rely entirely on parental control software; teens can quickly bypass these!

Google Search your child's name in quotations: "Jane Doe"
You may be surprised what you find.

If you think your youngster is Sexting…
Monitor their cell phone use. Check cell phone Messages *(Sent & Inbox)*, Recent Calls *(Received)* and Media Center *(Pictures & Videos and Downloads.)*

Pics don't stay private.
Once sent, they can't be retrieved, they can be forwarded to many other people and they can't be erased.

Think before Forwarding.
If a teen forwards a nude pic of a minor, he/she becomes the original sender of child pornography, which is against the law.

Images and blogs have future consequences.
They are available for the entire world to see and share. This includes parents, relatives, school officials, law enforcement, college admissions departments and current and future employers.

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT PORNOGRAPHY

Secrecy is the lifeblood of addiction. If we can talk more openly about pornography AND healthy sexuality, it will remove much of the mystique that sends kids searching on the internet.

OUR GOAL AS PARENTS NEEDS NOT BE ONE BIG "THE TALK" -- BUT MANY SMALL, SAFE, ONGOING DISCUSSIONS.

The media saturated world we live in is busy telling our children lies about sexuality, about their bodies, their worth, and how to view and treat other people -- we need to be countering those lies with the truth and values we want our children to understand. We need to be able to identify and articulate the truths we want our children to know, and share those often. These need to be frequent, ongoing conversations where we remain aware and proactive as our children grow and develop and are exposed to a variety of new messages day in and day out.
"It is helpful to remember that our children will not learn everything at once, and we don't need to cover everything at once either. Learning about sex and pornography is a process that takes time and requires safety in asking questions." - Jeffrey J. Ford, therapist

"WHAT IF I SEE PORNOGRAPHY?"

NAME IT Identify it as pornography.
COVER your eyes/ears as quickly as possible.
IDENTIFY the lie and opposing truth about sexuality.
TELL someone about the exposure as soon as possible.
TURN to something uplifting to refocus your mind.
LEARN from the experience and identify ways to avoid the same situation in the future.

(Dr. Jill Manning, What's the Big Deal About Pornography?)

WHEN YOU TALK:

1. Ask questions,
2. Tell the truth,
3. Share your values.
4. Repeat!

WHEN SHOULD I TALK?

1. When you can talk calmly
2. When you feel nothing but love.
3. Often!

"Either you can teach them about sex. Or porn will." *educateempowerkids.org*

GOOD PICTURES BAD PICTURES: PORN-PROOFING TODAY'S YOUNG KIDS - CAN DO PLAN™

C	**A**	**N**	**D**	**O**
CLOSE my eyes	**ALERT** a trusted adult.	**NAME IT** when I see it.	**DISTRACT** myself.	**ORDER** my thinking brain to be the boss!

(Kristen A. Jenson, MA and Gail Poyner, PhD, Good Pictures Bad Pictures: Porn-Proofing Today's Young Kids)

WHAT'S SO WRONG WITH PORNOGRAPHY? (a simple explanation)

- Pornography is addictive. Extended use of pornography causes physical changes in the brain that make it very difficult to stop viewing.
- Explicit sexual images change how you view the opposite sex -- and can eventually lead to desensitization as it takes increased novelty to create the same effect.
- Pornography can cause us to develop unhealthy views of others and it teaches lies about human sexuality.
- Viewing these images repeatedly damages your current and future relationships.
- You feel bad about yourself when you hide your behavior.
- The pornography industry fuels sexual exploitation and sex trafficking.

We are passionate about providing resources and education for families -- we hope this handout is helpful in furthering the discussion in your own home and community. If you're interested in having this material taught in a class for your parenting, women's, or Church group, contact owningourstories@gmail.com

THE
Togetherness
PROJECT

www.togethernessproject.org

PORNOGRAPHY IS SEX MIS-EDUCATION -- IT IS A COUNTERFEIT OF REAL SEXUAL INTIMACY AND HUMAN CONNECTION

This is the truth that our children need to be armed with, in a culture that will try to sell them lies of sex void of intimacy and connection. We need to teach them truths about sexuality and intimacy, so they will be armed against the lies. Often children and teens think porn is 'teaching' them about sex -- we need to be clear that it is not sex. It's a cheap counterfeit. We want more for them then to be taken in by a hollow imitation.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MONITORING

External monitoring is not enough to protect our children from pornography. We must help them develop a sense of internal monitoring. **Parents must teach:**

- Healthy sexuality
- The importance of avoiding pornography (you will need to know and be able to verbalize your issues with pornography and the industry)
- The need for open discussion about experiences with media and pornography
- Consequences of improper sexuality
- Benefits of sexual restraint
- Value centered chastity (you will need to know and be able to verbalize your own family's values)

GOOGLE

Google is a wonderful tool. But it's important to explain to our children that if they have a question that makes them uncomfortable or nervous to ask, that is a sign that googling may be a bad idea. Most kids are first encountering porn because they are seeking out answers to simple questions, and their curiosity about what certain words and phrases they hear really mean. We need our children to know they can come to us for answers, not google. Google doesn't care if they're 8 or 10 or 13 -- it doesn't care about what is age appropriate or what our family's values are -- it will give them everything that relates to that word, when maybe all they wanted was a simple definition. It may seem awkward for them to ask us, but we need to teach them that if they are old enough and mature enough to know the answer, then they are old enough and mature enough to ask someone about it in person. Kids are often looking for anonymous and nonjudgmental sources for their info -- it's our job to prove to them that we're a nonjudgmental and trustworthy source of answers; and why that is more important (and reliable) than anonymous. We have to prove time and time again we are there to answer their questions, just as reliably as google.

WE NEED TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN WHEN IT IS APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE TO GOOGLE.

WEBSITES & RESOURCES

Get educated! Kristen A. Jenson of PornProofKids assures us that **"it only gets safer for kids when we as parents face [pornography] head on with good information."**

- Conversations with kids at: womenfordecency.org/blog/4-ways-to-start-a-conversation-pornography-kids
- Tips and tools for helping parents protect young kids: www.PornProofKids.org
- Good Pictures Bad Pictures: Porn-Proofing Today's Young Kids: www.gpbp.info
- Great info on proactively talking with kids, and "30 Days of Sex Talks" books: educateempowerkids.org
- Learn to identify and to talk about harmful media messages: www.beautyredefined.net
- Power of Moms Podcast, "Plan for Protecting Our Kids": bit.ly/1x2WZhJ
- SALifeline.org free downloads in thier bookstore: "Protecting Families" and "Understanding Pornography and Sexual Addiction"
- Education for teens/young adults: www.fightthenewdrug.org
- Geoff Steurer's Video: School Parents Night "Power to Be Safe Online" youtu.be/HzeJ3gKCuJE
- Jeff Ford's videos "The 5 C's - How to Talk to Your Children About Pornography" http://bit.ly/1BBGZnE
- List of resources: owningourstories.blogspot.com/p/resources.html
- This handout (and others) for emailing, printing and sharing, can be found at: bit.ly/WimoXF
- The LDS Church put together several family lessons, look under the "Family Home Evening" tab on overcomingpornography.org/resources
- Stay up to date at pornharms.com -- the leading national organization opposing pornography

WHAT VS. WHY?

Telling our kids 'what' the rules are can be easier, but less effective -- teaching the 'why' takes work but is infinitely more effective. Read more at bit.ly/1E5JJgS and bit.ly/1yB19Sm

10 Things You Should Know When Talking to Your Child about Sex

1. Fight the fear
It's safe to say this is not something a parent will relish talking about with their children. The mere thought of sex and your child in the same conversation strikes fear in heart of a parent. Fight that fear! As scary as the topic might be, it is more frightening to think of the possible consequences of not having this discussion.

2. Research
Sex itself does not change. Nothing new has been invented. However, the language of sex is always evolving. Every generation has their own buzz words and phrases. It would benefit you to become familiar with these terms. Use the internet to research. The more you understand what your child is exposed to, the better you will be able to explain the meaning.

3. Avoid negativity
Talking about sex is a difficult subject for you and your child. It is too easy in our efforts to protect our children to come across as putting sex in a negative light; however that wouldn't be healthy for the development of your child. Emphasize the importance of when, why and with whom sex should occur. Make sure to explain that in its proper setting, marriage, sex is a wonderful and beautiful expression of love.

4. Don't patronize
Your child may already know some of what you are going to be talking about. In this age of information, your children most likely have been bombarded by sexual images and messages. Kids talk about it with their friends, and often at an early age. *Talking down* to your children will only make them roll their eyes and tune you out. Your job here is to give the *right* information on sex and speak to them as a young man or lady.

5. Be vulnerable
As with other issues in parenting, what you did as a child or teen may or may not be what want your child to do. At the appropriate time and age, you may want to share the good choices you made in this area or any mistakes you may have made and consequences you suffered as a result. Sharing details with your child is probably not a good idea.

6. Faith
Most religions encourage sexual purity before marriage. If you are a family of faith, your child will have this benefit on their side. There is a growing abstinence before marriage movement in our country, especially within many churches. Teach your child to honor God with their body and to stay sexually pure for their future husband or wife.

7. Emotions

If your child is in the public school system, they may have had a sexual health class by the time you have these conversations. Nonetheless, you should cover that ground as well so that your values are instilled in your children. Additionally, you'll want to discuss with your child the negative emotional consequences of pre-marital sex as they usually are not addressed in school. When asked in a survey, one woman responded "I wish someone would have explained to me the emotional impact of these things. At 13, 14, 15, you just have no idea!"

8. The risks

When you talk with your child, it's vitally important that you explain the risks involved in having sex outside of marriage. Sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) are increasingly prevalent and often have severe consequences. Unwanted teen births are occurring every second. Your child must know the possible ramifications of reckless behavior. Paint the unpleasant scenarios that can become reality for them if they make unwise choices.

9. Peer pressure

Most children will face significant peer pressure at school, either directly or indirectly. Give your child the support and foundation they require to deal with it. Give them the strength to stand up for what they believe. Make sure your children understand their infinite value and the importance of keeping themselves pure until marriage. In a book on this subject, a 17-year-old girl stood up in front of her peers and declared that she was a virgin. When the laughs hurled her way, she replied "I can be like you in seconds, but none of you can be like me ever again." That is courage.

10. Constant communication

You and your child shouldn't have just one talk about sex and never mention it again. In our hyper-sexualized society, you and your child will probably be exposed to the content of your discussion on a regular basis. Use that to your advantage. It doesn't always have to be heavy conversation. Humor is a great teacher and puts everyone at ease. When the 16-year-old on Nick Teen is pregnant, quip to your daughter, "Aren't you glad you're not *that* girl?" It works.

100 Things Teens Can Do Outside of School

1. Invent a new type of pizza.
2. Make a music video.
3. Grow a tomato or sunflower plant.
4. Walk barefoot through the grass.
5. Build a sandcastle.
6. Have a "paint a t-shirt" relay race.
7. Picnic at a local park.
8. Make the best ice cream sundae ever.
9. Make a movie marathon.
10. Play Frisbee Gold.
11. Have a car wash to fundraise for a club or charity.
12. Make a card for a friend.
13. Lay in the grass and watch the clouds in the sky.
14. Bike five miles.
15. Catch lightning bugs.
16. Eat a banana split.
17. Take a nap under a shade tree.
18. Go swimming.
19. Play with water balloons.
20. Make paper airplanes.
21. Make a summer tote bag out of an old tank top.
22. Make a mud bath in the backyard.
23. Sketch a flower that is growing in your yard.
24. Bury a friend in the sand.
25. Babysit.
26. Volunteer in a community effort.
27. Go fishing.
28. Stargaze.
29. Create a photo journal.
30. Go for a hike.
31. Sign up for a reading program at your local library.
32. Swap a favorite book with a friend.
33. Make friendship bracelets.
34. Write a poem.
35. Write a song.
36. Write a play.
37. Start a novel.
38. Make a website.
39. Bake a loaf of bread.
40. Write a letter to a distant family member.
41. Have a basketball free-throw contest.
42. Have a watermelon seed-spitting contest.
43. Draw a picture of your pet.
44. Make smoothies.
45. Make fruit punch.
46. Help plan a family vacation.
47. Make a root beer float.
48. Write in your journal.
49. Organize your closet or drawers.
50. Paint your toenails.
51. Sweep the porch by your front door.
52. Make a homemade pizza.
53. Donate clothing and toys you don't use anymore.
54. Watch a sunrise.
55. Watch a sunset.
56. Attend a community event.
57. Have a fashion show in your living room.
58. Create a safety poster for school.
59. Volunteer to read to younger students.
60. Learn to grill a hot dog.
61. Make a collage with old magazines.
62. Write a note of encouragement to your favorite teacher.
63. Give high-fives to students coming off the bus.
64. Go for a walk with a friend.
65. Swing.
66. Skip stones at a lake.
67. Find shells at the beach.
68. Try a new hairstyle.
69. Try a new (healthy) habit.
70. Start an exercise program.
71. Make your own popsicles.
72. Watch an old movie with your family.
73. Go watch a new release movie with your family.
74. Make a list of your favorite movies.
75. Write down your goals for the year.
76. Make a birdfeeder with peanut butter and sunflowers.
77. Make art from twigs and leaves.
78. Make lemonade.
79. Make a playlist of your favorite songs.
80. Play a board game with friends.
81. Have a scavenger hunt.
82. Learn a new card game.
83. Clean your room.
84. Give your pet a bath.
85. Offer to walk your neighbor's dog.
86. Run through a water sprinkler.
87. Play Marco Polo in the pool.
88. Pick wildflowers.
89. Rearrange the furniture in your room.
90. Play some music and dance.
91. Watch fireworks.
92. Tie-dye a t-shirt or pillowcase.
93. Go to a baseball game.
94. Clean up trash in your neighborhood.
95. Play miniature golf.
96. Sleep until noon (once).
97. Learn how to hula hoop.
98. Make a sidewalk chalk masterpiece.
99. Learn how to wash your own laundry.
100. Visit a college.

BOOK REQUEST FORM

Form must be completed to receive a sample book.

SCHOOL: _____**PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME:** _____

Address_____ City_____ State: _____

Email address: _____

Contact Phone Numbers: _____

Please place a ☑ in the grade level you are requesting

5ᵗʰ grade   **6ᵗʰ grade**   **7ᵗʰ grade**

[ ]   [ ]   [ ]

8ᵗʰ Grade   **high school**

[ ]   [ ]

Note: If book is unavailable during the parent preview a copy of the workbook maybe delivered to the school for parents to pick-up