

Lesson four: Pornography

Ages 14–16

+ Lesson overview

This is the last of four lessons, focusing on empowering and supporting young people as they develop relationships. This lesson explores what pornography is and how it can distort a person's expectations of themselves, other people, and relationships.

Learning objective

To learn about how pornography can affect people and their relationships.

Learning outcomes

Young people will be able to:

- Explain what pornography is and how sites may use data to influence viewers' choices.
- Describe how pornography can distort someone's expectations about themselves, other people, and relationships.
- Identify how someone can seek support if they are concerned about the effects of pornography.

Resources

- Box or envelope for questions
- Resource 1: *Teacher support sheet* (1 per class)
- Resource 2: *Why does it matter? Diamond 9* (1 per small group of 3–4)
- Resource 3: *Information sheet* (1 per person)
- Lesson 1, Resource 1: *Unit baseline assessment*

Lesson summary

Activity	Description	Timing
Introduction	Introduce learning objective and outcomes and reinforce ground rules.	5 mins
Baseline assessment	Read a range of opinions on pornography and decide which the class agree with most.	5 mins
Positive sexual relationships	Identify the features of positive and respectful sexual relationships.	10 mins
Why does it matter?	Evaluate the effects that pornography can have on a person's perception of themselves and their intimate relationships.	15 mins
Reducing porn use	Give advice to a fictional young person worried about their use of pornography.	10 mins
Reflection and endpoint assessment	Return to the unit baseline assessment from Lesson 1 and add their learning from the unit.	10 mins
Signpost support	Remind the class how to access further advice, guidance and support about pornography and relationships.	5 mins

Climate for learning

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson. These include guidance on ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, relevant subject knowledge, communication, and handling questions effectively.

Keywords

Pornography; porn; rights; media; consent; expectations

Baseline assessment

➤ Introduction – 5 mins

Negotiate or revisit ground rules for the lesson. Explain that the class can put questions in the question box, either anonymously, or with their name on if they would like to have a follow-up conversation with the teacher.

Introduce the learning objective and outcomes. Explain that today's lesson will explore how pornography can affect a person's expectations of themselves, other people, and relationships.

➤ Baseline assessment activity – 5 mins

Share the definition of pornography from Slide 3.

On their own and without sharing their thoughts with others, ask the class to identify which opinion they agree with most on Slide 4, and answer the questions on the slide in their exercise books. As this is a baseline assessment, this should capture their initial views without further prompting or discussion.

Circulate around the room, gauging initial responses. Use this and the feedback from the groups on the question about whether porn causes harm, to establish starting points and adapt teaching.

Use Resource 1: *Teacher support sheet* to help guide feedback on the accuracy and harms of pornography.

Core activities

➤ Positive sexual relationships – 10 mins

Explain that it is important to be clear on what the features of a positive, equal, sexual relationship are.

Pairs should match up the sentences on Slide 5. Use Slide 6 to guide feedback from the class.

Ask pairs to consider how depictions of sex in porn may differ from the features of a positive, equal, sexual relationship identified.

Challenge: Add any additional features of a positive sexual relationship they can think of.

➤ Why does it matter? – 15 mins

Then in groups of 3–4, ask the class to sort the cards about the negative effects of pornography from Resource 2: *What does it matter? Diamond 9* in a diamond shape as indicated on Slide 7, demonstrating which aspects they see as the most important for young people to know, at the top of the diamond and working down towards the less important aspects, at the bottom of the diamond.

Take feedback from the group, encouraging groups to justify their reasons for the priority they have given the cards. Emphasise that there is no right answer, that different people may have different priorities, and that these can be affected by a range of factors.

Support: Select the three aspects they think are most important for young people to know about from the cards. Where possible, encourage them to give reasons for their choices.

Challenge: While giving a reason for their decisions, repeat the diamond activity but this time prioritising which effects are most likely to influence other young people's behaviour towards others.

➤ Reducing porn use – 10 mins

Still in their groups, ask the class to respond to the fictional young person on Slide 8 and think of three or four pieces of advice they would give the young person.

Take feedback from groups, creating a class list of suggestions.

Ideas might include:

- Talk to a trusted adult. For someone concerned about porn usage that they are struggling to control, they may choose to speak to a GP or if available, a school counsellor or school nurse. (It is important to acknowledge that this might feel a bit awkward but that talking about it with someone can help clarify their feelings and changes they want to make). Talking to a Childline counsellor might be particularly helpful if someone wants to remain anonymous, and they can be contacted through an online chat, which people might find easier than speaking to someone on the phone or in person.
- Make it harder to access porn, for example by going out more and finding new interests, turning off all devices after a certain time, or leaving them in another room when they go to bed.
- List all the reasons why they want to stop/cut down porn use and look back at the list when temptation strikes.

- Write down all the positive things they want from a relationship either now or in the future and think about whether using porn will make it more or less likely that they will achieve that sort of relationship.

Plenary/assessment for end of learning

➤ Reflection and endpoint assessment – 10 mins

Ask the class to return to their baseline assessments from Lesson 1. In a different colour pen, ask them to add anything they have learnt during this series of lessons to their own worksheet, or to make any changes they feel they need to make to their original responses.

Ask the class to privately reflect on:

- one thing they will take away from this unit of work,
- one thing they will take away from this lesson,
- and on a sticky note or piece of paper, write down one question they still have, to put in the question box.

The class should not be encouraged to share this reflection with each other.

➤ Signposting support – 5 mins

It is important to signpost support for young people who are concerned about the issues raised in the lesson. Give out Resource 3: *Information sheet*.

If the young people need advice on what they have discussed in the lesson or have concerns, signpost them to support at home or in school (such as tutors and head of year), as well as those outlined on the handout.

Extension activity

Reflecting on the sexualised media that young people are exposed to that is not pornography (for example, in film, music videos, social media posts), design an informative post for social media of no more than four images, with text, for a target audience of young people in Year 9. This post could explain:

- The differences between how people and relationships are portrayed in the media and in reality.
- How media might affect someone's perceptions of themselves, others, and relationships.
- The features of positive and respectful relationships.