

Outline - Impact of Porn on the Brain

- How Exposure to Porn Happens
- The Brain and Porn
- Porn Traumatizes Children

Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee.

1. How Exposure to Porn Happens

Dr Jay Stringer in his book, "Unwanted", surveyed 3817 individuals with unwanted sexual behavior (Stringer, Colorado Spring). Here are his findings.

1. 50% **Had a peer introduce them to pornography.**
2. 33% Had a peer touch them in a way that made them feel uncomfortable.
3. 32% **Had someone older introduce them to pornography.**
4. 35% Touched another peer or child inappropriately.
5. 21% Had an adult touch them in a way that made them feel uncomfortable.

Stringer writes, "Pornography is introduced in the context of relationships," and the context of those relationship produces long-term emotional, psychological, and sexual attachments for a person. Exposure to porn produces two key bonding hormones called oxytocin and vasopressin which hard wires our brain to those images (Hilton, 2014) This creates what Dr. Patrick Carnes calls an arousal template (Carnes, 2008) This template will guide who an individual is attracted to and what stimulates them sexually for the rest of their life. Researchers now tell us the average of porn exposure is around eight years old with some estimates being even lower.

From their 2024 research study, "Beyond the Porn Phenomenon", The Barna Group reports that "Pornography use remains a growing problem. Today, three in five U.S. adults (61%) report viewing pornography, and half of those who use porn say that "no one" knows."

2. The Brain and Porn

Our brains are hardwired to learn. Dopamine drives learning and curiosity (Weinschenk, 2009) and learning changes our brain (Mengia-S. Rioult-Pedotti, 2000). Human sexuality is an important form of learning (Hilton, 2014). Our brains are highly visual, and we respond to sexual stimuli faster than anything else. This is one reason our eyes can become our own worst enemy because sex is highly visual.

FMRI scans now can show the differences between a healthy brain and an addictive brain. If you compare a cocaine brain with a sexually addicted brain, they look the same (Voon V, 2014) (see graphic 1-2). Why? Because our brains respond the same way to all forms of pleasure regardless of their source. Sexually addicted brains are creating the drug they are addicted to. They have no impulse control. Neuroscientist's can now see a 10-12% reduction in brain matter due to this trauma (Meng, 2016). They become brain damaged over time. Researchers Kuhn and Gallinat study showed a reduction in gray matter with long-term exposure to porn (Kuhn, 2014) (see graphic 3). Gray matter shrinkage makes it difficult for sex addicts to calm themselves down because they rely on porn to do it. Over time, they must increase the kind and type of porn in order to get the needed dopamine high (Negash S, 2016). Each time they come off it, they will hit a lower and lower on the normal baseline and fall into more of a depressive state (See Progressive

Drug Tolerance graphic 4).

3. Porn Traumatizes Kids

Sit in any sexual addiction recovery group, and adults will recall the first time they saw porn as a child. Many felt disgust, horror, shame, shocked, excited, confused, aroused, and they didn't know what to do with what they saw. This phenomena is also called like/want split (Anselme, 2016).

In Dr. Bessel van der Kolk's book, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. He writes, "Trauma results in a fundamental reorganization of the way mind and brain manage perceptions. It changes not only how we think and what we think about, but also our very capacity to think." And "Being traumatized means continuing to organize your life as if the trauma were still going on—unchanged and immutable—as every new encounter or event is contaminated by the past." This sets us up for shame and bondage.

Ninety percent of critical brain development happens before the age of 5 (First, 2023). Exposure to porn traumatizes kids' brains. Porn stunts a child's emotional growth. A basic definition of trauma is the brain's inability to metabolize an event. Children have no way to process porn. The development of the prefrontal cortex, the front part of our brain behind our forehead that helps with decision making, planning, and impulse control, isn't complete until the age of 25. The brain cannot differentiate between explicit material whether it is in the form of a cartoon, drawings, pictures or video (Hilton, 2014). Our brain sees all sexual material in the same way (Voon V, 2014) (Meng, 2016) (Kuhn, 2014) (Negash S, 2016)

Dr. Caroline Giroux a psychiatrist who specializes in trauma, says "Exposing children to pornography should be forbidden and better regulated, as it is violating their spiritual boundaries and evolving beliefs around body, sexual development and intimate relationships, in a similar way that direct sexual abuse on their body does. If this trauma is not identified and processed promptly, the survivor runs the risk of reenacting as an attempt to resolve what once left him or her powerless, or of even engaging in similar criminal behaviors (Giroux, 2021)."

Children will become less empathetic adults and unable to affect regulate over time with exposure to porn (ARIEL KOR, 2021). They will seek out porn and act out the behavior they see with other kids (Ed.D., 2011).

Studies show children who are traumatized by sexually explicit material or sexual abuse are unable to have healthy relationships (Impact of Internet Pornography on Marriage and the Family: A Review of the Research, 2006).

Exposure to sexually explicit material destroys a child's life. I urge a DO PASS on Senate Bill 2307. Thank you. I stand for questions.

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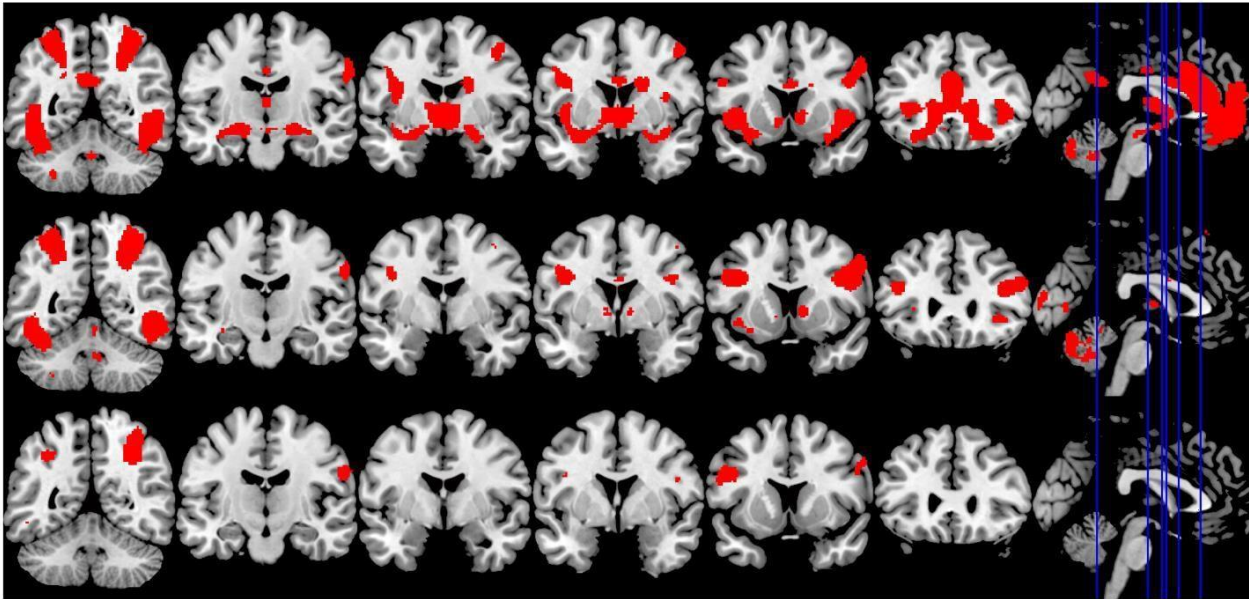
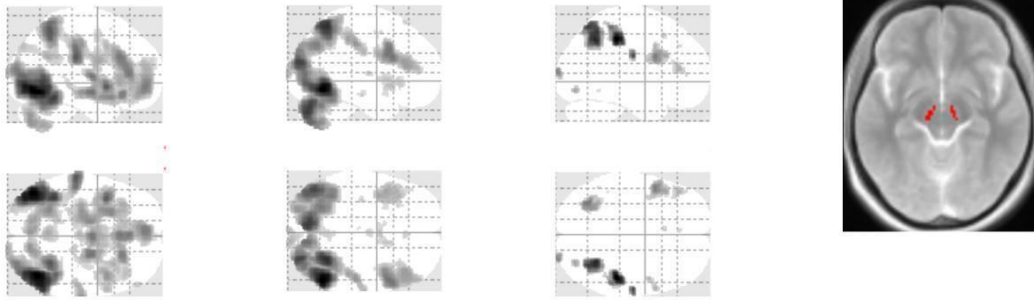


Image 1

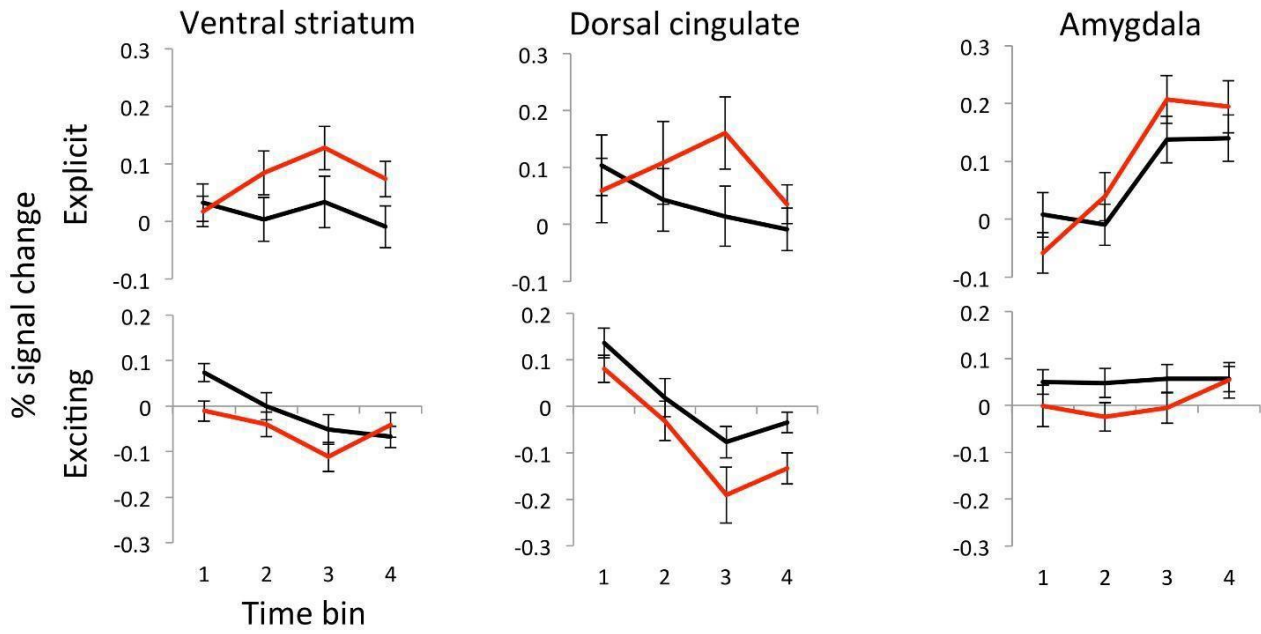
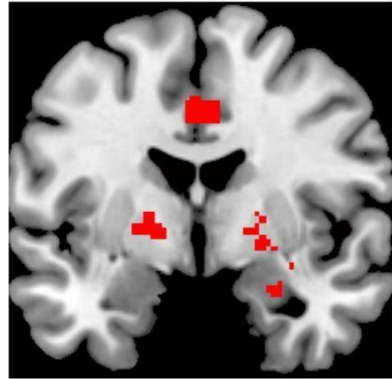
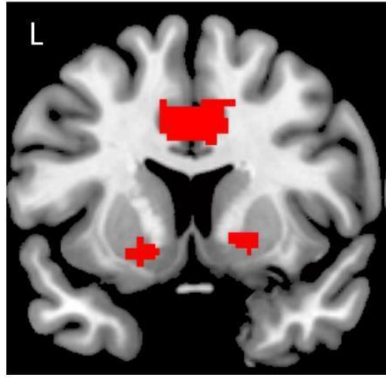


Image 2

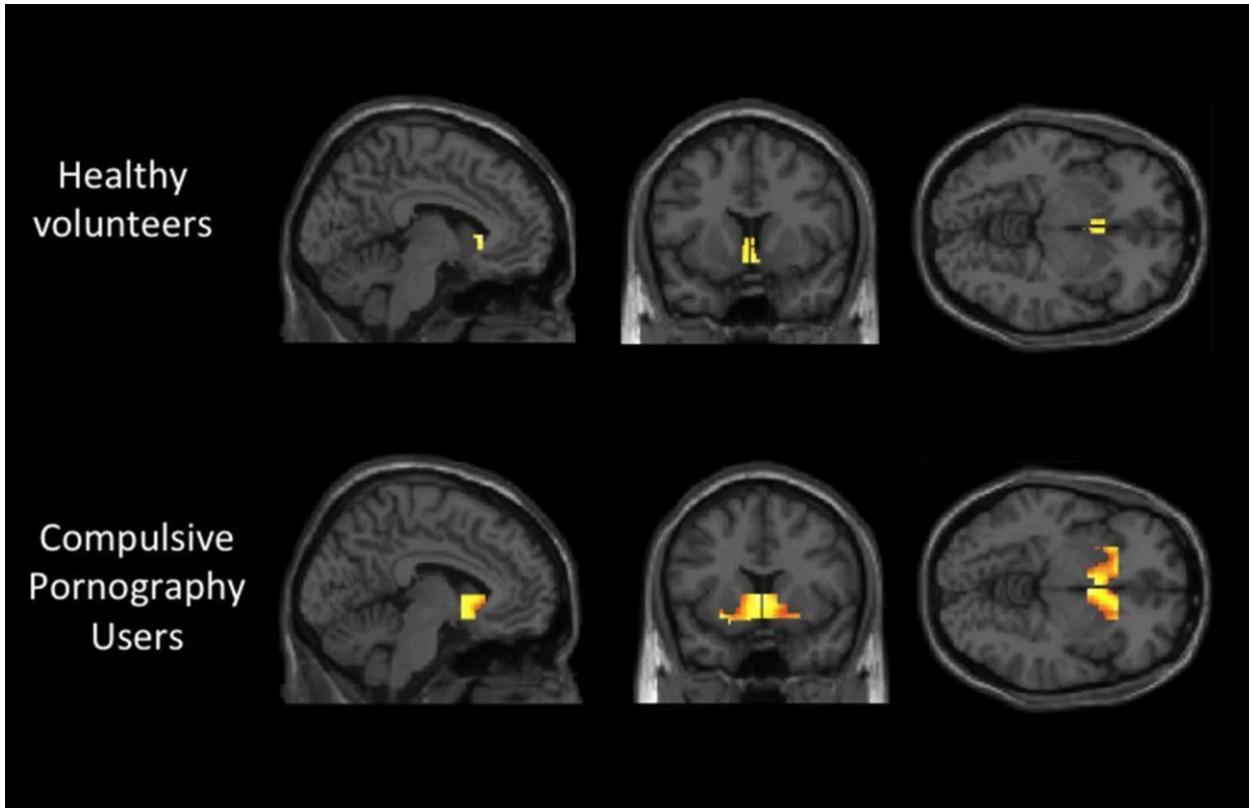
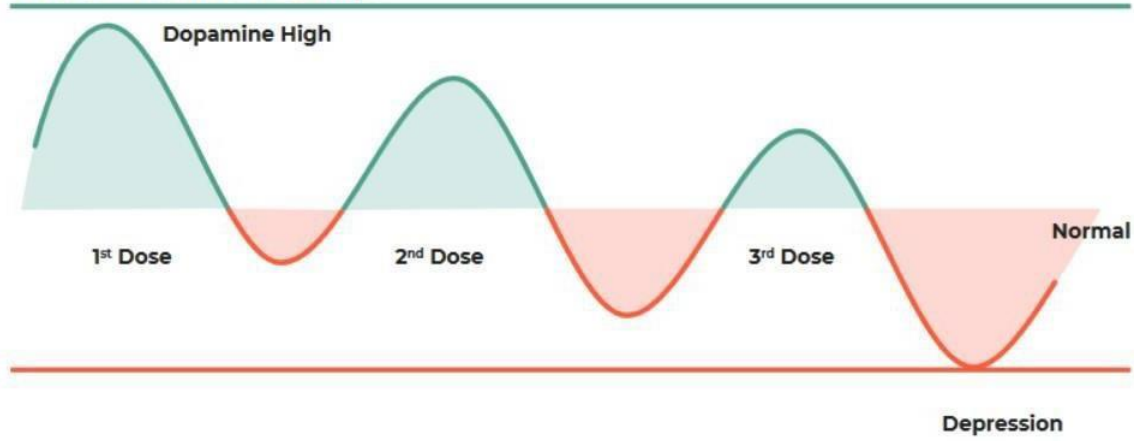


Image 3

TOLERANCE

PROGRESSIVE DRUG TOLERANCE



Progressive Drug Tolerance

Links to Podcasts and Videos on porn's impact on the Brain.

Valerie Voon Interview at Stanford

<https://neuroscience.stanford.edu/videos/valerie-voon-addictions-brain-network-disorder>

Effects Of Porn On Your Brain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzduEttlC_g

Pornography and the Brain: Understanding the Science of Addiction and Recovery -- Dr. Donald Hilton

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2yKslvPfV4>

What does porn do to a kid's brain?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UK-kJWc6abl>

How Porn Corrupts the Brain's Reward System: Neurosurgeon Explains

<https://www.defendyoungminds.com/post/how-porn-corrupts-brains-reward-system-neurosurgeon-explains>

John D. Foubert, Ph.D., Simone Kühn, Ph.D., Donald Hilton, M.D.

<https://truthaboutporn.org/media/>

Chapter 3 - Effects of premature sexualization on child development

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/Completed_inquiries/2008-10/sexualisationofchildren/report/c03

