

Protect Our Children Townhall

Perils of Explicit Sexual Content/Pornography on Our Youth

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"The views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government."

A privilege to participate in the service of the safety of our children with these distinguished, courageous, and honorable Prescott citizens.



PROTECT OUR CHILDREN TOWNHALL

Meet with Experts, City Leaders, and Law Enforcement. Get your questions answered about local issues involving sexually explicit library books, performances, and sex trafficking in Yavapai County.

EVENT DETAILS:

 **NOVEMBER 30, 2023**

 **3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

 **YAVAPAI COLLEGE
COMMUNITY
ROOM**

**Reservation
Required**



**Jeffrey E.
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Psychologist



**Andrea
Kadar**
Save Our Kids



**Sheriff
David
Rhodes**
Yavapai County



**Chief
Amy
Bonney**
City of Prescott



**Bill
Hughes**
*Chief Deputy
YC Attorney*



**Harry
Oberg**
*Yavapai
County BOS*



**Phil
Goode**



**Clark
Tenney**
Prescott Unified





Exposure to pornography and sexually explicit content can have significant impact on children, but there are differences between the two:

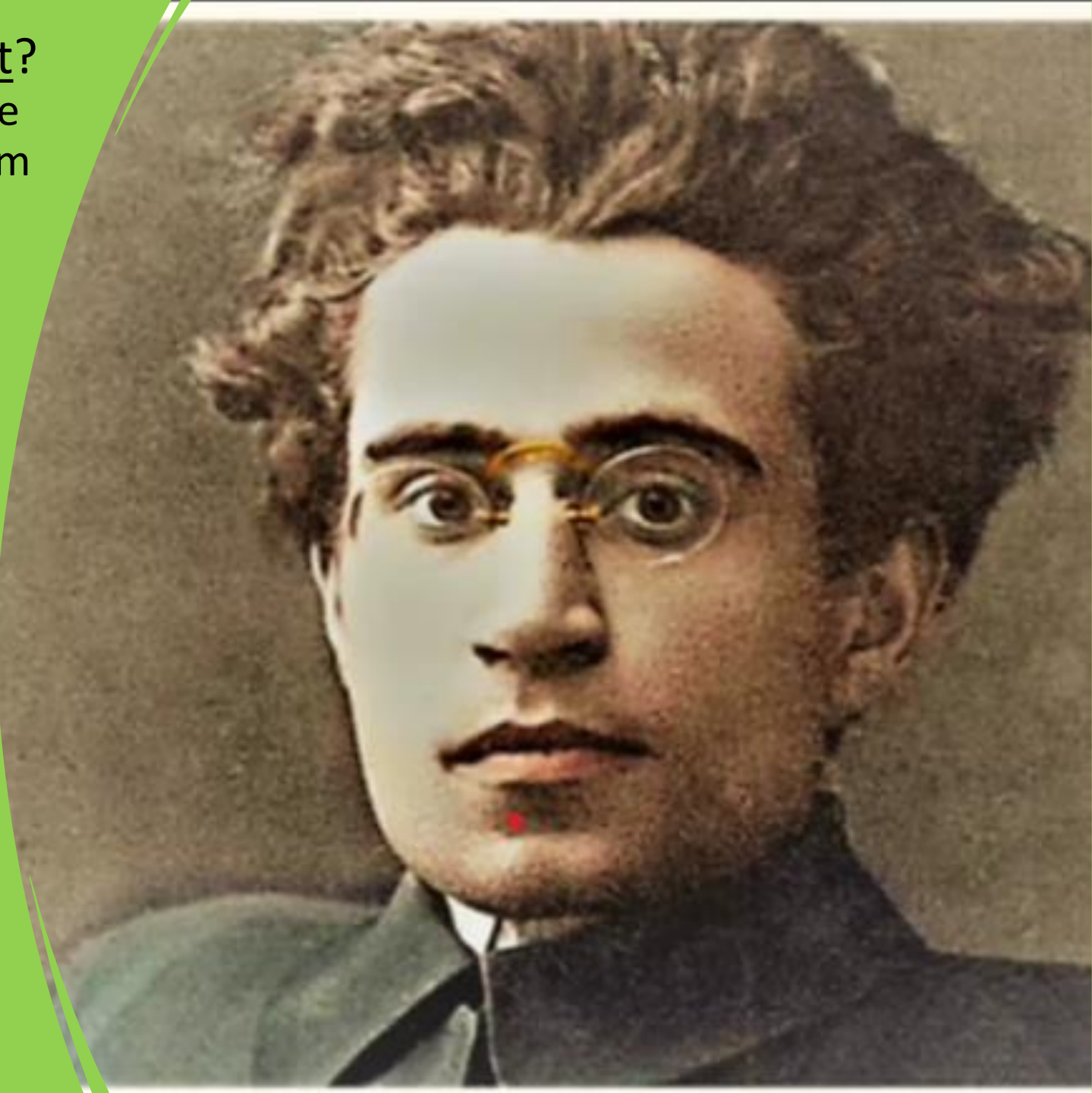
- Pornography: Pornography is typically created and distributed explicitly for the purpose of sexual arousal and gratification. It often features explicit sexual acts and is intended for adult audiences.
- Sexually Explicit Content: Sexually explicit content can encompass a broader range of material that includes explicit depictions of sexual content but may not necessarily be created for the sole purpose of sexual arousal. It can include explicit discussions of sexuality, nudity, or sexual behavior.

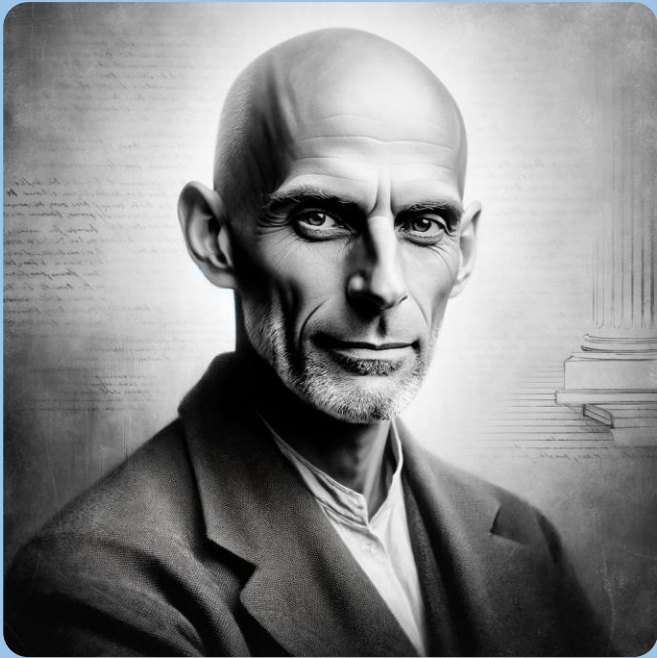
How did we get into this predicament?

To more fully appreciate this question, we would do well to understand the shift from Classical Marxism to Cultural Marxism, **Antonio Gramsci** being one of the most prominent figures in this process.

Gramsci was one of the Marxists who paved the way for Cultural Marxism, a term later coined and popularly used in various contexts, often critically, refers to the application of Marxist ideology to culture and society. This approach looks at how power and dominance are not just exercised through economic and political control, but also through the domination of cultural and ideological spaces. It often examines the roles of media, art, literature, and education in shaping societal norms and beliefs.

Gramsci's ideas were influential in the development of Western Marxism, which **emphasizes culture, ideology, and the superstructure of society in understanding and challenging power and class relations.** His theories laid the groundwork for later critical theories, particularly in the fields of sociology, cultural studies, and political theory, and have been influential in various social movements and academic disciplines.





The more radical neo-Marxist ideologies are putting our children in peril

- [Michel Foucault](#), a well-known French philosopher, historian of ideas, writer, political activist, and literary critic advocated for abolishing age of consent laws and was in favor of adults having sex with minors.
- [Judith Butler](#) serves as a Distinguished Professor in the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley and also favored sexual freedom with children.
- Taking over the baton to captain this backlash against feminism, Butler was the high priestess of queer theory — Judith Butler — who, unsurprisingly, defended incest. Furthermore, she did this without making a single reference to the fact that most familial child sexual abuse is by a male relative to a female child.



Radical ideology is at odds with normal child development

Per renowned child psychiatrist, Dr. Miriam Grossman, exposure to too early sexual/gender information and fueled and proposed by radical ideologies and/or individuals that know nothing about normal child development, confuses a young child beyond their emotional and cognitive capabilities.

Gender Identity: By age three, a boy knows that he is a boy and identifies as a boy.

Gender Stability: By age four, a boy knows that he is a boy and knows that he will become a man.

Gender Permanence: By six, seven at the latest, a boy knows that he cannot become a girl even if he wears a dress.



The Four Cs of Addiction

- Wilson (2014) notes that all addictions, regardless of their differences, result in an established set of “**core brain changes**” which, in turn, present as recognized signs, symptoms, and behaviors such as those listed in the **four Cs**:

1. **Craving and Preoccupation** with obtaining, engaging in or recovering from the use of the substance or behaviors in question.



2. **Loss of Control** in using the substance or of engaging in the behavior and noted by increasing frequency or duration, larger amounts or intensity, and/or increasing the risk and behavior in an effort to obtain the desired effect.



3. **Negative Consequences** in physical, social, occupational, financial, or psychological areas.



4. **Compulsive use** in that one is driven to consume and can't stop voluntarily.

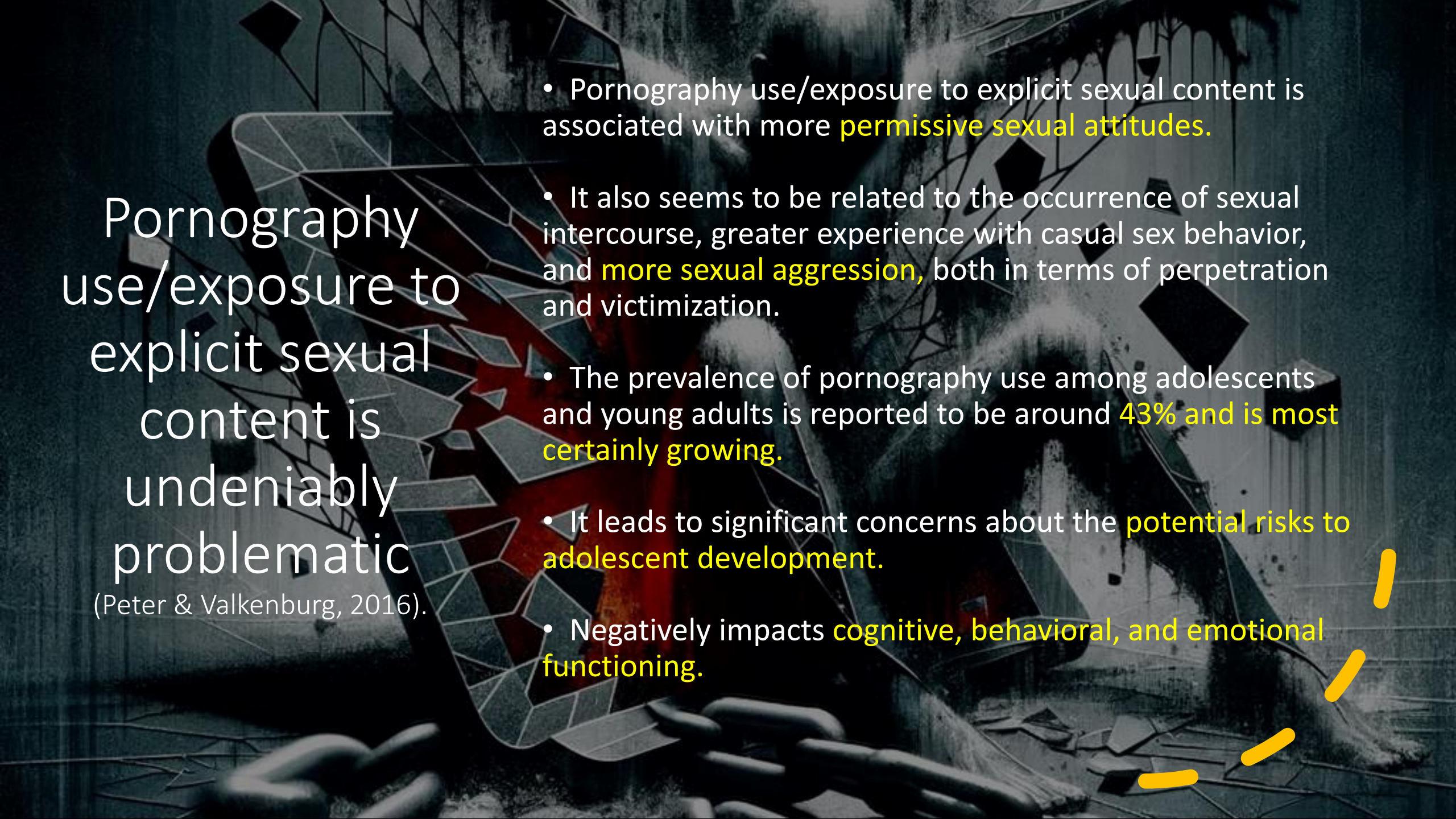


We initially
love the
addiction
more than
anything else





And although we love the addiction initially, we become enslaved to it.



Pornography use/exposure to explicit sexual content is undeniably problematic

(Peter & Valkenburg, 2016).

- Pornography use/exposure to explicit sexual content is associated with more **permissive sexual attitudes**.
- It also seems to be related to the occurrence of sexual intercourse, greater experience with casual sex behavior, and **more sexual aggression**, both in terms of perpetration and victimization.
- The prevalence of pornography use among adolescents and young adults is reported to be around **43% and is most certainly growing**.
- It leads to significant concerns about the **potential risks to adolescent development**.
- Negatively impacts **cognitive, behavioral, and emotional functioning**.



In the words of **Stephen Arterburn**, world renowned expert on sexual addiction:

“I don’t know of any plague to ever reach into the homes and families all over the world and create as much damage or heartaches than the struggle of lust, affair, pornography, perversion, and sexual addiction. It seems that everywhere I look, it gets worse and worse. The Internet exploded the problem, and now cell phones transport pornography more portably than the computer and facilitates affairs with greater accessibility and secrecy” (cited in Roberts, 2008, p.9).

So how bad is it really?

- **40 million** American people regularly visit porn sites (Webroot, 2019).
- **35%** of all internet downloads are related to pornography (Webroot, 2019).
- **34% of internet users** have experienced unwanted exposure to pornographic content through ads, pop up ads, misdirected links or emails (Webroot, 2019).
- The societal costs of pornography are staggering. The financial cost to business productivity in the U.S. alone is estimated **at \$16.9 Billion annually**; but the human toll, particularly among our youth and in our families, is far greater (Webroot, 2019).
- **One-third** of porn viewers are women (Webroot, 2019).
- Between 2008 and 2011, exposure to porn among boys under the age of 13 jumped from **14% to 49%**. Boys' daily use more than doubled. (Sun et al., 2016)
- In a 2007 University of Alberta study, 429 students ages 13 and 14 from 17 schools across Alberta, Canada were surveyed about how often they accessed sexually explicit media content: **90% of boys and 70% of girls** reported accessing sexually explicit media on at least one occasion (Betkowski, 2007).

What percent of teens watch porn?

Here are ten of the most alarming statistics about teens and pornography

<https://www.covenanteyes.com/2015/04/10/10-shocking-stats-about-teens-and-pornography/>

- ✓ 9 out of 10 boys and 6 out of 10 girls are exposed to pornography online before the age of 18.
- ✓ 90% of teens and 96% of young adults are either encouraging, accepting, or neutral when they talk about porn with their friends.
- ✓ The first exposure to pornography among boys is 12 years old, on average.
- ✓ 83% of boys and 57% of girls are exposed to group sex online.
- ✓ 32% of boys and 18% of girls are exposed to bestiality online.
- ✓ 15% of boys and 9% of girls have seen child pornography online.
- ✓ 71% of teens have done something to hide their online activity from their parents.
- ✓ 28% of 16-17-year-olds have unintentionally been exposed to pornography online.
- ✓ 20% of 16-year-olds and 30% of 17-year-olds have received a sext.
- ✓ 39% of boys and 23% of girls have seen sexual bondage online.

Dr. Gail Dines, founder of Culture Reframed and the leading expert on the perils of the porn industry, reports:



CULTURE REFRAMED
BUILDING RESILIENCE & RESISTANCE TO HYPERSEXUALIZED MEDIA & PORN

The Crisis

Parents Program

Our Work

Events

Resources & Media

Contact

Donate



SOLVING THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS
OF THE DIGITAL AGE

We help parents and other adults build kids' resilience to hypersexualized media and porn

12

A THIRD OF YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SEEN PORN BY AGE 12

88%

OF SCENES IN TOP RENTED & DOWNLOADED PORN CONTAIN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

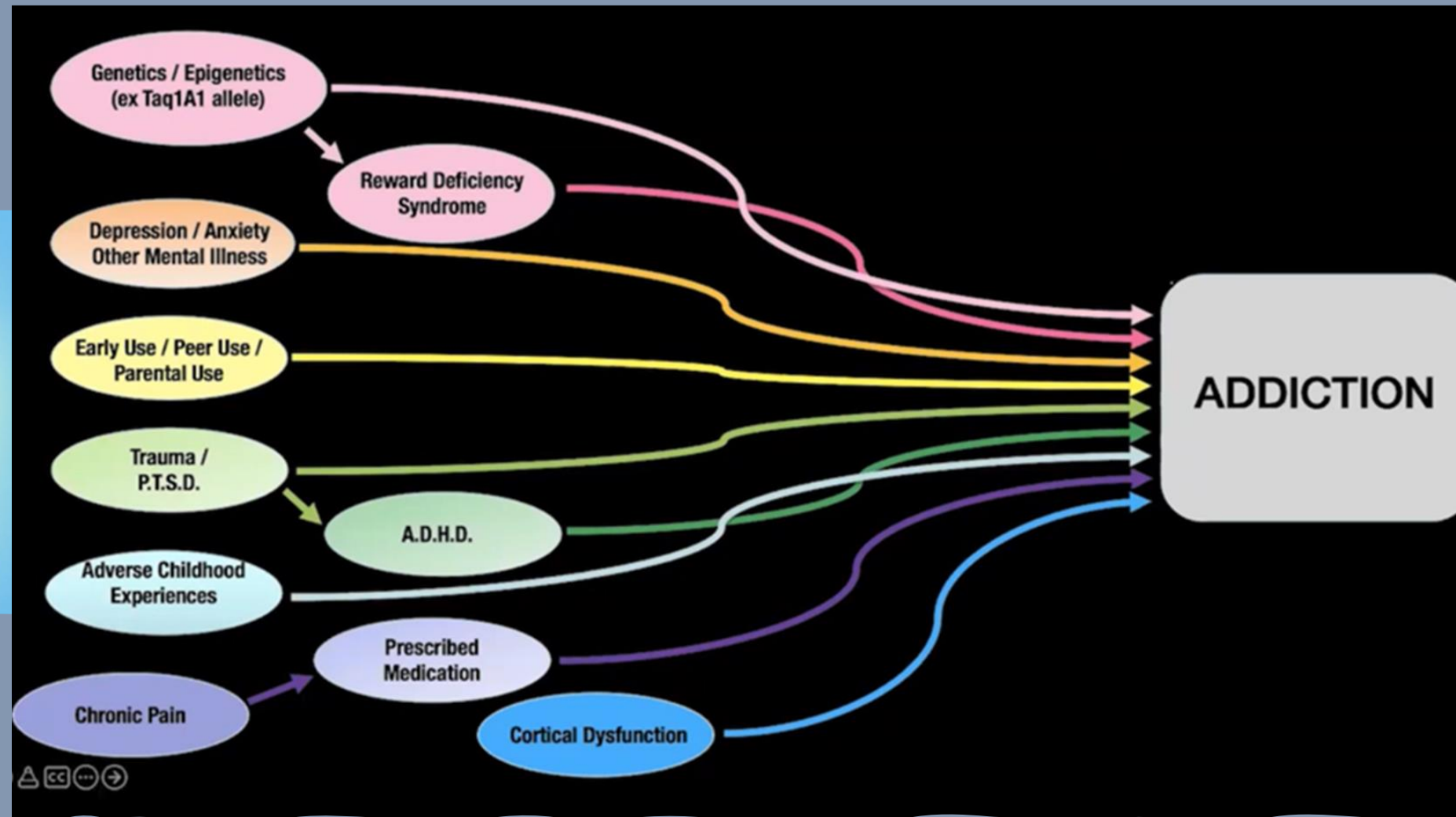
35%

OF ALL INTERNET DOWNLOADS ARE PORN

20%

OF SEXTS ARE PHOTOS OF CHILDREN, MOSTLY GIRLS, 15 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER





Dr. Kevin McCauley's model describes several possible pathways that can lead to addiction

How does the Brain Gets Hooked on Pornography?

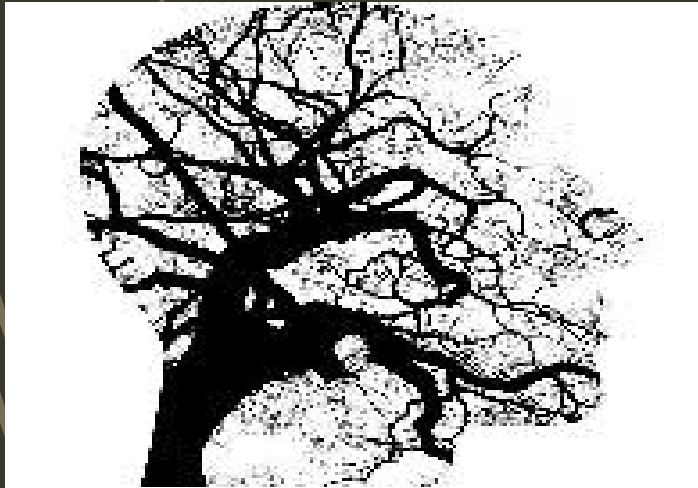
- ▶ As Kardaras(2016) stated in his book, *Glow Kids*, in order to fully understand addiction, we need to understand the **brain's reward system** and the impact of **dopamine** on that reward pathway.
- ▶ Specifically, **how much dopamine** is activated by a substance or behavior is correlated directly with the **addictive potential** of that substance or behavior.
- ▶ **Dopamine**, as many of us know, is **the “feel-good” neurotransmitter** that is the most critical and important part of the addiction process. Dopamine was discovered in 1958 by Arvid Carlsson and Niles-Ake Hillarp at the National Heart Institute of Sweden.

More on Dopamine



- ▶ When an individual performs an action that is satisfying to a need or fulfills a desire, dopamine is released into the **nucleus accumbens**, a cluster of nerve cells beneath the cerebral hemispheres that are specifically associated with reward and pleasure. This is also known as the brain's **“pleasure center.”**
- ▶ **Natural dopaminergic activities**, such as eating and sex, usually come after effort and delay and serve a survival function.
- ▶ These are called the **“natural rewards”** as contrasted with addictive chemicals/behaviors (which can hijack the same circuitry).
- ▶ Addictive drugs and behaviors, such as gambling and video gaming, actually offer a **short-circuit** to this process which only ends up flooding the **nucleus accumbens** with dopamine and does not serve any biological function.

Dopamine vs Endogenous Opioids



- Although **dopamine** has been referred to as the “**pleasure molecule,**” it is in actuality more about seeking and searching for pleasure, rather than pleasure itself. Dopamine is more involved in drive and motivation to seek.
- The “final reward” or what we experience as feelings of pleasure, Wilson (2014) writes, involve the release of **endogenous opioids.**
- You can think of **dopamine** as “**wanting**” and **opioids** as “**liking.**”
- As psychologist Dr. Weinschenk explains, “Dopamine causes us to **want, desire, seek out and, search**; however, the dopamine system is stronger than the opioid system and we hence seek more than we are as satisfied...” (Weinschenk, 2009).
- “Addicts want it more but gradually like it less. Addiction might be thought of as “**wanting gone amok.**” (Wilson, 2014).

Click here to listen to Gary Wilson’s outstanding lecture:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLtSoWrEplM&ab_channel=Reach10

Dr. Susan Weinschenk (2009) noted that dopamine is created in various parts of the brain and is critical in several brain functions to include:

Thinking

Moving

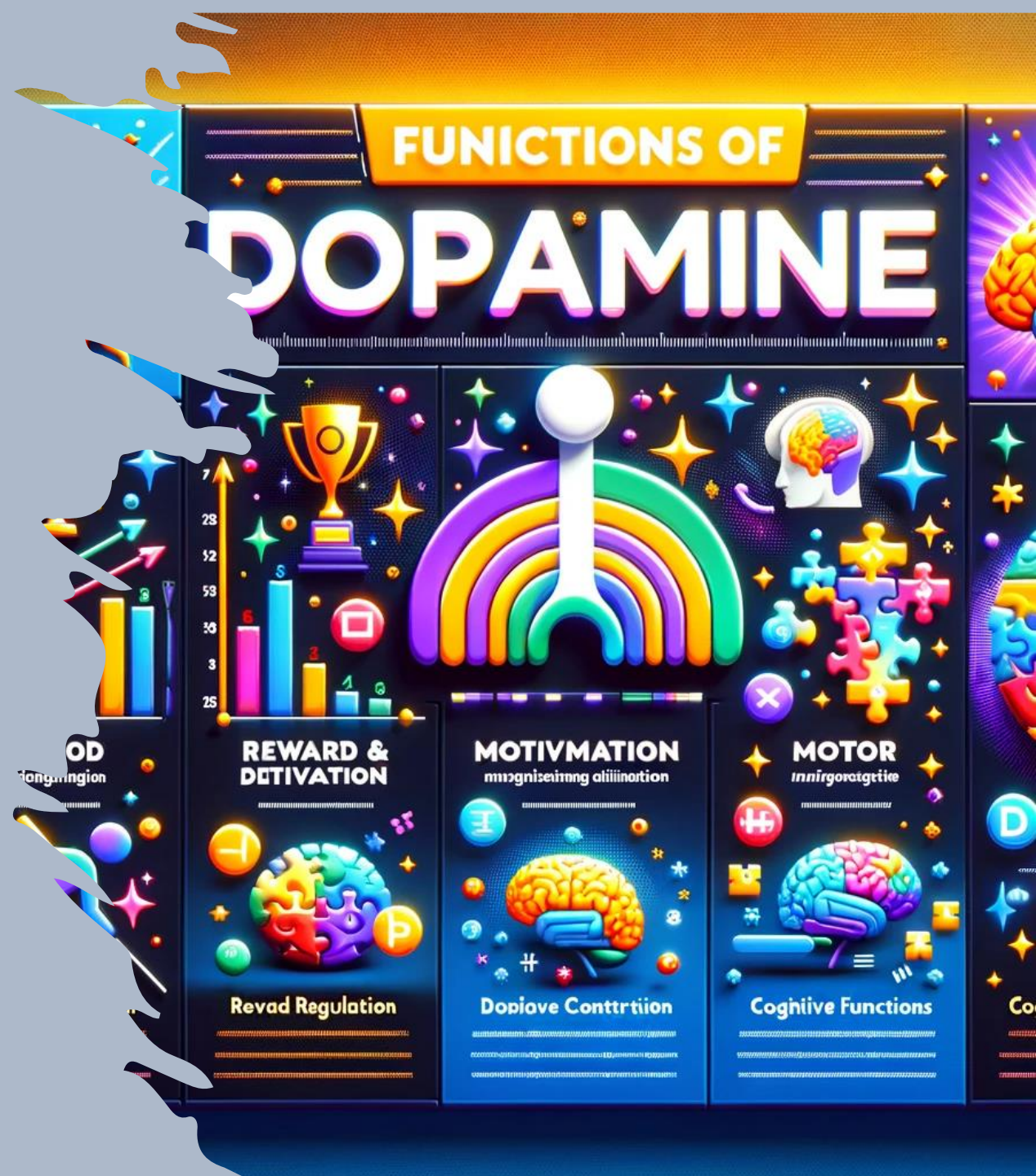
Sleeping

Mood

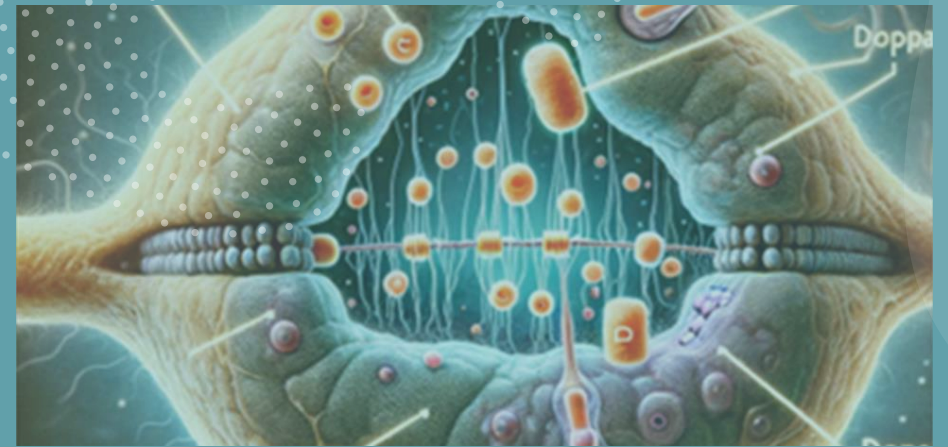
Attention

Motivation

Seeking and reward



Dopaminergic Downregulation

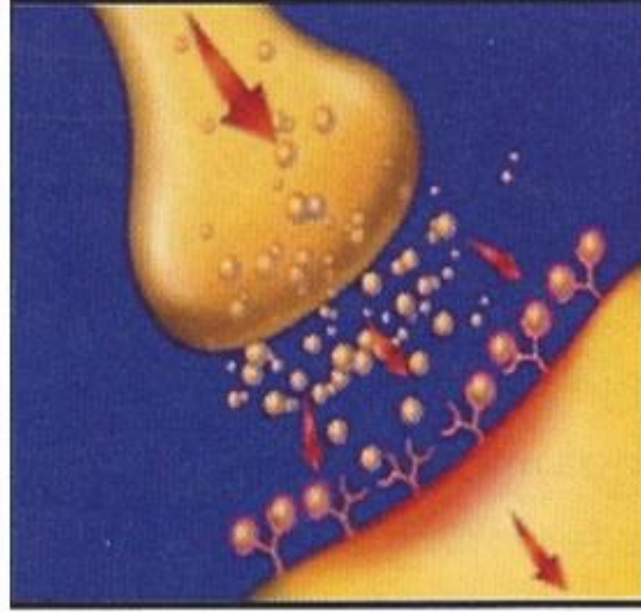


Normal Functioning



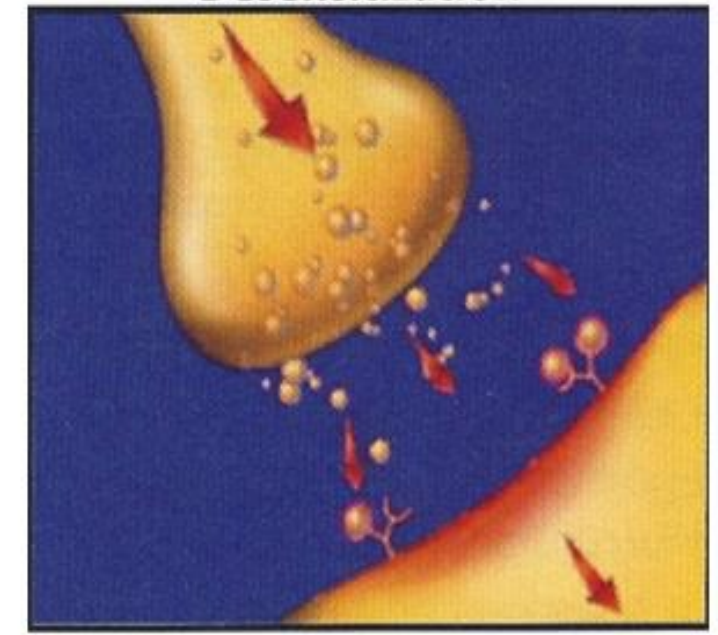
(Adapted from Stuff4Educators.com, 2014)

Over Stimulation



(Adapted from Stuff4Educators.com, 2014)

Desensitization



(Adapted from Stuff4Educators.com, 2014)

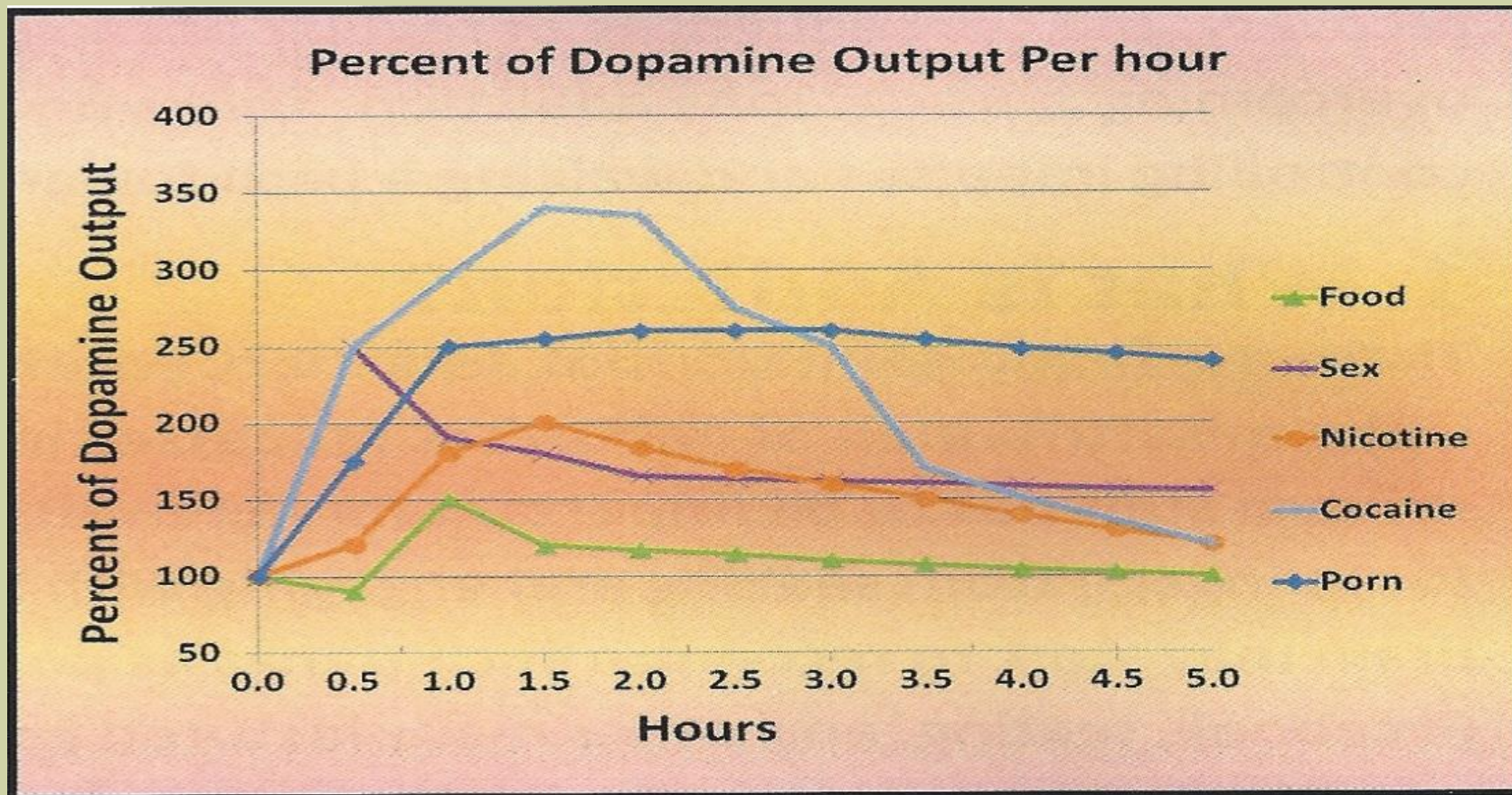
Addiction leads to downregulation of D2 dopamine receptors (tolerance – needing increasing amounts to get the same effect).



Dopamine changes in concert with substances/behaviors

Summary of dopamine increases:

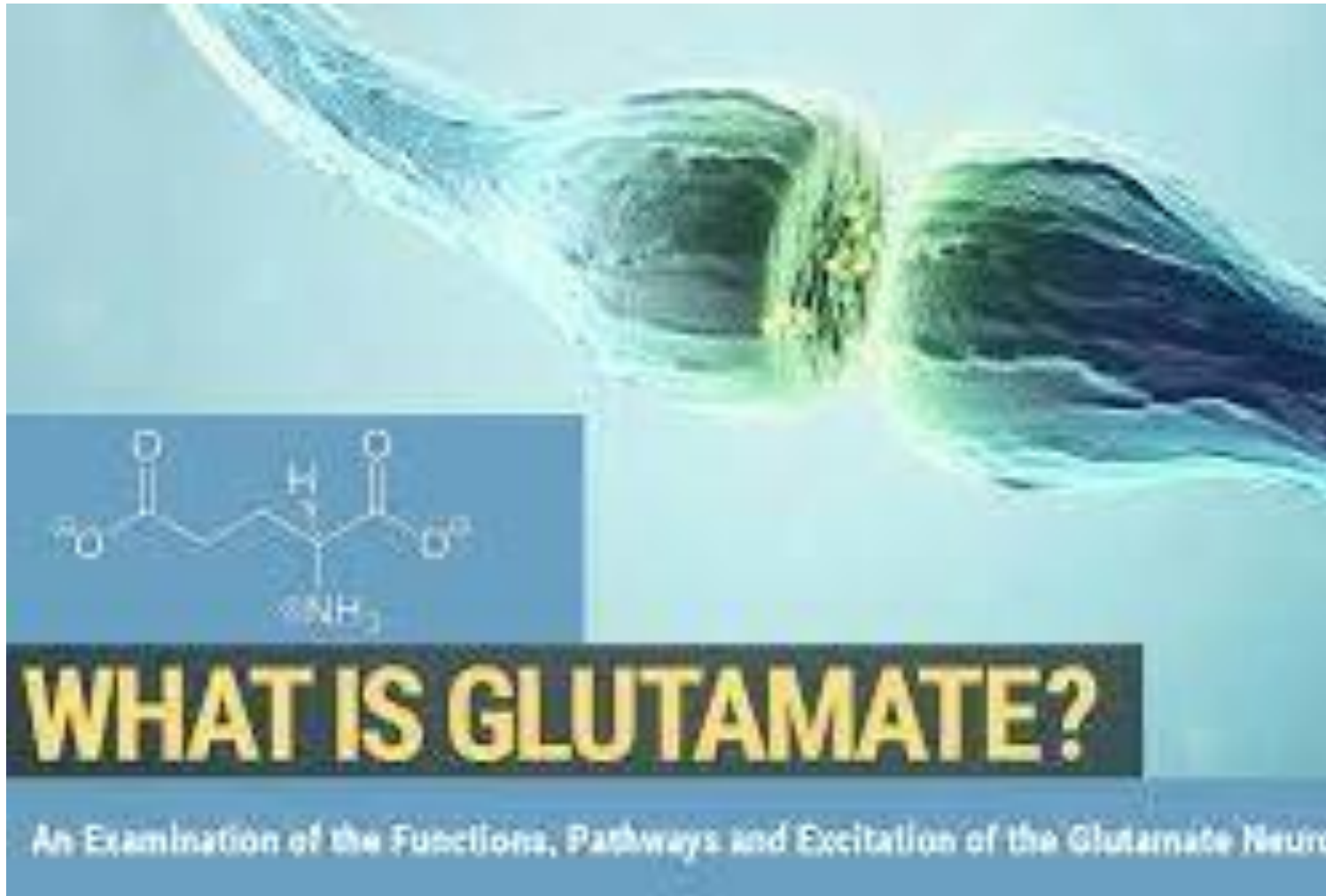
- ▶ Food – 150% increase
- ▶ Nicotine – 200% increase
- ▶ Snorting cocaine – 350% increase
- ▶ Sexual intimacy – 250% increase
- ▶ Pornography – 250% increases and stays elevated for longer – even when compared to cocaine



(Di Chiara & Imperato, 1988; newlifehabits.com, 2010)

Addiction neurochemical #2: Glutamate

Glutamate is an excitatory neurotransmitter with several types of receptors found throughout the central nervous system, and its metabolism is important to maintaining optimal levels within the extracellular space. As such, it is important to memory, cognition, and mood regulation.



Glutamate spillover and overlearning helps to lock in the addiction

- **Enduring vulnerability to relapse due to recruitment of “cortico-fugal” GLU projections to striatum**
- **Excess GLU “spills” out of the synapse to bind to extra-synaptic GLU receptors**
- **Changes in synaptic plasticity leads to pathologic learning and memory**
- **Result: impairment of inhibition of drug seeking**



Peter W. Kalivas, PhD
Department of Neurosciences
Medical University of South Carolina

The Impact of Pornography on the Brain



Dr. Donald Hilton, who has authored many studies on the addictive nature of pornography, referenced research that shows that the more people watch pornography, the more their **brains actually shrink**.



Research has also demonstrated that watching pornography **slows down the working memory** (Laier et al., 2013).



Kuhn and Gallinat (2014) found **decreased gray matter** in the brain areas that are responsible for decision making and motivation in porn seekers.

Excessive Pornography Promotes Hyperarousal of the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) Axis

Blood Flow Shifts: When a person is under stress, blood flow to the brain is shunted away from the higher regions of the brain, i.e., the cortex, and directed to the more **primitive parts** of the brain, i.e., the limbic or old brain in an effort to promote survival.

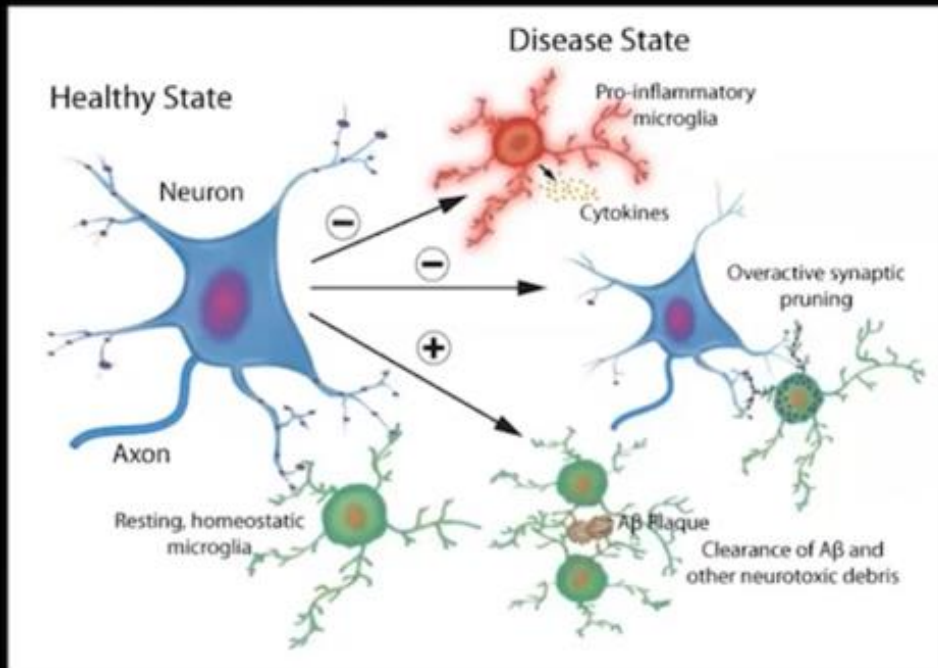
Elevated Cortisol: Chronically elevated cortisol is associated with **obesity, diabetes, hormone imbalance, metabolic syndrome, and high blood pressure** as previously noted (Pervanidou et al., 2011).

Oxidative Stress: When the cell's natural defenses are overwhelmed due to excessive stress, the **antioxidants** or scavengers are depleted, and oxidative stress or excessive free radicals develop. **Free radicals cause inflammation, tissue damage, and decreased efficiency.**



Microglia are damaged by excessive glutamate.

Reactive Microgliosis: response to pathogen/injury



- Resting microglia: injury to brain > Reactive Microgliosis
- Microglia respond rapidly to stress and trauma
- Shift from ramified (resting) state to amoeboid (activated) state
- Microglia are very fast-moving cells (fastest in the brain: entire brain parenchyma scanned by microglia every few hours)
- Become macrophages > phagocytize pathogens and debris
- Antigen-presenting cell to T lymphocytes

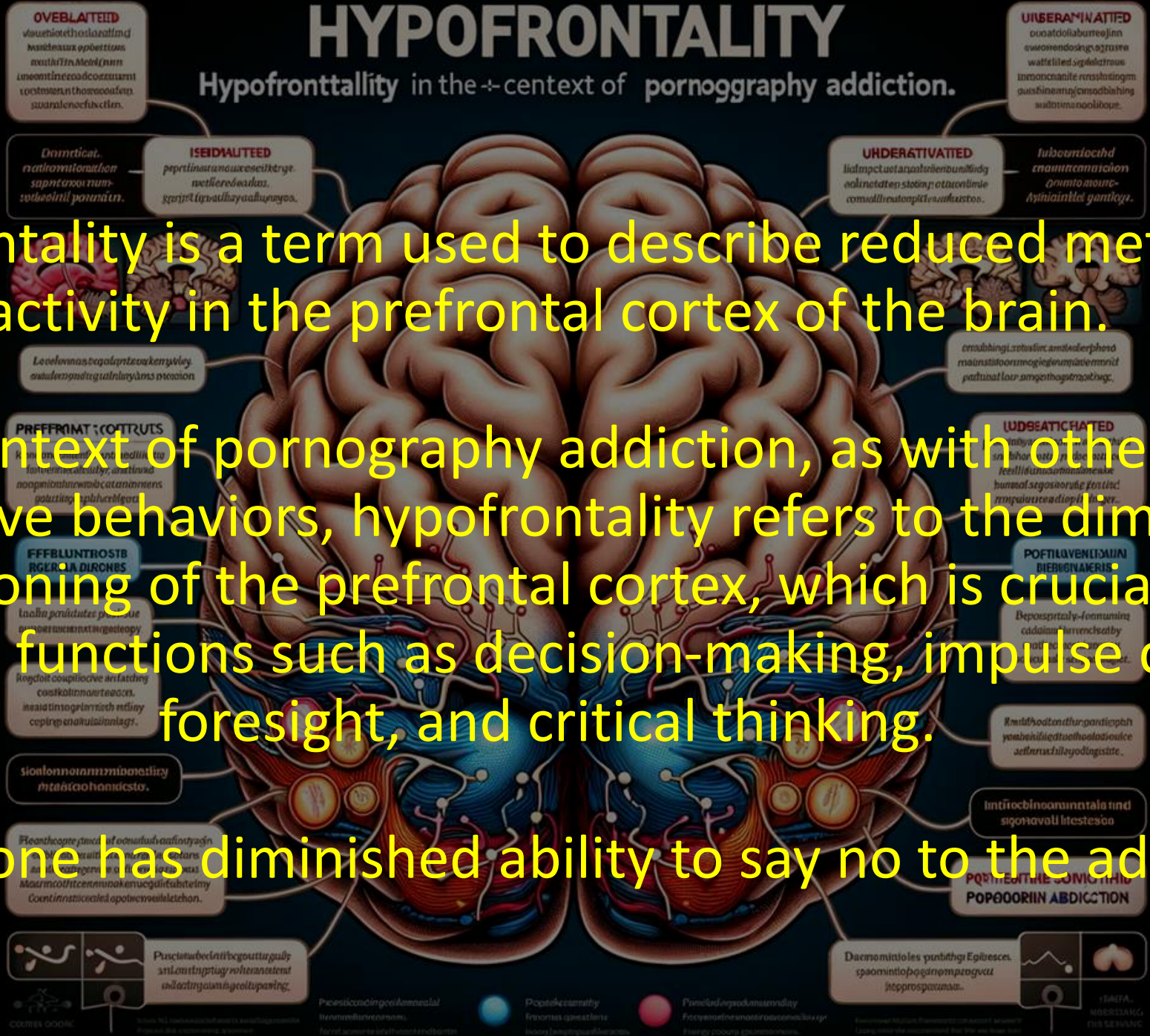
HYPOFRONTALITY

Hypofrontality in the context of pornography addiction.

Hypofrontality is a term used to describe reduced metabolic activity in the prefrontal cortex of the brain.

In the context of pornography addiction, as with other types of addictive behaviors, hypofrontality refers to the diminished functioning of the prefrontal cortex, which is crucial for executive functions such as decision-making, impulse control, foresight, and critical thinking.

In short, one has diminished ability to say no to the addiction.



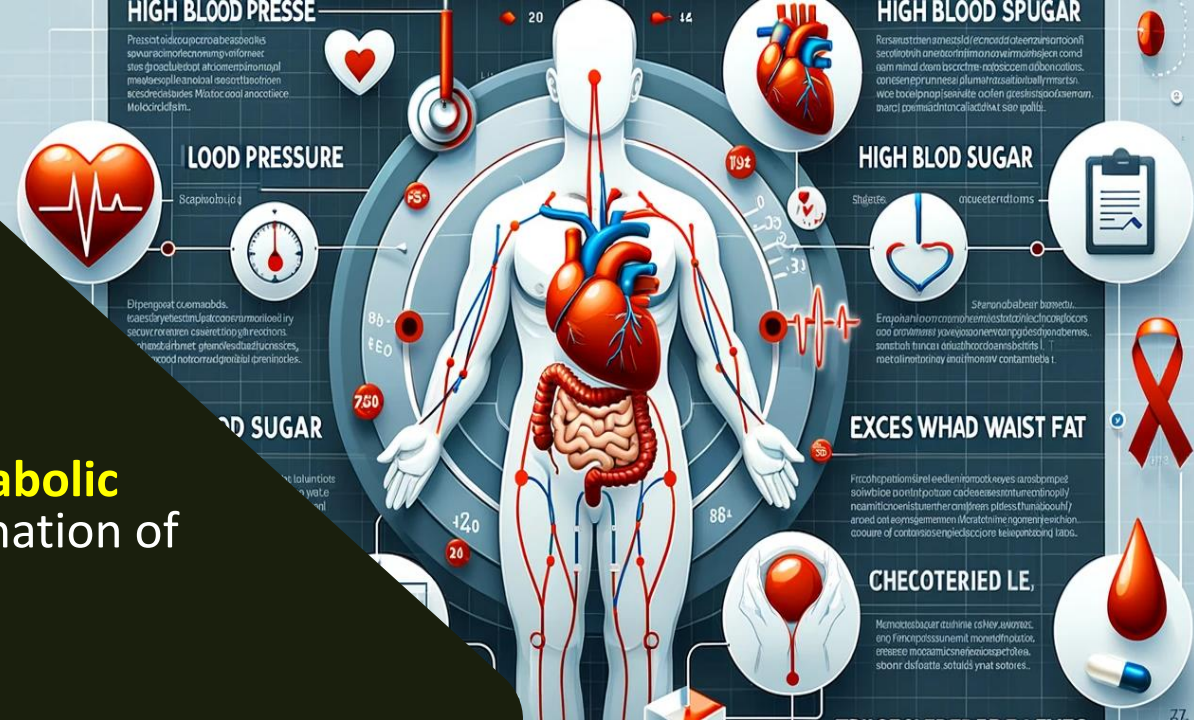
Impact of Excessive Pornography on the Body

➤ Excessive pornography use can trigger **Metabolic Syndrome**. Metabolic syndrome is a combination of the following (Dunckley, 2015):

- High blood pressure
- Midsection weight gain (spare tire)
- Abnormal cholesterol levels
- High fasting blood sugar

➤ **Metabolic Syndrome** is a serious condition and, if left unchecked, can promote:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Stroke

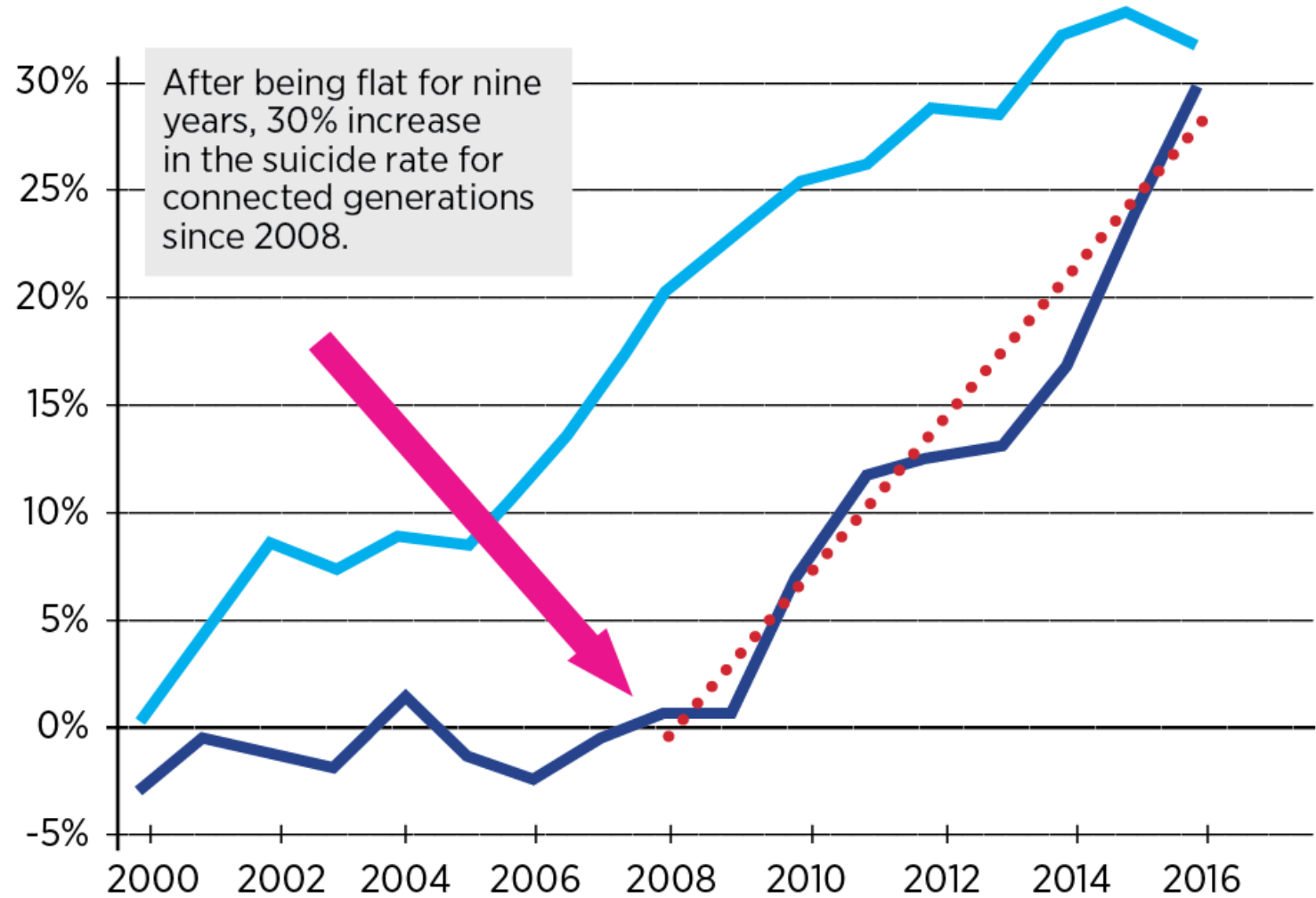


Excessive Pornography and Depression

- ▶ A 2018 study conducted by **Blue Cross and Blue Shield** revealed that that the highest rate of growth in depression has occurred in the youngest and the most digitally connected age bracket (see chart below).



U.S. Suicide Rates % Change: Comparison of Most Digitally Connected Generations vs. Less Connected 2000–2016.



SOURCE: CDC DATA

- Suicide Rate % Change Ages 35-75
- Suicide Rate % Change Ages 15-34
- Increasing Suicide Rates Ages 15-34

Excessive Pornography and Depression

Dr. Gail Dines concluded that studies indicate that porn users experience:

- higher incidence of depressive symptoms
- lower degrees of social integration
- decreased emotional bonding with caregivers
- increased conduct problems
- higher levels of delinquent behavior

<https://www.culturereframed.org/>

- Dr. Dines is professor emerita of sociology and women's studies at Wheelock College in Boston.

GAIL DINES:

the Revolution
Pornification



Excessive Pornography and Depression

The connection between general media consumption to include gaming and social media and depression is well-established as noted in **Kardaras' (2016)** review of the literature.

- A 2012 Missouri State University study of 216 students revealed **that 30 percent of Internet users showed signs of depression** and that the depressed kids were more intense web users.
- A 2014 study looked at 2,293 seventh-graders and found **that Internet addiction led to increased depression, hostility, and anxiety.**
- A 2014 study conducted in Pakistan with 300 graduate students found a **positive correlation between Internet addiction and depression and anxiety.**
- A 2006 Korean study involving 1,573 high school students found a correlation between **Internet addiction, depression, and thoughts of suicide.**
- Recently, the term Facebook Depression has emerged – namely, the **more “friends” one has on Facebook, the higher the likelihood of depressive symptoms** (Kardaras, 2016).



The Impact of Pornography on Sexual Aggression and Violence

In the words of **Jeffrey Dahmer**, serial killer who drugged and killed 17 men and boys as related in a confession to the FBI in 1992:

- *"heavy drinking, **pornography**, and masturbation"* -- admitting while in the U.S. Army he found **graphic porn** in Germany and spent thousands of dollars on it. He admitted to killing as often as once a week. (APB News, 2000).

Click here to view the "Inside the Mind of Jeffrey Dahmer: Serial Killer's Chilling Jailhouse Interview by Leslie Stahl:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWjYsxaBjBI&ab_channel=InsideEdition



The Impact of Pornography on Sexual Aggression and Violence

In the chilling words of **Ted Bundy**, serial murderer:

"I think people need to recognize that those of us who have been influenced by ... pornographic violence are not some kind of inherent monsters. We are your sons, and we are your husbands ... Any pornography can reach out and snatch a kid out of any house today."

*"I've lived in prison for a long time ... and I've met a lot of men who were motivated to commit violence just like me. And without exception every one of them was deeply involved in **pornography** -- **deeply influenced by an addiction**. There is no question about it. The FBI's own study shows that the most common interest among serial killers is pornography." (Dobson interview, 1989).*

Click here to view the terrifying Dr. Dobson – Ted Bundy interview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08dpnn0cd10>



The Impact of Pornography on Sexual Aggression and Violence



Owens et al (2012) and Sun et al. (2016) reported that research findings consistently link the viewing of violent pornography to increased tendencies for **sexually aggressive behavior**



Stanley et al. (2016) reported that there is a clear association between regular viewing of online pornography and perpetration of **sexual coercion and abuse by boys.**



Stanley et al. (2016) found that both regularly watching pornography and sending or receiving sexual images or messages were associated with increased probability of being a **perpetrator of sexual coercion.**



Dr. Walther DeKeseredy (2016) reported that among divorced people he studied, 30% of the women stated their belief that their husband's pornography use was integral to the **sexual abuse they suffered in their marriage.**



The Impact of Pornography on Sexual Aggression and Violence

The verdict is in!

- ▶ **Wright et al. (2016)** conducted an excellent and exhaustive meta-analysis of 22 studies from 7 different countries and concluded:

*“The accumulated data leave little doubt that, on the average, individuals who consume pornography more frequently are more likely to hold **attitudes conducive to sexual aggression and engage in actual acts of sexual aggression** than individuals who do not consume pornography or who consume pornography less frequently.”*

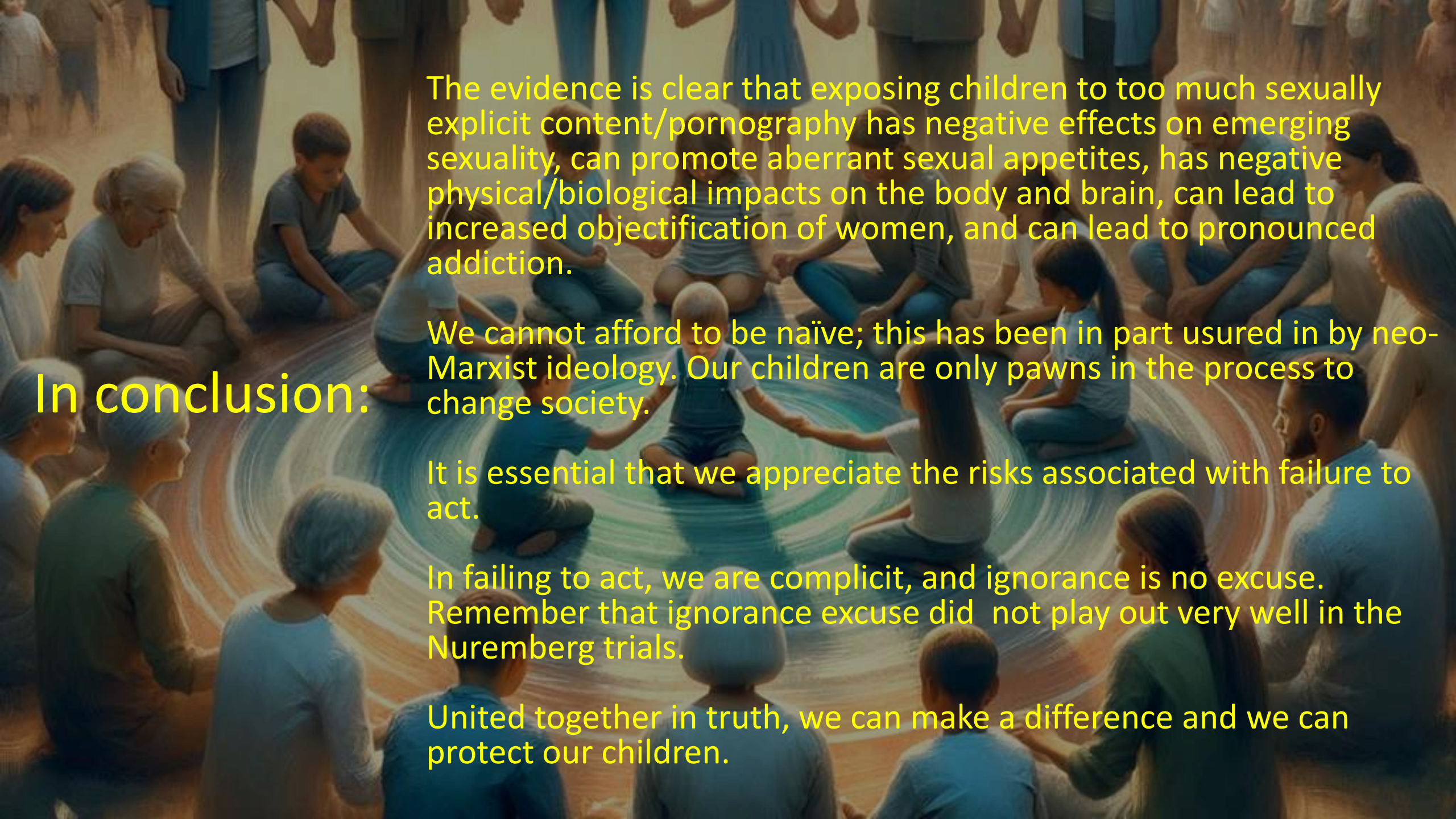


The Impact of Pornography on Sexuality

Unreliable erections during sexual encounters:

- ▶ Between 1948 and 2002, the historical rates for ED in men under 40 were consistently around **2% to 3%** and did not go up very much until age 40. (de Boer, B. et al., 2004). However, as noted in Wilson (2017), at least six studies have found **ED rates of about 14% to 33% in young men**, which constitutes a staggering **1000% increase** in just the last 15 years (Park, 2016).
- ▶ In fact, adolescents are suffering disproportionately as noted by in a Canadian study which showed that problems in sexual functioning are sadly higher in adolescent males than in adult males. In a two-year period **78.6% of males aged 16-21** reported a sexual problem during partnered sexual activity (O'Sullivan et. al., 2016):
 - Erectile dysfunction - **45%**
 - Low sexual desire - **46%**
 - Difficulty climaxing – **24%**





The evidence is clear that exposing children to too much sexually explicit content/pornography has negative effects on emerging sexuality, can promote aberrant sexual appetites, has negative physical/biological impacts on the body and brain, can lead to increased objectification of women, and can lead to pronounced addiction.

We cannot afford to be naïve; this has been in part usured in by neo-Marxist ideology. Our children are only pawns in the process to change society.

It is essential that we appreciate the risks associated with failure to act.

In failing to act, we are complicit, and ignorance is no excuse. Remember that ignorance excuse did not play out very well in the Nuremberg trials.

United together in truth, we can make a difference and we can protect our children.

In conclusion: