

# 3 Simple Definitions of Pornography Kids Can Understand

## Why teach children a definition for pornography?

When it comes to young kids, there is no dispute: pornography is harmful. Early pornography exposure can function like sexual abuse, prematurely awakening sexuality before kids are developmentally ready to cope with sexual feelings. Children who can learn to look away from pornographic images are protecting their mental health. Teaching kids *how to identify the type of images they should look away from* is a necessary first step.

## Don't worry about a legal definition!

Adults have long debated the *legal* definition of pornography. With this in mind, many people think defining pornography for kids might be an impossible task. It isn't. Kids don't need a definition that can hold up in court; they need a definition they can *use*. In this document, we will show you 3 ways you can help kids understand what constitutes pornography.

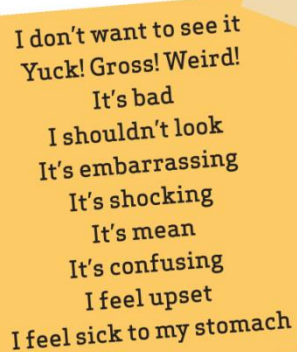
## 3 Straight-forward ways parents can use to define pornography

### Definition 1: Use clear and simple words

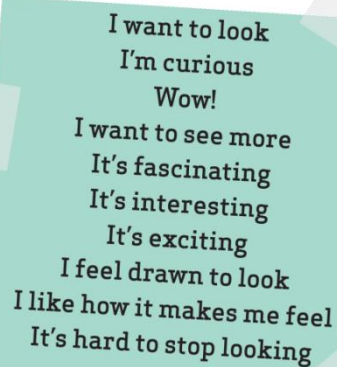
The read-aloud book [Good Pictures Bad Pictures](#) defines pornography as "pictures, videos, or even cartoons of people with little or no clothes on." Pornography *focuses* on the private parts of the body that are normally covered up by a swimsuit.

### Definition 2: Use feelings

Pornography often produces mixed feelings. When kids see pornography, they often feel (at the same time) like they don't want to see it and they do want to see it. Here are some common ways kids feel when they see pornography:



I don't want to see it  
Yuck! Gross! Weird!  
It's bad  
I shouldn't look  
It's embarrassing  
It's shocking  
It's mean  
It's confusing  
I feel upset  
I feel sick to my stomach



I want to look  
I'm curious  
Wow!  
I want to see more  
It's fascinating  
It's interesting  
It's exciting  
I feel drawn to look  
I like how it makes me feel  
It's hard to stop looking



Protect  
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Many kids describe a desire to look at porn “like the pull of a giant magnet.” Even kids who have been traumatized by exposure to pornography can find themselves feeling “pulled” by a confusing desire to see more. Helping kids recognize the feelings that often accompany pornography is a big part of defining what it is.

In reality, there is some subjectivity about what constitutes pornography; what is pornography for one person may not be for another. But if a child is having confused feelings after seeing images involving scantily clad people, that child needs an adult to help them process those feelings.

### **Definition 3: Add more information as children mature**

This definition by Dr. Jill Manning is appropriate for kids who have a basic understanding of sex. We recommend teaching this definition to kids as soon as they are ready for it.

*“Pornography is material specifically designed to arouse sexual feelings in people by depicting nudity, sexual behavior, or any type of sexual information. This can refer to pictures, stories, sounds, symbols, actions, or words that depict bodies and/or sexual behavior.” (What’s the Big Deal about Pornography: A Guide for the Internet Generation, p. 2):*

This definition gets to the core of what pornography is all about: **to elicit sexual feelings**. Understanding the *intent* of pornography is an essential precursor for many important discussions parents will want to have with their kids about *why* pornography is harmful for people and relationships.

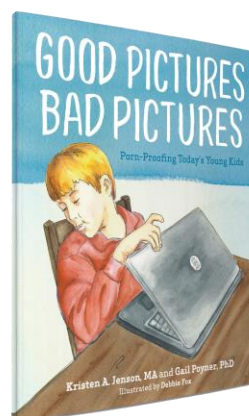
The more kids understand about how pornography is impacting their world, the stronger their **internal filter** will become.

## **The *Internal Filter***

Every child deserves to be armed against the dangers of pornography!

Make it easy with [\*Good Pictures Bad Pictures\*](#), a read-aloud book that’s comfortable for parents and empowering for kids.

**#1 Best Seller on Amazon!**



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