



October 17, 2025

Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

Re: Bill S-209: An Act to restrict young persons' online access to pornographic material

Mr. Chairperson and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for giving the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (“C3P”) the opportunity to participate in the study of *Bill S-209: An Act to restrict young persons' online access to pornographic material* (the “Bill” or “Bill S-209”).

On October 9, 2025, Monique St. Germain, General Counsel for C3P, appeared before the Committee to speak about Bill S-209. As mentioned during her appearance, C3P has made submissions on other bills and studies related to the harm that viewing pornography has on children. On October 10, 2025, we received a request for additional information from the Procedural Clerk of the Committee, namely that we share information we previously submitted with updated research.

To provide a timely response to the foregoing request, we have updated content from our submission of June 7, 2024 to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security regarding Bill S-210, *An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material*.¹ We focused on information related to the harms associated with young persons' online access to pornography. We intend to provide a separate submission to this Committee addressing specific aspects of the current Bill S-209 in the near future.

About the Canadian Centre for Child Protection

C3P is a registered Canadian charity dedicated to the personal safety of children. Our focus is on providing programs and services aimed at reducing child sexual abuse (“CSA”) and the online sexual victimization of children. Since 2002, C3P has been operating [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca), Canada's national tipline for public reporting the online sexual exploitation of children. [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca) was adopted under the Government of Canada's *National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet* in May 2004. It receives and processes tips from the public about online crimes against children and refers any potentially actionable reports to the appropriate police unit and/or child protection agency. C3P also created and operates Project Arachnid, an innovative tool which helps combat the growing proliferation of child sexual abuse and exploitation material (“CSAEM”) on the internet by detecting where known CSAEM is being made publicly available and issuing notices to the entity hosting the material to request its removal.

Summary of position

C3P strongly supports the implementation of age verification requirements for websites and mobile apps that facilitate user access to pornographic material.² To date, there has been little oversight over the pornography industry in this country by government at any level. There are virtually no *Canadian* accountability mechanisms in place for that industry specifically, nor for any of the other online providers

¹ Bill S-210, *An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material*, 1st Sess, 44th Parl, 2021 (Deemed reported without amendment on Friday, June 7, 2024 (House of Commons)).

² “Pornographic material” is defined in section 2 of Bill S-209.



that permit pornographic material to be on their platforms. As a result, for several years now, children of all ages have been readily able to access adult content, not only on platforms dedicated to adult content, but also on mainstream platforms that are not exclusively “pornography” sites. For example, in 2024 X (formerly Twitter) previously estimated that as much as 13% of content on its platform was adult pornography and X is now officially allowing pornographic content after an update to its policies in June 2024.³

The evidence is clear that there is serious harm to children when exposed to such material, particularly if the material they are exposed to is illegal, violent or degrading. Any site that permits unverified users to upload user generated pornographic content – and there are many such sites – is vulnerable to hosting illegal, violent or degrading content, particularly if the site also lacks strong, effective and transparent moderation and removal processes. It is abundantly clear that the strategy to date of relying on the companies that facilitate access to this type of content to fix this problem has failed. Governments must step in and establish a legislative and regulatory framework to ensure that – just as in the physical world – pornographic material is available only to adults, and that all such material that is made available is restricted to that which is legal and consensual.

Harm to children exposed to pornographic material

Children, especially those who are undergoing puberty, are at a vulnerable stage in their sexual development as well as their brain development.⁴ Research has found that children’s exposure to pornography is associated with:

- Difficulty forming healthy relationships.⁵
- Harmful sexual beliefs and behaviours.^{6,7,8,9} For example, a study conducted with youth in five European countries found that “Boys perpetration of sexual coercion and abuse was significantly

³ Todd Spangler, Elon Musk’s X Now Officially Allows Porn After Update to Policies, June 3, 2024. Variety. Available at <https://variety.com/2024/digital/news/x-twitter-porn-policy-update-1236023536/>.

⁴ Warren Binford, TEDx Talk: Sex, Porn & Manhood, April 12, 2017. TEDx Salem. Available online at: <https://www.trendhunter.com/keynote/talk-on-pornography>.

⁵ See generally Nicky Stanley et al, Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People’s Intimate Relationships: A European Study, Journal of Interpersonal Violence, manuscript available online:

<https://knowledge.lancashire.ac.uk/id/eprint/13319/>; See also: Allison Baxter, “How Pornography Harms Children: The Advocate’s Role”, American Bar Association, May 1, 2014. Available online at:

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/child_law/resources/child_law_practiceonline/child_law_practice/vol-33/may-2014/how-pornography-harms-children--the-advocate-s-role/#:~:text=Exposure%20to%20pornography%20harms%20children,increasing%20the%20risk%20of%20addiction; See ALSO Warren Binford, TEDx Talk supra at note 4.

⁶ Government Equalities Office, “The relationship between pornography use and harmful sexual behaviours” February 2020. At p. 19. A study involving 20 frontline workers in the UK found that a majority of the frontline workers felt that pornography as a “key contributing factor in many of their clients’ harmful sexual beliefs and behaviours”.

⁷ Children’s Commissioner. (2025). “Sex is kind of broken now”: Children and pornography.

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/sex-is-kind-of-broken-now-children-and-pornography/>

⁸ Mori, C., Park, J., Racine, N., Ganshorn, H., Hartwick, C., & Madigan, S. (2023). Exposure to sexual content and problematic sexual behaviors in children and adolescents: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 143, 106255. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106255>.

⁹ McKibbin, G., Green, J., Humphreys, C., & Tyler, M. (2024). Pathways to onset of harmful sexual behavior. *Victims & Offenders*, 19(5), 739–777. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2023.2208579>.



associated with regular viewing of online pornography.”¹⁰ In another research study that involved 14-21-year olds, 9% reported having perpetrated some form of sexually abusive behaviours, and that 9% had significantly higher exposure to, and use of, violent sexual materials.¹¹ In addition, those who watch pornography may form a distorted belief that women and girls are always sexually available, and form harmful attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual consent.¹²

- A normalization of sexual harm.¹³ Those who are overexposed to pornography (in particular violent pornography) are less likely to speak out if they witness sexual assault or if they themselves become victims of sexual assault.¹⁴

We also know from our work that online forums discussing child abuse tactics encourage the use of pornography as a means of breaking a child’s inhibitions and resistance to sexual activity and making a child compliant to requests. There are numerous cases in Canadian jurisprudence in which an offender used pornographic material as part of the grooming process. As an example, our recent research project titled “Production of child sexual abuse material in Canada: A study of legal decisions from 2001 to 2019”¹⁵ surfaced several court cases where the offender used pornography in the process of making CSAEM. In one sentencing decision, the court mentioned that the offender “showed his daughter pornographic materials to show her how she should act on the videos he produced.”¹⁶

¹⁰ Nicky Stanley et al, supra note 5 at page 10. Between 19% – 30% of the 4,564 youth (14-17) surveyed indicated they watched porn regularly. See also House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social and Legal Affairs in Australia, “Protecting the age of innocence”, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. February 2020 at page 40. Available online at: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Social_Policy_and_Legal_Affairs/Onlineageverification/Report.

¹¹ Michele L. Ybarra, MPH, PhD1; Kimberly J. Mitchell, *Prevalence Rates of Male and Female Sexual Violence Perpetrators in a National Sample of Adolescents*, (December 2013). Available online at: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/1748355>.

¹² Government Equalities Office, supra note 6, at page 18. See also: New Zealand Classification Office, “Growing up with porn. Insights from young New Zealanders” (2020) at page 36. Available online at: <https://www.classificationoffice.govt.nz/resources/research/growing-up-with-porn/>.

¹³ Allison Baxter supra at note 5.

¹⁴ Warren Binford supra at note 4.

¹⁵ Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc., “Production of child sexual abuse material in Canada: A study of legal decisions from 2001 to 2019” (2024), available online: <https://protectchildren.ca/en/resources-research/csam-legal-decisions-study/>.

¹⁶ *R v WD*, 2008 ABPC 290 at paras 2 and 27.



Research has also found associations with children's pornography exposure and negative gender¹⁷ and racial stereotypes¹⁸; problems with sexual arousal;¹⁹ aggression;^{20,21} and negative health outcomes such as substance abuse,²² depression,²³ risky sexual behaviours,^{24,25} and sexual deviance.²⁶

The harms of pornography were discussed in a report by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children ("NSPCC") titled, "*I wasn't sure it was normal to watch it*" *A quantitative and qualitative examination of the impact of online pornography on the values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of children and young people*.²⁷ The researchers surveyed 1001 participants between the ages of 11-16 living in the United Kingdom and found that:

- Substantial minorities of older children (42% of 12-16 year olds) wanted to try things out they had seen in pornography. Some 44% of males, compared to 29% of females, reported that the online pornography they had seen had given them ideas about the sexual things they wanted to try out.
- Over 33% of participants found the pornography they encountered online to be degrading and humiliating, and almost 30% found it repulsive and revolting.

A U.S study noted that most teens who indicated they have viewed pornography have been exposed to aggressive and/or violent forms of pornography. This includes 52% who reported to having seen pornography depicting what appears to be rape, choking or someone in pain.²⁸

¹⁷ Women are often depicted as being ready for sex regardless of the situation. There is rarely a depiction of equal relationships in which the two parties are on equal footing – the women are there for the pleasure of men. The study conducted by Stanley et al, indicated that "boys who regularly watched online pornography were significantly more likely to hold negative gender attitudes". See Stanley et al supra note 5 at page 16.

¹⁸ For example, Asian women may be depicted as being meek and submissive whereas Black men may be portrayed as being violent and aggressive.

¹⁹ Warren Binford supra at note 4. Warren Binford found problems with arousal in one third of men between the ages of 18 and 25.

²⁰ Alexy, E., Burgess, A. and Prentky, R. (2009). Pornography Use as a Risk Marker for an Aggressive Pattern of Behavior Among Sexually Reactive Children and Adolescents. *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association*, 14(6), pp.442-453.

²¹ Wright, P. J., Paul, B., & Herbenick, D. (2021). Preliminary insights from a U.S. probability sample on adolescents' pornography exposure, media psychology, and sexual aggression. *Journal of Health Communication*, 26(1), 39–46.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2021.1887980>

²² Svedin, C., Åkerman, I. and Priebe, G. (2011). Frequent users of pornography. A population based epidemiological study of Swedish male adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 34(4), pp.779-788

²³Christina Camilleri, Justin T. Perry and Stephen Sammut, Compulsive Internet Pornography Use and Mental Health: A Cross-Sectional Study in a Sample of University Students in the United States. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 2021. Available online at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7835260/>. See also Nelson, L., Padilla-Walker, L. and Carroll, J. (2010). "I believe it is wrong but I still do it": A comparison of religious young men who do versus do not use pornography. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 2(3), pp.136-147.

²⁴ Carroll, J., Padilla-Walker, L., Nelson, L., Olson, C., McNamara Barry, C. and Madsen, S. (2008). Generation XXX: Pornography Acceptance and Use Among Emerging Adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 23(1), pp.6-30.

²⁵ Mubasshera, H. (2024). Pornography usage during adolescence: Does it lead to risky sexual behavior? *Health Economics*, 33(8), 1682–1704. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hec.4825>

²⁶ Lam, C. and Chan, D. (2006). The Use of Cyberpornography by Young Men in Hong Kong: Some Psychosocial Correlates. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 36(4), pp.588-598.

²⁷ D'Orlando, F. (2011). The demand for pornography. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 12(1), 51–75.

²⁸ Common Sense, Teens and Pornography. Available online at <https://www.common SenseMedia.org/sites/default/files/research/report/2022-teens-and-pornography-final-web.pdf> at page 7.



Just today (October 17, 2025), the New South Wales Standing Committee on Social Issues released a report on its study of the “Impacts of harmful pornography on mental, emotional, and physical health”.²⁹ It is a lengthy report that C3P has not reviewed in full, but we direct your attention to:

- The findings on page x of the introduction, including the finding that “Pornography is readily and easily accessed by children and young people online”.
- The information on page 43 about the presence of pornographic material on social media and other non-pornography-dedicated sites.
- The information on page 44 about the age of first exposure to pornographic material, with “both research and anecdotal evidence show[ing] that many children were barely into their teens, or even younger, when they first viewed pornographic content”.
- The section beginning on page 49 titled “Impacts of harmful pornography”, which discusses the impact of pornographic material on how young people understand consent, problematic themes of violence and misogyny within pornography, the influence of pornography on body image, additive or compulsive use of pornography, and other harms. This section also discusses the unique impacts on young men and boys, LGBTIQ+ people, persons with a disability, and other diverse populations.
 - Within this section, see in particular paragraphs 3.133-3.135 on the issue of “self-generated pornography” by young people and 3.136-3.145 on research suggesting exposure to pornography may be one factor linked to an increase in child sexual abuse by male adolescents found in a recent study of over 8,000 Australians.

It is important to note that studies on the effects of pornography on children rarely discuss impacts on very young children (i.e., those under 12). This is a critical knowledge gap given that, according to a 2018 report, “one of the fastest groups of internet users are children between the ages of 6 and 10 years”³⁰ and that many youth have first come across pornography before the age of 12.³¹

To attempt to better understand what younger children are exposed to in Canada, research on this issue was conducted by a not-for-profit called Media Smarts. Their research found over 30% of kids aged 9 to 13 have encountered pornography online without seeking it.³²

While somewhat dated now, in 2017, C3P conducted an informal survey with children in grade four³³ and grade six.³⁴ Approximately 40% of students in grade four reported that they had been asked weird questions, seen uncomfortable content or felt somewhat unsafe while gaming. In similar discussions with students in grade six during that same year, we learned that:

²⁹ New South Wales Standing Committee on Social Issues, Report no. 66 (17 October 2025), available online: <<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/3067/Report%20no.%2066%20-%20Impacts%20of%20Harmful%20Pornography%20on%20mental,%20emotional,%20and%20physical%20health%20-%2017%20October%202025.pdf>>.

³⁰ Sheri et al. The Prevalence of Unwanted Online Sexual Exposure and Solicitation Among Youth: A Meta-Analysis, *Journal of Adolescent Health* 63 (2018) 133- 141 at page 139.

³¹ Common Sense Media. (2023). *Teens and pornography*.

<https://www.common Sense Media.org/sites/default/files/research/report/2022-teens-and-pornography-final-web.pdf>

³² MediaSmarts. (2022). “Young Canadians in a Wireless World, Phase IV: Encountering Harmful and Discomforting Content Online.” MediaSmarts. Ottawa.

³³ Canadian Centre for Child Protection. This information comes from an informal survey of 80 students in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

³⁴ Canadian Centre for Child Protection. This information comes from an informal survey of 60 students in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.



- Approximately 70% had at one time or another felt weird, uncomfortable, strange, or scared while online.
- Of those things that they listed as weird or uncomfortable, 'pornography' directly and possible euphemisms included 'seeing images', 'seeing uncomfortable things', and 'weird pop-ups' were examples given.³⁵

Grade six students were asked to "list concerns that grade six students might have about going online". Responses included 'popping-up nudity', 'pornography', 'people being sexually offensive', 'flashers', and 'uncomfortable images sent to you'.³⁶ These responses are consistent with a study conducted by the New Zealand Classification Office, which found that quite a few teenage participants had accessed pornography for the first time at or under the age of 12, with the youngest being only 4 years old when they first saw pornography.³⁷ According to the same report, "young people think access to porn is too easy"³⁸ and felt they were too young when they first saw porn.³⁹

Ease of access to pornography sites

*It's far too easy for any 12 year old to hear the word porn...and suddenly they're welcomed with seven million sites all showing images.*⁴⁰

Pornography websites are available 24/7 and there are thousands of them accessible with the click of a mouse from a child's own home. Not all charge for the content they provide, and not all require registration to access the pornography. In fact, many have pornographic content prominently displayed on their home page. In addition, children are often exposed to ads for sexual content, even when using innocuous websites. Moreover, algorithms used by various platforms are maximized to show ads to as many individuals as possible. Such ads can pop up when children are playing online games, visiting shopping websites or when interacting with others on social media. Clicking on one ad related to an adult website (even in error) can result in receiving numerous other similar ads, all with the purpose of enticing the individual to visit those websites. This means children of all ages can be easily exposed to pornographic material without even needing to seek it out specifically.

It should be noted that online activities that are age-restricted and involve financial transactions currently achieve age verification using credit cards, which are generally not issued to minors – this includes cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, R-rated video games and paid for pornography. The problem areas relate almost solely to services that provide content for free as they instead generate revenue by monetizing traffic-driven ad sales.

³⁵ Full list of responses for Grade 5 Student Advisory Group "Risks regarding the online world" included: Seeing uncomfortable things, weird pop ups, being hacked, losing personal information, seeing images, strange friend requests, scams, being scared, 'chain mail', getting boundaries broken, losing privacy, pornography, uncomfortable situations, internet addiction.

³⁶ Canadian Centre for Child Protection. This information comes from an informal survey of 80 students in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

³⁷ Growing up with porn, supra at note 12, see page 16.

³⁸ Growing up with porn, supra at note 12, see page 9.

³⁹ Growing up with porn, supra at note 12, see page 9. See also Christina Camilleri, Justin T. Perry and Stephen Sammut, Compulsive Internet Pornography Use and Mental Health: A Cross Sectional Study in a Sample of University Students in the United States. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 2021. Available online at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7835260/>. That study out of the United States, also found that over 70% of male participants and over 50% of female participants had accessed pornography before the age of 13.

⁴⁰ Growing up with porn supra at note 12, at page 16. Quote from 17-year-old male who participated in the survey.



With the ubiquity of smartphones, children can also access adult sites from anywhere at any time, away from parental or other supervision. According to statistics from one popular platform dedicated to pornography, 85% of its Canadian traffic in 2023 came from smartphones compared to only 12% from desktop computers.⁴¹ This means that while parents/guardians or schools may attempt to implement filtering software on computers, children can still access adult sites using public Wi-Fi or data on their phones because filtering is either not available or is less robust and more easily evaded on those mediums.

In addition, as mentioned above, adult pornography and CSAEM are both often used to groom children into compliance.⁴² As a grooming tactic, a perpetrator may show the pornography to the child in person, but they may also send pornography to a child directly (either as images and videos)⁴³ or simply send a link to a pornographic website⁴⁴ that, once clicked on, exposes that child to pornography. If the offender sends a child a link to an adult pornography site, because there are currently no barriers to prevent a child from accessing such content, the child could easily be exposed to it without seeking it out, and without any warning. This ease of access has the added danger of normalizing not just the child's access to pornography, but also the abusive relationship between the offender and the victim.

Non-consensual material, child sexual abuse material (CSAEM) and bestiality material on adult websites

Current studies on the effects of pornography on children are based on content that is for the most part, legal (content depicting consenting adults engaged in lawful sexual activity). Such content can range from professionally created pornography, made by larger companies or small filming studios, to amateur content uploaded by individuals, with little or no attempt at moderation before upload and a lackadaisical approach to moderation afterward. Even if the content on these websites is “legal”, it can be extremely harmful to children as it portrays sexual activity in a way that is not always consistent with healthy and respective relationships.

Content on adult sites may also include material that is illegal,⁴⁵ such as intimate images distributed without consent,⁴⁶ voyeuristically recorded material, or material depicting non-consensual sexual activity, such as CSAM, and bestiality. This content has the added danger of normalizing violent sexual acts, intrusive recordings that violate privacy, and the sexual abuse of children and animals.

⁴¹ The 2023 Year in Review. December 9, 2023. Pornhub Insights. Available online at: <https://www.pornhub.com/insights/2023-year-in-review>. The same report stated that mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) made up 92.8% of all Pornhub's traffic worldwide.

⁴² Elliot and colleagues found that among 91 offenders who sexually exploited children, 33% used adult pornographic videos or magazines to groom and desensitize children. See Elliott, M., Browne, K. and Kilcoyne, J. (1995). Child sexual abuse prevention: What offenders tell us. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 19(5), pp.579-594. Research also indicates that sexual offenders expose children to pornographic videos and images in order to lower children's inhibitions. See Lanning, K. (2010). *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis*. 5th ed. Alexandria: National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

⁴³ See for example *R v Dichrow*, 2020 ABPC 58; *R c Echevarria Perez*, 2023 QCCQ 7559.

⁴⁴ See for example *R v Allen*, 2020 ONCA 664 (CanLII); *R v Ghotra*, 2020 ONCA 373.

⁴⁵ W5, “Pornhub: Shocking allegations against a porn empire”, aired April 3, 2021. CTV.ca Available online at: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/video?binId=1.811589>.

⁴⁶ Sometimes inappropriately called “revenge porn”.



The Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics held public hearings to study the *Protection of Privacy and Reputation on Platforms such as Pornhub*. Survivors of CSAEM,⁴⁷ sex trafficking, sexual assault and the non-consensual distribution of intimate images testified or submitted written briefs to the Committee alleging that illegal content is freely available on adult sites to anyone who has access. Similar stories were conveyed in a W5 episode – *Pornhub: Shocking allegations against a porn empire*, in which at least three victims alleged that material depicting their abuse and sexual assault was available for extended periods of time on Pornhub.⁴⁸

In 2024, the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage released its report on its study into “Harms Caused by Illegal Sexually Explicit Material Online”. The report highlights the prevalence of CSAEM and non-consensually distributed sexual content online and calls attention to the issue of “deepfake sexual abuse”. Harms from these materials include the re-sharing and loss of control for victims. Our agency also provided information for this study indicating that CSAEM of adolescents ends up on adult pornography sites, where it is difficult to remove.⁴⁹

C3P is also aware of a significant volume of CSAEM that includes pubescent/post-pubescent victims that is available on adult sites. Project Arachnid (described above) regularly detects child sexual abuse material involving identified pubescent and post-pubescent children on adult pornography sites.⁵⁰

Other causes of harm

Harm to children as a result of pornography is not localized to children’s exposure to the content on adult sites. Children may also be harmed through the desensitization and escalation that results from the habitual use of adult sites by adults. We are aware of several cases in which offenders, mostly those who collect CSAEM, state that they began viewing CSAEM due to the escalating use of pornography.⁵¹ Others claim they came across CSAEM accidentally, through an incorrect download or a pop up, while others indicate that their addiction to pornography made them seek out more extreme content, and some were

⁴⁷ Brief of Rose Kalemba, published March 9, 2021. Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. 43rd Parliament, 2nd Session. Available online at:

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/ETHI/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=11088039>.

⁴⁸ W5, “Pornhub: Shocking allegations against a porn empire” supra at note 45.

⁴⁹ Pages 13-14 of “Harms Caused by Illegal Sexually Explicit Material Online: Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage”.

⁵⁰ For more information, see C3P’s written submission to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics made available online at: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/ETHI/Brief/BR11142144/br-external/CanadianCentreForChildProtection-e.pdf>. See also Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc., *How We Are Failing Children: Changing the Paradigm* (2019) at page 22, available online: https://protectchildren.ca/pdfs/C3P_ChildRightsFramework_en.pdf.

⁵¹ See *R v Barry*, 2019 CanLII 128210 (ONSC) (offender who downloaded and made CSAEM claimed he bumped into CSEAM while watching and searching for pornography); *R v CH*, 2020 BCSC 323 (offender claimed he began downloading CSAEM when he followed pop ups); *R v Kreibom*, 2020 BCPC 155 (offender claimed CSAEM would pop up when he searched for pornography and he viewed it out of curiosity); *R v Alexander*, 2018 BCPC 389 (offender claimed his viewing of CSAEM escalated from viewing pornography); and *R v Bisson*, 2020 BCSC 1778 (offender claimed his viewing of CSAEM escalated from viewing pornography); *R v Dunajski*, 2024 ONCJ 590 (the offender claimed that he eventually clicked on a CSAEM link out of curiosity); *R v Kalina*, 2025 ONCJ 41 (the offender claimed to be viewing adult pornography when he clicked on a “popup” and began viewing CSAEM out of boredom); *R c Laganière*, 2024 QCCQ 7655 (the offender claimed that he “gradually increased” his consumption of pornography, first viewing adult pornography and later CSAEM); *R v RS*, [2024] O.J. No. 3244 (ONCJ) (the offender told his psychiatrist that he downloaded CSAEM as a condition of being a member in an online adult pornography group); *R v Sawatis*, 2025 ONSC 50 (the offender claimed that he was seeking out adult pornography and “nudist sites” which provided opportunities to “engage in” other websites that contained CSAEM).



led to CSAEM. For example, in one case where the offender was found in possession of over 7000 images and over 100 videos of CSAEM, the offender stated that he developed an addiction to pornography, which led him to “following internet links to pornography sites, leading in turn to an interest in viewing child pornography”.⁵²

Conclusion

Just as we protect children against the harms of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and R-rated movies, there need to be adequate protections online to protect children from pornography (and illegal content that may find its way onto adult sites). The digital nature of online pornography does not and should not mean that society abrogates its responsibilities to children and youth. We cannot let adult sites dictate the sexual education of Canada’s children. Given the repeated evidence that exposure to pornography, especially by youth, leads to higher rates of youth holding negative gender stereotypes and increased aggression in intimate relationships, we cannot let the status quo continue.

The above summary of our overarching recommendations is a starting point for how the federal government can fulfill its obligations to victims. There is so much that can be done, and Canada has an opportunity to lead the development of a model that truly works for children and families victimized online. Thank you for your consideration.

⁵² *R v Bisson*, 2020 BCSC 1778 at para 8. See also *R v Alexander*, 2018 BCPC 389 – where the offender was found in possession of over 6000 images and 400 videos of CSAEM, the offender stated he had been viewing pornography since he was a teenager and moved to viewing CSAEM for “something different” [8]. He indicated he had started with images and escalated to even more pictures and videos.