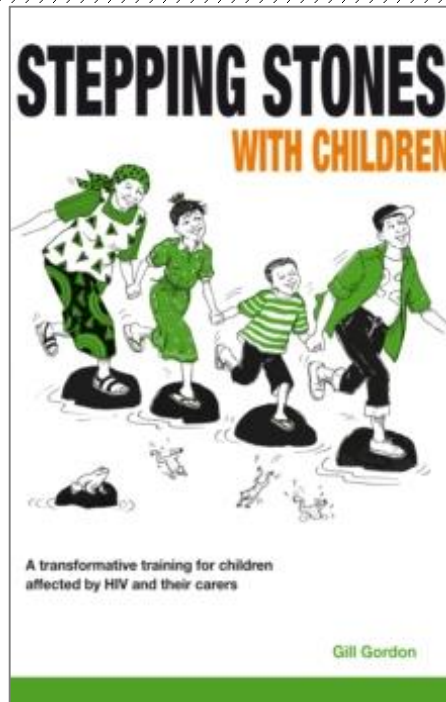


Handouts for *Stepping Stones with Children*



This *Handout for Stepping Stones with Children* is to be used with the *Stepping Stones with Children* training manual published by Practical Action Publishing, 2016.

You can download this handout for free for use with this training manual from the www.stepsstonesfeedback.org website.

On this website there are also many other resources to support you with this training manual and the original *Stepping Stones* training manual.

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PORNOGRAPHY

Many children have seen pornographic images in movies, on mobile phones, through the Internet, and in magazines. If they don't have the opportunity to talk and think about porn critically, they can get confused and frightened, and copy harmful gender and sexual behaviour.

Some children may be shown porn by adults. This is sexual abuse, and illegal. The children may be traumatized by it.

1. What is porn?

'Porn' is short for 'pornography'. Porn is images of sexual organs or sexual activity, created with the purpose of causing sexual excitement in the people who see them. Porn is intended as entertainment for adults, not children. In most countries the legal age for using porn is 18. Porn is not sex education, because sex in porn is different from real sex. People who make porn do so to make money, not to educate.

2. Pornography and the law

In most countries it is illegal to make pornographic images of children, regardless of whether the child agrees or not.

In some countries, such as South Africa, the sale of certain kinds of porn to people over 18 years is legal, if done through registered shops. In countries where porn is legal it is usually illegal to show certain acts, such as sex with animals, or scenes of rape and torture.

In other countries, such as Zambia and Tanzania, making or viewing any pornography is illegal. Without enforcement of laws there may be widespread access to pornography, by adults and children. In particular, it is difficult to prevent people accessing porn through the Internet.

3. Why is porn more harmful for children than adults?

Children who see porn may:

- be confused and upset by what they see, making them scared of sex and affecting their future sexual lives;
- think that porn shows the right way to have sex, and copy it;
- learn harmful messages about sex – sex without virtues and outside respectful, equal sexual relationships – which shapes their beliefs and behaviour;
- start to feel sexy and want sex when they are too young, making it more difficult for them to delay sex;
- be drawn into illegal and exploitative sexual relationships with adults by attending showings of porn movies.

4. Ways of protecting children from porn

Caregivers can:

- talk about porn with their children and other caregivers, family members, neighbours, housemaids, and friends, so that they understand and think critically about it;
- explain the negative effects of porn on children and adults, gender norms and practices, sexual safety, and the legal and ethical issues;
- put password-protected blocks on porn to prevent children accessing it via computers and phones;
- in countries where all porn is illegal, campaign for enforcement of porn laws; for example, the closure of local video houses showing porn;
- campaign for cinema owners to refuse entry to porn films to children under 18 years old;
- switch off the DVD player and lock up the plug;
- ensure that any porn in the house, such as DVDs, is locked up;
- if watching porn movies, ensure that no children can see or hear the film.

Children can:

- talk to peers about porn, to share what you they have learned, and help their peers to become well informed;
- avoid watching porn, and be assertive when people try to persuade them to see it on DVDs, phones, or computers, in magazines, or at the cinema.
- tell an adult they trust if someone puts pressure on them to see porn.

