

## California Catholic Daily

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Published: February 29, 2008

### "Pornography is harmless fun"

*Planned Parenthood promoting smut on web site aimed at teens*

[[Teenwire.jpg]]A Planned Parenthood web site for teenagers is promoting pornography to young people, Cybercast News Service reports. An article posted on the Planned Parenthood-sponsored Teenwire.com web site advises teens that pornography is a "lower-risk form of outercourse."

"Many couples can read or watch sexy stories or pictures together," the article, originally posted on Teenwire.com in 2007, states. "They can also share or act out sex fantasies."

Another piece of advice on the website, "Porn vs. Reality," warns that it is against federal law for anyone under 18 to view pornography. But, says the article, "not everyone follows the rules, and you may run across some porn before you turn 18."

Many people enjoy pornography "alone or with a partner," says the article. "People have different ideas of what is arousing, and there are many different kinds of porn that appeal to people's different interests."

On the Teenwire.com web site's "Ask the Experts" page, one writer assures a student concerned that pornography use will affect his grades that "there is no correlation between using pornography and getting bad grades in school." The "expert" assured another teenager that masturbation and pornography use did not constitute cheating on his girlfriend.

Cris Clapp, congressional liaison for the anti-pornography group Enough is Enough, told Cybercast News Service that the web site lacks key information. "Overall teenwire.com has painted a picture that pornography is harmless fun," she said. Clapp noted that Internet pornography includes very graphic content, including violent sexual images.

Clapp cited the Nov. 10, 2005 congressional testimony of author and family therapist Jill Manning, who said, "Children and adolescents are considered the most vulnerable audience of sexually explicit material."

Manning told congress that youth are easily coerced into viewing or producing pornography, and have a limited ability to process material they encounter, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. They can be victims of others' pornography consumption, and their sexual and social development can be negatively affected by exposure to false or traumatic messages about sexuality and relationships. Pornography also encourages unrealistic expectations in youth about their future relationships.

"However, this legal reality is rapidly losing momentum as widespread availability and accessibility of pornography normalizes illegal exposure," Manning said.

Clapp told Cybercast News Service parents need to be involved in the education of their children. "Unfortunately, parents are outsourcing their responsibility to talk to their kids about healthy sexuality to teachers, the culture and sites like teenwire.com, without any understanding about the sort of misguided messages that our children are hearing," said Clapp.

**(This is an edited version of a story provided courtesy of Catholic News Agency.)**

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