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## **Failure to tackle the harms of pornography is undermining equality and putting women and girls at risk of violence** **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/111812>)**

Pornography that features violence against women and girls is now mainstream and freely available to anyone, including children, according to new research commissioned by **Women's Aid** and funded the **Community Foundation of Ireland**.

*'Facing Reality: Addressing the Role of Pornography in the Pandemic of Violence against Women and Girls'* was undertaken by the **Sexual Exploitation Research and Policy (SERP) Institute** on behalf of the national domestic violence organisation.

Women contacting Women's Aid for support have previously identified their partner's use of pornography as a component of the sexual coercion and abuse they are enduring, and this research report starkly reveals that much of what features in mainstream pornography constitutes sexual violence.

Pornography that features acts of violence against women, including strangling, verbal humiliation and spitting is now mainstream and available to everyone, including children, with a few clicks online.

**Women's Aid CEO, Sarah Benson** says: "Pornography has a hugely negative impact on young people and society more generally. It shapes the sexual expectations of children and young people in ways that normalise harmful, coercive, dangerous, and abusive behaviours. It reinforces misogynistic and disrespectful stereotypes and undermines any educational work on consent and on safe, healthy, and respectful relationships."

This report builds on previous research published by Women's Aid that showed a very high level of public concern in Ireland about the harms of pornography to gender equality, healthy sexuality, and children in general.

This groundbreaking new work includes a comprehensive review of existing literature on pornography, with a particular focus on the nature of pornography, its consumption, its impacts, and the consequences of consumption for gender equality, sexuality, and gender-based violence.

The researchers also consulted with key domestic and international experts to draw on their professional experience and insights on this issue.

Read or download the report [here \(https://www.womensaid.ie/app/uploads/2024/10/Facing-Reality-Full-Report-October-2024.pdf\)](https://www.womensaid.ie/app/uploads/2024/10/Facing-Reality-Full-Report-October-2024.pdf).

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