



Young People and Porn: Challenges, Evidence and Opportunities

Challenges

Evidence

Solutions

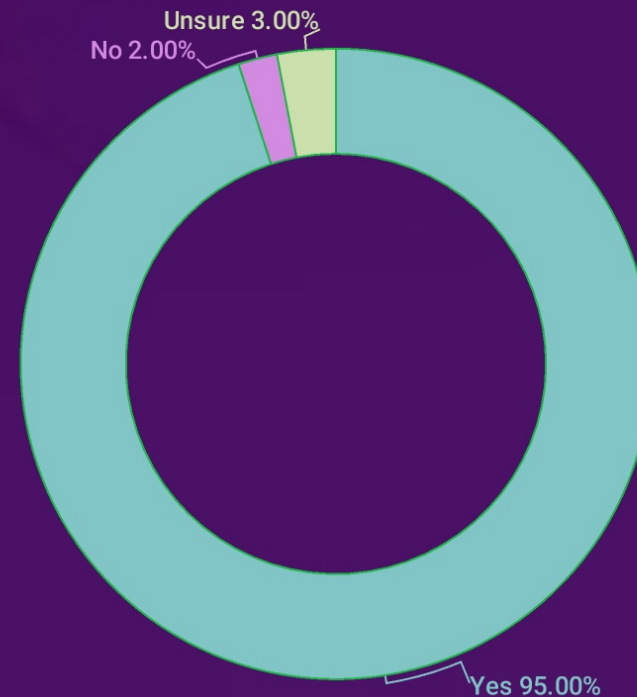
Chief Censor David Shanks

Do you believe pornography is an issue for young people today?

YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND
SEXUAL HEALTH CARE
PROVIDERS (cohort 260)

95% say YES

Preliminary findings - Robertson
and Denholm 2017, Stakeholder
survey, Porn and young people in
New Zealand



Children are seeing porn:

- Nearly half of children between ages 9-16 experience regular exposure to sexual images (2017 Australian study)
- One in 10 children aged 6-14 visited a porn site during May 2015 (UK study)
- One in five children surveyed in the UK had seen pornographic images that had shocked or upset them (2015 Childline Poll)

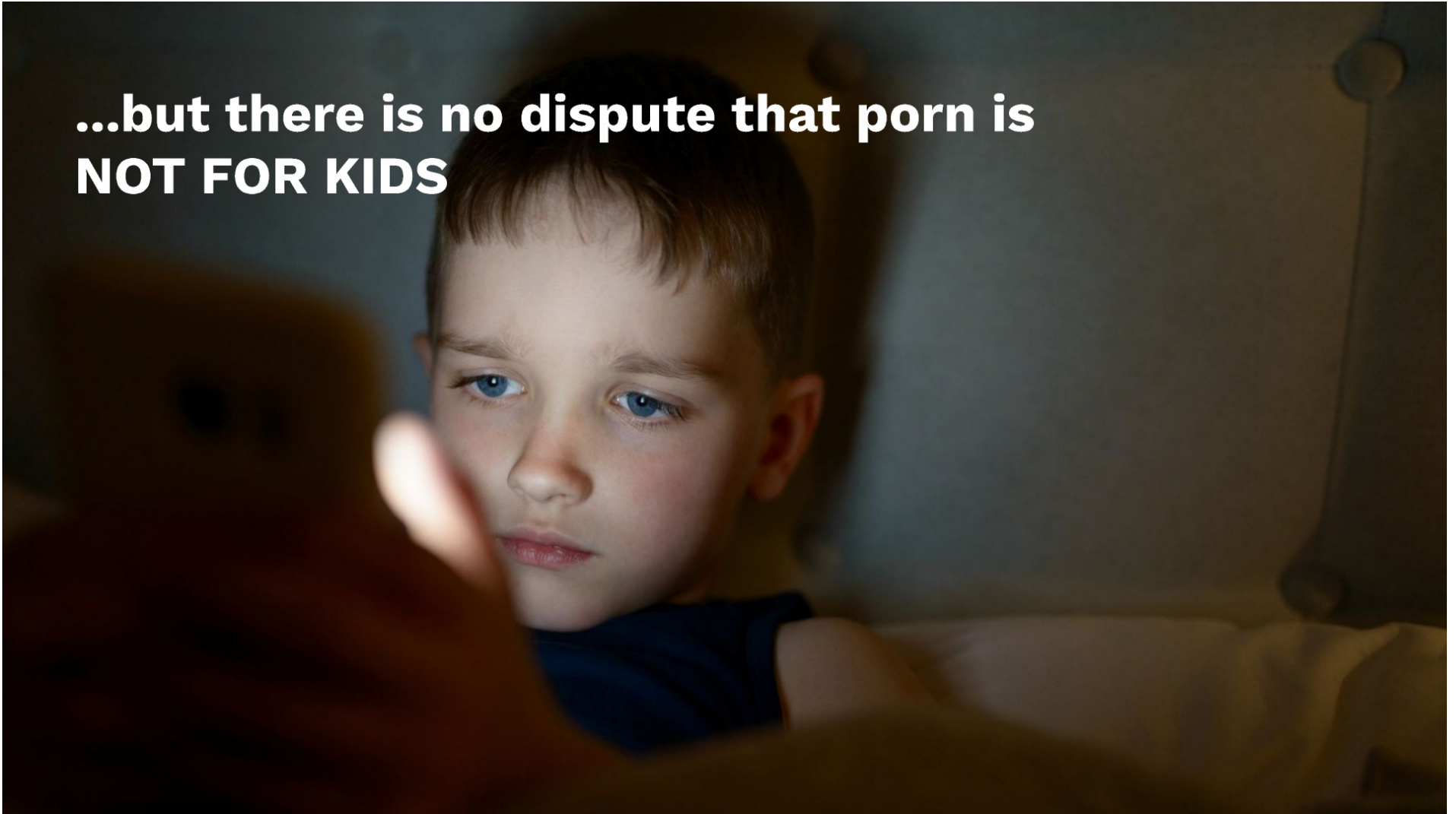
Is this a concern?

Research has **correlated** porn use with issues such as:

- Increased sexual aggression and sexual 'entitlement'
- Coercion
- Risky sexual behaviours
- Addiction/compulsive behaviour
- Porn Induced Erectile Dysfunction (PIED)

Causality is heavily contested...

**...but there is no dispute that porn is
NOT FOR KIDS**



The challenge: 4 reasons it's different this time

There have always been concerns about new technologies and pornography. BUT the industry now has levers that make it different from anything in the past:

- Big Data/Artificial Intelligence
- 24/7 influence
- Social control
- Personalised

**... and technology will
keep moving the target
in this space.**



FORTNITE

- **Big data engines and online user surveillance means that pornography immediately adapts to user preference.**
- **Big trend for 2018 porn searches was for 'Fortnite Porn'**
- **Expect to see further content specifically aimed at youth & gamers**



We face fundamental (and fast evolving) media challenges.



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Young New Zealanders viewing sexual violence:

3-phase research programme investigating the effects of sexual violence in media on young NZ'ers.

- They are watching it. It is affecting them (sometimes acutely)
- Stereotypes and 'scripts' about sexual violence are influencing young people
- They watch what they want, when they want - and can feel no-one is looking out for them

The image shows the silhouettes of four young people standing against a bright, orange and yellow sunset sky. The figures are dark against the light background, creating a high-contrast scene. The person in the center is wearing a cap and is seen from the back. The others are in profile or three-quarter view.

NZ Youth and Porn - A Major Study

A research project examining how and why young New Zealanders are viewing pornography today, which puts the experiences of teenagers at the centre of the debate

Our Research

- Working with social research agency Colmar Brunton
- Nationally representative survey
- 2,000 New Zealanders aged 14-17
- Quantitative findings released December 2018
- Qualitative phase now underway - working with Christchurch-based Collaborative Trust

What we asked young people:

- Sex education/information at school
- Prevalence, frequency, age of exposure
- How, where, why they view porn
- Views on impact/influence of viewing porn
- Behaviours they see in porn: consent, aggression, etc



1 in 4

young NZ'ers first saw porn
before the age of 12



71%

were not seeking out pornography
when they first saw it

FROM OUR 2018 STUDY OF
NZ YOUTH AND PORN



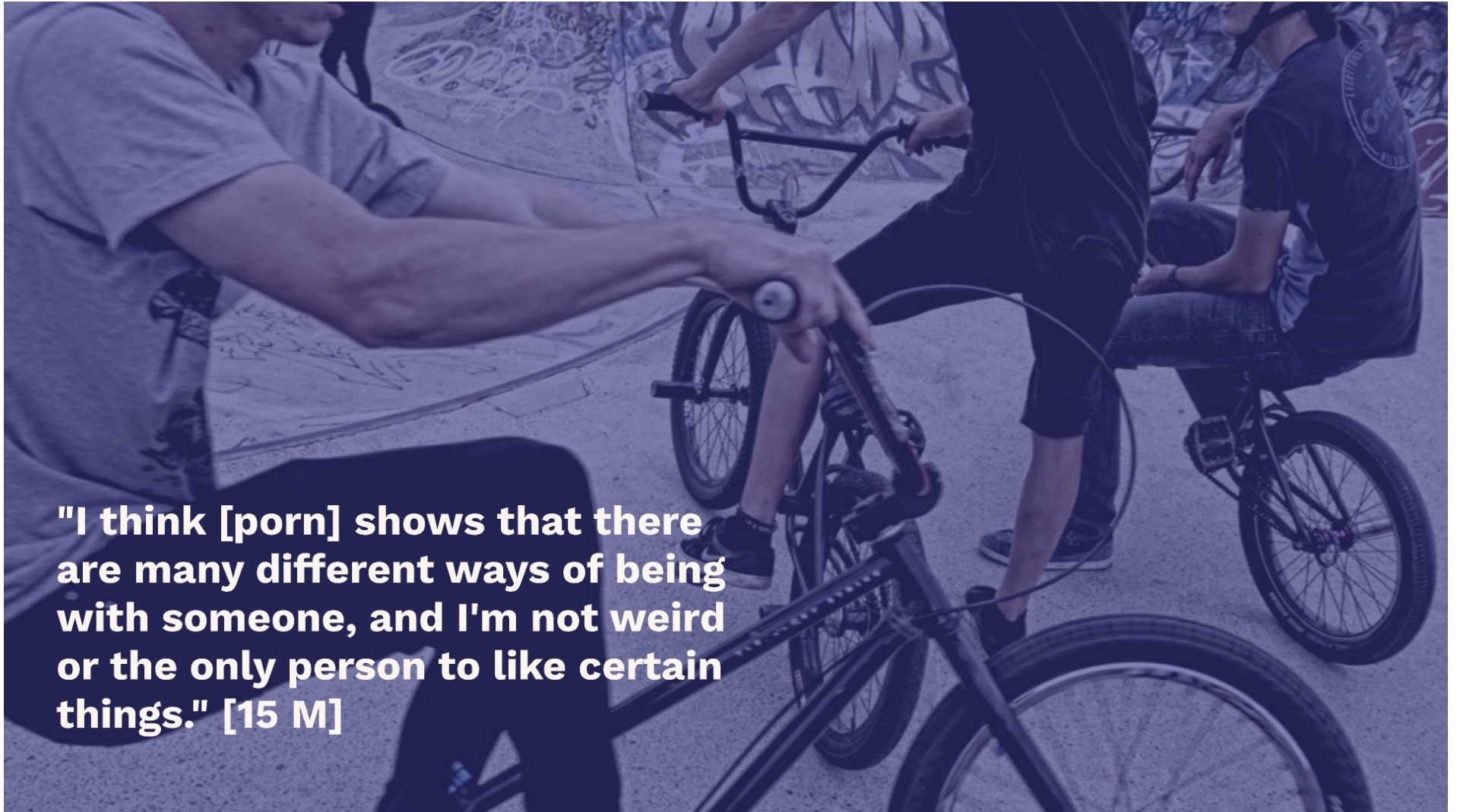
69%

have seen violence or aggression



72%

have seen non-consensual activity



"I think [porn] shows that there are many different ways of being with someone, and I'm not weird or the only person to like certain things." [15 M]



"By looking and learning it helps with the anxiety and a basic knowledge of what to do." [15 M]

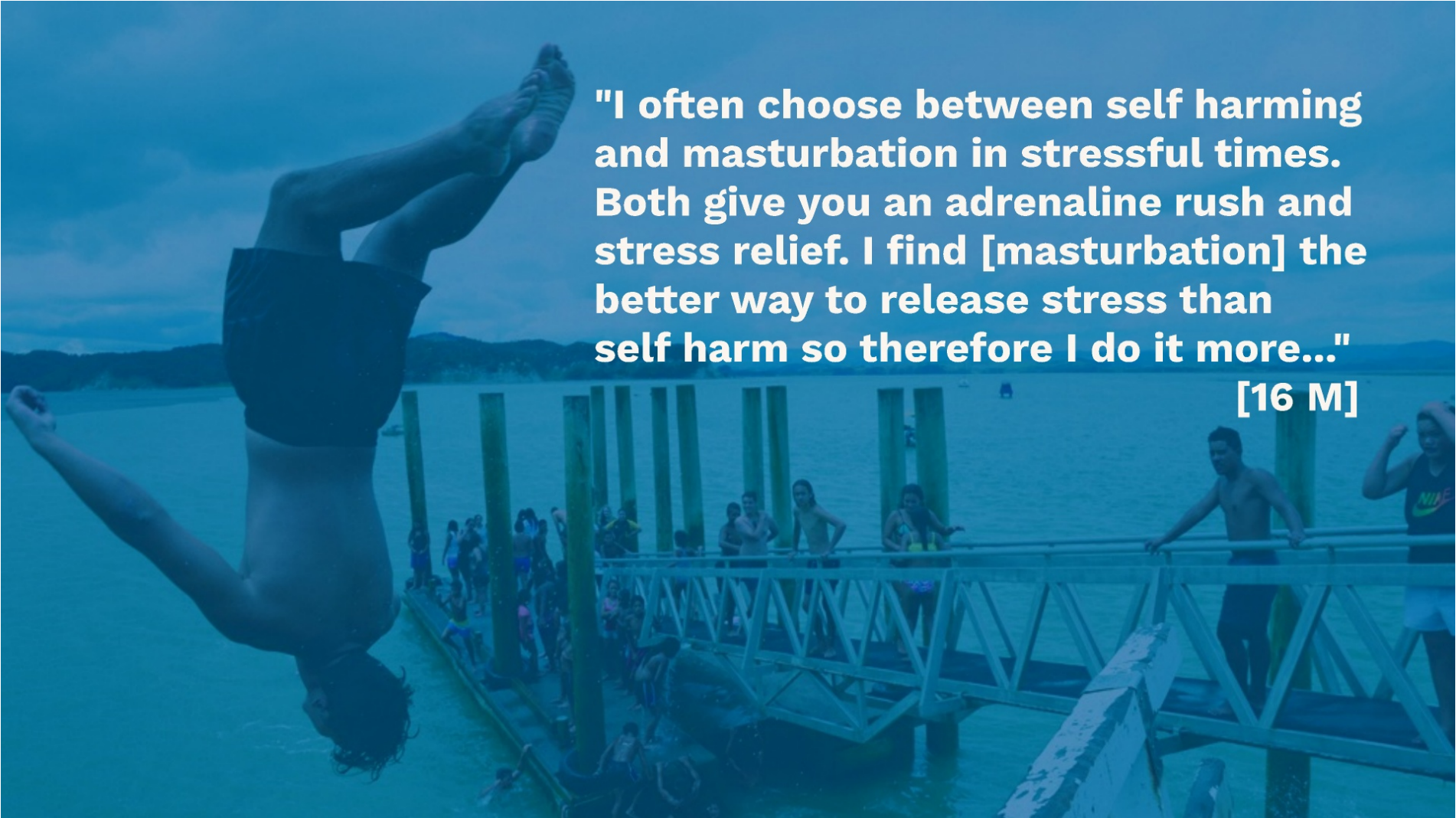
"Some porn is brutal, violent and degrading to women...it can lead you to believe that this is how you treat a woman." [15 M]



**"What if some people expect porn
from their partners and force them
to act that way?" [14 F]**



"For people my age, images and porn are kind of all we know about what sex looks like." [14 F]



"I often choose between self harming and masturbation in stressful times. Both give you an adrenaline rush and stress relief. I find [masturbation] the better way to release stress than self harm so therefore I do it more..."

[16 M]





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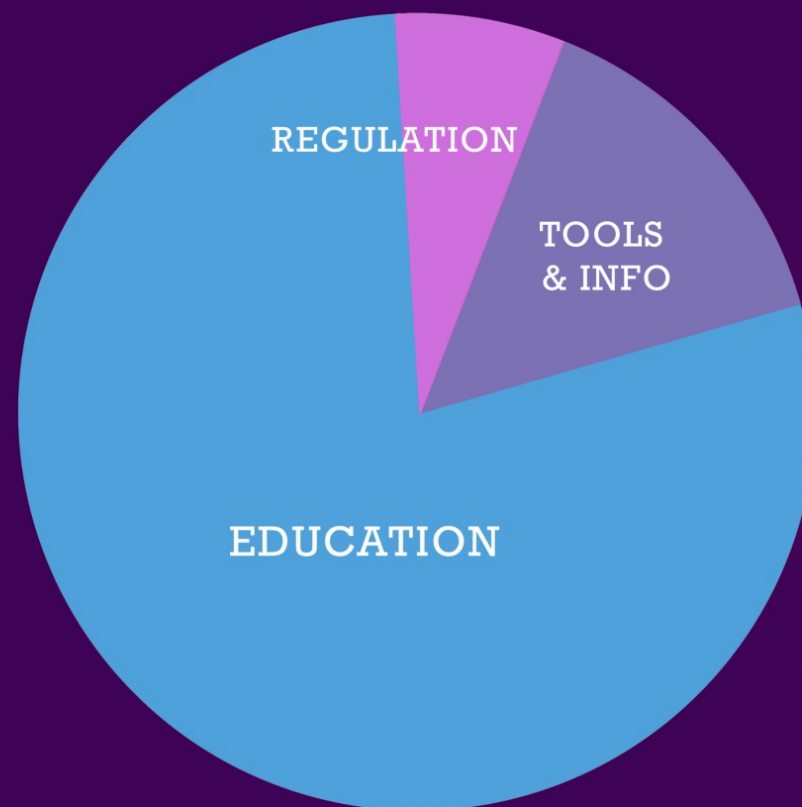
Solutions

Increasingly, the picture emerging is of an uncontrolled social experiment with young people as the primary subjects.

Is that what we want?

New solutions

Need to look at the whole system - more than just regulation.



Parents Guide

We're developing a range of educational resources for both parents and young people



The key...

By putting young people's actual experiences and concerns on the table, we will have the best chance of making changes that will really help them.

The findings will help inform...

- Sexuality & relationship education
- Sexual violence prevention
- Digital literacy education
- Updates to regulation
- Parent support initiatives

Using a range of controls can make sense

- Parental controls and systems
- Working with ISP's on filters and default settings
- Age classifications for adult websites

Age Verification - the new frontier?

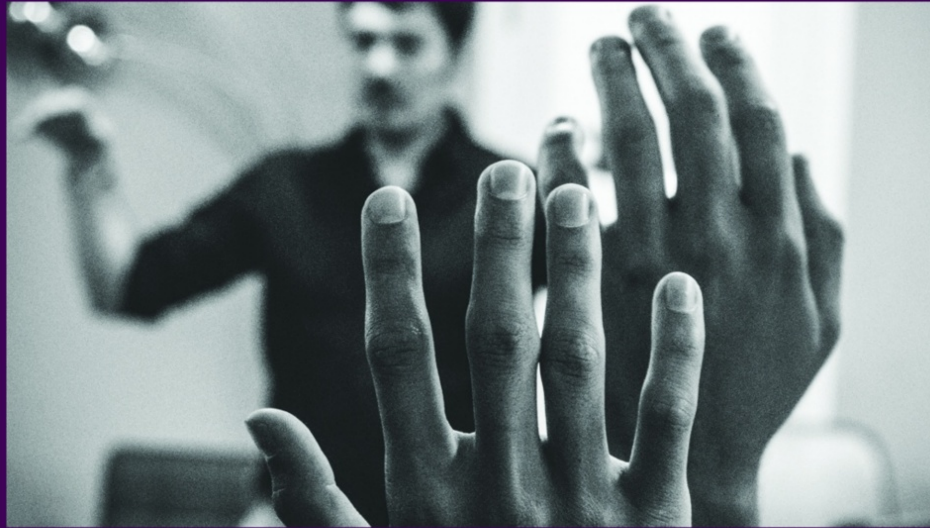
Age verification legislation requiring access to 'adult' sites in the UK to be age-verified 18+ is on its way.

A combined approach

- **Evidence:** What IS the NZ situation?
- **Regulation:** Classification Regulation, Harmful Digital Communications, overseas initiatives
- **Education:** Porn/digital media literacy
- **Support:** Tools and strategies



What can you do?



Get in touch and let's talk! This is going to take everyone.



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