

Protecting Teens from Digital Pornography

The Problem: The majority of U.S. teens are exposed to porn

12 average age of first exposure

73% teens report consuming porn before 18 y/o

58% of teens accidentally have seen porn. Of those, 63% report they have been exposed in the past week.

52% of teens in the study who report viewing porn, 52% reported "having seen...depict[ions] of what appears to be rape, choking, or someone in pain."



Source: Common Sense Media. "Teens and Pornography." 2022.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS FOR TEENS:

Teenage exposure to pornography is associated with increased sexual aggression risk, increased depression, and increased anxiety.

Sources: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2021.1887980>
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0202048>

These companies are coming for kids, even when kids are not looking for pornography.

Solution: Age Verification to enter a digital porn website

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Twenty-five states have laws requiring digital porn companies to age gate users.

Rather than having users *attest* to being 18 years old, these laws require the websites to verify (through third party provider or the website itself) that any potential user is 18 before entering.

After confirming a potential user as an adult, the website grants access. The AV industry is designed to check age and to delete identifying data. The law requires **any identifiable data be deleted under penalty of lawsuit or AG action.**

SCOTUSblog

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OPINION ANALYSIS

Court allows Texas' law on age-verification for pornography sites

By Amy Howe
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How does Age Verification work?

See AV provider Yoti. Variations of AV tech allow a website/user to select the method of choice:

- uploading a video to a third party which estimates age and notifies the porn company that the potential user is over or under 18 (*Instagram employs this with Yoti in certain use cases)
- anonymous verification: Louisiana, the first state to pass an AV law, authorizes its digital driver license app LA Wallet to provide an anon code (like dual factor authentication) to verify age for entrance
- uploading government identification
- direct input of personal information

*<https://tinyurl.com/4kfw6av6>

SCOTUS upheld Texas' law in June 2025

The court held that states may enact laws requiring porn websites to use effective age verification to protect children from harmful and inappropriate content.

“The power to verify age is part of the power to prevent children from accessing speech that is obscene to them...Requiring proof of age is an ordinary and appropriate means of enforcing an age-based limit on obscenity to minors...adults have no First Amendment right to avoid age verification.”

- Justice Thomas, majority opinion

Children are being harmed by digital porn. Reasonable, legal safeguards exist.



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