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## Net porn is intractable problem, report finds

*Experts say protecting youth from explicit materials that pop up at every turn will require multifaceted shields*

**BY BILL GRAVES**

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Type the words "amateur photos" into an Internet search engine, and you'll get thousands of Web sites focused on photography and thousands more peddling porn.

An anti-porn filter will screen some of the smut, but not all of it.

Pornography has become so pervasive on the Internet, occupying at least 100,000 U.S. Web sites in a \$1 billion-a-year industry, that no single strategy will protect children, says a study report to be released today by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences. The study was sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education, the Kellogg Foundation, Microsoft and IBM.

Internet porn is a small but growing portion of an adult entertainment industry that generates at least \$10 billion annually — more than professional football, basketball and baseball combined.



MARV BONNARVICZ/THE OREGONIAN

**Brian Quintan, 15, a freshman at Lincoln High School, uses a Multnomah County Public Library computer to search the Internet for information on Cesar Chavez. Brian says it is not uncommon to stumble across pornography while researching other topics.**

according to industry estimates.

A summary of the council's report says research is sparse on how children are being affected by widespread exposure to sexually explicit materials.

Pornography can do nothing but harm children with mental and emotional problems, says Marie Hoeven, executive director of Children First for Oregon, a nonprofit public policy group.

House, 14, a freshman at Lincoln High School in Portland. "It is not something kids should be exposed to . . . It is distorting minds from what they should be focusing on."

"It just comes up," says Brian Quintan, 15, also a Lincoln freshman. "I don't think a lot of people think it is a problem. It is a real big problem. It is corruptive."

The Internet poses special challenges for protecting youth because it's tough to supervise and control and offers no way to distinguish between children and adult online users, says the council report.

Anti-porn filters help, the council says, but sometimes they leak and sometimes they block useful, nonporn sites. That's why Multnomah County Public Library was among several libraries that challenged in March the constitutionality of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 in a federal appeals court in Philadelphia. The act requires libraries to block pornography and other material considered harmful to minors. If they don't, they forgo federal support.

Multnomah County provides filters but makes them optional because sometimes they block information children need, says Rivkah K. Sass, reference coordinator. The filter, called Foolproof Internet, for some reason blocks the library's Homework Center Web page, and

it also screens out the Outernet for Young Adults, a place where adolescents can find information on health, safe sex, homosexuality and other topics they sometimes have trouble talking to adults about.

The National Research Council advises combining aggressive enforcement of anti-obscenity laws, close supervision of children using the Internet, clear Internet-use policies and education to protect kids from online smut.

"Nothing beats parental supervision," says Amy Grant, a Beaverton attorney who home-schools her two children and serves on the Cedar Mill Public Library board. Nothing, that is, except maybe consumer abstinence, she says.

"Nobody will make a business out of pornography if people stop buying it."

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