



To whom it might concern,

NoFap LLC (“NoFap”) submits the following brief for examination by the Standing Committee on Health. This is regarding motion M-47, the examination of *“the public health effects of the ease of access and viewing of online violent and degrading sexually explicit material on children, women and men.”*

NoFap is a website operated in the United States that offers programs and services for those recovering from pornography addiction. We’re a popular brand operating in the porn-recovery field, with hundreds of thousands of unique visitors per month, along with hundreds of thousands of people who have made the active step to follow us on social media, register for accounts, or actively participate in our porn-recovery programs and discussions on the platform. Given that you are researching the effects of Internet pornography consumption, NoFap offers the following to assist in your research.

Through my work at NoFap, I have seen the following reported by heavy porn users:

- Decreased genital sensitivity and decreased pleasure during sexual intercourse.
- Inability to orgasm during sex.
- Inability to achieve or maintain sexual arousal without using or fantasizing about pornography.
- Escalation in the amount of porn watched and the type of porn watched, including categories of pornography that would have originally been unattractive to the user
- Decreased interest in partnered sex or interpersonal relationships.
- Decreased quality of life.

When heavy porn users remove one variable from their lives - using pornography - they often report one or more of the following changes:

- A reversal or reduction in sexual health complaints, including the return of normal genital function without using or fantasizing about pornography.
- Increased interest in pursuing or cultivating sexual relationships.
- Various life and interpersonal relationship improvements, depending on the individual.

We also would like to provide the Standing Committee on Health with external resources that if attached as exhibits, would surpass the 5-page limit of briefs submitted to the committee.

- For more information about porn addiction, we have published an overview of the subject at **[NoFap.com/porn-addiction](http://NoFap.com/porn-addiction)**.

- The verb for abstaining from behaviors (namely using porn and masturbating, for a period of time) to reverse porn addiction symptoms is called “rebooting” and we have a page on the subject at **NoFap.com/rebooting**.
- We have a free downloadable guide that provides an overview of our views on sexual health available at **NoFap.com/getting-started**.
- We collaborated with Alec Sproten, a behavioural and social scientist, to survey our users. He concluded that quitting porn (“rebooting” or “abstinence” from certain behaviors, namely porn and masturbation for a period of time) renders people **more willing to take risks, more altruistic, more extroverted, more conscientious, and less neurotic**. Results are viewable on his website <http://www.alec-sproten.eu/language/en/2016/01/18/how-abstinence-affects-preferences/>.

### **Stories from Canadian Users**

We recently posted an announcement on the website asking for Canadian users to share their personal stories, for the purpose of including some of them in this brief. While NoFap cannot verify their citizenship, all of the stories that we have attached come from users who have identified themselves as Canadian citizens. Most of them would like to remain anonymous. We’ve included just a small selection of the total number of stories submitted to us.

#### **Andrew from Ontario**

My name is Andrew. I am 31 years old. I live not far from here, just a little ways West down highway 417 to Nepean. I was an auto mechanic, I have fixed your vehicles when they were broken and kept you moving along through your life. Today, I am broken and in need of repair, but no one knows how to fix me.

I would stand before you today and speak for myself, but these words are deeply shameful. I was asked to say how pornography has affected my life... there are many poignant things I could say, but the truth is I do not know. I do not know how pervasively pornography has affected me. I find that to be most disturbing.

I, like countless others, access pornography on the internet. I have learned that the endless searches and hours of clicking through infinite open tabs can overstimulate the dopaminergic pathways in the brain. It just so happens that dopamine, the neurotransmitter of the dopaminergic pathways, is believed to play a role in schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder. I know this all personally, as I have been hospitalized for the above afflictions.

I cannot say that pornography causes mental illness, that would be farfetched. But, I also cannot say that pornography does not play some role, perhaps as a precursor or catalyst, to those who are predisposed to suffer mental health issues. It is a hard thing to study scientifically... and the funding hasn't been there to promote study in this area.

There are many things I do know. But, for all I know, I can say that I wish I had never seen pornography at all. At least in my case, technology has surpassed the capacity of my humanity. I am addicted, fighting with grim hope for a way out.

You, who have the power to effect change, please do something to help. When I was younger, I'd have liked to know how harmful this could be. Perhaps my life could have been different if we knew as a society what pornography could do to us.

### **Anonymous from Ontario**

Porn affected my life very negatively. I started it because I saw it as the ultimate stress reliever. I thought that the more I used, the more "chill" of a person I would be. I saw it as my salvation as I was struggling with anxiety, self-doubt, and depression as a 13 year old. But relying on porn made everything so much worse. My relatively minor mental health problems became amplified tenfold to the point that I lost almost all sense of who I was. Still, I couldn't see the connection between my porn use and my struggles. Porn encourages you to masturbate in a way that I can only call "marathon-like". The masturbation sessions were prolonged, almost never-ending. My mental health became awful. I was a bright kid with a bright future but none of it has materialized. Since beginning the long difficult process of quitting 1 year ago, I have made great strides. I am still a wreck and I still use porn to some degree but letting go of it has made things so much better for me. I can't wait to put even more of it behind me and hopefully salvage my life. I encourage the government to warn the public better about the mental health effects of pornography as I had no idea until the NoFap organization informed me.

### **Husband from Alberta**

I'm a 30 years old father and husband from Alberta. Started viewing pornography in my teens, which seemed harmless. Fifteen years later it has become a compulsion and way of coping. I suffer from erectile dysfunction, decreased interest in sex with my wife, and impairment to cognitive functions like focus and memory. All of these problems improve drastically when abstaining from pornography and masturbation.

### **Daniel from Saskatchewan**

My name is Daniel Nelson, from Caronport, Saskatchewan, Canada. I was addicted to pornography from the time I was 12 until I was 22. Throughout this decade I experienced increasing feelings of depression and loneliness. I watched porn consistently roughly 5 times per week, with the content always becoming increasingly hardcore. Porn skewed my perception of women and decreased my desire for a real relationship. Porn made me apathetic to everything in my life that was not related to sex. Porn allowed me to suppress strong emotional problems. Porn caused brain fog which decreased my academic performance and ruined my once-sharp memory. I have been free from porn for the past couple of years, during which I have experienced inner peace, energy, an increased interest in others, more confidence, more appropriate emotional responses, empathy, and overall a better life. I hope people come to see porn for the threat that it is to a happy life.

### **Anonymous from Ontario**

Living in Brampton, Ontario. I started watching porn at grade 7. It completely took over my life. I always have a hard time with people because of social anxiety. I'm not interested in finding a job and other hobbies. In highschool, I didn't go to school for a year because of fatigue and I hated going to school. It's really hard to focus on school work because the large amount of "brain fog" I have, I can't even concentrate on anything. Before, I didn't really have any interest in being in a relationship. At the moment, I'm trying to pull through this devastating issue and I have been going on numbers of streaks of not watching porn. I had a lot of lack of motivation in the past years.

### **Anonymous from Edmonton, Alberta**

Pornography has literally ruined my life. Every teacher or medical health professional that said "masturbation is healthy" sabotaged my better judgement. Increased dopamine levels shutting down your reward pathways should never be associated with artificial sexual stimuli, especially not the kind that depicts women as unnatural sexual objects.

I've been watching porn since I was 12 years old, masturbating since 14. Every relationship I've been in with every woman in my life has ended due to an embarrassing bout with erectile dysfunction, I can't get it up unless it's to porn. I've literally been lying on top of the women of my dreams naked and not been able to get an erection whatsoever. My mood swings violently due to withdrawal symptoms and I can trace a predictable pattern of bad behaviour with post-masturbation withdrawal symptoms. It's the first thing I want to do when I'm tired, when I'm stressed, or when I'm lonely. Even a day after masturbation I maintain a sense of unhealthy apathy at times when it is least appropriate, this has cost me several jobs, friendships, and financial losses. Growing up to porn/masturbation prevented me from maturing like a man should and learning to understand the emotional needs of women and even female friends. The long term consequences: I'm an emotional wreck and I consider suicide on a regular basis. Pornography and masturbation are the two worst addictions of our time, hands down. Instantly available, free, and it can be done in a matter of minutes. If the Canadian government is indeed planning to do something about this, I beg of you to shine a true light on the long term results. Young men are being exploited and destroyed by a billion dollar industry. Anyone on here will agree that by the time you realize the effect it's had on you the worst of the damage has already been done. I write all of this knowing the effect it's had on me but like the worthless addict I am I can't stop.

### **Anonymous from Toronto**

Toronto here. Been watching porn since 12. Totally twisted my point of view of how women should be treated. Destroyed my innocence when I was young. Became like a drug that I would love to abuse. I am 26.

## **Conclusions**

These stories represent only a tiny fraction of our Canadian usership - there are 1000s of Canadians who are either users or visitors of NoFap, every one of them possessing their own unique story. Some of our survey data, viewable at [NoFap.com/about/community/](http://NoFap.com/about/community/), suggests that 9% of our users are located in Canada.

As you can read in these stories, the unlimited consumption of Internet pornography can impact individuals in many, occasionally unexpected, ways. NoFap's website contains thousands of similar stories from men and women, teens, teachers, counselors, mental healthcare professionals, and concerned parents and partners. These people come from diverse backgrounds and beliefs. Yet almost unanimously they all share that pornography has negatively impacted them or those in their lives. Thankfully, most of these people who quit using pornography often report a reduction or reversal in symptoms associated with their heavy pornography consumption.

People have regained their ability to have sex. People have saved their relationships and marriages. People have started to really “live their lives to the fullest,” after simply removing one variable from their lives - using pornography. While there are already a number of scientific studies supporting the existence of Internet pornography addiction (many of which were likely provided to the Standing Committee in briefs and testimony from other individuals and organizations), NoFap continues to support further research into the subject.

NoFap is a secular, sex-positive, science-based, and nonpartisan organization. NoFap doesn't aim to restrict the creation or consumption of Internet pornography. However, with organizations and individuals having trouble with finding funding for studies, getting approval to conduct studies, or being unable to get their findings published in peer-reviewed journals, NoFap finds it important to promote and assist with further research initiatives. We hope that this M-47 study by the Standing Committee on Health will carve the path for further research into the effects of Internet pornography consumption.

Thank you for your time and we wish you all the best in your research.

Sincerely,  
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## **About NoFap**

NoFap® is an organization located in the United States that offers programs and services for those recovering from pornography addiction. For more information about NoFap, you can visit our website at [NoFap.com](http://NoFap.com).