**Children and Pornography**

Call for all parents, educators, care takers, psychologists and therapists to give our children a holding and a good mirror in their sexual development

**Body Communication**

Our concepts about sexuality have changed drastically in the last century. Back then it was concentrated on reproduction, nowadays it is mostly about lust. But what is still the same: our longing to be seen, felt, heard, valued and connected as a sexual being. Not to forget the most important thing here, namely that sexuality is the most intimate body communication. We want to exchange body feelings: touch another body, whisper words in the ears of our loved one, that gives a reaction in the body on both sides. And we answer with another touch, other words. That is REAL contact: authentic with feelings, erotic expression, an exchange of energy that brings fulfilment.

When we were young, this was the most normal thing to do. Children reach out from inner impulses towards things or experiences that are experienced as lustful. A child expects a reaction that is connected with the heart. We cannot separate heart from lust. Lust is spreading over the whole body and the heart wants to connect, to exchange feelings, to communicate with another body. Very basic stuff.

When we grow up, we learn that many adults feel uncomfortable with body contact and exchange of lustful feelings. Especially our genitals are treated as if they are not existing or sometimes they get an overwhelming attention. That’s when we start to separate them from the heart. By this, we loose our innocence, our naturalness, our grace and dignity.

**The internet**

Until 1990, it was possible to have a certain control over pictures of adult sex, to keep them away from children. So children would not feel confused or overwhelmed. Since the introduction of the internet, many things have changed. Beside the many goods things we got from the internet, it also opened a whole market for sexual entertainment that was not meant for children, but is yet easy accessible for them. Now more than half of all teenagers have seen pictures of commercial sex without having made their own experiences first. Often they send porn films to even younger children who have no clou at all about what they see, but they try to release the stress by playing it out with other children (snow ball effect).

 We have no control about this anymore, even when we put a lock on our computer at home. And we have no idea what consequences that will have in their later life, for the brain, for the development of the personality and self-worth and the ability to relate. And we are not only talking here about “normal” porn. Children of young age can see sex with violence and animals, even with children.

Can you imagine what is happening in a child by seeing this kind of movies?

**The effect of porn for children**

When a child sees porn pictures before it could have made its own sexual experiences, it sees this pictures as reality. As a model of how to do it. In place of a step by step experience in their own speed, to find out how it feels, what kind of preferences it has, it gets overwhelmed by these pictures without any chance of finding meaning, to compare it with something else, without having developed an own sexual identity. That gives stress in the body and confusion and it leaves the body and the psyche in a split: lower and higher body parts, dirty and nice, shadow and light, shame and lust….

Especially in the vulnerable time of personal development, puberty, teenagers would need adults to go to and talk about their confusion. But we adults feel mostly uncomfortable with talking about sex. We did not have a proper sexual education ourselves. In fact, we have a maximum of outer freedom in these times, but inside we feel lost when it is about sexuality and education.

We don’t know a lot about the psycho-sexual development and we have repressed our own negative experiences in childhood.

We either despise or trivialize porn. But what children need here is a person who is **present**, stable, trusting and transparent, curious and able to talk from own experience. To give a frame, boundaries - not control or prohibition. So teenagers can digest what they have seen, realise that porn is not reality but business, to give it a meaning and a place in their experience.

**Work to do!**

Our teenagers need support in the jungle of sexuality, a good frame, good mirroring. That we talk about feelings in the heart and in the genitals, talk about sexual feelings and intimate relationships. That we give them permission to experiment, but also show them the possible consequences of sexual activities. That we teach them to respect boundaries and remind them to feel what they are doing.

But first, we as educators and caretakers, have to learn to overcome our own guilt and shame about our body and sexuality. And to learn how we can connect to our children’s sexual development in a way that they feel understood and safe. Until now, we leave this education to much to the internet.

P.S This article is inspired by the book: “Vom Himmel auf Erden” by C.J Ahlers

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[www.rodeparel.nl](http://www.rodeparel.nl)

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