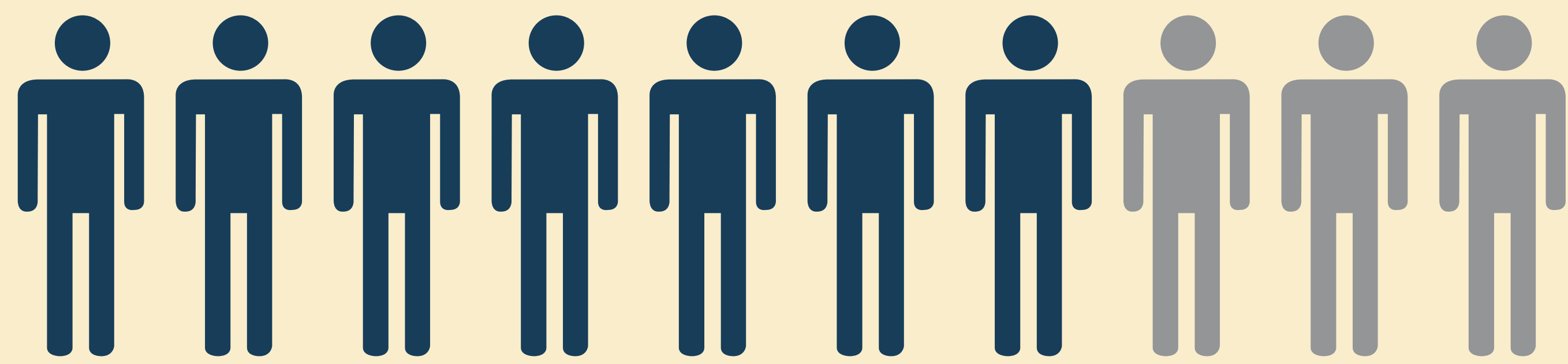


The Dangerous Effects of Pornography

Pornography use is at crisis levels



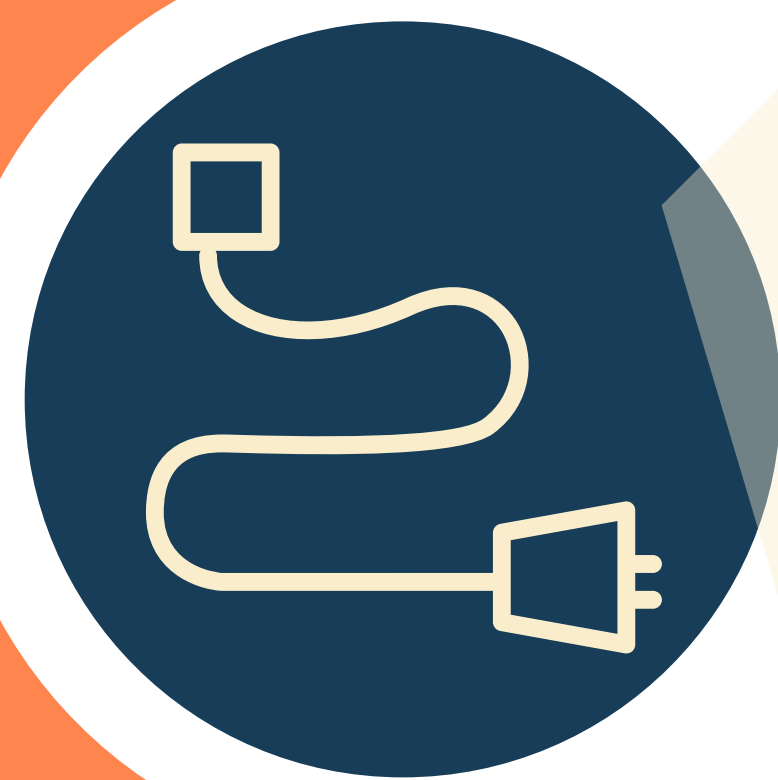
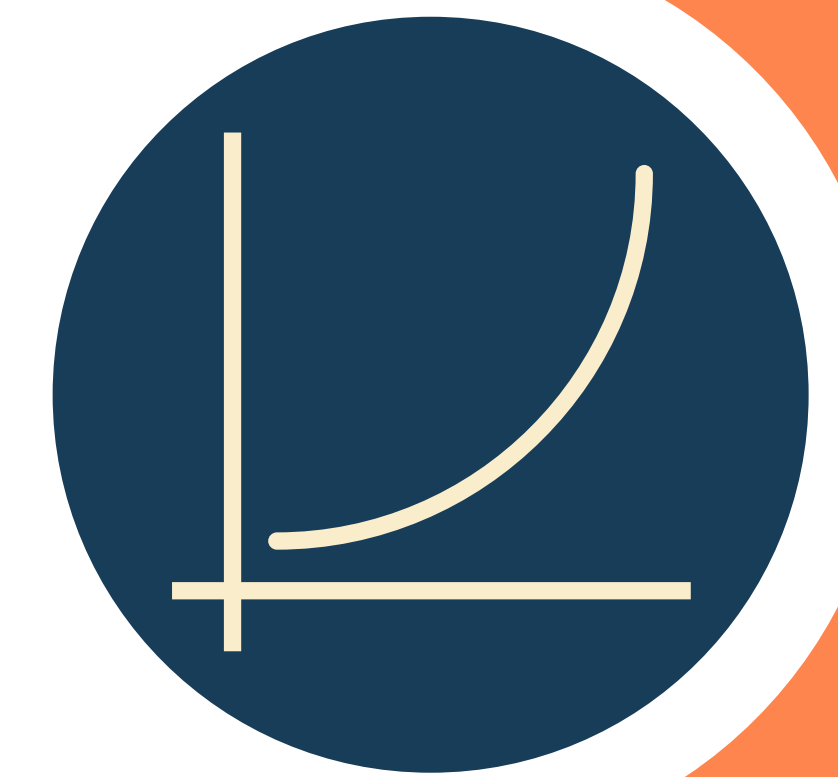
70% of men

ages 18-24 and 73% of women ages 18-35 have used pornography in the last month.



Pornography is extremely accessible, anonymous, affordable, and addictive.

Porn escalates. Users find themselves consuming more porn more often and in more extreme forms.



Pornography addiction rewires the brain as dramatically as cocaine abuse.

God's Message of Hope

God loves us and desires to protect both our mind and our body. Because the Holy Spirit lives in us, He helps us flee from temptation. "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body." - 1 Corinthians 6:18, ESV

What to do When temptation happens, move away from it. Leave the room. Turn off the phone or computer. Look for the company of others. Pray for strength.

12% of the websites on the internet are pornographic (24,644,172 sites).



Consuming pornography has been linked to poorer mental health.



Pornography use is linked to increased loneliness, lower self-esteem, and poorer body image.

God's Message of Hope

You are not alone, nor are your sins unforgivable.

Every person struggles with sexual sins.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of

God." - Romans 3:23, ESV

Jesus died for your sins, too.

What to do

Be transparent. Share your struggle with those who care for you. Talk to your pastor and hear the words of forgiveness. Let others know which situations create temptation so they can help you avoid them.

35%

of all internet
downloads are
pornographic.



Pornography spreads harmful misinformation about sex to young people; the average age of first exposure to pornography for boys and girls is ten or eleven years old.

Viewing pornography can lead to misuse of one's own body. Pornography use also contributes to infidelity and divorce. (Not to mention, it's illegal for minors.)



Increased use of pornography can be linked to men's enjoyment of degrading, uncommon, or aggressive sexual behaviors.

God's Message of Hope

God's forgiveness heals. His Word and Sacraments renew us and bring us life and hope: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." - Romans 12:2, ESV

What to do

Focus on long-term goals. Pornography might provide immediate, temporary gratification, but it harms long-term, lasting relationships. Pornography impedes the growth of healthy relationships between men and women, transforming sex into a desire to serve self rather than an opportunity to serve another.

**Pornography hurts marriage and family.
Marital infidelity increases by 300% in
those who use pornography.**



Pornography hurts relationships. Porn use decreases interest in real relationships, and it causes the user to want to view more porn.

Pornography can produce feelings of shame and guilt that prevent the viewer from pursuing healthy relationships.



Not only does pornography increase the likelihood of divorce, but it also inhibits opportunities to serve one's spouse and the growth of families. Porn has been linked to declines in rates of sexual activity in marriage and is a contributor to decreasing birthrates the world over.

God's Message of Hope

Because we have been forgiven, the Holy Spirit softens our hearts so that we might forgive the sins of others. Though pornography may have harmed your relationship with a loved one, confession begins the healing process.

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." - James 5:16,

ESV

What to do

Repent and be forgiven. When pornography use harms a relationship, confess the sin and seek forgiveness. Consider speaking to your pastor individually and as a couple for guidance and support as the relationship heals.

Pornography is the third most common form of sex trafficking, and 63% of underage sex trafficking victims have been advertised or sold online.



Pornography desensitizes. Use of pornography numbs the pleasure response God designed for sexual intimacy and the strengthening of oneness within marriage.

Pornography dehumanizes. The person in pornography is no longer viewed as a person – he or she is viewed as just an image, something meant for pleasure, not someone with inherent value.



God's Message of Hope

God is not absent from the world; He is at work to uphold life. He does this through His Word and Sacraments, but He also works through you: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:6-7, ESV

What to do

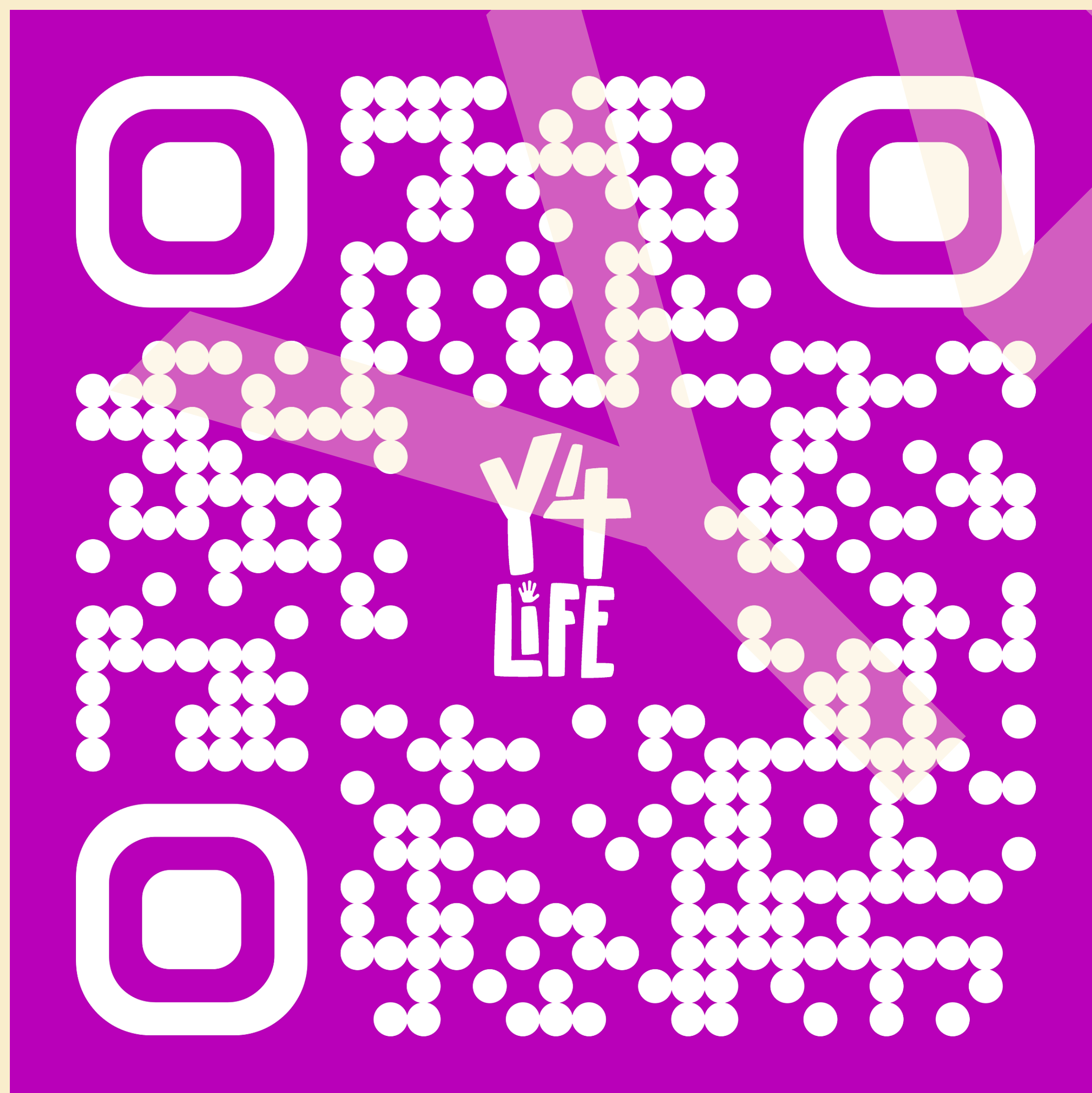
Pray that God might work through government and individuals to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Educate others about the harmfulness of pornography use. Uphold the truth that every person is a beloved child of God. Every life is created and redeemed; every life is valuable and worth protecting.

Pornography is never a life-affirming option. It is addictive, easily hidden, and harmful to relationships. Sometimes, it even functions as a self-medicating response to pain or trauma. For these reasons, it can be difficult to help someone struggling with a porn addiction. Telling him or her to "just stop" is often ineffective. Counseling or therapy may be necessary to treat and heal the underlying emotional cause of pornography use.

God desires to heal, forgive, and give the gift of life. If you are struggling with a pornography addiction, there is hope. Contact your Lutheran pastor or call the 24-hour Word of Hope hotline at 1-888-21-STORY (1.888.217.8679).

Sources

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**Learn more about using
your Gospel-motivated
voice 4 Life.**