

Galway City Tribune

Gaillimh
2020
Galway

LIGHT RAIL PLAN BUILDS UP A HEAD OF STEAM

10 NEWS

PNEUMONIA CAN PROVE DEADLY FOR SOME PEOPLE

57 LIFESTYLE

LEINSTER UP FOR REVENGE AGAINST CONNACHT

104 SPORT

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2018 ■ €2.40 ■ CONNACHTTRIBUNE.IE

CHILDREN AS YOUNG AS TEN EXPOSED TO PORN

■ Call for action after shocking findings from Galway research

BY DENISE McNAMARA

PORNOGRAPHY was first seen by two-thirds of the youngest NUIG students before they entered their teens.

That startling finding is a reason why primary school sex edu-

cation must include pornography, believes Kate Dawson, an education facilitator with the West Ireland Sex Education Resource (WISER) team in AIDS West.

She was part of a team in the School of Psychology which conducted an anonymous online

study completed by 2,808 NUIG students. It found that over 53% of boys first saw porn between the ages of 10 and 13 compared to just over 23% of girls of the same age.

▶ See page 3

FRIDAY: Settled with good sunny spells but a cool feel to the day with max. temps. of just 12°/14°C. Light north-easterly breezes. A cold night to follow (0° to 4°C) with grass frosts likely.



SATURDAY: A chilly start to the day but bright early on. Clouding up later with the risk of the odd spot of drizzle but amounts will be very small. 12°/15°C. Not as frosty overnight due to cloud cover.



SUNDAY: Starting on the dull side with the risk of light drizzle in places. Brightening up later with sunny spells. 12°/14°. Grass frosts overnight. **OUTLOOK:** Generally dryish to mid-week: a risk of light rain at times.



9 770791 181042

Workshop on porn being rolled out in Galway's schools

Continued from page 1

When the results were broken down, the researchers found the numbers rose to 65% for students in the 18-24 age bracket.

And the numbers watching porn at a younger age are growing. A survey in 2013 of 2,000 NUI Galway students found that half of them had watched porn by the time they turned 13 years old - which had jumped by 3% five years later.

The potential implications of viewing pornography at a young age include an increased risk of unprotected sex, increased likelihood of early sexual debut and a risk of engaging in sexual coercion.

So, the need for young people to be informed about pornography has never been greater, stressed Ms Dawson.

The WISER team has developed a pornography workshop to help young people in thinking critically about how pornography relates to real-world experiences. It has been rolled out in Galway secondary school on a pilot basis.

"We cover six core topics, with consent being one of the main ones. In porn you don't really see verbal communication of consent so if you're sexually inexperienced you're not being taught about consent or that consent, negotiation, communication is fundamental to a sexual experience," she explains.

"Another is the difference between fantasy and reality - sex in porn is not what sex in real life is like. Young people can be really disappointed when they have sex for the first time and that's really sad. We talk about how it takes eight hours of filming to create 20 minutes of porn so they're only getting the best bits, it's so polished."

The workshop covers body image comparisons and dissatisfaction. Facilitators point out that only about 5% of porn actors are overweight whereas in Ireland about 51% of women and 66% of men are overweight. The average dress size for professional female porn actors is size 6-8 - that's three to four dress sizes smaller than the average Irish woman.

They also discuss the fact that in Ireland the average penis size for an adult man is 5.1 inches when erect. In porn, the average size is over 7 inches for professional male actors who are often hired because of their nether regions.

Workshops discuss sexual and gender-based violence and there is a focus on the emotional aspect of a healthy sexual encounter or relationship.



Kate Dawson, education facilitator at the Aids West WISER (West Ireland Sex Education Resource) team.

The NUI Galway survey found that male students were four times more likely to watch porn a few times a week than females. Over 44% of male students watched porn a few times a week, nearly a quarter watched it daily. Over a third of women watched porn a few times a year.

Over a third (36%) of male students stated that porn had influenced the way they interact with their partner about sex compared to about a quarter of women surveyed.

Just over 60% of students use porn for masturbation regularly.

"Porn was designed for people to masturbate and not as an educational tool but that's because it's so accessible and sex education in school is not what it should be," remarks Ms Dawson, who is a doctoral researcher in the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at NUI Galway.

"It's really a difficult topic because we haven't grown up talking about sex but we have a real opportunity in Ireland to make a really big change. We need to bring in evidence-based sexual education and discuss all things like consent, pleasure, masturbation and porn."

"We really need to stop saying porn is bad as it increases the shame and embarrassment and if a young person has an issue they're not likely to come forward and talk about it. And we know people are still going to see it."

■ For more information check out the porn information section on www.bewiser.ie.