

Making a Difference

The quarterly newsletter of the Maryland Coalition Against Pornography, Inc.



www.mcap1.com/ or en español: www.mcap1.com/español_

MCAP Hotline: 301-439-8475

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MCAP is getting the word out!

National Night Out – a fun, family-friendly evening event with activities for kids and many educational display tables - is an annual celebration offer by police departments across the nation on the first Tuesday of August each year. MCAP has participated for many years in Bowie, MD at Allen Pond. We also had a display table again this year at the Casey Community Center in Gaithersburg, so we did educational outreach in both Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. We could expand even farther out if we could get more volunteers and start planning to do so earlier. If you would like to help in 2024, please email us at mcapinc@mcap1.com.

Bowie



Gaithersburg



Baltimore



Kemp Mill, Silver Spring



Thank you to our donors who helped fund our sign! We could use funds to create more of the same, and also pay for the handouts on the display tables. **If you would like to make a donation, you can do that via Paypal by clicking [here](#).** or mailing a check to MCAP, P.O. Box 2868, Silver Spring, MD 20915-2868.

https://www.paypal.com/donate?token=ykTF6tKHI2PuFGMOg-PPQa8GrYZm7UmJDj8gEuI0ZICA5pAFEyie9OCLF2Q_2Hwj5GuBkpYkiwMdyN2

BACK-TO-SCHOOL PREP

As families are gathering supplies and getting ready for the new school year, it is a good idea to consider preparing students for the dangers of exposure to sexually explicit material at too young an age, and the grooming behaviors of predators. Kristin Jenson, the author of two of our favorite books for families to equip their children, GOOD PICTURES, BAD PICTURES, also offers current advice in her *Defend Young Minds* blog. MCAP recommends a recently-featured article; [3 Back to School Secrets for Porn-Immune Kids](#) is an excellent summation. She relates these accounts she has heard from parents:

One mom, Lydia, told about how her daughters dealt with pornography exposure at school in the 3rd and 4th grades! Another parent spoke about how her 5th grade son saw pornography on the school librarian's computer. Yet another shared about porn spam popping up on her daughter's elementary school project in Google docs.

Related: [Parent Alert! Porn Spam on Your Kid's Google Drive?! 3 Things You Need to Know Now](#)

And it is happening to even younger kids. Another mom sent her story to Kristen Jenson about an innocent kindergartner who got on a school bus to ride home. A third-grader approached her, held up a smartphone and said, "Look at this!" What this shocked five year-old girl saw was hardcore pornography! This incident happened in a middle-class neighborhood in Boise, Idaho, but it's going on everywhere.

How does this little girl react? Will she tell her parents? Will she be curious and look for more? Much of that depends on what she's been taught and how well she's been prepared. As your kids go back to school, make sure they are packing an [internal](#) filter!

Related: [Why Kids Need an Internal Filter](#)

In brief, the 3 points Jenson delves further into, within the article are:

#1: Define pornography—don't assume kids know what it is

Related: [How to Talk to Kids about Porn: Research Reveals 5 Obstacles to Overcome](#)

#2: Ask your kids to tell you if they ever see it – that same day!

For more ideas on getting your kids to tell you when they've been exposed to porn, check out [3 Reasons Kids Keep \(Dangerous\) Secrets](#).

Note: Teach your kids to STOP and ask you first before they google a new term! Remind them often that they can tell you or ask you anything! Let your kids know that if they hear a term or word they don't know, you'll be happy to tell them what it means. So many kids encounter porn because they google a term they hear at school. Obviously, it's a lot safer if you look it up online than if they do!

#3: After school, ask your kids what they've seen on the internet - that day!

Young kids are learning to navigate, and often don't know how to respond to, the many new situations they face as they go back to school. Especially ones in their *online* neighborhood that are embarrassing and troubling (and potentially dangerous). Coach them!

A good set of warnings from Jenson is also here: [Defend Young Minds Body Safety Tips](#) (Our MCAP home page <http://mcap1.com/> has a link to this pdf document, too.)

TACKLE THE TECH – consider using Internet Filters such as <https://canopy.us/> - related article: “Unexpected Nudity and Unsuspecting Kids: Protecting Your Children Online”

Canopy is utilizing AI-based filtering technology that not only shields out explicit content in real-time, but also tackles those sexualized, *partially nude* images that seem to pop up everywhere

Or <https://learn.covenanteyes.com/ally-parent/> . Covenant Eyes is known for their accountability software. The link above brings you to their article: “Help! My Kid is Looking at Pornography!”

For cell phone monitoring, there are parental control apps, such as <https://www.bark.us/>

To filter streaming content, e.g. movies and tv, consider VidAngel: <https://www.vidangel.com/> Why? For argument’s sake, Isn’t the sexualized content a form of “art”? See this succinct, entertaining video: <https://www.facebook.com/VidAngel/videos/1377809309254510/>

On Facebook, families are sharing and giving advice in a group, “Parenting in a Tech World” that now has over 376000 members! See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/119842088645840>. But be prepared to be amazed at the trouble kids are getting into!

More resources can be found on MCAP’s web page: <http://mcap1.com/StartTheConversation>

MCAP sees merit in state requirements of age verification to access porn sites

The movement is growing! More states are introducing bills to require potential consumers to verify they are at least 18 years old through advanced verification methods to enter pornographic websites, e.g., using their state government i.d. cards. The intent is to protect children from being exposed to adult content. In the Virginia law, it applies to websites where at least 33.3% of its content can be considered “material harmful to minors.” [WTOP article [here](#).] If you believe Maryland ought to do the same and would like to get involved, please contact us at mcapinc@mcap1.com.

Questionable, Sexually Explicit Books in Schools

MCAP is formulating a letter about our concerns to the Montgomery County School Board regarding overly-sexualized books that are in school libraries and, to varying degrees, the curriculum at all age levels. Since the change in policy implemented in March, parents can no longer opt-out their children, which led to controversy and protests. See the link about the court case related to religious freedom rights found in the Action Box below, and [petition](#). Book titles MCAP is considering questioning are below. You may want to see if they in your local school libraries. They are in the MOCO school online library catalog system and available from the Montgomery County **Public** Library in print and/or e-books or audiobooks via Hoopla or Overdrive. The links embedded in the titles lead to the records in the online catalog, which include summaries. You may want to evaluate them yourselves. Feedback is welcome.

[Forever For a Year](#) by B.T. Gottfred

[Gender Queer: a Memoir](#) by Maia Kobabe (illustrated, graphic novel type format)

[Jack of Hearts \(and Other Parts\)](#) by L.C. Rosen

[Lawn Boy](#) by Jonathan Evison

ACTION BOX

- ❖ MCAP is in great need of board members and administrative help, e.g. newsletter editing, legislative, graphic design, fundraising and social media outreach! **Please** email mcapinc@mcap1.com if you wish to serve. Monthly Zoom meetings are easy to attend, usually on a Wed. evening.
- ❖ Could your child's school use a speaker to talk about Internet dangers? Contact Officer [Joe Dugan](mailto:joseph.dugan@maryland.gov) at joseph.dugan@maryland.gov. He has been a member of the state Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, and is well-experienced in doing this, with rave reviews.
- ❖ Concerned enough to protest sexualized materials that have been found in local county public school libraries and curricula? Email us your feedback at mcapinc@mcap1.com. See [petition](#). A federal court case is pending against Montgomery County - News article [here](#).
- ❖ Can you translate English into Spanish? We need help with that, to offer educational handouts en Español. Please email us!