

Fighting Artificial Intelligence with Parental Intelligence: Protecting Your Kids from Deepfakes and Other AI-Generated Pornography

By [Culture Reframed](#) May 25, 2023



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This article was created in partnership with Canopy.

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) technology has brought forth countless innovations and possibilities from medical research to self-driving cars. However, like any tool, AI can be misused, and its darker side poses significant risks to children. One such threat is the emergence of AI-generated pornography.

In this blog post, we will briefly explore the dangers of two types of AI-generated pornography — deepfakes and pornography created by AI image generators — and shed light on the critical

need for effective parental control solutions to safeguard children.

Deepfakes: Distorting Reality

Deepfakes are computer-generated images and other media that manipulate or replace an individual's face and voice within existing video or audio content. (The term combines "deep learning," which refers to computers trying to mimic the human brain, with "fake"). By utilizing AI algorithms, deepfakes can seamlessly superimpose someone's likeness onto another person's body, creating highly convincing but fabricated videos. There are many free and fee-paying online programs that allow the average person to upload existing photos and videos and create deepfakes that appear to show an actual person engaged in an activity that they did not do.

The dangers associated with deepfake images are alarming, especially since the vast majority of deepfakes are pornographic. There is a large and growing market for 'celebrity deepfakes.' But predators can exploit this technology to target anyone, including children, by using publicly available images or videos, or their own phone camera, to create explicit videos that falsely depict individuals engaging in sexual acts that never occurred. Once circulated on the internet, these malicious deepfakes can cause irreparable harm to a person's reputation, privacy, and mental well-being.

AI Image Generators: Fueling the Spread

AI image generators employ machine learning algorithms — complex computer programs — to generate highly realistic images that appear to be the photos or videos of actual people. These programs 'crawl' the web, looking for existing images to 'learn' how to create seemingly real photos and videos. These AI-generated images blur the line between reality and fiction, making it increasingly challenging to differentiate between genuine and fabricated content.

The proliferation of both types of AI-generated pornographic images raises grave concerns. Children may be exposed to explicit and inappropriate content without their knowledge, consent, or the awareness of their guardians. Such exposure

can lead to psychological distress, as Culture Reframed's research reports have demonstrated, as well as skewed perceptions of intimacy and the normalizing of harmful sexual behaviors.

Young people who view pornographic images, as the American Academy of Pediatricians noted in 2016, are more likely to misunderstand or ignore consent and subscribe to "rape myths," and to engage in violent sexual behaviors towards their partners. The rapid spread of both AI technology and AI-created pornographic images makes it even more likely that children will be exposed to inappropriate content. Protecting minors from the far-reaching effects of AI-generated pornography becomes an urgent priority.

AI-Generated CSAM: A Growing Threat

In addition to the psychological and emotional impact to children from the exposure to porn, another grave concern surrounding AI-generated pornography is the potential incorporation of children's own images into deepfakes and AI-generated explicit content. This alarming phenomenon is analogous to the distribution of 'child pornography,' more properly called child sexual abuse material (CSAM). These images raise serious legal and ethical concerns. The misuse of children's images in AI-generated pornography not only violates their privacy but also exposes children to severe harm. Think this is an obscure threat? Even a few years ago, 1 in 5 police investigations of suspected CSAM found deepfake child pornography.

Isn't this illegal, you may wonder? In many countries, no. In the US, for example, a 2002 Supreme Court decision struck down a law criminalizing simulated child pornography. Legislation to criminalize deepfake pornography was recently introduced in the US Congress. We do not know if it will pass. So, at present, no federal law in the US bans the creation, spread, and display of fake child pornography.

Psychological and Emotional Impact

The impact of AI-generated pornography extends far beyond the realm of privacy and reputation damage. Children who

accidentally or intentionally come across explicit content created by AI (and who are incorporated into such content) face severe psychological consequences. Study after study has shown that exposure to pornography to young people can lead to various detrimental effects, including increased aggression, desensitization to violence, objectification of others, depression, anxiety, sexist views of gender roles, and decreased self-esteem. Online pornography is an international threat to children's health and well-being. The combination of explicit content and AI-generated realism amplifies these risks, making it crucial for parents and guardians to shield their children from the harms of AI-generated pornography.

Canopy: Fighting Bad AI With Good AI

As the risks of AI continue to escalate, it has become imperative to equip parents with effective tools to safeguard their children. Culture Reframed has partnered with Canopy parental control app, which utilizes the power of AI filtering technology to combat children's exposure to pornography — including deepfakes and explicit content created by AI image generators. By detecting and blocking nudity and partial nudity in images and videos, as well as incorporating customizable settings, screen time management, and location alerts, Canopy helps ensure that children have a safe internet experience. Canopy not only protects children from accessing AI-generated pornography, but also prevents them from contributing to its creation, even inadvertently. The app's Sexting Prevention feature empowers parents to prevent their children from sending their own explicit images by detecting such content before it is shared. By proactively addressing the issue of sexting, Canopy helps prevent the incorporation of children's likeness into AI-generated explicit content, mitigating the risk of exploitation and harm. Sign up for Canopy with code CULTURE20 to save 20% off any package.

No digital tool, however, can substitute for honest and open dialogues with children about the dangers of the internet, and of AI in particular. Culture Reframed's Parents Program contains a wealth of content and resources to help equip kids with the

knowledge they need in our rapidly changing technological world. Taking advantage of both informed discussion and the advanced technology of Canopy can pave the way for a safer online experience, empowering parents, and protecting the well-being of children in the digital age.