



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on January 9, 2022

## How Hollywood Used the “Pandemic” to Groom America’s Kids

The COVID-19 outbreak had a [significant impact](#) on children, particularly their mental health and their attitudes about sex.

The U.S. Surgeon General recently put out a public health advisory declaring youth mental health a “significant public challenge” that requires urgent attention.

“Since the pandemic began, symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns have increased among young people,” the [Surgeon General Report](#) reads.

Thorn released a [research report](#) that found that nearly 1 in 7 children ages 9-12 shared their own nude photos in 2021, almost triple the number from just one year before.



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The report also found that the number of children ages 9-12 who admitted to seeing nonconsensually shared nudes of others rose dramatically. Moreover, these children were more likely to believe sharing nudes is normal behavior for children their age.

The viral outbreak resulted in children being exposed to unprecedented levels of screen time as children were required to take classes virtually and parents had to simultaneously work while having their children at home.

And while children have been exposed to screens for longer periods of time, the content to which they have been exposed on those screens has been of a highly sexualizing nature.

In 2020, Netflix [made headlines](#) when it released a film titled *Cuties*, which depicts 11-year-old girls in sexually charged poses and situations, including a scene in which the main character takes a picture of her genital area and posts it on social media.

Around the same time, streaming platform Hulu, which is owned by Disney, added a program called *A Teacher*, in which sexual relations between teachers and schoolchildren are normalized. Streaming at the same time was *Pen15*, which features a scene of an underage character masturbating in front of a mirror.

On HBO, there’s *Euphoria*, which cast former Disney Channel star Zendaya in a show that depicts sex acts between a teenager and an adult.

One of the most popular shows on Netflix is the animated series *Big Mouth*, which is rife with depictions of pubescent children engaging in sexual behavior. In one scene, a 12-year-old boy offers to perform oral sex on his own father.

At the *Washington Examiner*, Tim Winter posits that depictions of suicide in popular media for young people may also influence alarming suicide rates:



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As if that weren't enough, Netflix for years glamorized the suicide of a teenager in 13 Reasons Why, which featured the most graphic suicide scene ever produced by Hollywood. Even the National Institutes of Health linked 13 Reasons Why to a 30% increase in actual suicides among children ages 10-17. Only after years of public outcry, including ours, did Netflix relent and remove that scene. But this program's mere existence should have raised alarm bells before it was ever brought to the streaming platform.

"The results of this study should raise awareness that young people are particularly vulnerable to the media," [said](#) study author Lisa Horowitz, Ph.D., M.P.H., a clinical scientist in the NIMH Intramural Research Program. "All disciplines, including the media, need to take good care to be constructive and thoughtful about topics that intersect with public health crises."

In his [2013 essay](#) "The Slippery Slope to Pedophilia," TNA contributor Selwyn Duke explained how exposure to a behavior in entertainment, including behavior society currently deems unacceptable, softens the viewers' resistance to that behavior:

The next step after normalization and tolerance is engendering sympathy and affection, and entertainment's role in this is simple to understand. Just as people may condemn the sin but not the sinner, they also have trouble loving the sinner but not the sin. This is why a mother may accept even a son's heinous crimes and why people will justify the scandalous behavior of a favorite politician or sports figure. Likewise, when people come to like a show — and, more specifically, a character on it — they generally start to accept what that character represents. And just think how successful this entertainment campaign has been. Homosexual characters are now a staple of TV and film and, as in the movie Sling Blade, are sometimes the work's only compassionate voice of reason.

American society is on a dangerous path. Parents, communities and the nation's policymakers will have to be willing to take action like leaders have in countries such as Hungary, where pro-trans propaganda aimed at minors has been [criminalized](#) — provoking outrage from the international LGBT lobby.



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