

November 17, 2023

To: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., [justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca)**Re: Bill S-210 – An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material**

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of CFUW, a non-partisan, self-funded organization with 94 clubs across Canada and over 6,600 members. Our mission is to achieve educational and economic equality and social justice through continuous learning and empowerment. Our vision is that women and girls are educated and empowered to make transformative change in the world.

I am writing to ask you to support **Bill S-210**, which requires commercial pornography sites to verify that consumers are adults in order to allow access to their content. This Bill aligns with CFUW's 2020 Resolution "Protecting Children from Exposure and Access to Pornography and Sexual Violence on the Internet," in which CFUW urges the government to develop policy to limit children's ability to view pornography online.

Violent and degrading sexual content is currently freely and easily accessible by children, who may be deliberately seeking, or are inadvertently exposed to, online pornography at an increasingly early age. A growing body of research demonstrates that adolescent pornography use is linked to more sexual aggression and stronger gender-stereotypical sexual beliefs.<sup>i</sup> By reinforcing harmful stereotypes and unrealistic expectations about sex—in addition to distorting and diminishing the importance of consent—pornography can perpetuate rape culture and the misogyny inherent in it. These are not the lessons we want our children to be learning.

Bill S-210 represents one way to address the significant harm caused by exposure to sexually-explicit material at a young age. Implementing an age verification mechanism will not prevent every child from accessing sexual content, but it will deter a large number of children, particularly those younger in age, making this a worthwhile endeavour.

As age verification technology does raise very serious privacy concerns, we support the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs' amendments to the 'Regulations' section of the Bill regarding age-verification methods. These additions ensure that the Governor in Council must consider whether the method maintains user privacy and protects user personal information before prescribing an age-verification method. These considerations are essential and must be included in the final version of the Bill.

We are looking to you to prioritize the protection of children and the promotion of healthy sexual behaviour by supporting Bill S-210.

Thank you very much for your attention and support on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joy Hurst." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joy Hurst  
President, CFUW

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<sup>i</sup> Jochen Peter and Patti M. Valkenburg, "Adolescents and Pornography: A Review of 20 Years of Research," *The Journal of Sex Research* 53, no. 4-5 (2016): 509-531, doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2016.1143441;  
Nicky Stanley et al, "Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People's Intimate Relationships: A European Study," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 33, no. 19 (2018): 2919-2944, doi:10.1177/0886260516633204;  
Paul J. Wright et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Pornography Consumption and Actual Acts of Sexual Aggression in General Population Studies," *Journal of Communication* 66, no. 1 (2016): 183-205, doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12201.