



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Enough is Enough: Making the Internet Safer – Part 2

Guest(s): Donna Rice Hughes

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Roger Marsh: Well, welcome back to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Technology has surely changed our way of life over the last few years from the first televisions that had no remotes to the smartphones of today, which are a source of communication and entertainment that you also use for work and shopping right in the palm of your hand.

Now naturally this revolution has had a huge impact on our children with some definite dangers. Toddlers and young children alike today learn and play on devices connected to the internet, and that could put them at risk of being exposed to inappropriate content. It can also make them vulnerable to predators.

As a parent, you can provide as much guidance as possible. You can block websites. You can limit screen time. And yet even with those precautions, there's still some risk. As your children get older, their friends may have access to inappropriate content that your child may view on those devices. So how do parents and caretakers fight back in this seemingly uphill battle?

Well, there is hope and there have been some significant steps taken in the right direction. Now, today's program here on Family Talk was recorded about five years ago, and while some of the content may have been specific to that time, much of what we're about to hear in today's conversation is still relevant today.

Joining us once again is our guest, Donna Rice Hughes, the President and CEO of Enough is Enough, a nonprofit organization working to make the internet safer for children and families. And now here is Dr. James Dobson to further introduce today's classic program and our guest, Donna Rice Hughes, right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: I've said it before many times, but the fight for righteousness in the culture is a passion of mine. If parents aren't present and active in the lives of their children, if they're distracted, if they're unmotivated, if they're unconcerned, then I guarantee you that culture will take them to hell.

Unfortunately, this generation of children is being twisted and warped by many evils, not just obscenity, but many of its permutations throughout the culture.

And I've seen it up close and personal of course. As many of you know, I served on the pornography commission for President Ronald Reagan back in the 1980s. I got a good look at it, a bad look at it. And the dangerous impact of obscenity and the sex industry itself have just become worse and worse since that time. And it made me sick when I saw it all those years ago. Now, these graphic perverted images and sex trafficking and all the different ways that pornography is distributed and it invades our homes and our families and it affects nearly everything of value in this culture from our families and certainly our children.

And joining me in the studio right now is a woman who we heard from briefly yesterday when we let our listeners hear a sermon that was given about my guest and what has happened to her. And I hope you heard that because that's one of the most powerful programs that we've done. So you can contact us on the web where all of our past programs are available.

Our guest is a lady that I have known for more than 20 years, and I can't tell you the depth of my respect for her. She's fighting all of those avenues for the sex industry to invade our homes and our families. Her name is Donna Rice Hughes and she's President and CEO of Enough is Enough. That's EIE. And this organization is dedicated to educating families and communities about the dangers of pornography, sexual predators, and many other threats that we're going to talk about today. She's an author, a speaker, and a regular commentator and contributor to many media outlets throughout the world.

Donna, it's good to have you back here today. We heard a little bit of your story last time. We won't take the time to recap it, but you've been to hell and back in your adult life, haven't you?

Donna Rice Hughes: I have sir. And it's great to be back with you and to be talking with you and your listeners about an issue I believe that impacts every single family, not only in America but around the world if they have internet access. Because the internet opens up all of the good in the world, but also all of the evil.

And when Enough is Enough started back in 1994, our focus was to protect children and families on the internet and to make the internet safer with two of the key main concerns then and still today are kids easy and free access to hardcore pornography that we know under the law is obscenity, and also any other kind of pornographic content and sexual predators.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, where did the passion come from to fight like you have so vigorously and it's related to your story, we can't recap it all, but you need to tell us what motivated you to stand up for righteousness in all of its avenues?

Donna Rice Hughes: Well, I had a lot of sexual exploitation in my life as a young child and then also in a date rape when I was 22. But I would say that one of my biggest prayers having survived that big scandal that we talked about is I wanted the pain-

Dr. James Dobson: That's the scandal with Gary Hart.

Donna Rice Hughes: Yeah, the 1987 scandal where my life was really torn apart, but God brought me back to himself. I wanted all of that pain to count for something, and I had a big national media platform. And so when I started working with Enough is Enough and we saw the beginnings of sexual predators and child pornographers and hardcore pornographers exploiting this new medium called the internet, I went, "Aha, now I know why I'm here."

And so we took these issues to Congress and launched the Internet Safety Movement in 1995 and helped pass four of the major pieces of legislation at that time in the '90s and became front and center on this issue. And-

Dr. James Dobson: Only God could have done that, right?

Donna Rice Hughes: Only God could have done that. Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You just think about you're having been characterized unfairly and wrongly by the media as a bimbo, as a prostitute, as the most wicked of women. Here you are, a young woman who was exploited and taken advantage of and went through all that turmoil in your life, and here you are before Congress.

Donna Rice Hughes: That's right, before Congress, and working with members of Congress, working with the national media. I've done over 3,500 media interviews in the past 25 years that I've been doing this work, and we've accomplished so much with just a small team of people.

But I will say that now today that children still have all this access to this very hardcore material for a couple of reasons. One, some of the laws we got passed in the '90s were not upheld by the Supreme Court. And number two, the obscenity laws, which are federal laws on the books have not been aggressively enforced. And then also sexual predators. Now the Department of Justice and all, they're going after the child pornography, et cetera, and sexual predators. But America is still number one producer and distributor of hardcore pornography. And we're number two as far as child pornography. So we're not doing very well.

Dr. James Dobson: And can God bless a nation that would exploit its children that way?

Donna Rice Hughes: And be apathetic. And you know what's amazing, Dr. Dobson is before the last presidential election, we wrote, Enough is Enough wrote the first ever children's internet safety presidential pledge, and we went to candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton to get them to agree before whichever one was going to be elected, and now of course we know it was Donald Trump to sign this pledge and Donald Trump signed it. So now-

Dr. James Dobson: And Hillary Clinton would not.

Donna Rice Hughes: She didn't, but she did send a letter of support after Donald Trump signed it. So now we have a president who pledged to appoint an attorney general that would aggressively enforce all the federal laws on the books to prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

Now we're doing fairly well in the sex trafficking category. We've got more to do in the child porn issue. And this next attorney general, Dr. Dobson, we have got to have them start enforcing these hardcore pornography laws because kids have a steady stream of this content. And I believe we've lost a generation of young people because they have been devouring this content that should never be out there in the first place.

Dr. James Dobson: Let me say again what I've said in the past, and people have heard me say this so much that they probably could quote it, but a 13-year-old boy especially, just at the awakening of his sexual life and his passions, 13 years of age, he didn't know anything about life at that point, can stumble on to hardcore or violent pornography like Ted Bundy did, whom I interviewed right before he was executed, and they can be captured by it. And I'm telling you, it becomes an addiction that can last for a lifetime.

Donna Rice Hughes: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: An absolute lifetime. And trying to get over it is worse than alcoholism or many of the other addictions that people fall into. You're trying to prevent that.

Donna Rice Hughes: We're trying to prevent it. And Dr. Dobson, really since the internet, young girls, teen, preteen girls are getting involved in pornography.

Dr. James Dobson: It's not just boys.

Donna Rice Hughes: It's not just the boys. And it's starting at ages seven, eight, and nine years old, and it's just a mess. And this is one of the reasons that we created the Internet Safety 101 program, the first ever curriculum to teach parents that their kids are not immune from coming across pornography online. They're not immune from sexual predators grooming them online. They're not immune from cyber bullying. They're not immune from the online gaming issues. And this is, by the way, online gaming is one of the primary ways that predators gain access, especially to young boys, through these online games.

So we created this curriculum. We got it on PBS. It's still available now on Vimeo, and we won an Emmy Award for it.

Dr. James Dobson: Give us the name of it again.

Donna Rice Hughes: It's called Internet Safety 101, and you can find out more about it at the internetsafety101.org website. But it's critical that parents realize that they are the first line of defense because we need the government to step up more, and

that's what we're working on. Then Lord willing, we'll be able to hashtag drain the cyber swamp because it hasn't been done before. And we need to, but there's a lot of cleaning up there that needs to happen. And we also need corporate America to step up to the plate. And we've got another wonderful series of successes to share with your listeners on that.

Dr. James Dobson: You have many things to tell us. I've been fighting right along with you. We've been working separately on the same issue. And I hate to tell you this, but there's not been a president since Bill Clinton all the way through to today who has been willing to get in and fight this.

The Justice Department has not been willing to take it on. Yeah, they do a few cases where they charge people with child pornography, but it's too little and too late. And adult obscenity is just as dangerous because pedophiles use adult obscenity to show it to children and to say, "Look, this is what mommies and daddies do." Ultimately, it comes back and destroys the integrity of children and their emotional stability.

Donna Rice Hughes: You're right.

Dr. James Dobson: I can tell you how strongly I feel about this, and you do too. And that's why I appreciate so much what you've been doing.

Donna Rice Hughes: Well, and you're exactly right. And we now know there's enough peer-reviewed studies to show that indeed this type of internet pornography, which is very extreme, much of it is violent, much of it is very degrading, like bestiality and other types of content that these kids are coming across, actually rewires the brain. We've actually written a lot about this, and it is now, it's a public health issue. And so we're beginning to address that particular issue as a public health issue.

But one of the things we have done is call on corporate America to do more, and we started the Safe Wi-Fi campaign.

Dr. James Dobson: And that brings us to Starbucks.

Donna Rice Hughes: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Tell us about that story. I'm really excited about it.

Donna Rice Hughes: Well, four years ago, we approached McDonald's and Starbucks to voluntarily filter their public Wi-Fi in their stores from child pornography and pornography. McDonald's did so right away over two years ago, and they filter their public Wi-Fi in their 14,000 restaurants in America. Starbucks did not respond until they were publicly embarrassed by our campaign a couple of years ago. They agreed to filter two and a half years ago. They didn't keep their promise. So just recently, we relaunched the campaign, the national media partnered with us,

and now Starbucks has agreed to finally implement filters in their stores across America to filter pornography and child pornography.

We teach parents that they need to safeguard all the internet enabled devices their kids are using, their gaming devices, their smartphones, their laptops. But when they go onto a public Wi-Fi environment, their kids can jump onto the Wi-Fi and the parental control tools don't necessarily work. Also, sexual predators can fly under the radar of law enforcement in these public Wi-Fi places, airlines, stores, stadiums, et cetera, and get whatever they want and break the law.

You know what's amazing, is a lot of these corporations have not thought through their Wi-Fi policy. They provided Wi-Fi so that people can use the internet when they're in their place of business. But we're saying to corporate America, make sure that that Wi-Fi is safe and secure so that people are using the internet for beneficial purposes and not for illegal purposes.

And we also are asking leaders of all the industries, the airline industry, trains, stadiums, hospitals, think of every place that you can connect to the internet through your smartphone. That's public Wi-Fi. All of that public Wi-Fi needs to be safe and secure. Entire nations. The United Kingdom is asking all their providers and all these places that are offering Wi-Fi to filter. We want that to happen in America because it will do so much to keep children and families safe from all of the bad characters and the dangerous content that's out there.

Dr. James Dobson: And you can get the people we need to contact at your website, which is ...

Donna Rice Hughes: Enough.org. And our whole focus is making the internet safer for children and families and preventing the exploitation of children online. And we deal with cyber bullying. We have a High Road campaign where this comes from my own story of taking the high road to teach young people and adults alike to treat others with dignity and respect and to apply the golden rule. And we even have a Random Post of Kindness platform where you can go send someone a random post of kindness and write your own post and drop it in through your own social media account. And that's at enough.org.

And we still have the Internet Safety 101 program for parents to learn how to keep your kids safe. We've got resources. If someone you know is sexually broken or is struggling with pornography or a wife whose husband's struggling, we've put some of the top resources together that we know about in our resource center.

So our focus is to really help America use the internet in a safe way and to protect the dignity and the innocence of our children because once a child's innocence is stolen, they can't get it back.

Dr. James Dobson: Donna, I don't think we said at the top of the program, but you were a victim of date rape, so you know what you're talking about here.

Donna Rice Hughes: I do.

Dr. James Dobson: You know the impact that that has on a young person's life.

Donna Rice Hughes: I certainly do. And I was also as a young girl, six years old, molested by a pedophile who lived across the street.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you really?

Donna Rice Hughes: I was. But here's the thing. We now have an epidemic of child sexual exploitation that is worldwide, and much of it is being fueled by this hardcore pornography that's in the marketplace. I think I mentioned earlier, America's the number one producer and distributor of this content.

Dr. James Dobson: You know, our former attorney general, Jeff Sessions, who's a man that I love and appreciate.

Donna Rice Hughes: Yes. So do I.

Dr. James Dobson: You met with him and tried to get him to do something about this and you didn't get anywhere.

Donna Rice Hughes: We didn't. A number of groups, including your own, met with him two summers ago. And to the best of our knowledge, they have not revamped the Department of Justice section to begin prosecuting obscenity cases. And that needs to happen. It's got to happen at the federal level. This is very, very important. Because they're federal laws.

And we now know that for instance, in the United Kingdom, the filters that they're using in their nation, most of the pornography that they're blocking from coming into the UK is coming from the United States of America. And I say, shame on us. This shouldn't be the case. But in the meantime, like I said, where we're trying to get corporate America to filter their Wi-Fi, and we want parents to be the first line of defense to protect their kids from all this dangerous content and activity. In the meantime, the federal government and the state governments have got to start doing more.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's get down to brass tacks, Donna. You're doing a wonderful work that ought to be supported by Christians and you barely make it because people don't want to give to something that involves prevention. They want to talk about some other cause or purpose. One of them is our organization. We struggle too. I want to say that yours is an organization that I would like to see supported. You shouldn't have to carry this burden alone. And largely, it's on your shoulders, isn't it?

Donna Rice Hughes: Yes, sir, it is. We're a small organization with a very skinny staff, and we are 100% donor supported. We used to have some government support. We do not

any longer. So every penny, every 5 or \$10 goes a long way with us, and we squeeze as much out of that as we can. It's like the fishes and the loaves, but we need, we need people to support us.

Because you can't put a face on prevention, Dr. Dobson, like you said. We can't show all the children whose innocence has been saved because their parents went through the 101 program. We can't show all those kids that weren't groomed by a sexual predator because they knew not to talk to a stranger online that that person who's pretending to be their friend could in fact be a convicted sex offender. We can't show that.

But we know we're making a difference because we are fighting for righteousness. We are fighting to defend the innocence of these children. They need us. They're kids. And they have to have the government and parents and the adult community, including corporate America, be doing our part. We can't pass the buck. We've all got to do our part.

Dr. James Dobson: And they can reach you through enough.org.

Donna Rice Hughes: Enough.org.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, thank you for being with us and allowing us to tell your story. It's one that people should take seriously. And I do support what you're doing. You're accomplishing a lot with very, very little, and I appreciate you.

Donna Rice Hughes: Well, thank you for giving us the opportunity to be on your show and to work alongside you, Dr. Dobson, because you have been a fighter and a leader for so, so long. And so we're standing on your shoulders.

Dr. James Dobson: I consider that a calling. When the Lord looks down at this nation and its culture, his heart must grieve.

Donna Rice Hughes: That's exactly right.

Dr. James Dobson: Because of not only what we're doing as adults where decisions can be made and the consequences felt. It's those little bitty children. It's those kids around our feet. And I want to say to the parents, if you have given a computer to your child, do not turn them loose with it. Don't put it in a bedroom. Don't allow them access to it unfiltered and unfettered.

Donna Rice Hughes: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: You must step in. What's the set at the top of the program? If you're too busy to do that, your children will be destroyed. Satan will get ahold of them.

Donna Rice Hughes: That's right.

- Dr. James Dobson: And you can't afford to let that happen.
- Donna Rice Hughes: And it's every internet enabled device, the smartphone, the gaming device, the laptop. And I say to parents all the time, "If you're not going to be the first line of defense and a good cyber parent, when you make a decision to buy them another internet enabled device, then don't get it."
- Dr. James Dobson: That's great advice. Thank you, Donna. We're out of time. Appreciate you. Let us know if we can help.
- Donna Rice Hughes: Thank you so much.
- Roger Marsh: If you're a parent, please be advised that you are the first line of defense in protecting your kids from online dangers. Now you already know that, but it's worth repeating. We've just heard the conclusion of a powerful two-part conversation here on Family Talk featuring our own Dr. James Dobson and Donna Rice Hughes, the President and CEO of the nonprofit organization called Enough is Enough.

Now, if you missed any part of the program or if you'd like to listen to it again in its entirety, or if you'd like to share it with a friend or loved one, simply visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

While you're online, you can also download our free publication called "What Is a Woman, According to God?" Now to create this uplifting document, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has partnered with Dr. Owen Strachan to encourage moms, wives, sisters and daughters and affirm what God's design for women really is. The role women have in our world is incredibly important. So why not give some kind words of gratitude to a woman who brightens part of your life and do so even today? Again, for the free download called "What Is a Woman, According to God?," go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

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Now, keep in mind, we would love to connect with you and pray with and for you if that's what you need. And it's easy to do so over the phone. Call 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. And by the way, if you'd like to write to us with your comments, questions, even your prayer requests or financial contributions, our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. Again, that ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk or you can just put JDFI for short, Post Office Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of everyone here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for your prayers, your financial support, and for tuning in today. May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper in your relationship with Him.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.