

Girlie Posters at the Neighbors

Question:

My little six-year-old boy has been playing over at our neighbor's house for the past three years. Their son has become best friends with my son. Their family is not a Christian family, and we have brought their son to church with us about a dozen times. I walked over to their house today and their garage door was open, and I noticed some "girlie posters" on the walls of the garage. I have been inside their house several times and have never noticed anything that made me uncomfortable, but this does. Should I forbid my son from going to this little boy's house to play? I know that early exposure to things of this nature could damage his mind...however, this little boy is his very best friend. I spoke with him and asked if he saw any pictures of naked women at their house and he said "yes, in the garage." I told him that I didn't want him going into their garage because I didn't want him to see those pictures - he said he wouldn't, but if he had to go through to exit the house, he would look the other way. We want to be a positive influence on this family for the kingdom, without hurting our children's minds in the process....any advice?

Response:

Call me overprotective, but I wouldn't let him go back. Your boy is six, and may have been exposed to these pictures from the age of three. Hopefully they didn't make a huge impression on him, but I sure wouldn't take any chances of him getting exposed to more.

Hopefully your neighbor does not have anything worse, but that is something you don't know. I personally think it would be naive to think that he would have something inappropriate displayed in his garage (in the sight of his own child) and not have anything worse in his closet or elsewhere in his home. He may have magazines, videos, DVDs, or inappropriate material on his computer.

I know that sounds paranoid. I don't think every neighbor is a pervert, but I think it is fair to say that some of them (Christian or not) might be. The catch is, I don't know which ones are safe, and which ones are not. I also don't know which ones have pornography in their homes and which do not. That is one reason we don't usually let our kids go over to other kids' houses.

Just set a household policy that your kids can't go over to other people's house without you. Then when your neighbor invites your son over, you can explain that to her as gently as possible. You and your son can go over to the neighbor's together, or her son can come over to your house, but your son can't go over there alone. It's likely you'll have to come clean with her and admit that your son saw something inappropriate at her house. If so, you can lovingly explain that it is not that you are judging THEM, but that the situation merely made you realize that you wanted to be more careful with ALL visits away from your home.

Your son doesn't have to lose his best friend over this. It's not pornography vs. friendship, but even if it did come to that, would it be worth it to protect your child?

Psalms 101:3 I will set before my eyes no vile thing.

Job 31:1a "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl.

Ephesians 5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.