Child Abuse Images and SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN ONLINE

ecpat

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PREFACE

In this publication, global experts working in various related fields - law enforcement, research, rehabilitation of victims, advocacy, technology, etc. - share their knowledge and highlight the issues that need to be urgently addressed to more effectively counter child abuse imagery and the sexual exploitation of children online.

The papers presented here stemmed from The Preparatory Expert Meeting on Child Abuse Images and Sexual Exploitation of Children Online, which was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 14-15 August 2008. This expert meeting was organised by ECPAT International in preparation for the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 25-28 November 2008. The expert meeting was one of several thematic and regional consultations held worldwide to share expertise, examine new challenges and provide key recommendations to be discussed at the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. The World Congress III is part of the global child rights movement and represents a key platform for the realisation of the right of children to be protected from sexual exploitation. ECPAT International was one of its organisers, together with the Government of Brazil, UNICEF and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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BACKGROUND

Back in 1985, the Working Group against Contemporary Forms of Slavery was one of the first groups to discuss child abuse imagery, then considered as a form of slavery. It was not until 1990, with the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child, that an international instrument offered guidance to the international community about what should be done to address child pornography as a form of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). Shortly after, a Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography was assigned by the UN, and various groups around the world started to work more actively on these issues. The work of the Special Rapporteur has maintained a focus on the need to increase counteraction against child pornography, as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child which gives the basis for interventions.

At that time, there was significant denial and resistance to discussing and addressing the commercial sexual exploitation of children. In 1996, the First World Congress against CSEC was organised, hosted by the Government of Sweden. This was a critical step, as Sweden provided the political space for such issues to be discussed by high-level government officials, grassroots groups, international agencies, academics, children and others. These groups aimed to define enhanced measures and professional tools to tackle the sexual exploitation of children, and child pornography then began to be examined more systematically. Although we have seen some progress in tackling child pornography since then, especially at the level of legislation, several issues and concerns raised at the First World Congress remain to be dealt with more effectively. Nevertheless, this first congress provided the impetus to move forward and more aggressively to address child pornography. For example, soon after, in 2000, ILO Convention 192, one of the most powerful conventions for protecting children from child labour, specifically included child pornography as a form of child labour and slavery. This was the first time a convention on child labour had addressed the issue.

The Second World Congress, supported by the Government of Japan in 2001, examined issues of child pornography in a much more intensive and in-depth way. Indeed, child pornography was acknowledged as a major form of CSEC taking place. It was clear that new dimensions of the problem demanded attention, namely the dramatically expanding market for this kind of material; the large increase in the production and selling of child pornography, which at the time of the First Word Congress had been more of a cottage industry; and the increased sophistication of the technologies used to produce child abuse imagery. Similarly, more attention began to be paid to details such as age, ethnicity and gender. It was also recognised that specialised police, and thus specialised law enforcement training, were needed, and that civil society must play a stronger role, in particular NGOs and academics.

The congress was also crucial to the recognition that no international instruments existed that provided a legal framework for national laws to address commercial sexual exploitation of children, and child pornography/child abuse imagery in particular. Then, in 2002, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (Optional Protocol) came into force. This was the first international instrument to define child pornography in a comprehensive and clear way, thus providing guidance for legal reform and other needed actions on the part of governments and other stakeholders. Today, the Optional Protocol has been adopted by 124 State parties, and a number of powerful global and regional level instruments are also in place to address child abuse imagery. Europe, a region that has solid legal machinery (namely the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse), has been particularly forward in developing new laws and instruments. A great deal of effort has also been undertaken in North America. Sadly, in other parts of the world, this kind of hard-level initiative is difficult to find. It is also distressing that only a couple of

years ago, in 2006, the UN Study on Violence against Children nearly failed to examine the violence perpetrated against children in cyberspace, demonstrating that considerable work is still required to move this agenda forward to the degree of recognition that the severity of the problem requires.

The specialists convened at the Preparatory Expert Meeting on Child Abuse Images and Sexual Exploitation of Children Online had the complex task of ensuring that a solid set of recommendations was ready for discussion and deliberation at the World Congress III. This expert meeting contributed to the outcome document of the World Congress III, allowing the recommendations arising from the preparatory meeting to make a huge impact and lead to concrete decisions and actions to address child abuse imagery and related violations of children's rights.
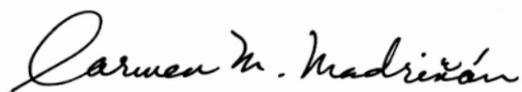
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INTRODUCTION
Key Current Issues in relation to Child Abuse Images and Sexual Exploitation of Children Online

Since the last World Congress against CSEC, held in Yokohama, Japan in 2001, a number of key changes related to the production, distribution and consumption of child pornography have occurred, chiefly due to the widespread use of the Internet and other information and communications technologies (ICTs). The latter have facilitated enormously the production of child pornography and the Internet now plays a major role in its distribution. As such, the issue of child pornography is no longer restricted to imagery, but is increasingly related to online interactions and the harms posed to children by new ICTs (such as exposure to content, grooming and producing/viewing/distributing child abuse images). While at the last world congress two thematic papers focused on child pornography specifically, it is clear that more focus must now be given to differentiating the harms done to children when using ICTs, as well as to the online behaviours that make children vulnerable. The role of the Internet in facilitating contact with children, the social aspects of image and text exchanges and their impact on children, and the growth of commercial child pornography also demand greater attention. Moreover, child pornography seems to be increasingly linked to child sex tourism and child prostitution, and the linkages between these different forms of CSEC must be better explored and addressed, as the understanding of their relationship is still limited.

This new scenario also has deep implications for the related terminology - both legal and generally. While the current terminology has not proved appropriate, it is extremely difficult to find language that reflects the complexities of the issue, is legally understandable and effective from a child protection perspective. In addition to the fact that legislation against child pornography globally remains very limited and inadequate, the law must also be reviewed in order to address the combination between child sexual abuse and child pornography, the role of the Internet and ICTs in facilitating child pornography and child sexual abuse, and the linkages between child pornography and other forms of CSEC. Reviewing and agreeing on terminology is indeed crucial, as terminology forms (ideally) the basis of related legislation, affects what constitutes a victim and their identification, and enables action from law enforcers.

The term 'child pornography' is still used consistently in most laws and policies, and yet it does not convey the fact that these images reflect abusive practices against children. It also fails to differentiate the harms that children may suffer, as abusive practices towards children are not necessarily limited to cases involving images of a child being sexually abused. In addition, the term does not capture the full spectrum of the materials now available, as not all materials that are circulating actually feature children being abused. Such materials are abusive in the way that they are being used: some images may not reflect harm against a specific child - for instance images of children on the beach or having a bath – but they are used for sexual gratification, make children sexual objects and create a market place for the further creation of images. How should these images be dealt with? Should we advocate for the criminalisation of materials that feature children in a sexualised way? This also applies to virtual child pornography – e.g., manga in Japan – as it represents children in ways that cannot be dismissed as 'harmless'. Hence, a key action identified is the need to undertake 'second-generation law reform' to address 'first generation' legal definitions, which in many cases no longer reflect the practices and offences currently taking place. Incidentally, not only national laws, but also national policies, have yet to address the complexities of the problem of child abuse imagery.

Harmonising legal definitions across countries and among key international and regional instruments is a another serious gap that must be urgently addressed. Different understandings of what constitutes

child pornography and what the harms are to children have meant that children are very unequally protected by the law according to the country and region. In this regard, it should be noted that child rights advocates need to better confront and argue against freedom of speech arguments that seek to justify child pornography. Since a study conducted in 2001 by Durkin on newsgroups, recent studies show that there has been a dramatic increase in the level of postings defending child pornography on the grounds of freedom of speech. It is also essential that the Judiciary develops an understanding of technological crimes against children. Such an understanding would have an important impact in sentencing and in preventing offenders from committing new abuses.

Good legislation means little without effective enforcement. While law enforcement from many jurisdictions are presently combating the sexual exploitation of children in ICTs with higher levels of sophistication in their investigations, such initiatives still take place on an extremely small scale. Very few national police among member countries actually cooperate with INTERPOL, and a dismal percentage of victims' identification is secured. Hence, the engagement of more countries and sectors in multi-stakeholder collaboration initiatives such as the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT) is clearly a priority. At the same time, there are concerns about whether the VGT model can work effectively in different cultural and national/regional contexts, especially as local stakeholders - law enforcement in particular - may have different requests and needs. In which contexts should the VGT model be promoted? Such 'global' models of multi-stakeholder cooperation may need to be refined for well-founded, extended reach.

Moreover, mechanisms must be created to ensure that the highly developed forensic technology now available is deployed in more effective ways. Law enforcement and the ICT industry need to work much more closely together in challenges such as encryption, the identification of offenders, the removal of images, and the creation and management of hotlines, as a large amount of child abuse images continue to be (increasingly) available. As a matter of fact, a much more active role is required on the part of the ICT industry, especially as the technology currently available allows for the creation of safer online environments for children. As the Internet completely transformed the volume, nature and scale of the market for child sexual abuse images, the industry gradually recognised that something had to be done and that tackling the problem was not only a matter of legislation and law enforcement. The Internet Foundation in the UK and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in the US were created as a result of this understanding. Unfortunately, many private companies still do not share that perspective and significant players still do not conform to best practices. It is clear though, that lumping these companies together and labelling them as 'capitalist', socially irresponsible actors is not useful. Instead, building alliances with them is key to moving the agenda forward. To catalyse much needed action, there is a need to map out all stakeholders in the ICT industry, as well as key deficiencies in terms of who should be more engaged and how, followed by the development of strategies to ensure their collaboration. In addition, clever ways of promoting more 'voluntary' adoptions of codes of conduct by specific stakeholders must be devised, using existing good models. The Internet industry involves diverse players and child protection measures need to account for the fact that Internet service providers (ISPs) now represent a rather tiny proportion of such players. Many other private sectors are now involved and play key roles in children's online interactions. In the current scenario, the role of the mobile phone industry requires particular consideration, especially as they are increasingly providing Internet services.

As the range of sexual abuses related to child pornography and facilitated by ICTs becomes increasingly complex, it has proved essential to build knowledge on the impact of each type of abuse and what sort of therapeutic treatments are most effective to deal with them, as well as vulnerability factors. Most resources have been invested in the work of law enforcement, the identification of victims and offenders and, to a certain extent, on the rehabilitation of offenders. Meanwhile, the child victim remains overlooked; they are hardly supported once the abuse is revealed or the predator is prosecuted. Somehow, we do not talk about the children themselves, the nature of their experiences or how these are

influenced by new technologies. What exactly are the damages to sexually abused children when their abuse is captured in images? What kind of harm - harm to self and potentially to others - is suffered when children are exposed to pornography? There remains a disturbing lack of knowledge about the reactions, symptoms and effects on children sexually abused through new technologies. Sweden has moved forward considerably in this aspect, but it remains an exception. Documented knowledge, including on clinical experiences, is highly needed. In general terms, it seems that therapeutic responses must be devised according to: 1) whether the child has been exploited online or offline; 2) online abuse when there is no physical contact; 3) whether the young person has consented to the exploitation; and 4) whether the young person has generated his/her own images. The impact on children needs to be distinguished from the impact on adolescents, as some adolescents are actually very well equipped to deal with online abusive experiences. Psychological treatment aimed at facilitating disclosure, as well as mechanisms such as helplines and peer support schemes, are another high priority, as children are very unwilling to disclose abuse when it has also been documented in different kinds of images.

Moreover, clearer discrimination between what is abusive and what is not abusive must be agreed to. There are deep tensions related to the legal age at which children have the right to view certain materials online. The Internet has enabled a 'decontextualisation' of materials that can be quite disturbing, as children are exposed to materials that they do not fully understand or do not expect to encounter. At the same time, how do we protect children's right to explore their own sexuality, and to understand sexuality, while protecting them from harm? The notion that under 18s are 'children' should not lead to a restriction of their (sexual) rights. Is their engaging, for instance, in voluntary and mutual webcam sex harmful or problematic? What about witnessing webcam sex? Most studies do not yet differentiate between consensual sex and deviant or violent sexual activity. Furthermore, while teenagers do behave in ways that make adults uncomfortable, society tends to be highly hypocritical in the sense that such behaviours very often mirror adult behaviour that is widely promoted by, for example, the media and celebrities. Young online offenders are offered multiple opportunities to engage in criminal behaviour, only to be harshly punished when caught in such activities.

An understanding of such issues varies according to one's cultural background, and cultural diversity needs to be handled with much sensitivity, especially as existing research on such issues still comes mostly from Europe. Cultural background may indeed have huge implications for child/teenage behaviour. How the child perceives what is happening will significantly affect disclosure, and much more visibility and understanding of their perceptions is required.

Finally, in terms of prevention, very often teenagers establish their own safety rules, and preventative interventions would probably be much more effective if children and teenagers were given the opportunity to clearly understand the risks posed by ICTs and empowered to establish their own self-protection rules. Preventative actions must also take into account the fact that children and teenagers often prefer to manage their 'online' problems themselves and are reluctant to seek adult intervention: they should thus be empowered and enabled to do so.

Note on the Use of Terminology

Since the Second World Congress, some notable changes have taken place regarding the terminology against the Sexual Exploitation of Children used to describe sexualised material (images, text and audio files) relating to children. While the term 'child pornography' had been consistently employed, more recently, questions have been raised as to whether this term accurately reflects the content of what is being produced, and whether the term implicitly implies consensual activity (Taylor and Quayle, 2003). The term 'abusive images' is now widely used by those who advocate for children's rights in relation to sexual abuse through photography (Vernon and Skogrand, 2006), but this changeover is not straightforward. The term 'child pornography' is used in the majority of laws and policy documents internationally (Akdeniz, 2008), and attempts to change terminology are thought by some to be both confusing and to not adequately capture the complex nature of the materials (Lanning, 2008) and interactions. This is worth further consideration, as the term used will have implications for both victims and stakeholders involved in eradicating the exploitation of children via the use of the new technologies.

Problematic engagement of youth through ICTs; social construction of meaning; understanding and response in virtual interactions and its impact on child protection.

Key issues

- Introduction to and examination of key issues in relation to sexual exploitation of children through new ICTs and the changes that have taken place since the Second World Congress.

- Analysis of the nature of social interaction in virtual settings and its impact on children.

- Analysis of the harms posed by the new ICTs to enable a more differentiated understanding of sexually abusive practices towards children.

- Education and awareness as a means to empower children and youth for self-protection in virtual interactions.

Findings of research on the sexual exploitation of children via virtual interactions in the US, conducted by the University of New Hampshire

by Janis Wolak

Contrary to the belief that the Internet would cause an increase in sexual crimes against children, there is no clear connection between sex crimes against children and the use of the Internet in the US. In fact, sex crimes against children have actually decreased in recent years. Well developed, good federal laws (and some state laws) have been adopted addressing both internet-related crimes and the linkages between child sexual abuse and child pornography; a network of law enforcers tackling Internet-related crimes is now in place; and the federal Government has generally been very active in this area.

Research on the issue, undertaken by the Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) at the University of New Hampshire, was instrumental to dispel various myths generated by a certain hysteria verified in the US in past years, when people were under the impression that large numbers of predators and paedophiles were contacting children online, including small children, to obtain private information and attempt abduction, rape etc. It is true that some child molesters, apart from abusing their own child acquaintances, also use the Internet to contact children. However, according to the research, most relationships between children and adults on the Internet do not have a sexual element, and American children do not seem to be using the Internet in ways that might cause harm to them.

At the same time, a small percentage of the children contacted by the researchers did report that they had engaged in 'sexual conversations' with adults, and an even s maller percentage - mostly older children - had actually gone to meet adults whom they had first 'met' online. Therefore, while most of the children who use the Internet do not actually engage is risky behaviours, a small percentage do. It is thus essential to examine which aspects of children's behaviours are facilitating offenders' ill intentions.

Looking at the nature of sexual crimes committed against children through use of the Internet, in the US context, the ultimate fact is that most of the children who engage in risky behaviours are aware that they are talking to adults, and virtually all of the victimised children/teenagers did know that they were dealing with a much older adult. Indeed, the offenders themselves are usually extremely open about their sexual intentions, and if they talk online with a teenager who is not receptive they just end the conversation and try someone else. Deceit and violence are extremely rare in the online sexual interactions between children and adults, and in subsequent offline sexual interactions. Rather, predators use seduction and manipulation, and the participation of children (young adolescents around 13 or 14 years of age are the primary targets of sex offenders who use the Internet) in such interactions is mostly 'voluntary'. As such, most crimes thus configure the so called statutory rape, as in US states the age of sexual consent is around 16 years of age and most cases involve children who, from a legal point of view, were too young to consent to sexual activity.

If such children are to be afforded better protection, it is essential to dismiss some counterproductive myths about their 'naivety': in the US context, most of the children who fall prey to sexual predators on the Internet are not 'naive' child Internet users, but rather are very sophisticated Internet users who have an interest in sex, are very motivated to learn more about sex and communicate online with a large number of people. Some are already sexually active and some are quite aggressive in their sexual behaviour, even stating openly that they are looking for sex when interacting with others online. Others feel that they are in love, or want to please the person they met online. The situations vary widely, and there are also high rates of coerced sexual intercourse.

In this connection, there is a need to acknowledge that teenagers are sexual beings and to enable them to have a healthy sexual life, instead of simply denying them a sexual life, as usually happens. While the sexual involvement of children with older adults may be voluntary, these children/teenagers (especially those aged between 13 and 15 years) have little experience, little ability to negotiate levels of sexual activity and suffer exposure to sexuality issues before they are ready. They need guidance to prevent their engagement in harmful and uninformed practices, and the right balance must be found between respecting their right to explore their sexuality and protecting them from harm.

Furthermore, it is important to stress that these online victims are mainly teenagers who share one or more of the following vulnerability factors: they are lonely and needy of affection; they are experiencing conflict with their parents; they have a history of sexual or physical abuse; they suffer from depression; they are grappling with sexual identity issues; they are considering homosexuality; they are gay boys; they feel cut off from their peers and resort to the Internet to socialise; and/or they 'talk' to people online indiscriminately (something most children do not do).

Thus, different approaches are required that go beyond the current prevention messages emphasising parental control and the dangers of divulging personal information. Prevention strategies must target youth directly and acknowledge normal adolescent interest in romance and sex. Such strategies should provide younger adolescents with awareness and avoidance skills, while educating older youth about the pitfalls of sexual relationships with adults and their criminal nature. Particular attention should be paid to higher risk youth, including those with histories of sexual abuse, sexual orientation concerns and patterns of offline and online risk taking.

US police work undercover in sexually-oriented chat rooms to combat sexual exploitation of children. In this context, most arrests take place before abuse has actually occurred. This is possible because most offenders do not pretend to be children and are quite open about their intentions when interacting online. Most offenders are not paedophiles. Some observers have questioned whether the undercover police are actually behaving in the same manner as children, some of who are quite open in their communications and sometimes even initiate contact. In any case, many arrests are taking place through such methods. It should also be noted that it is quite common that adults have a sexual interest in adolescents in particular, and this is not considered abnormal by psychologists: thus it must be made clear why it is wrong for adults to target young adolescents for sex, why it is not appropriate for adults to act on and let their sexual interests take priority over their responsibility for protecting and taking care of young people. Fortunately, while adults' sexual interest in children is high, many children do not engage in risky behaviours.

Findings of research on offenders' typology, conducted by the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, Censorship and Complaint Unit

by Angella Carr

Research conducted by the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, Censorship and Complaint Unit examined the online social interactions between individuals involved in trading child sex exploitation materials. It profiled 136 offenders, using investigation checklists and looking at their behaviour and social characteristics. Various case studies were developed based on interviews with the offenders themselves and their families and associates, as well as online observation and other materials collected during the investigation. The research was unique as it examined all offenders encountered by the researchers within a certain period of time, as opposed to just those who were actually prosecuted or convicted. Among them, 48% were younger than 25 years of age, and 28% were less than 20 years of age. All of them were male.

The research produced three key findings:

• There seems to be two distinct groups of offenders: 1) collectors, who focus on accumulating a large number of materials that they organise and swap online, and 2) a slightly smaller group of producers, who spend a lot less time online, engage in several associated activities offline, have a limited collection of images legally defined as exploitative, and spend considerable time photographing, filming and writing about child sexual abuse and sharing the resulting materials online. It is important to mention that some of these materials are not legally considered child pornography. It is quite common, for example, that such offenders take pictures of their child neighbours in the pool and then use the images and details about these real children to write stories of child abuse. While it seems that such stories are mostly fantasy (as no evidence to the contrary was found), the children's pictures, names and other factual information are made available online within the context of child abuse narratives, and may cause all sorts of harm to these children if discovered by them or others in future. It is also common that such stories are linked to Facebook accounts. Offenders download children's pictures found in Facebook pages – including pictures found in adults' pages as well as children's pages, attach them to child abuse stories and then link these to other offenders' pages. This practice increases the possibility that these children may be victimised.

• There is an association between online social connectivity and unconstrained offensive behaviours: the offenders who engaged online frequently, directly and one-on-one with other offenders, most commonly though ICQ, email and peer-to-peer communication, were more likely to engage in online behaviours not necessarily with the aim of obtaining images. These behaviours include producing materials that depict child exploitation, setting up websites to enable others to access these materials, selling these materials, possessing large collections and organising them in a systematic way, accessing these materials from sources other than the Internet, collecting and organising materials not legally prohibited, obtaining legitimate access to children (e.g., as scout masters, caretakers and teachers) and storing the materials and information collected using movable devices. These offenders receive significant social benefit and reinforcement through their online interactions, besides obtaining practical support and 'tips' such as how to avoid law enforcement.

• There is an association between online and offline social interaction: offenders who had more opportunities for offline social interaction, for instance in their home and work environment, were more likely to offend using applications that facilitated online social interaction; while those who lived alone or did not work were less likely to engage in online social interaction.

The research findings generate a number of hypotheses. Offenders seem to be a heterogeneous group, differing in terms of their age, their social status offline and what they do online. While several 'practical' benefits are derived from interacting online with other offenders, such as practical tips and the ability to access a larger number of images, not all offenders choose to obtain such benefits. Producers, in particular, seem to be especially motivated by the reinforcement that they obtain from having others recognise their sexual preferences and sharing the child abuse stories they write and the images they create. This could lead them to produce more stories and imagery and, ultimately, to commit child abuse and post images of such abuse online.

It should be noted that violent and degrading images are being encountered more often, as well as images of very young children. Also, some of the materials that producers write and collect tend to be very specific and do not constitute the type of material that is easily accessible on the Internet. The fact that they are interested in materials that are not so widely available might encourage them to produce them.

Offenders' collections of child pornography materials examined in research conducted in New Zealand included depictions of people defecating and bestiality, suggesting a relationship between such 'interests' and the sexual abuse of children. Thus, more research may be recommended to better understand the relationship between 'cross-deviant' interests.

The research findings have significant implications for both law enforcement and the rehabilitation of offenders, and, to a certain degree, for the treatment of victims:

•   Stereotyping offenders is very unhelpful and severely hinders appropriate responses. There is a need to match law enforcement responses and criminal justice responses to the different types of offenders and crimes, especially in view of the increasing number of young offenders.

•   Children depicted in child pornography may be victimised even in the absence of actual physical contact with the offender, as a number of studies have demonstrated that children who were photographed/filmed within an abusive scenario may suffer long-term impact and present symptoms such as aggressiveness and depression. There needs to be a review of what constitutes abuse and which materials can be considered child abuse materials, as it has been proved that child victims who come to know that their images within a child abuse scenario are permanently available may suffer severe impact, even though they may not have been sexually victimised.

•   When examining the materials collected from offenders, law enforcers must investigate the origin of child sexual abuse stories and associated images, even if these are not legally considered exploitative. It is important to identify and reach the children depicted in such materials, especially as they may be at risk of further violations, and to devise strategies to protect them.
•   There is also a need to consider the content, as well as the number, of images when judging the seriousness of crimes and applying penalties.

- Offenders who gain considerable reinforcement through their online interactions may respond better to socially reinforcing treatment approaches. Particularly in the case of juvenile offenders, treatment responses in such cases should involve their social networks. These networks are often one of their main 'constraints' in terms of not engaging again in offensive behaviour and are a source of positive social influences. Their social ties should not be cut off. Treatment should also involve their families, who often also suffer many consequences from their crimes.

- Those offenders who are not so interested in social interactions with other offenders, but instead are most likely to use the online environment opportunistically to contact children and eventually commit child abuse, will not respond in the same way to social reinforcement treatments. Such offenders have existed for several decades, are usually older, might have suffered abuse themselves and require different treatment approaches.

Child sexual violence on the Internet in Brazil

by Tatiana Landini

In Brazil, even though the issue of child pornography has gained much more visibility in the last 10 or 12 years, understanding of the phenomenon remains limited and biased. Child pornography is usually treated as an activity carried out by paedophiles, which ignores most of the materials found on the Internet and disregards the actual dynamics of the problem, the offenders' profiles and the realities experienced by children. Such misconceptions are partly fuelled by the way the issue is covered in the media, which tends to describe it as a form of paedophilia and in a rather sensationalist manner. These misconceptions have very serious implications for awareness raising campaigns, preventative initiatives and law enforcement, and result in a failure to protect children at risk or already victimised.

Research on the issue is also very limited in the country, and presently consists of just six academic theses: one from a sociological perspective (Landini, 2000), one from a psychoanalysis perspective (Hisgail, 2001), three on legal aspects (Brito, 2001; Carvalho, 2003; Tomizawa, 2005) and one focused on technological aspects (Furlaneto Neto, 2003). There are also two important studies conducted by NGOs (Reis and Schneider, 2004 and Reis and Oliveira, 2005). However, hardly any of these studies actually involved a proactive search, i.e., searching the Internet to see what kind of materials and interactions can be found. These research studies were based mainly on public complaints and newspapers articles, thus incurring a severe bias, as they only examined materials that were considered shocking or offensive by the individuals who reported them or by the media. Such methodologies leave out a large amount of materials, such as juvenile pornography, which is likely not to be reported. These methodologies would only be appropriate when investigating the representation of child pornography, i.e., what is perceived to be child pornography, and are not appropriate to determine how the problem manifests itself.

The only exception is the research by Elisa Reis and Fabio Schneider, conducted in 2004, which identified three main types of child pornographic materials available on the Internet:

1) Pictures depicting small children and babies being abused, called "child pornography sick" or "cp sick" by the paedophiles themselves.

2) Pictures depicting pre-pubescent children or those entering adolescence, photographed nude or in underwear, who do not appear to be aware of what is going on; these materials are also targeted to paedophiles.

3) Pictures depicting adolescents, especially girls with pubic hair and breasts, who may have been photographed or filmed in exchange for money. These materials are not targeted to paedophiles, are usually associated with adult pornography, child sex tourism and child prostitution, and can be found in pornographic sites and albums, as well as in tourism advertisements.

In order to obtain a clearer picture of the situation, it is essential that further research is conducted, including proactive research. This research is difficult to conduct and requires partnerships between stakeholders such as law enforcers and hotlines to produce accurate findings. Numerous gaps in knowledge need to be addressed:

- The dynamics of child pornography exchanges need to be explored to identify who is exchanging child pornographic materials, how they are being exchanged and for what purpose.

- Is child pornography part of a cycle of child sexual exploitation, and, if so, in what ways?

- What are the dynamics of the victim-offender relationship that lead to picture taking?

- Are all the individuals viewing and exchanging such materials aware that they are engaging in illegal activities? It is unlikely that they do and that they understand the gravity of their acts, especially in the case of adolescent pornography.

- How are the related investigations handled, and how they should be handled?

- What are the psychological damages suffered by children who view pornographic images depicting children and adults together?

- What are the appropriate psychological treatments for children abused online?

Furthermore, it is crucial to establish a clear distinction between juvenile pornography and child pornography and to deal with them as distinct phenomena. The fact that adolescents are posting and exchanging their own pictures as part of their online socialising activities needs to be recognised. This calls for frank discussions about juvenile sexuality and socialisation on the Internet, and for adequate measures to counter harm from this type of exchange. Effective social action against juvenile pornography also has to take into account the fact that this kind of material is not recognised as criminal by lay people, and the resulting absence of related complaints is likely to be making it more invisible and unaddressed.

While research on the topic is still very limited, it should be noted that significant improvements have occurred in terms of legislation. Brazilian laws on child pornography were first adopted in 1990, with the approval of Brazil's Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA). Article 241 of the ECA made it a crime to "photograph or publish pornographic pictures or scenes of explicit sex involving children or adolescents". The law was enhanced in 2003, when the acts of "presenting, producing, selling, supplying, making public and publishing" child pornography were also criminalised, without regard to what kind of media was involved, including the Internet. In addition, the related penalties increased from one to two years to four to six years' imprisonment, including a fine. The definition of child pornography was also clarified: "any depiction of explicit or insinuated sexual activity where a child or adolescent is involved, or exhibitions of his/her genital organs for sexual gratification". Simulated child pornography was also criminalised, as well as using the Internet to seduce or harass a child or adolescent. At this moment, a very important legal reform proposal is being examined that would also criminalise purchasing, possessing and storing child pornography.

Such important legal developments can be attributed, to a great extent, to the advocacy conducted by two NGOs working on the issue: Cedeca-Bahia, which has played a major role in deepening discussions and understanding of child pornography, and Safernet, which set up a national hotline that has led to the withdrawing of large amounts of child pornography from the Internet, while at the same time preserving evidence to ensure that legal actions can be taken.

With regard to the work carried out by Safernet, an interesting case study should be mentioned, which sheds light on how child pornography manifests itself in Brazil. A ground-breaking achievement by Safernet was disclosure of the fact that numerous illegal actions were taking place on the social networking website Orkut (launched in 2004 and widely used by Brazilians), such as exchanges of child pornography, trade of simulated child pornography materials, sexual harassment of children, paedophile networking, ideological justification and incitement to commit child sexual abuse as well as commercial sexual exploitation of children. Two forms of child pornography distribution through Orkut were identified:

1) Direct distribution, whereby child pornography images were stored in the Orkut website. Registered Orkut users created photo albums in their profiles that featured child pornography, thus making them available to anyone online. Another form of direct distribution was the placement of a child pornography image as the photo that identifies the user, as if it was the user's own photograph. Because one individual is able to create more than one profile for himself, some people created various profiles featuring a different child pornographic picture in each one, so that when they joined paedophile communities all the pictures appeared together as in a child pornography photo album.

2) Diffuse or indirect distribution, whereby Orkut users provided, in their profiles, links to communities and photo albums outside Orkut, leading to sites that sell pornography involving children, adolescents and even babies. Users were also meeting through Orkut and subsequently exchanging child pornography by email.

In 2006, approximately 34% of the complaints received by Safernet were related to child pornography: 34,715 of these were associated with Orkut and involved 1,202 of its communities and 3,143 of its profiles. Safernet realised that Google Inc., which owns Orkut, was taking far too long to withdraw images of child pornography, even after a formal complaint was made. Google Inc. was also refusing to forward to the Brazilian authorities the information required to enable prosecutions.

Safernet, along with the Brazilian Public Prosecutors Office and the Parliament's Commission for Human Rights, pursued legal action to oblige Google Inc. to forward the information needed by the authorities. This was a very polemic process which catalysed debates about the right of privacy and the responsibility of Internet service providers regarding illicit materials. Eventually, Orkut was ordered to forward all the information required by the Brazilian authorities to prosecute the individuals who were posting illegal content on the Orkut social networking website.

The relationship with the ICT industry has since improved, and Google will soon be featuring, on their main webpage messages of a campaign developed by Safernet to promote safe use of ICTs among parents, children and adolescents. As the reports received by Safernet were also forwarded to Parliament, an investigation to evaluate the occurrence of child pornography on the Internet was initiated. This was instrumental to effect the important changes in the legislation on child pornography described above.

To conclude, building knowledge is an essential step to inform public policies that are effective in combating the sexual exploitation of children through the Internet and other ICTs. Brazil, as in the case of many countries, still lacks public policies regarding online child pornography. These need to be developed, taking into account that child pornography is related to various other forms of sexual exploitation of children and not only to paedophilia. Increased knowledge would also enable much more successful awareness raising and preventative interventions.

Findings of research on child pornography in Eastern Europe

by Olha Sved

In 2007, ECPAT International in collaboration with local ECPAT groups conducted research on child pornography in four Eastern European countries, namely Russia, Ukraine and Moldova and Belarus, whereby literature review was carried out and 15 legal cases were analysed. Research in such countries was deemed necessary as it was found, in 2004, that large amounts of income were being generated in Russia through child pornography, and also that 80 per cent of child sexual images identified by the Internet Watch Foundation were related to commercial operations based in Eastern Europe.

The research indicated that the production of child pornography in this sub-region is mainly for financial gain and very often undertaken by criminal networks. Immense profit is generated through the sale of such materials.

A very particular feature of the phenomenon in Russia and Ukraine is the use of 'modelling agencies' to recruit young girls who are unaware that they are being filmed in changing rooms and showers, and who may pose for pictures with low degrees of sexual connotation without realising that their images will later be sold and used as pornography.

There is also the so called domestic production of child pornography, whereby individual offenders produce such materials in domestic contexts, e.g. family members make images of their own very young children to sell them on the Internet as a means to generate income.

Finally, there is the production and distribution of child pornographic materials by young people.

Locations where the production of child pornographic materials takes place include modelling agencies, saunas, hotels and private summer homes. Even kindergartens were used for such purposes in Belarus.

Furthermore, the production of child pornography is sometimes linked to tourism. In the last two or three years there have been several cases of foreigners visiting these countries with the intention to produce child pornographic materials.

The absence of clear legal definitions of what child pornography consists of, the lack of provisions criminalising all related acts, and the lack of provisions addressing the use of ICTs to perpetrate child pornography offences exacerbate the problem. In Moldova, for instance, some well-known cases were simply not brought to court because there were no specific legal provisions to enable it. Additionally, very often the police themselves, and even members of the Judiciary, are unaware that certain activities and materials are indeed illegal and that some special laws on child pornography are already in place.

The lack of child-friendly procedures when cases are disclosed is another key hindrance to ensuring effective investigations and convictions. One famous case in Ukraine involved 800 victims - girls aged between 8 and 16 years - and there were no skilled professionals to interview them in ways that would minimise further traumatisation and lead to the disclosure of key information.

Victims include both boys and girls, runaway children, street children, institutionalised children as well as mentally disabled children and school children. As mentioned above, some of the victims are unaware that their images are being captured to be used as pornography. Blackmailing is employed to perpetrate further abuses through the threat of disseminating the images of the initial abuse. School children are increasingly involved in self-generated child pornography especially by filming their own sexual activities, as well as by abusing other children to produce child pornography. There are also several cases of mentally disabled children being used by their families and neighbours for such criminal purposes. The use of boys should also be highlighted, as recently there was a case involving Russians citizens that went to Belarus to produce materials featuring over 100 boys aged between 15 and 17 years. Some children may also take part in such activities in return for money. As their access to technology is increasing exponentially, children are also being victimised through ICTs such as mobile phones with cameras, as well as engaging in risky behaviours online.

There is still very limited information available in countries of the region for children and adolescents on safe Internet use, and they usually do not know how to protect themselves. Some preventative initiatives have been initiated, but hardly any systematic prevention and protection mechanisms are in place, especially to address the use of ICTs in the production and distribution of child pornography and the increasing access to the Internet by children. Some key recommendations to tackle the problem more effectively in this sub-region include the following:

•	Developing integrated policies to combat the sexual exploitation of children through the use of ICTs and implementing child protection strategies, particularly in collaboration with the private sector (such as Internet service providers, cyber cafés, mobile phone companies and financial institutions).

•	Developing prevention strategies in schools through education and awareness-raising campaigns targeting children, parents and the general public.

•	An adequate legal framework which ensures that all acts related to the production, distribution, possession and viewing of child sexual abuse materials are criminalised.

•	A child-centred approach throughout the judicial system, with judges, prosecutors and officers trained to deal with cases of child abuse imagery. Also needed are adequately resourced law enforcement forces and active collaboration at the local and international level.

•	Specialised, long-term support services for victims, integrated into existing programmes.

Exposure to materials online and the right of children to view certain materials as part of their learning and sexual rights; decontextualisation of the materials and poor understanding, on the part of children, of what they really involve/their implications; self-generated materials, voluntary and mutual webcam sex, and witnessing; sexualisation of children.

The criminalisation of adolescents who are involved in acts related to sexually problematic and harmful behaviour towards children through ICTs has become a key issue, as the legal system does not usually differentiate between those adolescents and the adults who commit such crimes (even though in certain legal systems adolescents are starting to be treated differently from adults, for example, in Canada, where the parents might be held responsible). There is not yet an understanding that such adolescents require therapeutic and rehabilitative responses tailored to their age and particular circumstances, especially as they are often unaware that they are engaging in acts prohibited by law. With the advancement and widespread use of ICTs, numerous opportunities are provided for adolescents to engage in illegal acts, however there is an underlying notion that when they engage in problematic behaviours they should be held responsible in the same way as adults, as if adults did not have a duty to protect them. Appropriate legal responses, guidance and rehabilitation services must be available for adolescents involved in sexually problematic behaviour. Most often, they should be referred to a child protection institution and not be dealt with within the juvenile justice system. Legal terminology should also be reconsidered when applied to teenage offenders.

Furthermore, gender issues must be taken into account when discussing minors engaged in such illegal acts. Nowadays, both boys and girls demonstrate sexually problematic behaviour, but there remains a general assumption that only males engage in such behaviour. In the UK, for instance, the law has historically focused on the protection of girls, and only recently has the term 'girls' been replaced by 'children'. Given the historical and, in some places, cultural tendency to consider girls as victims, harms to boys (for example, falling vulnerable to blackmailing situations) are sometimes overlooked and can remain under protected by the law.

In order to provide adequate legal and rehabilitation responses - not to mention the implications for prevention and education - it is essential to increase understanding of how sexually problematic behaviour evolves in online settings. While in many cases the distribution of child pornographic images is triggered by feelings of anger and revenge, numerous adolescents exchange such materials without seeing the impact of their actions and the problems associated with it. Communicating better with them is crucial, as the lack of communication between adolescents and adults in this regard is clearly hindering adequate responses. Education on sexuality issues, for instance, should include discussions

about children's and adolescents' behaviour online, which seldom happens. They need to be listened to in order to better ascertain their concerns, behaviours and the problems they face in their online interactions. Interestingly, many adolescents report that, if 'in trouble online', they would turn to a friend even though they would prefer to get help from their parents or other adults. Thus, it seems that promoting and facilitating such communication is a key step. Such dialogue could be facilitated by channels that effectively reach them, such as chat rooms, websites, blogs, a forum in Second Life, cleverly publicised helplines etc.

While some research related to adolescent behaviour when using ICTs is already available, for instance in Sweden, findings are very likely to differ from one country to another, in particular from developed to developing countries. Cultural differences need to be acknowledged when designing effective prevention materials. These materials are usually developed in English, French or the most used language in a given country, and, as such, many children in developing countries simply have no access to this kind of information in a language that they understand. Prevention materials must be made available in local languages and dialects, and their translation and adaptation must reflect the specific situation and youth realities of each country. Such materials should be age-specific, easily accessible and written/ presented in a child-friendly way. Moreover, they should be designed bearing in mind that there are distinct groups of children. Children who are ICT savvy and well understand the risks will need a different kind of message to prevent risky behaviours. Information on the legal aspects must also be provided, as often adolescents do not know that they might be engaging in illegal acts. They should also be informed about how such acts might affect them in future, e.g. in securing employment.

The specifics of children's/adolescents' interactions online must be considered, such as where they access the Internet from (in the US, for instance, access is mainly from home). Also, it should be made much clearer in preventative messages that it is their own friends who may offer risks (e.g., they may distribute images of them naked). Furthermore, when looking for more adequate approaches, one must explore more positive angles, such as involving young people in establishing ethical behaviour within peer groups, peer support schemes, advocacy and awareness raising. There is certainly potential for more interesting and engaging initiatives to be developed. Instead of giving teenagers restrictive messages, it would be much more effective to engage them in the creation and provision of solutions. An education programme in Canada focuses on engendering respect and self control, starting from kindergarten and continuing through high school, which offsets potential risky or harmful behaviours during adolescence. Sexual exploitation through ICTs needs to be discussed within a larger framework, while also providing a clear stand on what is right and wrong.

Targeted interventions must be developed for children that are particularly vulnerable ('lonely' children, children that have suffered abuse etc.), and they should be a prioritised population.

In addition, existing materials and education programmes should be evaluated to estimate their actual effectiveness. Are they still adequate? Are they adapted to the new manifestations of sexual exploitation of children in ICTs? There is indication, for example, that most people do not read the safety tips on social networking sites. In the case of filtering software, it might play a protective role with younger children, while on the other hand be counterproductive by denying older children access to important information on sexuality and sexual health. Education on ICT safety must better consider the adolescents' need – and right – to learn and explore, including learning about sex, instead of conveying messages in a 'preaching tone' that is likely to have little impact. Adolescents must be informed about which behaviours carry which risks, instead of simply being told not to engage in them.

Indeed, it is absolutely essential to reconcile the basic features of teenage behaviour, such as exploring and testing boundaries, with their right to protection. In this regard, there seems to exist a marked conflict between adults' and adolescents' perceptions about 'inappropriate' behaviours online, and even about what constitutes a sexually harmful interaction. As in the case of children exploited in prostitution and those engaged in 'compensated dating', victims of sexual exploitation through ICTs do not usually see themselves as such, even when they engage in high-risk or self-destructive behaviour and present other symptoms that clearly indicate harm. This poses several problems, not only in terms of education/prevention, but also in terms of attracting them to therapy and other care services, since naming them 'victims' and treating them as such more often than not pushes them away and totally blocks communication. Even when these adolescents reach adulthood, they may still consider such experiences as unproblematic.

At a recent meeting involving Internet savvy youth, they argued that, as celebrities were exposing themselves and their sexuality in various media, youngsters also had the right to do so in their closed profiles and share them with their peers, in secure networks. They noted that adults make multiple assumptions about what young people should be doing, but often prescribe behaviours that they themselves do not always follow. This is highly hypocritical, especially considering the widespread availability of all kinds of sexualised images.

Gender-related misconceptions could also be hindering effective interventions. In Sweden, for example, there is an indication that girls, as much as boys, are accessing child pornography online, and that boys may be selling sex online more than girls. These trends are similar in all countries in the Baltic area. In India, research has shown that boys also are being photographed in nude poses, though it is unclear how such materials are subsequently used, especially as there is no mention of them in police databases.

Interventions needed (research, law enforcement, forensic, psychosocial approaches, awareness raising, prevention etc.) based on current typology of victims (e.g., 'voluntary'), offenders and images; reluctance of children to share information on their Internet activities

Interventions - at the levels of prevention, law enforcement, psychosocial treatments etc. - need to be planned according to the type of victim. In particular, children and young people cannot be grouped into the same category, as their levels of vulnerability and resilience are different. It is important to design interventions according to their protective and non-protective factors; how different age groups use and interact on the Internet; which age groups generate illicit images of themselves and/or others; and the kind of perpetrator that goes for each specific age group.

Interventions must also be based on the type of offenders: organised crime, paedophile networks, individuals who undertake grooming and solicitation online, young people, etc. Criminal justice responses, in particular, should better consider the different behaviours of offenders and the age of the child victim. Ongoing support to abusers and long-term rehabilitation processes are required as well.

Accordingly, as the issue of sexual exploitation of children though ICTs becomes more and more complex, the related terminology - especially the legal terminology - needs to be rethought to adequately reflect the harm and to clearly define each type of abuse/crime. This impacts on the ability to effectively counteract them, enabling adequate policies and interventions.

At the same time, while there is a need for sharper focus when presenting proposals and recommendations to governments and other key stakeholders, there are concerns that too much discrimination between categories of children and offenders (children and juveniles, paedophiles and those who may also have a sexual interest in youngsters etc.) could be counterproductive in terms of fostering action. Such categories, thus, need to be defined in ways that facilitate the taking of concrete actions.

Child pornography and the sexual exploitation of children through ICTs are increasingly related to the ways that online socialisation takes place, common expressions of interests and how relationships are formed. For example, there is concern that adolescents' generation of sexualised or pornographic images of themselves and their peers may foster demand and predatory behaviour. Thus, the adolescents' expression of their sexuality becomes their vulnerability, because of the way their sexuality is interpreted. Hence, interventions must be based on the various forms of online interactions currently taking place, instead of focusing mainly on aspects such as not disclosing personal details to strangers. Also, children need to be educated about sexually harmful behaviour.

There is also a need to devise ways to motivate children and adolescents to report abuse, and to seek assistance and care when they experience harm. Children who suffer sexual abuse online and through ICTs do not wish their parents to know what they have been doing online, are afraid of what their friends may think and are also afraid of having their computers taken away. Even when reporting their experiences, they do not want further involvement with law enforcers and other agencies. They mistrust these entities and think that they will be misunderstood, judged upon and face the circumstances of criminal justice and welfare systems. Children actually have good reason to feel this way, as a focus on the wellbeing of child victims is lacking within the criminal justice system of many countries. Sometimes the parents themselves do not want to have their children exposed for various reasons, including denial that a problem has occurred and fear that the system will re-victimise them. It is noted that similar difficulties occur in relation to trafficking in children, as victims are rarely willing to testify and a great deal of effort is required from social workers to gain the trust of victims and their parents. Apart from the offer of protection and tailored treatment from the outset, some form of restitution could be useful in increasing disclosure and reporting, as well as fostering confidence for collaboration and providing some sense of compensation for the abuse suffered (a restitution fund could be created for this purpose, using the proceeds of fines collected from perpetrators). Furthermore, gay, lesbian and transgendered adolescents might be particularly reluctant to disclose online abuses or to come forward to consult with social workers. These groups require more specific approaches.

An issue that was discussed in terms of interventions is whether certain types of crimes should be prioritised by the police. Certain countries have a tendency to prioritise grooming, for instance. Indeed, prioritising may be the only viable option for many developing countries that do not have the resources to do multiple interventions on multiple categories of crime. It therefore might be more strategic for child rights advocates to propose a set of priority actions to the governments of countries that have fewer resources, perhaps as part of a tiered plan of action (i.e., focus on certain offences in year one, focus on new categories of offences in year two, etc.).

Statistics currently available do not offer much guidance in terms of which offences require more attention, as information is rarely recorded, for example, on self-generated images. Grooming seems to be receiving significant attention in comparison to, for instance, the production of images of sexual abuse. There is a need for law enforcement data on the different forms of child sexual exploitation online and the children affected; how many suffer offline sexual abuse facilitated by online interactions; the number of victims per offender; estimates of how many children are being abused but not identified; etc. When presenting recommendations to policy makers and requesting that resources are allocated to combat child abuse imagery and the sexual exploitation of children through ICTs, one should present solid evidence to justify a list of concrete actions that must be undertaken. Good policy is based on good research/evidence.

In this regard, databases are crucial. Given the global - and virtual - nature of such crimes, one priority action would be to have a unique team to manage a centralised database of cases/images - such as the INTERPOL image database and G8 Project and also the VGT - in order to speed up the identification of victims and offenders. This would also be useful in terms of better determining the type of offenses taking place and their scale, and thus defining which counteractions are required accordingly. Unfortunately, the political understanding and support is not there yet to allow for the creation of a global centralised database, and at this stage it is unrealistic to anticipate collaboration from all countries for this purpose. Nevertheless, this kind of database could be built up through regional initiatives that can be interlinked for effective implementation.

Furthermore, there is a need to ensure that governments and law enforcers take actions as effectively as is required. A recent case in point is the intervention by the Russian Government against organised crime activities which resulted in the shut down of a major host of online child abuse images. This action has had such a significant impact that Russia is no longer listed as a major host of online child abuse images, and the US is suddenly listed as hosting 80% of the online child abuse images in the world.

> **A total of 247 child pornography websites on Runet, a Russian Internet domain, were shut down in the first six months of 2007, according to a spokesman for Russia's Interior Ministry. Speaking in Vienna at an Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) conference on combating the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet, the spokesman said that the number of crimes linked to child pornography in Russia totalled 46 in the first six months of 2007, while in 2006 the number of such crimes was estimated at 248. Amendments to current legislation were also made, toughening punishments for child pornography crimes.**

There are other similar examples of State intervention leading to the speedy shut down of hosts of illegal websites. It must be acknowledged that very often the necessary political will is lacking, not to mention that resources are simply not made available. In particular, the commitment at the G8 level, as the G8 has not yet implemented the level of follow-up action required. The way forward in designing adequate interventions at various levels is quite clear, and the technology required is already available. The key concern now is how to communicate the way forward to the global community in a manner that fosters the required actions.

Finally, as contradictory legal definitions across countries severely impede collaboration and the exchange of images and legal information among law enforcement, another priority is to harmonise legal definitions across countries, as well as between regional and international instruments. There is also a need to develop memorandums of understanding (MOUs) at various levels to facilitate collaboration across jurisdictions and systems to increase global representation in initiatives such as the Virtual Global Taskforce.

Legal and law enforcement responses and obstacles.

Key issues

- Critical examination of developments in enactment of relevant laws and procedures, international harmonisation of laws, and the tensions between the language of illegality and harm.

- Discussion of demographics, the role of databases and the problem of the world's invisible children that child abuse images reveal.

- Examination of mechanisms of coordination among and across key agencies and actors to enhance law enforcement and victim identification.

- Analysis of the procedural, legal and practical difficulties of gathering meaningful data about convictions involving internet-related crime and youth entering the criminal justice system and child protection services due to victimisation or offending.

- Ways forward in intelligence analysis that offer a more discriminating understanding of the offending process and the implications of online and offline abusive practices in relation to children.

INTERPOL's Child Abuse Image Database (ICAID) and the main obstacles in the identification of victims and offenders

by Uri Sadeh

One of INTERPOL's primary tools in combating the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, particularly on the Internet, is the INTERPOL Child Abuse Image Database (ICAID). Created in 2001, the ICAID provides the means for national law enforcement to share criminal intelligence relating to the production and distribution of online child abuse material within the international police community. The database contains hundreds of thousands of images of child sexual abuse submitted by local police authorities in INTERPOL member countries (186 member countries at present). These images constitute concrete criminal evidence. Once the images have been sent to INTERPOL's headquarters, child protection experts (three at the moment) in the Trafficking in Human Beings Sub-directorate use the ICAID's image recognition software to compare details and connect images from the same series of abuse or images taken in the same location with different victims. This is the primary step towards the identification of child abuse victims and their location.

An example of this process involves a set of images of the same children featured on a CD with the logo of a famous French chain, FNAC, a shopping bag from another well-known French outlet and school materials in French. This indicated that the abuse had been committed in France and eventually led to the identification and location of three abused children from the same family in northern France.

While in 2001, 30 victims were identified through the ICAID, in August 2008 alone, approximately 701 victims from 35 countries were identified. Cooperation takes place mainly between police forces from North America and Europe, hence, these are the regions where most of the identified victims come from.

> **Although boys are also being victimised, they are usually under identified**.

Another way in which the ICAID has proved useful is in determining whether seized images of child abuse have been distributed or not. This has important implications for sentencing, as non-distribution would result in reduced penalties for offenders.

With regard to representation, INTERPOL operates a secure network using Microsoft Grove to communicate online with around 50 investigators in 35 countries, sharing materials and benefiting from each other's expertise when analysing the images. The representation is mainly concentrated in Europe and North America, with one representative from South America, one from Africa and no representatives at all from Asia.

INTERPOL has recently started to publicise the details of wanted criminals in the media and on its website as part of its public appeals. These appeals are known as 'blue notices'. This strategy has proved to be extremely successful in terms of motivating the public to provide leads. Christopher Neil, a Canadian citizen wanted for abusing children in South East Asian countries, was arrested in Thailand in 2007 thanks to INTERPOL's initiative to feature his photograph in a public appeal on its website, which was followed by extensive publicity worldwide. A Norwegian child abuser was arrested only 48 hours after a public appeal.

Locating the place of the abuse and the abused child is severely hampered when the images seized do not give any indication of the location/country, even if the faces of the child and the offender are clearly shown, as this creates difficulties in terms of working with specific national police.

Difficulties related to exchanging information with law enforcers across countries remain another major problem. In an effort to address this, and as part of a G8 initiative, INTERPOL is presently developing a new system under which an international database will be directly accessible by national police. This new database has the potential to facilitate enormously the work of 'end-users', i.e., national police investigators themselves, as they would be able to do the searches themselves and move forward with their investigations more quickly without having to liaise extensively with INTERPOL. It is hoped that this new system will be operational in early 2009.

Another obstacle to INTERPOL's work is that, among all the 186 member countries, only 35 actually contribute to the ICAID by sharing their seized images. It is hoped that the new system mentioned above will also dramatically improve collaboration in this regard.
Countries in which computer usage is less advanced also pose problems in terms of investigation efficiency, especially as INTERPOL's investigations are very much based on computer technology.

Lack of coordination within member countries also needs to be addressed. For example, a local police unit can forward a complaint to INTERPOL from a small town, but if the country has no centralised unit to coordinate the investigations and communications the efficiency of the whole process is severely compromised. Thus, it would be important to have centralised police units in place to deal with crimes related to child abuse imagery.

In addition, the legislation in place in certain countries severely limits the sharing of materials and information by, for instance, forbidding the transfer of pornographic materials outside the country's borders. Legal amendments in such cases are urgently required to create an exception for the exchange of evidence between law enforcers.

Indeed, legal reform with a view to criminalising all the acts related to child pornography and the sexual exploitation of children through ICTs, and to harmonising legal definitions across countries, must be urgently promoted. For example, a large amount of the child pornography encountered online consists of pictures of children nude or in sexual poses, usually produced in a studio environment. This kind of material is very popular with abusers. National legislations must clearly spell out that these are not artistic materials: they are being used for the sexual arousal of consumers, they fuel the market for child pornography and they do constitute a form of abuse. It is not uncommon to find that numerous images come from the same studio and feature the same children, some of them very young, who sometimes also happen to be identified in sexual abuse images. This shows that such children are likely to be sexually abused apart from taking part in 'modelling' pictures.

Additionally, very few member countries involve social workers in the investigations to try to minimise the trauma of the victims. Such involvement would be highly recommended.

Schools are places that most victims pass through and obtaining the cooperation of school staff in identifying child victims would be invaluable to facilitating the work of law enforcers. This could entail educating school staff about child sexual abuse – perhaps also showing them how these images are a record of the suffering an abused child actually goes through – as well as developing a database available to a vetted network of headmasters, on a secure website, so that they could actively assist in the identification of victimised children.

Cooperation with NGOs has proved to be critical. In the last five years, 2700 investigators from 111 countries received hands-on training thanks to a partnership with the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC). Funding from NGOs has also enabled the capacity building of police forces in various countries, in Africa in particular.

Inconsistent approaches in legislation on child pornography

by Alisdair Gillespie

While at the last two world congresses against commercial sexual exploitation of children the lack of legislation on child pornography was identified as a key gap, this has now been addressed in several countries, as well as in international law. However, as the sexual exploitation of children in pornography and through ICTs becomes increasingly complex, it is clear that some of the legal definitions 'agreed' to at the Second World Congress, held seven years ago in 2001, are no longer pertinent in the current scenario and have proved to be less useful than anticipated. There is an indication that many of the laws in place present serious flaws. This certainly needs to be discussed at the forthcoming World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

Altogether, the terminology related to child pornography needs to be rethought. To start with, the term 'child pornography' prevails in most legal provisions and somehow disregards child sexual exploitation materials other than imagery. The law usually deals with 'real' child pornography imagery only, while other materials such as short stories, sound files and computer-generated images are not covered and are thus legal, even though they do constitute child exploitation. Live child pornography, for example, is hardly dealt with, not even in key related international instruments, unless it is recorded or somehow disseminated. The Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (Optional Protocol) probably has the widest definition of what consists child pornography, defined as ''any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes'', which includes cartoons, manga etc. Other instruments still limit their discussions to images. Lack of a wider definition for what constitutes child pornography leaves out a substantial amount of exploitative materials.

When examining key international instruments, it is of great concern that they usually contradict each other and are not legally binding. Among four key instruments - namely the Optional Protocol, the Council of Europe's Convention on Cyber Crime, the Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, and the European Union (EU) Council's Framework Decision on Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography (Framework Decision) - only the latter is legally binding in the European context and can be directly applied in domestic law. EU members are bound by framework decisions and these have domestic legal effect. Only this instrument can be cited in a court of law without the need to refer to domestic law. As a matter of fact, one of the problems with the Optional Protocol and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is that there is no way a citizen can actually make a complaint on the basis of these instruments. Apart from the fact that these instruments are not legally binding, very often national legislations simply ignore them, as international law cannot be pleaded in a domestic court without ratification and subsequent legal amendments, steps which are often neglected. In the UK, for example, the age of criminal responsibility is actually 10 years old, a provision which totally ignores the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

As a matter of fact, reaching consensus about what constitutes a 'child' is a key first step to properly addressing the problem of sexual exploitation of children in pornography. The four instruments cited above not only present varying definitions of what child pornography is, but also of what a child is. For example, the provisions in the Convention on Cyber Crime and the Framework Decision link the definition to the age of sexual consent in each State, which ranges from 13 to 18 years of age across European countries.

Furthermore, several acts and materials that constitute sexual exploitation of children are not deemed illegal across different countries and in the above mentioned international instruments. Viewing child pornography is illegal in some countries, such as the UK, but not in others, such as Ireland. The Optional Protocol is completely silent about viewing; the Framework Decision only criminalises the acquisition of pornography; and the Convention on Cyber Crime addresses viewing in the context of procuring child pornography, in the sense that procuring would entail viewing. The only instrument that expressly criminalises viewing is the Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

With regard to possessing child pornography, three of these instruments suggest that it should be criminalised, but ultimately leave it to the member States to determine.

Fictitious child pornography, such as simulated child pornographic images, pseudo-photographs (e.g., using the photo of an adult and making it look like a child), computer-generated images of children, images featuring characters that look like children, cartoons etc. are not unlawful in most countries. Given the technology now available to create images, even the distinction between a photograph and a cartoon is sometimes blurred, which hampers the work of law enforcers.

This leads to the important of issue of how to deal with materials that are not classified as pornography, but are, nevertheless, used as such by offenders. For example, images that feature children running nude on the beach are not classified as child pornography, but are increasingly used as pornography by individuals with a sexual interest in children. How should the law deal with the actual use of 'low-level' images instead of their actual content? The same goes for virtual pornography and materials such as manga. While solid evidence of their influence on offenders is still lacking, examinations of offenders' collections have shown that these often include manga, which means that manga is used for sexual arousal. Instead of focusing on just the content of materials, the law must take into account the actual use of materials for sexual arousal – even though this would be challenging and several loopholes would certainly persist in this regard. This is an important issue to be addressed at the forthcoming World Congress III.

> **In Japan, child pornographic materials such as manga – which are a type of cartoon featuring child characters in highly sexualised or pornographic situations – are legal on the basis that there is no evidence that they can lead to harmful behaviour. However, it is a fact that offenders' collections of images often feature manga, which shows that these materials are being used in ways that make children sexual objects. It is unfortunate that key international instruments do not criminalise this type of material either, especially as the Japanese private sector alleges that, in the absence of criminalisation of manga in the domestic law, they would respond to international consensus on the issue. While international standards may influence domestic laws, the international legal framework is still too weak in many aspects. As such, perhaps good national legislations should be used as models for advocacy work.**

Most importantly, illegal online activities conducted by adolescents, such as accessing child pornography and self-generated child pornographic images, are yet to be properly considered. In this regard, the penalisation of children (i.e., those under 18 years of age) urgently needs to be debated in order to reach a common ground, as they cannot be liable to the same punishment that an adult would face. Whereas a mere caution should be unacceptable in the case of adult offenders, the same does not apply when the offender is a child. In a certain way, seeing nude pictures of fellow teens amounts to peeping into the girls' changing room, something done by past generations that has always been rather natural. Why is it then that doing so through the Internet is considered a criminal offence that can cause teenagers to be listed on sex offenders registries, have their employment opportunities compromised and suffer all sorts of serious consequences? Certain types of adolescent behaviour should be dealt with from a child protection perspective, discussed as an issue of discipline and education about what is socially and morally acceptable, instead of being treated as a criminal justice matter. Only one of the four key instruments cited above expressly mentions adolescent activity and suggests that discipline would be the most appropriate intervention. This shows the degree to which this important issue has been neglected.

It is thus essential, apart from reconsidering legal definitions, to harmonise legal definitions across key international and regional instruments and also across countries. Current legal gaps are severely impeding the exchange of information between law enforcers from different countries and, consequently, the arrest and conviction of child abusers.

Harmonising national legislations certainly presents greater challenges, as key concepts may be viewed in radically different ways in different cultures – e.g., what is a child, what constitutes child pornography, is it acceptable to just view child pornography, is virtual child pornography acceptable etc..

It would also be useful to have international agreements regarding how illegal websites are to be removed and within what timeframe. Most often, after a hotline complaint is made, it is found that the child pornographic material is hosted in another country, and the process to get the material removed in the other country is usually highly inefficient. Moreover, even if removal is secured, the illegal content or website are often instantly mirrored in another URL.

Extending jurisdiction on the basis of the location of the victim, and the offender, is another fundamental measure to ensure increased protection for children.

The Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT)

by Victoria Baines

The Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT) is a multiple-approach initiative from law enforcement whereby global level collaborations are established with several key stakeholders in order to tackle the various dimensions of sexual exploitation of children through ICTs, and thus combat it more effectively. The following are some of the activities of the VGT:

• To address the need to educate children on online safety as a key prevention strategy, education packages have been produced targeting younger children, who are increasingly using ICTs. Education packages have also been developed for young people who may engage in illegal or 'deviant' behaviours online.

• To identify and locate offenders and victims, a reporting channel has been set up to allow access to first-hand information that is not always available to law enforcement agencies. In addition, VGT uses the INTERPOL GROVE system.

• To deter offenders, VGT undertakes operations, such as the very successful Operation PIN, which received a lot of publicity a couple of years ago. The operation led to numerous arrests all over the world after law enforcers posed as paedophiles and child pornography buyers in order to obtain access to offenders.

Building knowledge about offenders', and also victims', behaviour is a very important element, especially in view of evolving trends and challenges. A major challenge currently is the convergence of environments where sexual exploitation may take place, e.g., instant messaging and videos are now used on social networking sites, mobile phones are used to produce and distribute child pornography etc. This 'convergence' enables offenders to get comprehensive information on potential victims through various sources, which brings new risks.

This may partially explain why grooming has now become more aggressive, often based on threats and blackmailing rather than on persuasion and manipulation. As reported by children, grooming increasingly involves coercion and blackmailing, which are more sophisticated according to the technical proficiency of the predator. For example, groomers are now sending Trojan to the victims, which can open their webcam suddenly and capture their image, as well as another virus that blocks access to the child's own files. Children/adolescents may then be coerced to perform certain acts in order to regain access to their files or to prevent their images from being distributed.

Another key challenge is the fact that the commercial distribution of child pornography currently represents a very small percentage of the problem compared to the exchange of child pornography through peer-to-peer networks (file sharing), including self-generated images. The production and distribution of child pornography is increasingly related to adolescents' urge to socialise with peers, and is linked to new notions of privacy and of what can be shared in terms of personal data. In this connection, opinions expressed online and the type of relationships that are established online deserve as much attention as grooming and online solicitation.

> **The environment is changing: new opportunities for distributing child pornography images must be ascertained, without forgetting conventional media like DVDs. In India for example, it seems that images done by peers are mainly distributed through mobile phones; then they are sold in DVDs for commercial purposes.**

More effort is required on the part of the private sector to combat these new trends, which are partly enabled by the technologies recently created by the IT industry. Internet users also need to be made more aware of the implications of using certain devices. For example, purchasing an unsecured wireless connection could make a customer liable to child pornography-related charges, as offenders may be using their connection and their offences will be traced back to the customer's unique IP address.

Lastly, membership of the Virtual Global Taskforce must be increased if this initiative is to be made more effective. Partnerships must be established in a much larger number of countries and regions, as well as with a wider range of stakeholders, including NGOs.

Links between viewing indecent images of children and contact sexual abuse: issues from research

by David Middleton

The links between viewing child pornographic images and committing sexual offences against children remain somewhat unclear, as a number of research studies have indicated that only a small percentage of those prosecuted for viewing actually came to commit abuse later on. Moreover, studies that examined the conviction histories of Internet offenders suggest very low levels of prior sexual offence convictions against children. In relation to Internet offenders' reconviction rates, few studies currently exist, primarily due to the relatively recent nature of this form of offensive behaviour.

Clearly, some Internet offenders do move into contact sexual abuse, or are involved in both online and offline abuse, but the majority do not. Factors such as previous criminal history could help identify those most likely to be involved in contact sexual abuse. The fact that viewers of child pornography do not seem to necessarily engage or have a strong interest in sex with children may indicate that their 'resistance' mechanisms are working well (e.g., fear of prosecution). On this note, it should be emphasised that only giving caution to child pornography viewers could be dangerous. Viewers should be prosecuted immediately to reinforce such 'resistance' mechanisms. Also, it is important to bear in mind that studies focusing on convicted offenders tells us little about those who are never caught or convicted.

Linkages between the type of image and the risk of reconviction are not apparent either. While the literature supports the view that those who sexually abuse very young children tend to reconvict at a higher rate and abuse children of both sexes, it is not clear whether this is also the case for those who view indecent images of very young children. In fact, an individual who is able to obtain strong arousal from images of children clothed or partially

clothed may have a greater problem of deviant arousal, and therefore pose more risk to children, than an individual who requires images depicting sexual penetration. Similarly, the number of images held by an individual may not indicate the risk of reconviction. Clearly there is a need for further research on the extent to which the type and volume of child pornography materials accessed by offenders can be indicators of risk, especially as the length of sentences passed by courts, as well as the monitoring and treatment of offenders, could be based on erroneous interpretations as to the level of risk posed by individual offenders. Current assumptions are not adequately supported, as most existing studies are based on small samples and population bias, or tend to focus on 'hard core' images and large collections, which disregards the fact that many abusers are aroused by 'soft' imagery.

Are viewers of child pornography imagery (Internet offenders) and abusers (contact offenders) similar psychologically? Research comparing both types of offenders has suggested a number of similarities, in particular intimacy deficits and problems with emotional regulation, which are factors identified with a higher risk of sexual recidivism. Intimacy deficits have been associated with the need to engage in a sexual relationship with another person to alleviate loneliness, while emotional dysregulation may lead to offending behaviour in the presence of strong negative mood states. In conjunction with the use of sex as a coping or soothing strategy, individuals with these traits could seek sexualised images of children to meet their sexual needs. Those who present a higher proportion of these dynamic risk factors are more likely to be involved in, or move into, contact sexual abuse against children. Studies have also found that there were significant differences between internet offenders and a normative population in terms of both interpersonal functioning and affective difficulties. Altogether, more research is needed on the profile and behaviour of offenders. In particular, assessors should look for evidence of dynamic risk factors (particularly intimacy deficits, antisocial cognitions and personality), as well as previous conviction history, to identify those who are more likely to be involved in both viewing and contact offences. This should also inform specific offender treatment approaches and enhance offenders' rehabilitation.

Once again it should be noted that, even though most people who view indecent images do not personally engage in contact child sexual abuse, all those who view child pornography images must be prosecuted rather than merely cautioned, as they fuel the market for child pornography and the demand for new images to be produced, which means that more children will be sexually abused. There is indeed a need to make the links between child pornography and child sexual abuse more explicit through campaigns, especially as most viewers do not realise that viewing alone can cause harm to children, and would even disapprove of child sexual abuse. Media campaigns that highlight these links may act as a deterrent to some and therefore should be pursued.

A successful model for hotlines and filtering systems

by Peter Pilley

In New Zealand, an interesting partnership between ISPs, law enforcement and NGOs is an example of good practice in combating child abuse imagery. A hotline operated by ECPAT New Zealand feeds information to ISPs via law enforcement. The ISPs then block access to illegitimate websites using a special filter software, including websites containing child abuse imagery. The project has been successful due to a combination of factors.

First, the filter makes use of very effective technology based on a Swedish-designed model tested by a local ISP named Watchdog. Key features include the following:

- The filter is a combination of http proxy filtering and packed-level filtering, which limits some of the drawbacks found in existing systems such as Cleanfeed.

- The filter is very cost-effective to implement since it uses FREE BSD, an open source program that can be used freely by anyone without the need to buy a license. Hence, this filtering model entails no costs whatsoever for ISPs. In fact, as no laws compel ISPs to participate in this initiative, their cooperation has been entirely voluntary, as in the case of British Telecom's use of Cleanfeed in the UK.

- To prevent 'false positives' (i.e., marking/blocking suspected websites that later became legitimate), the entire list of URLs is reviewed every month, and a complaince system is in place through which the hosts/owners of blocked websites can easily request the removal of unjustified blocking.

- When an Internet user tries to access or is led to a blocked webpage, clear information is given on why the page was removed and what steps will be taken as follow up.

The project's success can also be attributed to the partnership established with the Department of Internal Affairs and ECPAT New Zealand, which manages the hotline. The credibility afforded by partnering with an NGO has been a key factor in terms of motivating the public to report, and public response has indeed been overwhelming. In addition, ECPAT New Zealand reports are relayed straight into the ISP's filtering system, which allows for fast decisions to be made on whether to refer them to the police or take other steps. It is invaluable to have an NGO participating in the process of setting up and managing hotlines, as well as sharing information and lists of illicit websites/web pages with law enforcement agencies. The involvement of this key sector must, by all means, be fostered in similar initiatives.

To make this initiative even more effective, increased collaboration needs to be established with law enforcement and commercial filtering systems - for example, in terms of enabling both to use the same lists. Commercial filtering packages that work on client-side computers are based on lists that may not be the same as the lists of hotline databases. In many cases the commercial filtering packages rely on separate providers for their lists. It would be very productive if the lists compiled from the reports generated by various hotlines could be used more widely and by a larger number of stakeholders.

How do we address the tendency towards criminalisation of adolescents' sexually problematic behaviour?

While some adolescents who have harmful sexual behaviours online may require a criminal justice intervention, in certain countries and in certain cases there is little understanding of their behaviour and extremely harsh punishment is given to such young people. This ignores the fact that they are still children and that the Convention on the Rights of the Child calls on us to recognise their lack of maturity – and often lack of guidance and support too – and take a rights-based approach in addressing their behaviour through measures that ensure their best interest while protecting others.

Thus, which approaches would be most appropriate when dealing with children and adolescents with problematic online behaviour? There is solid research and evidence indicating that early interventions and therapy practiced on children exhibiting sexually problematic behaviour of this kind is effective in preventing engagement in these practices again. Therapeutic interventions need not be extremely sophisticated. The key point seems to be ensuring that interventions to address deviant and harmful behaviours occur at an early stage. In Germany, for example, a model scheme that uses a therapeutic approach to deal with children (especially boys) over 12 years of age who show sexually problematic/harmful behaviour has confirmed that treatment is more effective when provided at early stages and in a very supportive manner. Ongoing assessment of the child also seems to be a good model, which has been tested in countries such as Sweden. There are also projects in Norway working with young offenders' families, which is considered to be an important element in terms of good preventative procedures and for long-term rehabilitation. In fact, the impact on the child's family, which also suffers the consequences of the child's offensive behaviour, needs to be better addressed as part of a more effective rehabilitation strategy for children who engage in sexually harmful behaviour.

As mentioned previously, many countries take a punitive stand and young offenders are usually sent to detention centres (sometimes mixed with adults due to a lack of facilities). Reforms of such practices are required. Ukraine is presently considering the application of fines to the parents, as well as community service by the children exhibiting sexually problematic behaviours. This reflects deterrence goals, but lacks necessary rehabilitative elements. On the other hand, Kazakhstan, for example, has adopted a rehabilitation model that appears harsh, but which seems to impact positively on children's behaviour.

Should adolescents that exhibit sexually harmful behaviour online be included in child sex offender registers? England, for example, recently changed the law in this regard and children who commit offences are now listed in a different register. This is still potentially damaging, for example, in terms of securing future employment.

It must be noted that indiscriminate criminalisation of children's and adolescents' online actions poses certain immediate and long-term risks, as 'innocent' behaviour could be captured and unjustly punished. It also creates opportunities for blackmailing and coercion, e.g., predators may send child abuse images to children and threaten to denounce them for possessing or viewing such materials.

When discussing the harm that is caused by the sexually inappropriate behaviour of adolescents, it is also necessary to consider the sexual rights of children. In this regard, children may seek sexual/nude images of other children in the course of exploring their own developing sexuality, as is their right. In a case where they are penalised for such actions, the response is inappropriate and unjust. Boys and girls take pictures of themselves in sexual poses. Should the possession of their own images be criminalised? Do they not have the right to photograph their own bodies and even to share such pictures with friends? Despite the underlying dangers of such behaviour, preventative responses that address their rights are needed, rather than simply criminalising the behaviour. The sexual rights of children are very often denied, debated and misunderstood. In many countries, there is a tendency to be very punitive towards adolescents' 'wrong' sexual behaviours, rather than utilising educational, rehabilitative and counselling responses.

The law, in particular, usually lumps together different types of activities, without considering nuances. Contradictions related to adolescents' sexual rights and sexual behaviours are found in many laws, often in relation to notions of what a 'child' is. For instance, a 16 year-old adolescent may be allowed to give sexual consent and thus have sex with the partners they wish; but if they, or their boyfriend/girlfriend, take sexualised/nude pictures of themselves, they are deemed to be committing a crime.

Differences in relation to the cultural context need to be considered too, especially as children from more traditional cultural backgrounds can be exposed to very alien sexual conduct through the Internet, without any education or guidance in their immediate physical world to assist them to make sense of it. This has the potential to instigate risky or harmful behaviours. In the Philippines, for example, local youngsters are still quite conservative and experience confusion regarding some of the very forward sexual models they find on the Internet.

In conclusion, it was noted that children and adolescents who engage in problematic sexual behaviours online should be dealt with within the welfare system, instead of the criminal justice system. There is already a tendency to decriminalise problematic sexual behaviours committed by children, for example, it is acknowledged that prostituted children should never be penalised (although they are still penalised in many countries). In time, the same understanding could be recognised for offences related to sexual exploitation of children through ICTs. This is already beginning to happen in some countries that have taken the lead and moved away from treating children as offenders for such behaviours, and from the use of the criminal justice system and child offender registries.

How do we balance the role of the criminal justice system and child protection imperatives in cases of adolescent sexually harmful behaviour online?

When examining child abuse images, law enforcers encounter more difficulties in building a case when the images involve adolescents, as it can be harder to ascertain that the children depicted are below 18 years of age. A qualified person usually makes such determinations, and if it is decided that the image features a child, then the website is blocked and an investigation may begin. European law enforcers have confirmed that it is much easier to work on cases involving prepubescent victims, as it is clear that it is a child that was victimised; this also facilitates cooperation with different police forces. Indeed, as law enforcement agencies are unable to manage the vast amounts of images seized, they tend to focus on those cases which are more clear-cut and will offer fewer problems when it comes to prosecuting and sanctioning. It is a practical choice.

There are different approaches regarding how to deal with illegal websites. US law enforcers tend to focus on the publishers, i.e., the individuals who put up the websites featuring child abuse images. Because the police sometimes need more time to investigate to determine who is running and accessing certain websites, some of these sites continue to be accessible even after the police have become aware of them. In the UK, on the other hand, it is believed that the longer the website is available, the more damage it can cause.

Difficulties in sharing information between stakeholders remain a key problem. For example, the New Zealand police share their list of websites featuring child-abuse-related content with law enforcement agencies from Europe and the US, however, sharing them with organisations other than police agencies, even credible and established NGO such as the Internet Watch Foundation, is not allowed. This limits the possibilities of identifying victims and offenders.

Facilitating the sharing of information across borders with a view toward identifying children and offenders is a key challenge. This is increasingly taking place between New Zealand and Australia, facilitated by the Virtual Global Taskforce as well as INTERPOL, through their database. On the other hand, EUROPOL recently found that Ukrainian children had been exploited in pornography, but for policy reasons refused to disclose further information to the Ukrainian police, which seriously hindered the investigations.

Having one single database of child abuse images, namely the INTERPOL Child Abuse Image Database, is invaluable to facilitating investigations. It is a fact that 95% of the images circulating today are the same ones that were found last year and the year before, i.e., a large number of them are recycled. It is highly counterproductive to have police on other continents investigating images that have already been investigated elsewhere. Indeed, among the main purposes of the INTERPOL database are avoiding duplicative work and increasing the success of investigations and interventions.

This is a key reason why INTERPOL actually advises against the establishment of multiple databases. All the more so since, in only a few months, the new and more user-friendly version of the INTERPOL database will be launched, and a much larger number of law enforcement agencies will be able to upload and use it in their investigations. Training sessions are being planned to enable them to do so, although some form of prioritisation may be necessary as it would not be possible to have all countries joining the database at once. Staggered inclusion is more realistic.

On the other hand, some argue that having one global centralised database is not an achievable goal in the near future and a better approach could be to ensure that regional databases are in place within regional networks like ASEAN, especially since trusting relationships and partnerships already formed at the regional level may be more effective in ensuring concerted actions against child abuse imagery. This could be one of the reasons why only 35 countries are presently feeding into the INTERPOL database. INTERPOL claims, however, that this low participation is not due to issues of trust, but rather to the availability of the resources that enable trainings and the adoption of the necessary technology.

Resources are invested according to political interest. More lobbying efforts are required for governments to secure the necessary resources, infrastructure and capacity building to tackle child abuse imagery. Several countries do have the technical capacity and financial resources, but do not direct them toward tackling this particular issue more effectively. Countries that already have the necessary resources available - not only financial, but also in terms of technology and trained law enforcement - should cooperate more actively with the INTERPOL network, thus maximising the use of their resources. They should also engage in building capacity in countries that lack it.

It is important to bear in mind though, that the necessary infrastructure must be in place to make use of specialised resources, otherwise more investment will not result in action. For example, there have been cases where very sophisticated training was provided to police forces that did not have computers available and thus could not make any use of the knowledge transferred. This highlights the fact that it is essential that trainings are matched with the actual resources available in a given country and take into account the contexts in which they are to be applied, otherwise capacity building efforts will be rather pointless. The political plea should thus include the provision of necessary infrastructure to support action.

Lack of resources is still one of the main problems though, and enhanced strategies are needed to catalyse political response. This could include a campaign supported by internationally recognised figures.

Partnerships, across sectors and countries, are another way to overcome lack of resources, and constructive working relationships must be built up for this purpose. It is important to think strategically and not to limit consideration to financial aspects. Cambodia, for instance, has received large amounts of funding that did little to effectively address the problem in that country. However, the formation of a trusted network between NGOs and law enforcement agencies conducting investigations, including from the US, the UK and other European countries, has made a huge difference in terms of convictions

of foreigners sexually exploiting children in Cambodia. In Indonesia, the same thing happened when US and European law enforcement agencies established a stronger presence in the country to work with national police and combat cyber terrorism, as child exploitation units were subsequently set up within the cyber terrorism units. Also, Australian police forces are now connected to all provinces in Indonesia to facilitate information sharing. Britain provides another example, as the law enforcement agency, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), invited a child protection person from the well-known child rights NGO NSPCC to work closely with them, besides partnering with British Telecom and other key private companies.

In short, resources are certainly important, but equally valuable is having the right partners working together. Some of the most effective agencies tend to be the ones that work in specialist units where they build productive relationships with third parties such as NGOs, researchers, etc. Also effective are investigative bodies that have a common goal and can easily transcend political interests. In this regard, partnerships with NGOs and grassroots groups have particular value, as they often enable direct links with the community. Making use of their expertise, commitment and 'passion' also helps to draw the attention of governments and the general public. All concerned stakeholders – donour agencies, government, grassroots organisations and the private sector – should be involved and bring in their expertise and value. Mapping out each sector's strengths and the kind of role they play is very useful as an initial step towards fostering multiple-stakeholder collaboration against child abuse imagery.

The Financial Coalition against Child Pornography (FCACP) is a good example of successful partnership between different sectors. It includes the private sector (credit card companies and banks), NGOs and law enforcement (FBI). The FCACP was initiated in 2005, when the US stated that regulations would be imposed on the private sector if they did not take action to address the problem of child pornography. The coalition was created initially with the purpose of facilitating the sharing of lists of URLs that featured illegal content. Private companies started to collect and compile relevant information and then send these lists of URLs to law enforcement for them to investigate the suspects. One of the main reasons why this model has worked well is because there is no competition and all parties' interests are aligned – i.e., to avoid having regulations imposed by the Government. It took about a year to develop such a trusting relationship. When progress started to become visible, the global nature of the problem became more apparent, and the need to expand this partnership to also involve European institutions was made clear. Efforts in this regard are currently being undertaken in Europe, in the East Asia and Pacific region and also in Canada.

Similarly, the Internet Watch Foundation in the UK came into existence when the possibility of passing new laws was proposed, calling for arrests of the directors of ISPs that enabled the dissemination of child pornography.

Thus, it seems that government involvement can be a 'push' factor, and may be required sometimes to catalyse private sector involvement in such multi-sectoral collaborations. At the same time, building trust is also needed and is an important factor, which may require time.

Another similar coalition is now being slowly formed in Canada, involving NGOs, law enforcement, ISPs and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. The Canadian Government is actively promoting change, although some believe that there still may be a need for legal reform to compel all ISPs to use Cleanfeed filtering in Canada, as several ISPs still refrain from adopting filters and other control measures, arguing that they must protect the privacy of their customers.

One way to foster action at the government level and in terms of law reform is to draw attention to the linkages between the production and dissemination of child abuse images, and organised crime, highlighting that such criminal activities generate huge profits which are then channelled to other illegal activities. Also, while child abuse imagery is not known to be linked to terrorism, organised crime networks do operate across multiple criminal activities and this is of interest to political decision makers on all sides.

UK legislation constitutes a good model in terms of private sector responsibilities, although it does present gaps, for example, the ISPs' involvement is still voluntary. As in other countries, this has not been a major problem because ISPs in the UK are engaging in actions to combat child sexual abuse imagery, as they are aware that regulations could be imposed upon them otherwise.

Good models in terms of legislation and policies should be presented to governments to guide them. In particular, countries that have legislation that does not allow sharing of evidence, and thus obstructs the sharing of images between law enforcement agencies, should amended their laws.

There are also successful precedents that could be instrumental in building cooperation with the private sector. In this connection, the Council of Europe's guidelines on working with ISPs is a good resource and provides a framework that can be used or adapted in several countries.

Vulnerability and resilience, therapeutic responses.

Key issues

- A critical examination of the opportunities afforded by ICTs for self-generation by young people of material that may cause harm (e.g., the role of camera phones and the mobile Internet), and evidence of impact on children.

- A critical discussion of notions of vulnerability and resilience: what factors serve to protect or to provide a context for harm in virtual settings.

- An exploration of the factors related to children who engage in sexually aggressive behaviour online with other children, and measures for prevention and treatment.

- Psycho-social approaches to treatment and recovery in relation to harms experienced and perpetrated online. Models for best practice that consider developmental needs and cultural specificities.

Reaching out and assisting child victims of online sexual abuse: problematic areas and gaps

by Carl Göran Svedin

A number of studies have explored the similarities and differences between online and offline sexual abuse of children, especially in terms of vulnerability factors, disclosure and symptoms.

A large percentage of the underage victims of Internet-related sexual victimisation are in early and mid-adolescence, while conventional offline child molestation involves a large proportion of victims under 12 years of age.

Children and adolescents with a history of sexual or physical abuse may be particularly vulnerable to online sexual abuse, as prior abuse may trigger risky sexual behaviour both offline and online. Indeed, many of those who have received sexual suggestions by an adult, either online or offline, seem to present general risk behaviour, problems in their family or at school, or experiences of bullying, robbery and violence.

Ybarra, Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak (2007) investigated whether risky online behaviours increase the risk of online interpersonal victimisation (i.e., unwanted sexual solicitation or harassment). The risky online behaviour that was most often reported in their research was posting personal information (56%), followed by meeting someone online (43%), having people on a 'buddy list' that are known only online (35%), making a rude or nasty comment (28%), sending personal information (26%), downloading images from file-sharing programs (15%), visiting an X-rated website on purpose (13%), harassing or embarrassing someone (9%) and talking about sex with someone known only online (5%). Engaging in four types of risky online behaviours seemed to represent a tipping point for increased risk of online interpersonal victimisation. Swedish mental health professionals who meet young persons exposed to Internet-related sexual abuse are especially concerned about those who respond to sexual suggestions by taking part in sexual activities online or offline meetings for sexual purposes (Nyman, 2006).

In relation to disclosure of offline sexual abuse, it seems that most victims talk about it with friends within their own age group. Very few talk to professionals, and even fewer report the abuse to the police. Disclosure of online-related sexual abuse tends to be even rarer, as it has been found that children are actually more reluctant to disclose abuse when it has been documented. They tend to keep their experiences to themselves and are thus at risk for developing different kinds of problems later in their childhood or as adults. Research has also suggested links between disclosure and the severity of the abuse: the more severe the abuse suffered, the more children avoid talking about it to people they know well.

Child and adolescent victims of online sexual abuse tend to present symptoms such as depression and self-destructiveness, which are in fact similar to those found in victims of offline sexual abuse. They are also more likely to have a post-traumatic stress disorder than children and adolescents who suffered other types of Internet-related problems. In addition, they are more likely to run away from home or act out sexually.

In relation to young people who sell sex online, most commonly the contact with their clients/exploiters is established through common 'friends', rather than through the Internet as seemed to be the case some time ago. This trend could have changed again recently, and research is required to examine it. Selling sex is associated with substance abuse and many other difficulties, which need to be considered in therapy.

In conclusion, it seems essential to establish a dialogue with young people about their experiences online. As an initial step, first line professionals (such as teachers, nurses and social workers) need to ask questions about Internet use and possible problematic online experiences in their meetings with children and adolescents, as many of the at-risk children and adolescents may be hard to reach by prevention programmes created for the general population of Internet users. This obviously requires training to enable such professionals to adequately and successfully establish such a dialogue.

Developing peer support programmes is a key step to ensure that abused children receive help, especially since young people tend not to disclose the abuse suffered to adults. Furthermore, at the investigations stage, all children abused online must be assessed in relation to their mental health and offered therapy.

Positive attitudes, good coping abilities and a good family environment make a dramatic difference in terms of a quicker recovery.

Unfortunately, many professionals do not yet have knowledge about therapies tailored for child/adolescent victims of online sexual abuse. This knowledge needs to be built up urgently. It seems that the kind of therapies usually provided to children who were sexually abused offline (contact abuse) need to be adapted to those abused online, and include other approaches apart from trauma-focused behaviour therapy only. This is because children abused online tend to present certain symptoms that demand particular attention if the therapy is to be successful, such as continuous shame and guilty feelings, as they are aware that the images of their abuse are available 'forever'. This seems to be a key point to be dealt with in therapy.

Lack of access to therapy is another major problem. Even in a country such as Sweden, professional help is only available in the capital. The lack of support is even more acute in developing countries.

In conclusion, the need for victims of online sexual abuse to be referred to rehabilitation must be highlighted at the upcoming Third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. There is certainly a need to foster a learning process regarding therapies and promote cooperation on the part of law enforcers, health professionals, policy makers and other concerned actors. Only a very small percentage of child victims are actually identified and reached by the police and medical professionals. The vast majority are left to deal with the trauma suffered alone. Sadly, efforts to track and provide treatment to abused children located in other countries are usually unsuccessful, as local law enforcers, social workers and others invariably respond: "We do not know where they are now, we lost contact".

Developing better methods of support and treatment for child victims of sexual abuse online

by Linda Jonsson

BUP-Elefanten is a specialised unit in the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinic at the University Hospital of Linköping, Sweden. Its purpose is to offer treatment for child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse and/or physical abuse. BUP-Elefanten also carries out research, develops treatment methods and lectures on related topics. With financial support from the World Childhood Foundation, a three-year project was established in 2006 aimed at improving understanding on how and why children are sexually abused via new technologies, and developing better methods of support and treatment for victimised children. The project is called the Online Project and the first report, Abused Online, is available at the project's homepage: www.lio.se/onlineprojektet. The project's work agenda is focused on interviewing professionals who are in contact with victimised children, as well as children, and, when it is needed, offering therapy for victims or support to their therapists. The children targeted in the project are 0-18 year-olds who have been sexually abused via new technologies. This includes, for example, small children abused by paedophiles who have documented the abuse, but also adolescents publishing their own sexually abusive pictures and children that get sexually bullied by other children. Very little is known about how child victims of online sexual abuse cope, what kind of support or treatment they are offered and what kind of treatment they actually need/want. The experience of BUP-Elefanten and the Online Project is based on few cases and does not allow for many conclusions, but some tendencies have been clearly identified.

International research indicates that 70% of child victims of sexual abuse show symptoms. It is reasonable to believe that these figures may also apply to child victims of online sexual abuse. The experience of the Online Project suggests that very often the victims of online sexual abuse exhibit symptoms that child victims of offline sexual abuse also display, such as eating disorders, exhaustion, pseudo-maturity, aggression, depression, PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), low self-esteem, shame, guilt and anxiety, among others. These symptoms can be present in isolation or there may be a combination of several symptoms.

Not all children/adolescents examined throughout the project presented symptoms or expressed that they were not feeling well. But it is clear, from both international research and the project's clinical experience, that symptoms can appear later in life. Furthermore, many were quite convincing when telling the therapists that they were in total control of their lives and dispensed with any kind of support. For the untrained eye it is easy to believe in their competent story and choose not to offer any support. However, when the children fill in a psychological self-report form, the results often show that they do suffer from symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares or engagement in self-harming actions. When told about the results the children often confirm them. Hence, there is an indication that psychological self-report forms and similar tests can be a good complement to assessments.

An interesting case study illustrates the fact that sexually exploited children do suffer negative impacts, even if they deny them. A teenage girl, whose father contacted the project after discovering that she was selling sex, does not think that such behaviour is problematic. She engages in commercial sex three or four times a month, according to her, because she has a very 'expensive' lifestyle and needs extra income. Although this kind of prostitution is 'voluntary' and does not involve a facilitator in the exploitation of the child, psychological tests showed that she was suffering from nightmares, anxiety and other symptoms, clearly indicating that 'voluntary' prostitution does have a strong impact on the child. In contrast to children who suffer non-commercial sexual abuse, those engaged in commercial sex tend to deny its negative impact, sometimes on the wrong assumption that the remuneration received should compensate for whatever painful feelings they may have, and that, as such, they have 'no right' to complain about or even to acknowledge adverse reactions.

There seems to be three groups of child victims of online sexual abuse: 1) the 'fooled' (e.g., those who engage in webcam sex and later discover that their partner distributed the images on the Internet); 2) the 'risk-takers', who enjoy taking risks and transgressing; and 3) the 'self-destructive', who engage in harmful behaviours believing that living in such a way is okay, and have no intention of changing anything in their lives. Online risky behaviour or self-destructive ways of living can be a way for the child to ease anxieties. In terms of strategies to adequately protect these groups from online sexual abuse, awareness raising would be more effective with the 'fooled' group, while the risk-takers are much harder to reach and protect. The self-destructive group would be the least prone and motivated to adopt safer behaviours. Indeed, it seems that particular attention must be given to devising more effective ways to reach this group and attract them to therapy if an abuse takes place.

Each of these three groups may be more prevalent depending on the cultural and social context. In Ukraine, for instance, it is more common to find the 'fooled' victim cases, especially children and teenagers deceived by modelling agencies that have hidden cameras in the changing rooms or take pictures of them in somewhat sexualised poses to later sell as child pornography. In recent years, many parents in Ukraine have come forward asking for help, as their children show several symptoms arising from this particular type of abuse, but adequate therapeutic assistance is hardly available.

It is important to find ways of supporting groups of children that are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, especially as these children may not be found in ordinary child and adolescent psychiatric units or at the social welfare office. There is an indication that children who are experiencing a death in the family, divorce of their parents, bullying or other similar traumatic events are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, and a perpetrator who contacts them online during such phases may be more successful. However, vulnerability does not always result in abuse, and what actually causes children to be victimised online cannot always be determined.

Furthermore, there is a need to develop therapies that attract children and their families, as it has proved to be extremely hard to attract and maintain children in therapy. Most are uninterested in getting help and seldom stay in therapy. In some cases, the family itself does not support therapy and even lack a supportive attitude towards the child, for instance, blaming them for 'being so stupid' as to allow others

to capture their nude pictures. To give an example, a man was sentenced in 2003 in Sweden for taking sexually abusive images (mostly posing pictures) of his own children and their friends. When the abuse was revealed just one of the victims accepted therapy. The parents of the other victims did not think there was a need, since the children were 'too small to understand what had happened'. However, the Online Project has come across some of the children from this case and verified that, today, they are feeling unwell and present abuse-related symptoms. Whether the other children have also found it disturbing later on in their lives is unknown.

> **Lack of support from parents can be extremely harmful to children who suffer sexual abuse online. Therapists have noted that the shame in the face of their parents is often a greater pain for these children than the abuse itself. They feel that they have let their parents down and consider themselves responsible for the abuse suffered.**

In order to develop adequate and effective therapies, therapists need support in terms of resources for research and training, so as to build documented knowledge and clinical experience. Lack of expertise must be urgently addressed, as shown by the above mentioned study. Therapists who were asked whether they had come across cases of sexual exploitation of children in pornography often responded that, because the children feared the police, they usually chose to deal with the children's symptoms only and not discuss the actual abuse. Others said that they did not believe that the trauma itself was important and found it more useful to focus on the symptoms the children exhibited. Some were afraid to interfere with the police investigations. And quite a few considered that sex was a private matter in which they could not interfere. All of these justifications might be valid, but there is a high risk that the therapist actually feels uncomfortable or somehow fearful about the information that the children may bring forward. Thus, it seems that therapists, as well as parents, need to better understand that there is, by all means, a need to intervene, even in the cases of children whose 'innocent' pictures were taken when they were still very small and unaware that they would be used by individuals with a sexual interest in children. Research has shown that years later these victims do present symptoms. Training programmes should provide therapists with better knowledge of what exactly online sexual abuse consists of. They need to be familiar with the various types of abuse that may occur online. Sometimes, even the police do not quite understand what exactly happened, and the children have difficulty explaining it too.

How to facilitate disclosure, a very important element in therapy, also needs to be learned, especially as the process of understanding and disclosing online abuse is harder for children. They are usually unable to disclose it in a cognitive way, and when the abuse consists of capturing their images, they may feel that there is no need to disclose after all. Therapists - and other relevant professionals such as nurses, social workers and teachers - must ask the child the right questions. If they are afraid of asking or interfering, the child cannot be helped. Well-known research indicates that children seldom speak about sexual abuse. The reasons for this are many. Some children simply say that no one asked them.

Once again, it seems essential to engage in a dialogue with children and adolescents in order to understand their experiences online and ensure that they receive support if abuse takes place. The vast majority of children who suffer online sexual abuse are not offered any kind of rehabilitation and either remain invisible or are lost track of.

> It is deplorable that in a modern society we accept that children are being sexually exploited online, but do not provide the support mechanisms and methods for taking care of the victims. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says that every child that has been sexually exploited has the right to physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration. This is not a reality in any country at the present time.

Vulnerability and resilience among children due to sexual orientation and/or gender identity

by Annica Ryng

There is no research on what therapeutic responses would be most appropriate for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) children victimised in child abuse imagery/child pornography, although some research is available on the vulnerability of such groups of children to sexual exploitation in general.

> The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Juan Miguel Petit, has pointed out that "gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender adolescents are more exposed to violence, especially psychological violence. Hostile reactions by society to their gender and sexuality may leave them alone in a marginalised situation that exposes them to exploitation … [these groups] are exposed to greater risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation…"

LGBT adolescents are more exposed to violence, partly because they may live in or circulate in rather marginal environments. They are also more vulnerable to prostitution and trafficking, especially due to discrimination by (potential) employers and stigmatisation by their families and friends. Even in Sweden, a country considered very liberal when it comes to sexuality issues, hate attacks against these groups do take place. Such attacks are similar to the 'curative rape' that occurs in Africa (rape to 'cure' sexual behaviours disapproved of by certain groups). Many LGBT adolescents escape home because they are rejected by their families, and, once living on the streets, become highly vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Carl Göran Svedin's and Gisela Priebes' research, Selling Sex in a Population-Based Study of High School Seniors (Sweden, 2007), showed that, among bisexual girls, there were overwhelmingly more girls that had sold sex (52.3 %) than had not (15.6%). The bisexual girls had also sold sex more often than heterosexual girls. Among boys selling sex, on the other hand, 10.8% were homosexual, 13.5% bisexual and 75.7% heterosexual. In addition, Norwegian Social Research conducted a survey of girls and boys aged 14-16 years in Oslo, which showed that LGBT adolescents tend to start their sexual lives at an earlier age.

LGBT children tend to be more isolated in their online lives. When going online, they may seek confirmation of their sexual identity and self-esteem, which could represent an added vulnerability factor. Indeed, the anonymity of online encounters can be especially appealing to LGBT people who are not out with their sexual orientation or gender identity and who fear exposure. Also, they are less prone to disclose problems encountered online or the actual abuse suffered, and to seek help and support, for fear of reprisals from family and also fear of being misjudged and badly treated within the judicial system.

To ensure greater online safety for LGBT adolescents, safe and open online community spaces need to be created where they can obtain support at various levels, including information on how to contact professional LGBT organisations that can offer help. Simple devices, e.g., a small rainbow flag on the corner of a webpage, could effectively attract young LGBTs to 'safe online spaces', and give them a sense that others are aware of their potential problems and supportive.

It is important to note that when companies and organisations choose filters that block content that is presumed to be harmful to children, websites for LGBT organisations and safe community spaces often get blocked also, as they may display words not acceptable to some filters (e.g., words like 'lesbian' may be associated with pornographic sites). This needs to be addressed speedily, as it leaves LGBT adolescents with even fewer opportunities to obtain information and help that is adequate to them, especially as most Internet communities are 'heteronormative' (i.e., they assume that all young people are heterosexual and looking for friends or relations of the opposite sex).

In conclusion, LGBT adolescents are more vulnerable, not only to commercial sexual exploitation, but also to online sexual abuse. Research studies on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, both online and offline, should include sexual orientation and gender identity as variables in order to better understand and address the vulnerability of LGBT adolescents, who, in fact, constitute a major at-risk group. The need to take sexual orientation into consideration in research studies about sexual exploitation of children should be highlighted at the upcoming Third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

Care and treatment of child victims of child pornographic exploitation

by Julia von Weiler

Therapists tend not to pay much attention to determining whether child pornography exploitation has occurred, and, in general, hardly any assessment takes place before counselling begins. In fact, therapists find it much more challenging to deal with such cases. They seldom bring up the subject and avoid confronting the child, assuming that the child would take the initiative to discuss such issues if they wished to, as "they know that they can trust the therapist". As such, they often fail to ask key questions such as "Have you seen your picture on the Internet?", "Was it distributed?" etc. Some professionals also seem to be fearful of talking about the subject, while others believe that organised crime could have been involved and worry about their safety.

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What helps victims to disclose? Professionals have mentioned that an effective way to foster disclosure is to tell the child/adolescent that they already know that an abuse has happened, and make it clear that they are open to discussing it. Building a trusting relationship is also essential.

> **Suspicions that boys are also being exploited in child pornography have always been very high, even though the disclosure of cases of exploitation of girls is more common. As a matter of fact, it seems that boys find it more difficult to disclose than girls, due to a variety of reasons.**

It is vital to ask adolescents about their experiences and 'safety strategies' online. Also, therapeutic responses should avoid a moralistic approach, as abused children must be reached out to in ways that facilitate their engagement in the rehabilitation process.

In many cases, the perpetrator is known to the victim or somehow represents a father figure. This kind of relationship may have been built up online and it deserves particular attention in therapy.

Moreover, coping strategies must be defined according to the specific types of exploitation. The distribution of images to peer groups through mobile phones, for instance, has different implications than the distribution of images to unknown people through the Internet.

Research has shown that most young people do not engage in online sex and reject online solicitation, which indicates high levels of resilience on their part. Nevertheless, fostering resilience cannot be overlooked, and more studies are needed on which factors promote it. Some of these factors are already well-known, e.g., self-esteem and being surrounded by a supportive family environment. The issue is rather how to promote self-esteem and other strengths. Children and adolescents are generally very resilient, and each individual has his/her own strengths, which need to be identified. Prevention and education are also important to strengthening resilience. There are, for instance, certain peer to peer programmes in India that promote resilience in very creative ways, e.g., through dancing. Restitution programmes, through which compensation is provided to victims, could also play an important role in rehabilitation and in bolstering resilience to not fall prey to exploitation again. One strategy that children sometimes employ for surviving the trauma is to sell sex, which could be prevented by effectively fostering resilience.

Parents should be informed about how they can play a part in fostering resilience, and more programmes are needed targeting parents, especially as some parents tend to take unhelpful measures such as throwing away home computers, which can be very problematic for children who use them as a vital way of socialising and strengthening their sense of belonging.

In conclusion, therapists need to learn how to bring up the subject of child pornography exploitation and facilitate disclosure. They also need to understand clearly why it is so essential to do so. Altogether,

more specialised training must be provided to enable better treatment responses, adequate to particular circumstances, and to increase knowledge about the phenomenon of child pornography exploitation itself. A key measure would be to establish specialist training centres and networks to facilitate the exchange of expertise, including across borders.

Setting up peer to peer support schemes, including peer to peer websites and online social networks, where safety tips could be freely exchanged by children and teenagers could also be very effective in terms of facilitating disclosure and access to treatment, not to mention fostering resilience and enhancing prevention.

How to assess children's experiences and responses to online abuse exchanges, especially non-contact abuse and self-victimisation, while also considering geographical, cultural and sexual orientation issues (both in relation to vulnerability and resilience); what helps them to disclose, and what could be successful preventative and therapeutic models.

In most dictionaries, the term `resilience´ refers to psychological protective factors that exist before a harmful event takes place, which would help a person to not get involved in exploitative or abusive situations. Nevertheless, resilience can also be developed in therapy, whereby the resilience of the patient is strengthened in view of the next potential set of adverse circumstances. Factors related to children's personalities, experiences, relationships and the environments they frequent as they grow up enable them to better control or cope with the negative effects of traumatic experiences. Resilience relates to protection and one's ability to recover, and is thus the opposite of vulnerability.

Better determining the factors behind the development of resiliency could mitigate vulnerability. Existing research in this regard is limited, and it seems that factors which make children vulnerable to online sexual abuse are the same that make them vulnerable to other forms of abuse, such as family problems, sexual identity issues, loneliness and isolation, which cause them to search for intimate relations online.

Reports from abused girls reveal that they were in states of vulnerability when they were abused, for example, they did not have many friends, were being bullied, were experiencing divorce in the family, etc. Some of these abused children note that coming into contact with skilled social workers and being able to access better educational opportunities made a significant difference in recovering from the abuse and building resilience, as they felt their lives could become more meaningful.

Moreover, strengthening children's coping skills to manage the difficult situations they may encounter seems to be more useful to promoting resilience than giving them messages implying that they should not, or are not allowed to, get into certain situations. Children are curious by nature and are likely to engage in risky behaviours sometimes. Indeed, promoting children's empowerment is a great deal more effective in terms of fostering resilience. Empowering children can be done though life skills training, by providing comprehensive information or by encouraging abused children to take positive steps by themselves and to share their stories of recovery with others who may also have suffered harm, or who potentially could suffer harm. Empowerment also happens just by listening. Children all over the world often find it difficult to speak to adults because they do not really listen or pay attention to their views. Taking the time to listen and to try to understand children's perceptions and points of views plays a huge part in empowering and fostering resilience.

> **Very restrictive approaches, such as education and prevention campaigns/ messages that focus excessively on risks, have proved to meet reluctance on the part of children. Some successful interventions related to HIV/ AIDS prevention, which do not tackle the issue from a 'moral' or sexually restrictive perspective, but rather provide tips on how to lower the risks of infection, could provide good models on how to communicate with children on sensitive issues.**

By all means, children's perceptions must be more carefully considered in interventions against online sexual abuse, including child pornography. In the Philippines, for instance, suffering sexual abuse online is not seen by all children as victimisation, but, instead, as a sexual adventure or experience. Some groups, such as ECPAT Philippines, have been using child and youth participation methodologies in their projects to protect children from online sexual abuse, as they recognised that it was easier for children to have discussions on the topic when communicating with their peers. Also, related materials and documentation available to children, including online, tend to be rather adult-oriented. It is important that campaign and educational materials are devised according to different age groups. Children should also be asked about their safety strategies and how they have avoided unwanted exchanges and getting into troublesome interactions. The more children feel empowered and consulted about the issues that affect their lives, the more likely they are to report, to disclose harm and to seek help.

In the UK, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) realised that they had to involve youth from the start if they were to be successful in their work. Thus, a youth advisory panel was set up with six youth from all over the UK who provide advice on the CEOP's activities and materials. For instance, they review the report abuse webpage, the wording of materials, logos, colours and songs. They are also involved in the CEOP's other activities, as much as is feasible. This has been instrumental in ensuring that the CEOP's education programme, which is delivered to millions of children, makes a greater impact, as it is designed in ways that are much more appealing to children and adolescents. In fact, responses from children increase exponentially once an initiative or material is modified following the advice provided by the youth panel.

Facilitating disclosure and reporting has major implications to children's resilience and vulnerability. Disclosure is hampered in countries where sexual contact is forbidden and where homophobia exists in larger proportions, as the abused child knows that he/she will probably be blamed for the abuse. It is also hampered where corruption among law enforcement is high, as the child knows that revealing the identity of the abuser could even put the child's life in danger. Children from minority groups may also be more fearful to disclose. Thus, it is essential that families and communities are made aware of the problem so that they can support disclosure and assist the child to face its consequences. Community members and children must be sensitised to the issue of online sexual abuse and why it is important to disclose. They must also learn how to report and be informed about what happens once a report is made.

To ensure that children have access to advice and assistance should a problem occur, there must be channels that effectively reach them, taking into account what technology they are currently using and how they are using it, e.g., through social network websites, blogs, Facebook etc. In the case of more marginalised groups, such as gay children, reporting channels should be made available on community websites, as these populations will feel much more comfortable disclosing or reporting to peers. Sweden has an initiative of this kind, where the managers of the website have also established a good relationship with the police.

Many children who report a concern or an abuse to the CEOP's reporting channel mention that they had not told anyone about it before for fear that their computer would be taken away, which would have a major impact on their social lives. Combating the ignorance of parents, encouraging frank communications with their children and teaching them how exactly they can help should a problem occur or should they suspect that something has happened, also helps disclosure, as well as prevention of sexual abuse online. Parents must also reassure their children that they are doing the right thing when reporting.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that law enforcement agencies and academic institutions should liaise and work in partnership with each other more often, as both sectors retain comprehensive, albeit distinct, information on issues of child abuse imagery, and enhanced sharing would be extremely beneficial in terms of making their spheres of work more effective. As the CEOP receives reports directly from children (which is rather unusual), they have access to material that is quite revealing about how children feel in the face of certain specific online experiences. Through the 'report abuse' button available on the MSN website, the CEOP gets approximately 200 reports a month from the public, 50% of these are from under 18s. Some children also report directly to the CEOP website. Some reports come from children who are concerned about others, some relate to confidentiality issues, and some feature children's statements like "please don't tell anyone" and "I'm scared". Analysis of such reports by academia could lead to very useful insights into children's behaviour online, perceptions, vulnerability and resilience factors, etc., ultimately resulting in better designed interventions at various levels.

Thus, it would be highly recommended to establish and strengthen partnerships between academia and law enforcement. An initial step would be to develop guidelines on how information from law enforcers could be made available to academic institutions. The channels for this information sharing should be put into place.

Finally, it should be noted that it is primarily a State responsibility to make sure that the structures discussed above are put into place.

Victims' identification and assessment; how to foster follow up on the part of social workers, health professionals, the police and other actors, and how to ensure that children identified as victims of sexual exploitation online are provided with treatment.

There are a number of measures that could prove effective in ensuring that children identified as victims of sexual exploitation online, particularly child pornography, are provided with treatment.

Identification usually focuses on getting evidence against the offender, but it is important that all those involved are made aware that it is their responsibility to also address treatment issues. Procedures for this purpose should start from the outset, at the investigation stage, and the involvement of law enforcers is critical. If there are arrests, police officers, prosecutors and justice officers must take the necessary steps to ensure that children are referred to therapy. Support measures should be available throughout the process, and as is necessary to ensure long-term recovery.

Investigation/prosecution and psycho-social treatment are two separate but complementary aspects when dealing with child victims. How to ensure that one does not compromise the other has, nonetheless, proved problematic in certain circumstances. Some law enforcers tend to consider that therapeutic treatment is bound to delay and hinder the prosecution process and, thus, are not cooperative at all. In England, for example, a formal protocol established to guide the process of referring victims to treatment was simply ignored by most judges and other law enforcers. In other countries, police officers may even isolate the victims and hinder their contact with NGOS and social workers in the belief that this will allow the gathering of evidence without complications. Criminal justice usually prioritises the speedy prosecution of offenders, regardless of the time the victim may need to digest the psychological and practical impacts of the abuse, and to deal with the whole criminal process in a way that does not cause further harm and traumatisation, which is facilitated through therapy. As a matter of fact, understanding that therapists can actually provide tools for the investigation and prosecution process must be fostered among law enforcers. Similarly, investigations should seek to identify whether the child pornographic image was self-generated, whether contact took place and other elements that may be helpful to the therapists who will have to deal with the victim's rehabilitation. Enhanced interactions between law enforcers and therapists are of utmost importance, not only to ensure prosecutions and convictions, but also to safeguard the child's right to be given opportunities to overcome the trauma suffered.

A key action required for the above purposes is to have in place a multi-disciplinary team to define and implement the necessary processes, and to enable the different players to comprehend and complement each other's fundamental roles. Sensitisation of law enforcers - police officers, prosecutors and judges - through tailored trainings is also required to foster their understanding and cooperation. Furthermore, formal protocols to guarantee that immediate assistance is provided once law enforcers identify a victim must be developed.

An issue related to the above is whether the child victim should not be called to court proceedings since his/her images already constitute enough evidence of the crime. While in certain cases this could prevent further traumatisation, it could also be counterproductive. Some judges lack broader understanding of the issues of child pornography and sexual exploitation of children in general, and when examining images that feature, for example, a smiling child, they could mistakenly believe that the child was accepting of the abuse. It is a fact that, in many countries, judges are reluctant to receive training on these and other issues. Not having a child in front of them to better demonstrate that a serious abuse did take place, with far reaching implications for the child, even if the child might have been unaware of it at the time, could hamper convictions, mitigate sentencing, hinder compensation and also hinder treatment. Indeed, it is necessary to look at why sentences are sometimes very low. In certain cases, the offender pleads guilty and the sentence is halved. This raises serious child protection concerns.

Also, some jurisdictions require evidence that a 'real child' was abused – the US in particular - especially where pseudo-pornography is not criminalised. In the UK, on the other hand, the burden of proof is reversed: the defence actually has to prove that it was not a real child who suffered the abuse. With regards to the prosecutors' stand, some may insist on bringing the victim to court to make the case stronger. Whereas in Canada, for example, prosecutors are required to maintain a certain distance from the victims for objectivity.

In examining the geographical distribution of the children identified by INTERPOL, it is clear that most of them were found in Europe and the US, as INTERPOL has more connections in these regions. A disproportionate number of Western children are identified, while a large number of victims in other regions - for instance Asian children, who probably make up a large percentage of the children exploited in child pornography - remain unidentified and unassisted. In the Philippines, for example, Internet connectivity is very high and increasing numbers of children are found to have been deceived or coerced into posing for pornographic images and engaging in cyber sex. Nevertheless, it is reported that these children are rarely identified. In this regard, the notion that it is mostly in the West that this form of sexual exploitation occurs needs to be challenged. A recent initiative in Japan, Korea and Egypt disclosed details of databases of abusers with a view to clearly demonstrating that their nationals and children were also involved in online and child pornography abuse. Fostering understanding of the issue and combating denial are essential measures to reach child victims. In Japan, for example, minimal attention is given to victim identification, and, indeed, the general notion is that these are issues of obscenity rather than of child exploitation and abuse.

Enhancing information sharing is crucial to identify victims. The need for a multi-disciplinary approach – ideally the establishment of a multi-disciplinary international network to work on victim identification, disclosure and therapeutic assistance – must be made clear to policy makers and other stakeholders.

> **Altogether, very little attention is given to the victims themselves. Even if they have been identified or have disclosed the abuse, it is often unclear what sort of compensation and treatment will be provided to them. In Ukraine, girls exploited in child pornography and child prostitution are often placed in shelters with other children in difficult circumstances. It has been discovered that this is causing other girls to escape from the shelters a few days later in order to try to have nude pictures of themselves made and sold, as they had 'learned' how much money they could make from such activities. This example demonstrates how important it is to have specialised programmes for the rehabilitation of child victims of commercial sexual exploitation, not only for their own welfare, but also for the protection of other children.**

How do we ensure standards of quality in treatments for children exploited in child pornography and through ICTs? While increasing identification and cooperation to ensure referrals is required, the reality is that often there is simply no support available to victims, or such support is provided by a few NGOs that lack specialised expertise. Certainly, it is not only the State that has the responsibility to provide this kind of assistance, but even in some countries that do have the resources, the support to victims falls to NGOs. Ensuring standards of quality is not only a matter of financial resources but also of transfer of skills across countries. An example of a very interesting model is the centre currently being developed in Sweden, based on a highly successful model from Iceland, where a multi-disciplinary team of doctors, psychologists, police officers and social workers all work together in a house that children are referred to. Ways of 'exporting' this kind of good practice must be devised, bearing in mind that there will probably be a need to adapt them to the local context.

It has been suggested that a restitution fund should be set up for child pornography victims, using seized assets, contributions from ISPs and relevant financial institutions, and fines collected from offenders. A fund of this kind could be used for the development of therapeutic strategies and the provision of therapeutic assistance. Where child pornography is connected to child sex tourism, the travel industry could also contribute to such a fund.

> **"We may 'destroy' a child through the process of prosecuting the offender – a child abused in pornography may indeed tell other children 'please don't disclose because look what happened to me!'"**
>
> **(Alisdair Gillespie)**

Role of the private sector

Key issues

- **The impact of the media, ICT and the entertainment industry on child sexual exploitation: responses and gaps.**

- **A critical examination of inter-sector collaboration models for tackling child abuse images.**

- **Expanding prevention and counteractive measures for child protection within the ICT industry - both fixed and mobile providers.**

- **Analysis of policy level initiatives for child protection, e.g., policy frameworks that enable uniform responses across large corporate bodies, such as IT or financial institutions, whose services impact on child protection.**

Microsoft's partnerships to foster online safety

by Katharine Bostick

Microsoft's Child Safety Programme was developed through consultations with a variety of stakeholders who had expertise on the issue, including UN agencies, NGOs and government officials. It involves mainly the US, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, and its geographical spread is still quite limited.

Empowerment, capacity building and fostering strategic partnerships are key elements of the programme. In Cambodia, for example, where the Internet is being used to arrange sexual contact with local children and to organise sex tours involving the sexual exploitation of children, the British Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) has provided technological support and training for law enforcers to assist in better addressing the problem. In Thailand, India and also Cambodia, a range of educational programmes are provided to children for prevention and also to assist victims, for example teaching of IT skills to trafficking victims to improve their employment chances and thus assist in their reintegration into society.

Some key elements have proved to be necessary to ensure such successful partnerships: 1) trust: the various sectors/stakeholders need to develop trust between them; 2) shared purpose: there must be a shared purpose of protecting children, apart from the particular interests of each partner; 3) mutual benefit; 4) commitment; 5) understanding clear roles and responsibilities; and 6) open communication and a positive, critical attitude.

'Public-private partnership': working hand-in-hand to make the online world a safer place

by Julie Bainbridge

The Financial Coalition against Child Pornography (FCACP) was formed in 2006 to address the alarming growth of commercial child pornography over the Internet. Its members include leaders in the banking and payments industries, as well as internet services companies. The FCACP was formed at the urging of US Senator Richard C. Shelby, former chairman and current ranking member of the US Senate Banking Committee. It is managed by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the International Center for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC).

The NCMEC serves as a national clearinghouse of information about missing and sexually exploited children. It works in cooperation with the US Department of Justice and the US Department of Homeland Security to provide services for families and law enforcement. The NCMEC has a cyber tip line (www.cybertipline.com) that receives reports regarding child sexual exploitation from both the public and ISPs.

The ICMEC works to combat child abduction and child sexual exploitation globally. It provides training and assistance to law enforcement, legal professionals, NGOs and governments. It also advocates for changes in laws, treaties and systems to protect children worldwide.

Key objectives of the FCACP are to disrupt the economics of commercial child pornography by building alliances with companies, law enforcement and NGOs, as well as to craft solutions that are harmonious with local laws and customs.

The cyber tip line plays a key role in this regard, and provides a good model for cooperation between hotlines and financial institutions:

1) A URL is reported to the cyber tip line;

2) NCMEC staff visits the website and confirms the existence of commercial child pornography;

3) A test transaction is performed by law enforcement with a 'set-to-decline' credit card;

4) The time and date of the failed transaction are provided to the credit card company;

5) The credit card company isolates the transaction and identifies the business and the location of the merchant responsible for selling the child pornography;

6) The credit card company amends the original cyber tip line report (via a secure reporting form) to include information on the merchant;

7) A cyber tip line report is made available to federal law enforcement agencies for 10 days;

8) If law enforcement agencies decline to make an investigation, the relevant financial institution is alerted and may pursue the merchant for a violation of Association Rules or Merchant Agreements;

9) If law enforcement agencies indicate that they will take 'Further Action', the entire process stops and no notification is made to the financial industry.

One of the members of the FCACP is PayPal, an online payment company. It is interesting to examine the internal mechanisms they set up to detect violations related to commercial child pornography. For example, they use key words (over 1700 key words, in multiple languages, are built into modelling tools and updated weekly) to check whether transactions are related to child pornography. If exact matches are found, the transactions are routed through channels to investigate them for detection of actual child pornography websites. PayPal invests heavily in monitoring and detection tools in the area of child exploitation, for example, it employs tools that crawl and spider its system internally, and externally on the web, looking for violations. PayPal also encourages anyone who has information about the potential unlawful use of PayPal to contact the company.

A number of recent accomplishments of the FCACP can be cited:

- A clearinghouse on child pornography has been established.

- A process for test transactions was developed in collaboration with law enforcement.

- A collection of Best Practices for Vetting and Monitoring Merchants was published.

- A dashboard and other tools have been built for dissemination of trend info and other data to select coalition partners. Features of the dashboard include detection of details, such as fictitious billing sites, as well as analysis of site/domain name registration and 'who is' information (i.e., detailed information about the registrant of the website).

As of 2008, five working groups have been established within the FCACP to tackle evolving aspects of the problem:

1) Addressing demand;
2) Analytics;
3) International expansion;
4) Remedies; and
5) Technology.

The migration of payment for commercial child pornography and web hosting, away from traditional financial vehicles and hosting models is a key challenge, which may require greater regulation of Internet commerce. It is essential that the FCACP is successful in encouraging the various Internet-related industries to implement corporate social responsibility policies to combat the problem. These policies must include greater due diligence, as well as filtering and monitoring of their hosted sites.

In the UK, with the emergence of pre-paid credit cards, abusers now would have to be very careless to use their own credit cards to purchase child pornography. It is more difficult to track abusers using pre-paid credit cards because the personal details provided to use the cards are hardly checked. Even though most companies only sell pre-paid credit cards through another credit card, which means that personal details are more carefully checked, many openly admit that they do not take this kind of safety measure. Once a pre-paid credit card is obtained, the user is registered with VISA, MasterCard etc., and can buy any downloadable product rather anonymously. The Financial Coalition against Child Pornography notes that the use of pre-paid cards has dropped off due to greater involvement of law enforcement.

'Anti-social networking': the case of Google in Brazil and the role of the private sector

by Thiago Tavares

Brazil experiences a huge digital divide: 54% of the population has never used a computer, while 67% has never used the Internet. The Government is presently taking steps to decrease this digital divide, which will certainly have significant implications for child protection issues.

The Brazilian NGO SaferNet was the first NGO in Latin America to work for the protection of children online. SaferNet has set up a hotline, managed by a staff that includes three lawyers and one psychologist, which in the last two years received 130,000 unique reports. This hotline is linked with INHOPE and other similar networks around the world. Difficulties faced by SaferNet include obtaining support from authorities and establishing enhanced cooperation, although investigations and prosecutions in relation to online child sexual abuse are definitely growing.

Approximately 30% of the reports received are related to communities in the social network website Orkut, which has Brazilians as the majority of its users. Thanks to the lobbying efforts of SaferNet (mentioned in the presentation by Tatiana Landini in Panel 1), in November 2007 Google offered apologies for the lack of action to prevent a wide range of illegal actions that were taking place on the Orkut site. After a battle that lasted two years, Google lost a legal action and signed a cooperation agreement with SaferNet and the Brazilian Attorney General's Office. This is the first international agreement on child online safety and constitutes a pioneering initiative in the fight against online crimes against children. Google also changed some of its key policies and agreed to: set up the necessary mechanisms for SaferNet to report to Google on cybercrimes committed in Brazil and involving Brazilian users of Orkut; immediately review and respond to SaferNet on the follow-up undertaken on the reports forwarded by Safernet; and discuss with SaferNet, every two months, matters related to the implementation of the process. Another important development that followed was the creation of an online system by Google that allowed 500 URLs to be sent daily from Safernet to Google to be screened for content on child abuse materials, and subsequently removed, with proper reporting back to Safernet. The process also included mechanisms to store relevant information for 180 days for investigative purposes, even if the content has been removed.

Relevant international instruments do not currently make ISPs liable for hosting illegal content if they claim to 'have no knowledge' that they are hosting such materials. However, there must be mechanisms in place to ensure their liability when they have been notified, but do not speedily remove these materials, and thus do not comply with international regulations.

In addition, it is suggested that, at the World Congress III, the growth of child sexual abuse on web 2.0 services should be examined to better determine effective ways to combat it. Gaps in developing countries, in particular, must be better addressed, followed by the identification of adequate public policies. Also, more efforts are needed for the establishment of contact points and hotlines in developing countries, which is not possible without strong support, especially from the private sector.

> **"Twenty years from now we will look back and wonder how we could ever think the Internet could be a totally unregulated space."**
>
> **(John Carr)**

The MySpace approach

by John Carr

Online social networks created a space that became a magnet for millions and millions of youngsters. They are a unique enterprise that has had many implications for child protection issues. As they have expanded, a key challenge has been how to ensure that social networks are safe spaces for children. The example of MySpace provides some good measures that could be followed by others:

- A working party in Washington, DC is currently developing enhanced technology for age verification, even though MySpace already has clever systems in place for this purpose (the minimum age to enter MySpace is 14 years, one year later than most social networks).

- MySpace is investing a great deal of resources in advertising their privacy systems, which supports the creation of a safer online environment.

- Safety measures include an educational aspect, whereby children and parents are reminded of the risks posed by using the Internet and social networks.

- A large percentage of MySpace staff is involved in addressing complaints, a decision that was not influenced by any kind of liability (although it is true that MySpace is owned by a major company which has the necessary resources to carefully examine complaints that other social networks may not have).

- Registers of sexual offenders are publicly available in the UK and the US. In the US, a company consolidated all sexual offenders' registers from 50 states into a single database, which MySpace consults to ensure that offenders do not have access to its website.

> **Lobbying is currently taking place in the UK to oblige sex offenders to have a single email address as the only one they can use. Using other email addresses in their online activities would make them liable to prosecution.**

Some key players in the ICT sector are already implementing good initiatives to enhance child safety online. Indeed, the actions and policies that can make a huge impact in terms of increasing protections for children are sometimes quite clear, but gaining access to the right decision makers and political leaders to take such changes forward is often difficult. In this sense, a platform such as the forthcoming World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents is crucial to enable a dialogue with key policy makers.

In consultations on online safety, young people have suggested that separate safe spaces should be created for children, using features more sophisticated than simple age verification. While this kind of safety measure is being examined by some stakeholders, certain implications could pose obstacles. For example, if separate spaces are provided to youth, other specific groups could lobby for similar treatment, which might not be desirable in some cases. A few simple safety mechanisms could, however, be easily disseminated on a large scale. The MSN messenger in Britain, for example, is the only one in the world that has a left-hand side button with the British CEOP logo, providing information on the issue of sexual exploitation through ICTs and on Internet safety measures. This good practice should be replicated in other countries. Indeed, there are ongoing discussions on how to make this button available in other domestic environments.

Is there a tradition of industry self-regulation in your region and how well does it work? How could it be promoted and strengthened? What is the role of State regulation? How can information be utilised, not only for shutting down abusive transactions/interactions, but also for identifying children in need of protection, assistance and support?

A key impediment to self-regulation is lack of interest on the part of relevant mass companies. Companies do not have much of an incentive to implement corporate social responsibility policies, as they have primarily economic interests and have a main imperative to maximise shareholder value. Corporations tend to embrace external causes only if it entails some positive impact on the bottom line, or if they are somehow compelled to act.

As such, it seems that without some government intervention, we may see only isolated examples of tangible progress in terms of ICT industry regulation. 'Soft' interventions do not seem to produce much of a result either. In Canada, for example, although some functionaries and officials communicate with the industry in an effort to promote improvements in this regard, there is limited response. Thus, 'credible threats' of regulation on the part of governments may be what is required.

An interesting case study is Cleanfeed in the UK. Since the Government hinted that every ISP should be obliged to implement the Cleanfeed filtering system, 95% of the ISPs have done so for fear that laws would be passed in this regard otherwise. As there are still no laws in place compelling them to do so, 100% adherence has not been achieved, and the failure to implement the system on the part of the remaining 5% of ISPs means that 600,000 households still have access to illegal content. ISPs in the UK have been well aware, for the past five years, that they should implement Cleanfeed, but have been reluctant to do so, particularly on the grounds that the costs are high.

> **One of the most significant recent events is the creation and use of Cleanfeed, a filtering system developed and implemented by British Telecom (BT) under no legal obligations at all. Certainly lobbying played a role, but BT decided to implement this major system to filter illegal content while other industry stakeholders considered it 'foolish' and inappropriate. If all ISPs in the world implemented such a system, online crimes of sexual exploitation of children would be dramatically reduced, even though there are ways in which such crimes could still be committed. Also in the UK, a code of conduct that seeks to accomplish what Cleanfeed has accomplished has recently been adopted among mobile phone companies, and is starting to be replicated in other countries.**

It is important that filtering software does not to block legitimate content. Default settings that block access to all gay and lesbian related content are an example of poorly designed software and inappropriate use of the technology. Filtering products should not worsen the problem. Similarly, the implications of impeding registered sex offenders from accessing certain websites should be better examined in the case of young people, who are often treated from a criminal justice perspective instead of a child protection perspective.

There is a need to disseminate existing good models of self-regulation to foster more cooperation on the part of other private sectors. Self-regulation requires commitment, investment of resources, etc., and some companies want to be told what they are meant to do to ensure that they do it properly. They need direction.

On the other hand, it should be noted that self-regulatory monitoring systems are hardly efficient. Again in the UK, several stakeholders have agreed that existing self-regulatory codes are not really effective and that binding laws are needed. What should the parameters be? Existing codes of practice could be used as a basis to design legislation to regulate the ICT industry. In this connection, the UK Government has provided a secretariat to facilitate meetings and discussions.

> **"When looking at the experience of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation in Tourism, we see that 10 years down the road there is still uneven compliance. There is a need for real teeth to accompany these instruments to push those not fulfilling their commitments. With each little mechanism for monitoring the implementation of codes of conduct, comes a huge amount of responsibility, especially to assess whether they are merely being used as a public relations exercise."**
>
> **(Carmen Madrinan)**

In conclusion, clear child protection objectives with regard to State regulation of the ICT industry should be agreed to at the upcoming World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, with equally clear timeframes for their implementation. More systematic action is necessary, and the State must absolutely step in to make this a reality, rather than waiting for goodwill. Also, harmonisation of laws and police procedures is urgently required to deal with ISPs that fail to take websites down upon notice. This must be done speedily, even if an illegal website is found to be hosted in another country.

> **"Parallel to the corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement, there is a movement anchored in international legal initiatives that is discussing corporate responsibility in relation to human rights. It is examining how the principle that all society is responsible for human rights applies to the private sector. The question it raises is: should corporate entities have a different set of responsibilities when they are entities within society?"**
>
> **(Carmen Madrinan)**

Could regional initiatives, such as those around the EU codes, work as a trigger to more positive developments or models? What is needed to develop successful partnerships (government-NGO-private sector)? What is the balance between educational and technical measures in the provision/creation of safe environments? What is the responsibility of all parties (government, NGO and industry) where these fail?

The continuous development of new products without appropriate assessment of their potential impact in terms of exacerbating the sexual exploitation of children, such as pre-paid credit cards and anonymiser software (i.e., software that allows the user to hide his/her details and thereby be hard to trace), makes it hard to believe in the private sector's goodwill. New products are usually introduced to address new needs – e.g., the need to secure privacy, the need to avoid indebting, the need for a payment tool that prevents children from overspending etc. It is only when the ways in which they facilitate abuse are quite evident, that companies are more open to taking measures to address the problem. Naturally, the private sector tends to be reluctant to admit that it has liability, as opening these floodgates could have quite dramatic consequences for companies. While some sectors are waking up to the issue, many manufacturers are not so easily sensitised and lack of pro-activity prevails. Although, this is partly due to insufficient engagement with the private sector.

Civil litigation, and the simple threat of it, is a sure way to force the private sector to provide services and products that do not facilitate harm to children. Nevertheless, what seems to be more effective at the moment is to keep a transparent and open dialogue that does not dissuade key players from taking part in the discussions and eventually taking action. Lack of trust between key stakeholders remains a serious impediment to multi-stakeholder action. In the relationship between companies and NGOs, for instance, transparency regarding each side's expectations is crucial. If properly and honestly managed, collaboration between NGOs and the private sector can be an added value for both parties, especially in terms of mutual validation. Child rights advocates, the ICT industry, financial institutions, law enforcers and academia must work together in ways that enable full disclosure of the benefits and responsibilities for all parties.

The creation of safe environments requires a combination of technical and educational measures. Technological solutions can always be found, and safer technologies can be made available, but lack of awareness and commitment on the part of key stakeholders remains a serious impediment to enhancing the protection of children. As such, education is of primary importance to ensure that the ICT industry takes child protection into consideration when developing products and services, and to ensure that continuous monitoring of new products and services is undertaken to check for potential harm.

Transferring knowledge and skills is part of this a process. This includes increased information exchange between law enforcers and the ICT sector, which could actually share a great deal more data about offenders and the behaviour of children online without infringing upon privacy rules. Collaboration in this regard is indeed urgently needed.

> **"There is a need for funding by the ICT industry towards research, but in ways that do not compromise the nature of research itself."**
>
> **(Ethel Quayle)**

Issues related to whose involvement is actually desirable deserve attention. For example, there have been discussions on whether the Financial Coalition against Child Pornography should seek to involve certain 'dodgier' players. Engagement of private sector stakeholders must be supported by very clear codes of conduct that discriminate between compliers and operators that are actually accessories to illicit transactions (although such a distinction can sometimes be hard to make).

Finally, regional solutions, such as those around EU conventions aimed at protecting children from sexual exploitation through ICTs, have proved to trigger very positive developments, especially as they are usually based on local/regional circumstances. At the same time, and in view of the global nature of the problem of child abuse imagery and sexual exploitation of children through ICTs, multi-stakeholder action needs to be undertaken from broader perspectives, with the right balance between local/regional details and the global aspects of the issue.

> "With technological innovation (including in relation to means of payment), everything can be compromised, anything can mutate between good and bad, and it is up to multi-stakeholder collaboration to find remedies at every step."
>
> (Julie Bainbridge)

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Prevention

Prevention strategies, and in particular educational and awareness raising materials, need to:

- Integrate information for prevention of sexual exploitation through ICT in broader sexual education programmes that take a developmentally relevant focus.

- Take steps to eliminate the stereotyping of victims as exclusively young children and characterising the forms of victimization as only involving violence so as to ensure that protection initiatives also reach adolescents and reflect other modalities that do not conform to violent stereotypes but result in victimization of children such as statutory rape.

- Use differentiated strategies relevant to particular age groups: for younger adolescents give focus to safe use and access to the Internet, recognising and acting against risky situations online; and practicing refusal and resistance techniques. For older adolescents, provide information about laws related to sexual contact, risks and dangers related to transmitting sexual images, and nature and tactics used in online grooming by sexual offenders.

- Target youth with information that acknowledges their normal adolescent interests in romance and sexual development while highlighting the need to protect against adults who exploit these interests to sexually exploit them. Materials would include discussion on aspects of seduction by adults who deliberately evoke and induce emotional or sexual responses in order to prepare young people for later exploitation.

- Develop and use strategies that recognise the independence and developmental needs of adolescents considering that this is a particularly vulnerable group to Internet-initiated sex crimes that may not necessarily be receptive to the advice and supervision of parents.

- Promote and facilitate conscious critique by youth of their online interactions, particularly those that take place with unknown people or focus on sex.

- Provide tools and information on inappropriate action and sexual overtures to website and law enforcement authorities.

- Be available in local languages and dialects; their translation and adaptation must reflect the specific situation and youth behaviour of different countries, be easily accessible and written/presented in a child-friendly and age-specific format.

- Provide information on the legal aspects impacting on use of the Internet (including how certain illegal acts might affect their future, e.g. in securing employment), as many adolescents do not know that they might be engaging in illegal acts.

- Inform youth about how risk of harm can sometimes also come from one's own friends.

- Use measures which involve youth in preventions such as peer support schemes, youth-led advocacy and awareness raising.

- Target and prioritise specially designed material to reach vulnerable children ('lonely' children, children that have suffered abuse etc).

- Develop innovative strategies to reach LGBT adolescents, such as: creating safe and open online community spaces for LGBT adolescents that provide support and information; creating access and links to materials, contacts and services relevant to LGBT youth; adding simple features to web browser to draw attention of young LGBTs to such support channels.

- Provide special information for clinicians and others working with children on the risks that children experience online, with digital cameras and other technologies, to enable them to assess problems and assist when needed.

- Develop more explicit and clear understanding that child pornography is a documentation of the sexual abuse of a child, especially as most viewers do not realise that viewing alone can cause harm to children.

- Counteract the mainstreaming of sexualised images of adolescents and youth as mini adults and sexual objects.

In addition

- Evaluate existing materials and education programmes to assess their actual effectiveness and adequacy in view of the new manifestations of sexual exploitation of children and changes in ICT.

- Study children and adolescents' online sexual behaviour in the context of the specific channels used - chat rooms, websites, blogs, a forum in Second Life - to ensure information is practical and specific to these platforms and that relevant help channels are provided.

- Target at risk youth populations, who may be hard to reach with current generic materials; train and inform first line professionals that may have more opportunities for interaction with at-risk youth.

Legal and law enforcement responses

- Review legislation to address the legal responsibility of Internet providers and other relevant ICT actors for preventing and responding to reported child pornography and online child sexual abuse.

- Scope of responsibility of law enforcement, with accompanying increase in resources, to be expanded to facilitate comprehensive responses that include investigation, identification, persecution as well as linkages for support and restitution for child

- victims whose sexual abuse has been depicted or otherwise documented.

- Specific law enforcement and criminal justice responses must be refined and developed based on forensic analysis of current modalities, types of crimes and offender profiles.

- Consensus on the definition of a child - a person under 18 years of age according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - is essential to ensure that national legislations and international instruments uniformly protect children from sexual exploitation in pornography.

- Increase advocacy to make all actions and materials that represent sexual exploitation of children illegal across different countries and legal instruments: viewing and possessing child pornography, fictitious child pornography such as simulated or computer-generated images of child pornography or pseudo child pornography, manga and other material which represents the sexual exploitation of children.

- Legislation to protect children documented in sexualised materials which are not classified as child pornography but which are used by offenders for sexual arousal, such as child erotica, is needed to take into consideration the actual use of such materials.

- All those who intentionally view child pornography images must be prosecuted rather than cautioned.

- Countries that have legislation that restrict law enforcement from sharing evidence of child abuse depicted in child pornography images should remove such barriers in their laws.

- International agreements are required to ensure that illegal websites are speedily removed across contries, with clear timeframes.

- The location of the victim and the offender should be recognised as a factor to extended jurisdiction of investigation and increase protection for children.

- Materials collected from offenders should investigate the origin of child sexual abuse stories and associated images, even if they are not classified as exploitative or illegal, as the children featured may be at risk of further abuses.

- Law enforcement data is needed to be shared in a form that will assist those working with children and in child protection online: how many suffer offline sexual abuse facilitated by online interactions; the number of victims per offender; estimates of how many children are abused but not identified.

- Databases are required for more effective investigation, prosecution, identification and assistance: a centralised database of cases/ images is essential to accelerate effective identification of victims and offenders; determine the type of offences and their scale, define counteraction, treatment and recovery measures accordingly. All member countries must contribute to the INTERPOL database, ICAID.

- Centralised police units must be established and relevant training and resources provided to deal with crimes related to child abuse imagery.

- Trained, skilled professionals must be available to interview the child victim using child focused and friendly procedures that minimise further traumsatisation and lead to the disclosure of key information.

- Recognise schools as potential valuable partners for child protection and identify standards and measures to involve them in preventing and assessing sexual victimisation when it is taking place.

- Training for law enforcement must be relevant to the local context and be provided in light of the material, technical and infrastructure resources that are needed for implementation and to support action.

- Partnerships across sectors and countries must be built up to enhance law enforcement. Models of specialist units which work through structured agreements in collaboration with third parties such as NGOs, researchers and other law enforcement and investigative bodies should be shared. Such have worked well when they share a common goal which allows them to transcend political interests.

- Countries that already have the necessary technical capacities and financial resources should cooperate more actively with the INTERPOL network, thus maximising the use of their resources including by assisting to build capacity of law enforcement in countries that lack it.

- Increase global representation of global law enforcement in initiatives such as the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT) and share such models more widely.

- Build greater collaboration and understanding between the therapeutic community and law enforcement and increase use of therapeutic tools in the investigation, prosecution and treatment process to ensure more effective enforcement but also to safeguard the child's right to be given opportunities to overcome the trauma suffered.

- A multi-disciplinary international network should be created to work on victim identification, disclosure and therapeutic assistance.

Dealing with children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour

- Appropriate responses including therapeutic interventions, education, guidance, legal services and support for rehabilitation must be available for adolescents involved in sexually problematic behaviour online. Child protection must be the first line of response with focus on treatment and social rehabilitation for harm done.

- Legal terminology must be reconsidered when applied to teenage offenders.

- Treatment of children with sexually problematic behaviour should involve their

- families and their social networks to restrain them from engaging again in offensive behaviour, as well as a source of positive social influences. Their social ties should not be cut off.

- Therapeutic interventions for children with sexually harmful behavior need to be provided at an early stage. Ongoing assessment of the child is also required.

- Research is required to increase understanding of what motivates adolescents to engage in harmful acts online, thus enabling adequate treatment as well as prevention responses.

Support and treatment of child victims

- Child-centered approaches must be promoted and built throughout the whole judicial system; judges, prosecutors and officials need to receive training on child-rights based measures for dealing with cases of child abuse imagery and online sexual exploitation of children.

- Police officers, prosecutors and justice officers must take the necessary steps to ensure support measures are available for child victims including through multi-disciplinary teams which enable different players to comprehend and complement each other's fundamental roles.

- Guidance and intervention protocols are needed to guarantee that immediate assistance is provided once law enforcers identify a victim.

- Lack of access to therapy is a major problem: specialised, long-term support services for victims of child abuse imagery and online sexual exploitation must be integrated in existing programmes.

- Developing capacity among youth to provide peer support through structured programmes is a key step to ensure that abused children receive help.

- Traditional therapies usually provided to children who were sexually abused offline (contact abuse) need to be adapted to those abused online, and include other approaches apart from trauma-focused behavior therapy only. Online abused children tend to present certain symptoms that demand particular attention, such as continuous shame and guilty feelings as they are aware that the images of their abuse are available 'forever'.

- Knowledge about therapies tailored for child/adolescent victims of online sexual abuse needs to be built it up urgently: therapists need support in terms of resources for research and training, so as to build and document knowledge and clinical experience.

- Specialist training centres and networks for therapists must be established to enable them to deal with cases of child abuse imagery and online sexual exploitation, and facilitate the exchange of expertise including across borders.

- Training programmes should provide therapists with better knowledge and understanding of what online sexual abuse consists of exactly. They need to be familiar with the various types of abuse that may occur online.

- Therapies that attract children and their families need to be developed.

- Capacity for intervention must be build among therapists and as well as parents to ensure that children are helped without further harm.

- Clinicians who work with youth who have been sexually abused should be alert to the possibilities that illegal sexual images of victims may have been produced.

- Empowering children is very effective to foster resilience and recovery: empowering children can be done though life skills training, providing relevant and age-appropriate education and information, or encouraging and accompanying survivors in taking positive steps for personal and social action which accelerates their recovery.

Facilitating disclosure

- Therapists need information regarding forms of sexual exploitation in the online environment and training for addressing the subject of sexual exploitation through child abuse images in order to assist children and facilitate disclosure of exploitation.

- Peer-to-peer support schemes are needed, including safety ensured peer-to-peer websites and online social networks where information could be exchanged by children and adolescents on online experience and references for relevant support services be made available.

- Channels for education, reporting and assistance must be made available for community members and children to ensure that child abuse images and sexual exploitation online can be stopped and addressed.

- Ensure that children have access to advice and assistance through channels that effectively reach them, including new technologies and online applications such as social network websites, blogs, Facebook etc.

- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered adolescents might be particularly reluctant to disclose abuse or to come forward, and require specially targeted approaches.

- A restitution fund could be set up for child pornography victims, with seized assets, contributions from ISPs and relevant financial institutions, and also from the fines applied to the offenders. Such a fund could be used for the provision of therapeutic assistance.

Research

Numerous gaps in knowledge need to be addressed:

- Analysis of the dynamics of child abuse image exchanges is needed to identify patters among those exchanging these materials, the purpose and conditions that facilitates exchanges etc.

- Establish the extent to which individuals viewing and exchanging child abuse materials are aware that they are committing illegal acts to develop effective interventions and deterrents, especially in the case of adolescents' viewing child pornography.

- Study and document processes of investigation to establish elements that facilitate prosecution of offenders, provide quality support for victims, enhance social understanding and reintegration of victims etc.

- Case documentation and analysis is needed to examine the benefit of different approaches and psychological treatments for children abused online to develop and further appropriate professional practice.

- Research studies on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, both online and offline, should include sexual orientation and gender analysis as variables in order to better understand and address the vulnerability of LGBT adolescents, who in fact constitute a major at-risk group.

Offenders rehabilitation

- Social reinforcing treatment approaches could be used for working with offenders who gain considerable reinforcement through their online interactions for better response. Those offenders not interested in social interactions with other offenders, use the online environment opportunistically and will require different treatment approaches.

- Ongoing and long-term rehabilitation support processes are required for offenders.

- More research is needed on the profile and behaviour of offenders: in particular, assessors should look for evidence of dynamic risk factors (particularly intimacy deficits, anti-social cognitions and personality) as well as previous conviction history to identify those more likely to be involved in both viewing and contact offences. This should also inform specific offender treatment approaches and enhance offenders' rehabilitation.

- Further research is needed on the extent to which the type and volume of child pornography materials accessed by offenders can be indicators of risk.

Advocacy and policy making

- Public policies are needed to tackle online child pornography that take into account the relationship between child pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation of children: hotels in tourist venues should provide access through safe ISPs;Internet cafes should designate child-safe spaces to prevent exposure of children to adult sites and child-adult viewing.

- State interventions leading to the speedy shutting down of hosts of illegal websites are crucial.

- Integrated policies and child protection strategies must be developed and implemented in collaboration and consultation with the private sector - such as the ICT industry, ISPs, mobile phone companies, cybercafés, financial institutions etc.

- Enhanced strategies to catalyse political will and action are needed. This could include a campaign targeting key sectors supported by internationally recognised figures.

- The growth of child sexual exploitation aided by web 2.0 services must be investigated to better determine effective ways to combat it. Gaps in terms of measures implemented in developing countries in particular must be addressed and adequate public policies put in place.

Private sector engagement

- The parameters for self and State regulation of the ICT industry to combat child pornography and sexual exploitation of children online should be agreed at the upcoming World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, with clear timeframes for implementation established.

- National and International collaboration among law enforcement agencies to be strengthened and procedures harmonised to ensure timely take down of illegal content from the reported websites.

- Existing good models of self-regulation should be disseminated to foster more cooperation on the part of relevant private sectors.

- Self-regulation codes of practice must include mechanisms to assess implementation.

- The mobile phone industry must take the full array of child protection issues into consideration when providing their services, in the same manner as the fixed Internet providers, since they are increasingly providing Internet services.

- Strong support is required especially from the private sector in setting up of contact points and hotlines in developing countries.

- Key stakeholders in the ICT industry need to be identified, with clear mapping of possible roles and terms for engagement, recognising the current deficiencies and gaps to foster effective collaborative solutions.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration

- Map the relevant ICT sector entities involved in social responsibility initiatives and foster collaboration and multiple-stakeholder partnerships to work against child abuse imagery.

- Promote, adapt and replicate innovative initiatives in child protection used by private sector parties with the ICT industry, financial institutions and others.

- Advocate adoption and use of the Council of Europe's guidelines on working with ISPs and its framework widely.

- Develop guidelines to enable the safe use of law enforcement information and unrestricted intelligence material by academic institutions for the development of prevention and educational materials.

- Engage key players from the ICT industry, financial institutions, law enforcer's child rights organisations and academia for collaborative work in child protection against sexual exploitation online outlining the roles and responsibilities of all parties.

- To ensure that the ICT industry takes child protection into consideration, in education, research and development.

- Private sector to set up consultative and feedback mechanisms for engagement with relevant child protection agencies and children when developing new products and services and also regarding existing product lines. Continuous monitoring of such products and services through such collaborations is also essential to prevent potential harm.

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