Children and Young Persons with Abusive and Violent Experiences Connected to Cyberspace

Challenges for Research, Rehabilitation, Prevention and Protection

In may 2006 the Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation and the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk under the Council of the Baltic Sea States, invited experts working with assistance to young persons that have had abusive experiences in the context of the Information and Communication Technologies, ICT. The expert meeting was dedicated solely to the specifics of the impact of the abuse on the child and young person, and what this means in relation to treatment strategies, child protection initiatives and prevention programmes.

This report presents a documentation of the eight presentations held at the meeting and is therefore not the usual collection of articles. It is the presentations told by a narrator in a way so that persons outside of the circle of experts will be able to grasp what the most urgent issues in the view of the experts are when it comes to assisting victims of Internet related offences. The report also contains the conclusions reached at the meeting, including some recommendations on ways forward.

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Swedish Children's
Welfare Foundation

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Preface

It is with great satisfaction that the Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation and the WGCC, the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk under the Council of the Baltic Sea States present this joint expert report on children and the Internet.

In Sweden and internationally, the issue on how the digital revolution affects us all and how it affects our children are under debate. As was stated by the experts at the meeting, the information and communication technology, ICT, is a valuable tool for all, no matter what age, if used in a positive way. The technology may however be used as a means through which children and young persons become brutally exploited.

At the regional level the WGCC is developing the issue on how children abused in the context of the new technology can best be assisted. The Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation has in Sweden committed itself to increase the knowledge on how sexual exploitation in all forms affects children. This work includes giving professionals the necessary means and tools in meeting the challenges of assisting children exploited in the context of the new technology.

We recognised how we could utilise the international network connected to the child cooperation within the Council of the Baltic Sea States with the tradition and resources of the and through this give this urgent topic a high quality addition.

The Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation and the WGCC consider that the suggestions and the outcomes from this report will contribute to national and international organisations and authorities finding efficient methods to support children and young persons that have been sexually exploited in the context of the ICT. Our organisations will in cooperation and separately give this work a high priority.

Stockholm and Oslo in April 2007

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INTRODUCTION

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) permeate the entire society, bringing change to all our lives, both to children, young persons and adults. At an early stage of this era of ICT, child advocates and some police forces recognised that the ICT was a frighteningly efficient tool to disseminate illegal pictures, pictures depicting sexual abuse of and violence towards children and the legal and policing responses to this have since developed.

Early on in the international development of actions, legal initiatives and international police programmes, the question was raised: What impact does this kind of abusive experiences have on the child? This question was formulated by several professionals at different conferences and meetings, but many of us will remember the Vienna conference in 1999 on Combating Child Pornography on the Internet, when this was raised as a definite gap in knowledge. At that time, focus was on children that were abused and where the images of the abuse were posted on the Internet for an infinite number of perpetrators to access, view, download and redistribute.

In response to the gap addressed at the Vienna conference, Childnet International in London, initiated the Victim Identification Project (VIP) in which they partnered with Cork University in Ireland and Save the Children in Sweden in order to look at child victims that had been identified as appearing in child abusive images and also to look at what assistance had been given to these children and if there were examples of child friendly identification processes that could be shared. The VIP project resulted in meetings in several locations around Europe involving police persons and psychotherapists in a unique exchange of experiences and good practices.[1]

In the world of ICT young persons will interact with each other and with adults in many different forums made available by the new technologies. Communities are now as common a meeting place for young persons as schools or youth clubs. Some young persons will have negative experiences from meeting with people offline that they have first encountered online, while most children and young people, when asked, will claim that offline meetings have been rewarding and fun.

The Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation and the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk under the Council of the Baltic Sea States believe the time is ripe to move the agenda forward in relation to assistance to young persons that have had abusive experiences in the context of the ICT. We therefore invited experts working with assistance to victimised children and researchers looking at the impact on individual children and on groups of children the ICT has had when it comes to abusive, violent and disturbing experiences. The meeting provided the small group of invited experts time to listen to and to present their most recent experiences.[2] Ample time and emphasis was given to discussions and exchange of views in order to identify gaps in knowledge and to formulate possible ways forward. The expert meeting had a clear child focus, and attempted not to look too closely at police initiatives or offender profiles or treatment.

Important as these are, the meeting was dedicated solely to the specifics of the impact of the abuse on the child and young person, and what this means in relation to treatment strategies, child protection initiatives and prevention programmes.[3]

In order to document the meeting, the Swedish journalist, Ms Cajsa Malmström was tasked to write a report on the discussions and the presentations, and it is the result of this endeavour that we now proudly present. The report contains the eight presentations made, all described by Ms Malmström. The descriptions have been revised by the presenters themselves before publication. This report is therefore not the usual collection of articles; it is the presentations told by a narrator in a way so that persons outside of the circle of experts will be able to grasp what the most urgent issues in the view of the experts are when it comes to assisting victims of Internet related offences. It is our belief that the presentations and the discussions will be of value for all persons working with children of all ages, including teachers, social workers, psychologists, doctors, nurses and career advisers. The conclusions reached at the meeting, including some recommendations on ways forward are also included in the report.

We hope that this report will contribute to a more informed debate and a constructive dialogue to continue between all stakeholders working with the ICT or with children and young persons.

Lars Lööf, Psychologist and Psychotherapist, Secretary to the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk, the WGCC, Council of the Baltic Sea States

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1. For more information on the VIP project, refer to http://daphnetoolkit.yourquicksite.com/qsPortal/Home.asp?N=180
2. Appendix I: List of Participants at the Expert Meeting 29th to 31st of May 2006

3. Sexual exploitation in the context of the Internet, as described in the report, includes sexual abuse that occurs as a result of grooming but also the production and distribution of child abuse images and the different forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children taking place in cyber space.

THE PRESENTATIONS

In the following chapters each lecturer's presentation at the expert meeting is summarized.

Sexual exploitation via the Internet – the clinical challenges

Tink Palmer, is the Director of Stop it Now! UK and Ireland. She has been in social work practice since 1973 and gained her professional qualifications in 1975. In the past twenty years she has specialized in child sexual abuse and is an experienced clinical and forensic practitioner, manager, policymaker and strategist.

Tink Palmer highlighted a worrying new trend, looking at the plight of children and young people abused through prostitution, in the Barnardo report *Stolen Childhood:* [4] "the Internet is being used by abusing adults (pimps) to sell young people. Equally, abusers secretly video young people being abused through prostitution and broadcast this abuse live on the Internet". [5]

Sexual exploitation of children is a key area of concern for the Barnardo's Children's Charity which is an organisation in the UK with the vision that the lives of all children and young people should be free from poverty, abuse and discrimination. Amongst its many projects, it runs services for children who are sexually exploited.

Tink Palmer found in her study that there was very little written on the issues concerning children who are victims of abuse via the Internet and for the professionals who would want to assist these victims. Alerted to the dangers of the Internet, she was commissioned to examine the impact of the new technology on Barnardo's work, to open up discussion in the professional arena regarding the implications for practice and the impact this may have on working procedures and policies.

In the report *Just one click* Tink Palmer describes, referring to several harrowing case histories, how the new technology is proving to be an invaluable tool for child sex abusers: "The new technology gives people who are sexually interested in children a new medium to network, share infor-

mation and fantasies, explore new identities and normalise their behaviour". [6]

Different forms of abuse

Mobile phones and web cameras have to be included when talking about the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). They are often used in connection with the Internet. In a questionnaire to all Barnardo's services, both those who work with abused children and those that cater for the needs of children in other circumstances, several different forms of abuse via the Internet and mobile phones were identified. They are listed here below and cover the spectrum of abusive activities:

1. Children who view adult pornography.
2. Children abused through prostitution using the Internet and mobile phones to contact their abusers.
3. Adults or young people who engage in 'cyber-sex' with children.
4. Children of adults who download or distribute sexually abusive images of children.
5. Children groomed online for sexual abuse offline.
6. Children sold online for sexual abuse offline.
7. Young people who place images of other young people online.
8. Children who download sexually abusive images of children.
9. Children sold online for live sexual abuse online.
10. Children made the subjects of child abuse images.

Children made the subjects of child abuse images

The single largest group in the survey of Barnardo was children made the subjects of child abuse images. It is a form of abuse that can lead to a long-lasting trauma and which may have severe consequences for the rest of a person's life. During 2001-2004, the COPINE Project (Combating Paedophile Information Networks in Europe) observed a huge increase in new child abuse images. COPINE estimates that it has seen 60 000 individual child victims when studying newsgroups [7]. The greatest concern is that no one knows who or where these children are. It is also worrying that, as time has gone on, the children in the new images seem to be younger in age, the abuse perpetrated against them is more serious and the venue for the abuse appears, in general, to be of a domestic nature.

Focusing on these victims, there are certain things Tink Palmer considers need to be considered:

- It is impossible to know the scale of the number of abusive images.
- The children themselves will rarely disclose voluntarily, for several reasons.
- The activity is hidden.
- With the new technology, people can make and distribute abusive images with ease, undetected and at very little cost.
- Very little is written on the implications for practice and the impact this may have on working procedures and policies.

Silencing of the children

Children who have been sexually abused seldom disclose their abuse. For children who are the victims of abusive images disclosure is even harder. There are a number of reasons why children are silenced by sexually abusive behaviours perpetrated on them.

The perpetrator, Tink Palmer states, is often a relative or someone close, well known, to the child. The relationship between the victim and the abuser can prevent the child from disclosing – often the

abuser is well known to the child and the child has. an emotional tie with the person. This may result in the child not wanting to get the abuser into trouble When abusers use the new technologies to abuse children, particularly photographing their abuse, they use different strategies to silence their victims.

The children may be: [8]

- Shown abusive images of other children, in order to normalise the activity.
- Shown their own abuse images by the perpetrator.
- Encouraged to place images of themselves online.
- Encouraged to introduce their friends or other children.
- Encouraged to be pro-active in either their own sexual abuse or that of other children.

These strategies can make child victims feel responsible for the abuse and the abusive images often make it even more difficult for them to talk about what has happened. The victims are afraid of what parents, caregivers and others will assume by looking at the pictures because: [9]

- They feel they are seen 'letting it happen'.
- They are frequently made to smile and look 'happy' and therefore appear to be enjoying it.
- They are seen not to stop it.
- They introduce other children to the abuser.
- They experience 'shame' at being involved and a fear of being recognised.
- They may be actively involved in the abusive activity.

Because of the double silencing that occurs when children are abused via the new technology, it is even more important to develop new ways of helping the victims. Tink Palmer emphasises that this new conduit for abuse has implications for police, social workers and therapists who are involved in child protection work – practices and procedures need to be reviewed from the point of discovery of the image, the disclosure interview, the investigation, assessment, therapeutic intervention through to support for the child witness.

4. Palmer, Tink (2003) Stolen Childhood. Barnardo's, UK.
5. Palmer, Tink, with Stacey, Lisa (2004) Just one click. Barnardo's, UK.
6. Kollock, P, Smith, M (eds) (1999) Communities in Cyberspace. Routledge, London.

7. Palmer, Tink, with Stacey, Lisa (2004) Just one click. Barnardo's, UK.
8. Ibid
9. Ibid

Changes in current professional practices

As well as the need for changes in current professional practices (detailed below), local, national and international co-operation has to be developed and strengthened in order to discover the victims and

to apprehend the abusers. We have to realise, says Tink Palmer, that the sexual abuse of children is now an international issue which requires international co-operation – with just one click the abusive image of a child can be sent anywhere in the world.

Police forces need to be encouraged to place as much emphasis on finding the child victim in the images as they do on apprehending the perpetrator. If this were to occur, a more pro-active stance would be taken by the police in seeking out the children

When a child is the victim of abusive images, he/she rarely has control of the disclosure process. Generally, the image is discovered and then the victim is sought. Investigative personnel need to be mindful of the impact on child victims when they are informed that images of their abuse have been traced online. Some will not have known they were the subjects of photography because hidden cameras may have been used. Others may have known about the photography but would never have told anyone for the reasons given above. The reaction of either group of child victims is, in the main, to deny that it is them in the images. We must never under-estimate the trauma of disclosure.

Even when investigators tell child victims that they have identified them in the images, the children have been known to continue denying any knowledge of being sexually abused, let alone being the subject of photography. As professionals, we need to be aware of the impact of such knowledge being given to the child victims – at some point, the reality of their situation will dawn on them and they will need help in coping with the fact that they have no control over who sees the images.

The investigative process has to be reconsidered in many aspects. Is it for example always necessary to interview the children who are the subjects of abusive images for evidential purposes asks Tink Palmer. If they are required to give evidence in criminal proceedings, maybe they could do it out

side the courtroom. A new guidance was issued 2002 in UK to assist child witnesses[10] that entitles children under 17 years to 'special measures', for instance that they can give their evidence from outside the courtroom through a televised link.

Careful thought must also be given to the way in which the interviews of children who have been the subjects of abusive images are recorded. It would seem to be totally inappropriate to video record the interview when it is such technology that was the conduit of their abuse in the first place. Children have reported feeling re-traumatised due to the recording of their evidence.

New issues arise when considering the assessment and therapeutic needs of children abused via the new technologies. These are:

• The total impotence they experience regarding the disclosure of their abuse.

• The realisation that hundreds of thousands of people have access to the images.

• The responsibility that abusers place on children and thus the resultant 'shame' (albeit misplaced) that children feel.

• The non-resolution of their sexually abusive experience – their image may always be available on the net.

Multi-disciplinary training programmes are urgently needed in the view of Tink Palmer, for all those working with children abused by the new technologies, both for those who investigate these matters and those who assist the children in recovery. It is necessary to review practice guidance for all those who work with child victims. Such practice guidance needs to ensure that all aspects from discovery of the images to the child giving evidence are reviewed and reflect the differential impact that abuse via the new technologies has on children. It is also important to remember that child victims do not live in a vacuum, they are normally part of a family members of which also need to be assessed regarding their support needs.

Children groomed online for sexual abuse offline

Sexual abuse offline after a grooming process online generally starts as a chat room activity.

Tink Palmer describes how the perpetrator masks his identity and real age and fabricates looks and interests in order to get in touch with young people. He will form a "special relationship" with his victim online which remains a secret with the aim of enabling him to meet his victim offline.

Such grooming may have dire consequences, where the victim is both sexually abused and feels betrayed by the former trustful "friend" online. Many victims express the view that they really thought the abuser was their friend.

Grooming online is an even more hidden form of abuse than in real life. It is generally faster and anonymous which enables the abuser to build up a trusting online relationship more quickly. Groomers groom in chat rooms, private chat rooms, through web cams and voice technologies. They find out as much as they can about their potential victim, establish the risk and likelihood of the child telling and find out information about the child's family and social networks. If it seems "safe enough" they will isolate their victim, maybe using flattery and promises or threats and blackmail, and get control over the child. They give false information about themselves, including false self-images.

IN closing her presentation, Tink Palmer emphasises that the impact of such a grooming process is silencing the children. Children's behaviour on the Internet is, she claims, less inhibited. They will say things that they would not in the real world and they are fearful of those close to them finding out about what they have said. Another reason for children's silence is their consciousness of peer opinion – they would not want their peers to know that they have been "duped".

10. *Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Gudiance for Vulnerable and Intimidated Witnesses, including Children* (2002) U K.

Analysis of the experience of children abused online - two case studies

Katarzyna Fenik is psychotherapist and works in Nobody's Children Foundation in Poland with sexually abused children. She is co-author of the project for raising awareness of Internet crimes against children/of online child abuse and author of several publications on child abuse issues. She is also coordinator of the Helpline.org.pl – nationwide helpline for children concerned about illegal and harmful contents on the Internet and she is involved in the coordination of National Contact Point for Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children.

Katarzyna Fenik works with assistance and psychotherapy to children who are abused online. She has made an analysis of the experience of two different clinical cases concerning three aspects:

1. The methods used by the perpetrators.
2. Difficulties in victim identification.
3. The risk factors.

The two girls who were exploited through Internet are called Sylwia and Natalia. Their backgrounds are different, as well as the stories of how they got into abuse.

Case 'Sylwia'

The 14-year old girl called Sylwia fainted and was taken to the hospital. It was only there that her mother found out that Sylwia had already been seeing a psychologist for some time.

The mother was anxious about her daughter's problem and started a small "home investigation". In Sylwia's computer the mother discovered many e-mails and an archive of conversation with a man called Thomas, whom Sylwia had met online.

It turned out that Thomas had visited Sylwia at home several times before during her parents' absence. Sylwia had been manipulated, forced to sexual intercourses, threatened and given false promises.

Case 'Natalia'

As a psychotherapist Katarzyna Fenik gives advice on an Internet helpline. She was contacted by a school counsellor who made an interesting inquiry: "What could it mean if a 9-year old girl draws a frame on every drawing she makes...?"

Katarzyna Fenik adviced the school counsellor, still through the helpline on Internet, to talk further with the child. The young girl called Natalia said that her drawings were like photos that were shown to her at home by a neighbour – her mother's friend. Natalia revealed that abusive images were shown to her after the evening-cartoons on TV and that she watched them together with her mother and the neighbour.

Later Natalia disclosed that she was sexually abused by her mother's friend and that he took pictures. Moreover, the mother was receiving gifts from the neighbour when she agreed to leave Natalia alone at his home. Natalia's mother denied all the facts when confronted with them.

The framed drawings that Natalia made indicated that she was shown child abuse images at home, that she was being abused and that the abuse was recorded, most probably via a web camera. The abusive images were then distributed online.

The persons involved

There were different persons involved in these two stories. In Sylwia's case there were Sylwia and the man whom she first got in touch with on the Internet, Thomas. There were more people involved in the story of Natalia: apart from herself, the school counsellor, Natalia's mother and her neighbour.

Sylwia and the Internet

For Sylwia the Internet was the world in which she found close friends, and also a medium which perfectly responded to her teenage needs, for example the acceptance that she needed in this period of life. She explained her experience of Internet as: "I had my own world, the world in which I could hide myself..."

Sylwia considered Internet to be safe. In this virtual world nobody could see her or what she was thinking about herself , for instance that she was ugly, fat and boring.

Nobody was supervising Sylwia when she was surfing and chatting on the Internet. She explained: "My parents were happy that I could use the computer so well, and even my grandpa was proud of me too..."

Thomas and the Internet

Internet allowed Thomas to create a picture of himself, to groom a girl, regardless of his age and appearance. It helped him to cover his real intentions and to seduce her.

The school counsellor

Internet facilitated for the school counsellor to get advice in a matter that was troubling her. It also allowed the helpline psychologist to monitor help for Natalia after the case was disclosed.

Natalia's perpetrators and the Internet

Internet gave anonymity to Natalia's mother and her neighbour, and also financial benefits through selling photos and movies online.

Natalia did not know that when she was sexually abused she was also recorded and watched by other people.

This caused difficulties for the police in the investigation. The police do not monitor online criminal acts, they do not have skills or methods to secure evidences, and could therefore not identify other victims.

The methods of perpetrators

Thomas used the fact that Sylwia experienced a difficult time in life. He gave her attention and acceptance and devoted a lot of time to her. In the archive of his conversation several comments as the following were found: "Just say one word and I will enter the chat to talk to you at any time…", "It is amazing what a good person you are, Sylwia...".

Thomas created a picture of himself in Sylwia'smind by telling her things like: "When I was a small boy, the other children didn't like me, I was so ugly that they always avoided me in the playground", "If you didn't like me – nobody would like me...".

Thomas talked to Sylwia about his sexual fears and convinced her that she could be the one to help him. He persuaded her to have sex with him and then he made her responsible for all that happened. Also, he made her familiar with child pornographic pictures, with the result that she thought that "every child has this kind of photos, this is as child drawing". In this way, he convinced her that his behaviour was normal. Eventually, he used her unawareness to record sexual abuse and to distribute it online.

Sylwia's case – solutions and complications

Sylwia told her psychotherapist in detail about her contacts with Thomas. The police secured evidence from Sylwia's computer, e-mails and messages from the chat line.

She agreed to collaborate with the police and disclosed so many facts that the police could search the home of Thomas. It was revealed that Thomas had committed many similar offences online.

Since the case was disclosed Sylwia and her family have had support of the psychologists. She is getting help how to enter into more normal relations with her peers and to find 'real' friends.

Sylwia's parents do not permit her to use the Internet at home.

Natalia's case – solutions and complications

Natalia's mother and her neighbour managed to hide many photos and films mentioned by Natalia. Some of the movies could be secured by the police, but only few clients were identified, as the files were distributed via Internet.

The girl has been in foster care for some months. Now entering into the age of puberty, she experiences many emotional problems and tries to hide her sexuality.

She does not want to talk about the abusive images. She is thinking about changing her appearance because she is afraid that some day someone may recognise her in pornographic materials.

Natalia gets support from a psychotherapist and psychiatrist.

Experiences from and questions raised in clinical practice

Bengt Söderström is a clinical psychologist working exclusively with Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) cases for the last ten years. He is head of the Vasa clinic in Stockholm, Sweden, the Stockholm County Child & Adolescent Psychiatry outpatient clinic specializing on CSA, providing treatment programmes, consultations, supervision, training and methodological development. Bengt is the author of articles on dissociation and on trauma and editor and co-author of 'The Vasa Tool Box[11].

Bengt Söderström says it can be concluded from clinical practice that there seems to be specific factors having an impact on rehabilitation of children with pictures of their abuse on the Internet. These factors may be others than those known in treatment of otherwise sexually abused children. In every individual case it is important to consider the severity of abuse experience, the relation to the abuser, the age at onset, the duration etc.

The pictures per se

The pictures as such may have an impact on stigmatization, continues Bengt Söderström. There are many cases where the shame and stigma of knowing that your pictures are on the Internet have increased the distress and prolonged the rehabilitation.

Bengt Söderström underlines that the picture-taking in itself, as a an issue separate from the abuse experience can have severe consequences for the victims, as is demonstrated by the following brief examples:

Example: A girl aged 6, had been sexually abused by her father for years and had been photographed during the abuse. The first time she sees herself live in the monitor while her father is taking a film, she is six years old. Her response to the scene she sees where she has the father's penis in her mouth, is extremely strong and emotional.

Example: A preschool girl panics when she discovers hidden cameras in the room where a man has tricked her to take her clothes off. He had done

so by promising her a new fancy dress.

Pictures are used as threats of exposure. Bengt Söderström says that in cases of peer abuse we now see more and more instances where threats to show pictures to friends are used to prevent disclosure to adults/authorities. The threats are also used in order to bully and humiliate the victim. This may be hard to talk about to an adult who is not familiar with the technology and its new efficient means of bullying (e.g. picture-sharing on mobile phone). The perpetrator will similarly tell small children that the pictures are a mutual secret, something they have together and that hey should always keep quiet about, continues Bengt Söderström. This may make it more difficult for the child to disclose gradually, to tell a little bit at a time, since he or she knows that there are pictures that can show the whole story at once.

Bengt Söderström gives examples how the picture-taking as part of the grooming process may be confusing and/or normalising for the victims:

Example: A father who took pictures when he abused his daughter used the same ritual taking the abusive images as when he took holiday pictures or everyday pictures. The daughter got so used to the picture taking that she would not have found it strange even if her mother had come in during the abuse.

Example: A paedophile in a neighbourhood used to take non-sexual pictures to make a group of children feel confirmed and admired. In doing so he was triggering jealousy and competition between them which made them eager to comply when he finally suggested that they should be nude or do sexual stuff in front of the camera.

Impact of different disclosure processes

According to Bengt Söderström the rehabilitation is affected by how the abuse and the abusive images were disclosed, a process that may vary a lot.

When the child discloses abuse and pictures taken of the abuse

In these cases the disclosure was made by a conscious act of telling. The child's active decision to disclose makes it easier to talk about the abuse in treatment and to address feelings that need to be processed as well as confused thoughts and misunderstandings that need to be clarified.

When a child discloses abuse, but reveals the existence of pictures only later in treatment

The child experiences a strong sense of relief after having disclosed some aspects of the abuse. She or he realises that her/his story is believed and the experience of the ongoing treatment as being helpful, may help the child to risk disclosing and address the picture-taking as well.

When a child is brought to treatment after abuse has been exposed by others

When the child is not the first to tell, there may be very strong factors that prevent the child from talking about the abuse and its consequences; factors that also prevent the child from benefiting from treatment. There may be feelings of shame and guilt or confused thoughts about responsibility and right and wrong. There may be strong feelings of loyalty, fear or other effects of the grooming process that are enhanced by the non-intentional exposure of the abuse.

When a child is brought to treatment after pictures of abuse have been exposed

Such factors may be even stronger when there is a distance in time and place between the abuse and the exposure. The scope of the sexual acts may be immediately obvious in the pictures, but not the grooming and trickery of the child. If the perpetrator and the child are caught in the act, a normal response from a non-offending adult often makes it clear to the child that the rescuer blames the perpetrator.

The delayed and less direct response from non-witnessing adults talking to the child about abusive pictures may be less supportive, especially if the pictures depict the child with a happy face. Bengt Söderström underlines that questions posed during the investigation to the child about how it felt,

are easily perceived as blaming the child and may make it much harder to assist the child in treatment to see through the manipulations; how the perpetrator made it happen.

Bengt Söderström asks if the inherent quality of the pictures per se and the disclosure process could be seen as existing on a continuum where one end would represent a moderate impact on the child and the other a severe negative impact? He continues: We know that overt symptoms and conscious worries are accessible targets in treatment, but do pictures of the abuse increase the risk of symptoms staying covert and confusions and misunderstandings being harder to access in treatment?

Addressing pictures in specific treatment areas

Bengt Söderström points out that an important question is how the pictures can be used to help the therapist in the rehabilitation process. He suggests that the pictures may be used in different ways to address specific areas in the treatment:

Reality

- Talk about what really happened as the child describes it.

Thanks to the pictures we know much about what the child experienced, which may actually assist an experienced helper to tailor treatment. It is important to let the child be informed and have control over who is to see the confiscated pictures. Should the therapist actually see them or should the police tell the therapist about them?

Affects

- Expose, desensitize and reprocess affects when there are symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and dissociation.

There is a risk of premature exposure to traumatic memories, thoughts and feelings in treatment; children may become secondarily traumatised if pictures are shown to them indiscriminately, says Bengt Söderström. Just knowing what situations there are pictures of, may make it harder for the child to dare think about them. The graphic explicitness of a picture seems to make a gradual defusing of dissociated painful aspects harder. Helpers need to have a sensibility for this.

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11. *The Vasa Tool Box.Etc.*

Thoughts

• It is necessary to understand what happened and the consequences of the abuse.

According to Bengt Söderström new questions and answers about the abuse need to be addressed at each developmental step. This also applies to the impact of pictures taken and distributed. Bengt Söderström asks when and how is a little girl to be helped to understand that her pictures are on the Internet, that people probably are masturbating to them and how is she to be helped to live with that fact? Specific group programmes?

• Symptoms and own responses to abuse have to be normalized.

• The helper must attribute responsibility for the abuse and learn the child right and wrong.

The therapist's knowledge about and familiarity with photo and distribution techniques and of child pornography dynamics is probably essential for all these three treatment goals, underlines Bengt Söderström.

Increase safety and autonomy

• Increase assertiveness and knowledge of children's rights.

• Increase own safety and help-seeking behaviour.

Family and environmental interventions

• Enhance attachment to and communication with non-offending parents/caregivers.

Non-offending parents often have a longer crisis following disclosure than the child has, says Bengt Söderström. They may need longer time in treatment to come to terms with what has actually happened to the child. Pictures taken and distributed can make this even harder, when at the same time the child's need to be reassured and relieved from shame and guilt may be even greater, due to the pictures, continues Bengt Söderström.

• Help caregivers understand affects and symptoms of child sexual abuse and give support.

• Help child test reality and correct misunderstandings together with non-offending parents/caregivers.

Bengt Söderström also points out that the graphic explicit nature of pictures has a great impact on parents. Seeing pictures of the abuse may make it easier to believe what happened, but also harder to see through the grooming and deception of the child. If the child looks happy and horny on the pictures, it may be difficult to correctly attribute responsibility for the abuse, to understand how this came about and to convey emotional support to counteract the child's sense of guilt and shame.

• Help caregivers promote safety and protective behaviour.

Helpers

There are several questions raised in consultations given to colleagues concerning the pictures, says Bengt Söderström.

• Is the picture-taking just another abusive experience to be noted in treatment?

There is a growing awareness among therapists and other helpers that there is a need to ask about pictures and films being taken and to talk about that in treatment. Confiscated pictures may provide some guidance for what needs to be addressed in treatment.

• Is there a whole field of specific factors and dynamics we need to be familiar with?

Very few helpers are familiar with the dynamics in the child pornography field and the variety of ways in which the photographing and the distribution of pictures may be performed and how it may be perceived by the child. The difficulties discussed that parents may have in recognising and correctly perceiving the explicitness of pictures certainly applies to helpers too. The therapist's bewilderment at understanding e.g. a happy or sexually aroused child in the pictures may indeed cause a similar reaction as those parents will show.

Are there specific consequences and treatment needs not yet known?

• Are there any specific long term effects?

We can tell the child about the experiences of adult survivors of other forms of abuse experiences. We are quite certain how to prepare for difficulties that may come later in life and can encourage and promote positive strategies to cope with them. But how will life be as a former victim of child sexual abuse when pictures of the abuse are still distributed in great volume on the Internet of today?

• What, if any, are the effects of pornographic pictures taken without the child experiencing the situation as sexually abusive?

• Are there any generational issues?

Finally Bengt Söderström asks: What do pictures in general and sexually explicit pictures specifically mean to a young person today in relation to privacy, identity etc.? How different do we as somewhat elderly helpers perceive that?

Victimology of Child Sexual Abuse Images

Sharon W. Cooper MD, (Adjunct Professor of Paediatrics) is a Developmental and Forensic Pediatrician who serves on the faculty at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Medicine. She is the lead author of the most comprehensive textbook on child sexual exploitation, has contributed several chapters to other texts on child maltreatment and sexual assault and has provided more than 100 lectures on this form of child maltreatment throughout the world. She is a consultant for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (USA).

Sharon Cooper is concerned about the child sexual exploitation widespread through the US. She defines 5 different types of child sexual exploitation:

- Child sexual abuse images.
- Prostitution of children & youths.
- Sex tourism.
- Cyber-enticement.
- Human trafficking.

In each of these contexts one must also consider the role of pornography. However, this was not done just a few years ago when the US society still was at denial concerning these matters. People could just not believe that there were young children involved in these areas. Many thought that the images were adults whose images were manipulated to look like children, or that the images had been "morphed" into virtual children. But some hard lessons have been learned since then. For example there are now 3.5 million images with child sexual abuse circulating on the Internet which cannot all be virtual and morphed. Several cases have been known where children were exploited either voluntarily, by family members, through community organizations or illicit sexually oriented businesses. Finally, these digital crime scenes are becoming a high priority for eradication by society.

Sharon Cooper underlines how important it is to recognize the links between child abuse and prostitution. According to research, the persons who have been victims of child sexual abuse are, in their lifetime, 28 times more likely to be arrested for prostitution than a person who has never been a victim of child sexual abuse (National Institute of Justice, US, 1995). It is not known exactly how having abusive images online may affect the victim, but there is a growing concern that this form of abuse may increases the risk of a victim becoming exploited subsequently further through prostitution. Research from the US has highlighted the importance of recognizing prostitution within a family as a precursor to a child running away from and ultimately becoming a victim of further exploitation on the streets. In addition, there is much more evidence of marketing of children in online shopping sites such as www.Craigslist.com.

Sex tourism constitutes another link for the production and propagation of sexual abuse images as offenders make videos and return to their country of origin with this contraband and share with like-minded persons.

Child sexual abuse images are also closely allied with cyber-enticement cases, in that youth online are often sent such images to encourage them to comply with the wishes of online predators, as a form of education regarding desired sexual acts, and to break down reluctance on the part of the victim to engage in mutual image exchanges. Typically, when a youth has begun to comply with image exchanges, especially using live web interaction such as with web-cams, extortion into silence and compliance is even more likely.

The normalisation of sexual harm

A matter of great concern, continues Sharon Cooper, is 'the normalisation of sexual harm' in media, advertising, fashion, entertainment, music and music videos and how this impacts youth values and beliefs leading to compliant victimisation. The normalisation of sexual harm is a concern in child sexual abuse, pornography and exploitation through prostitution. Sexualized images of adults have been promoted in media for decades, but only recently has the market strategy turned to the sexualization of children and youths, further promoting the dangerous concept that children are only small adults. Sharon Cooper provides numerous examples, for instance popular music entertainers, music videos and with lyrics and images, televi sion programmes titled in common prostitution terms, kids clothing, videogames, cartoon figures, and advertising strategies, spreading the message to children that sexual abuse, pornography and prostitution is something normal, positive, and even desirable.

What does it do to children hearing and seeing that everyday, especially to children who already are at risk of sexual exploitation? How does the business of sexualising children in combination with the modern technologies affect children and their objectification? Sharon Cooper reports research which reveals that when teen girls watch 3 or more hours a day of sexually degrading music videos as a normal past time, they are more likely to be arrested for assaulting a teacher, have multiple sexual partners, use drugs and alcohol, and have contracted a sexually transmitted disease. It is not at all unfathomable that when a youth is sexualised everyday for instance in his/her clothing, and in their favourite past times, it is not a big step to become exploited offline and online.

The normalisation of sexual harm in all of these societal venues is very likely to enhance the risk of compliant victimisation and there is a great need of further understanding the impact of all these factors on the behaviours of children today. Not only is there an important role for parental education regarding this important influence upon youth behaviours, but also industry leaders need to be informed of the negative influence that their practices may be having in the struggle against sexual exploitation of children and youth.

Training needed

There have been recent figures quoted to the US Congress that child pornography is a $3 to $20 billion industry. The new technologies, such as the Internet, iPods and mobile phones, have proven to be invaluable tools for sex abusers, making it very easy to distribute and sell child abusive recordings. Meanwhile, lots of judges and other professionals who should assist abused children, still refuse to even look at these abusive images. Consequently they have no understanding of the nature of the crimes. This lack of knowledge of the cycle of sexual abuse associated with possession and distribution of child pornography, leads lawmakers and the judicial systems to false assumptions regarding the risks for repeat offending.

Sharon Cooper states that investigation, prosecution and prevention are very complex and require a great deal of training for professionals, with particular attention to welfare workers. Many such workers have no knowledge of the pathway to further exploitation from sexual abuse, to image production, to online distribution and possible eventual prostitution.

Investigators and medical personnel who analyze these images have to be familiar with the taxonomy of abuse images provided by Taylor and Quayle,[12] because of the need to describe the content of images without showing them since many judges refuse at this point to visually review this contraband.

Improvements of current practices are necessary in many others areas:

- Child welfare workers must become experienced in interviewing children regarding sexual exploitation.

- Denial of images by child victims seems to be very commonplace and can cause problems with the legal strategies. It is important to be aware of what might happen to a child under the discovery and investigative process. The discovery that victims appear in abusive images offline or online, can lead to severe emotional consequences. How will a child react if he or she is not aware that the abuse was recorded? Furthermore, if he/she never has told anyone about the images out of self-protection, how does this impact the case, as well as the mental health of the victim? Obviously, there is a need for secrecy as a self-protective means of avoiding blame and shame. There is an immense difference between a child who has made a decision to disclose sexual abuse and moves forward to do so, as compared to a child who is not ready for this disclosure but is confronted with images of their own abuse. In addition, there is often a time span between the abuse and the disclosure of abusive images which can be problematic, as in the following case:

Example: A girl called "Mia" (not her real name) had been rescued from sexual child abuse. Several years later, pictures of areas where she was abused were published on national television in the authorities' attempt to locate her through newly

12. Taylor Max, Quayle Ethel: Child Pornography: An Internet Crime (2003) Brunner-Routledge, Hove.

discovered abusive images. How did it affect Mia, having to face not only the abuse once again, but also knowing that the abusive images were online and seen by numerous other offenders, and moreover, being afraid that she should be recognized through the publishing of the photos? Mia's statement to the media was that her one desire was to make the images go away. This child bravely subsequently testified before the US Congress regarding the terrible impact of her exploitation and the need for the US to protect children more and have harsher sentences for producers of this form of abuse.

- Specialists such as forensic doctors have to know how to combat continued abuse by recognizing and emphasizing those images that denote the passage of time in a child's life e.g. hair length discrepancies, fingernail growth and condition, emerging sexual maturation signs.
- Efforts to diminish compliant victimization (as is seen in cyber-enticement cases) as well as exhibitionism on the Internet contributing to the number of images are important.
- It is important to reinforce that the great minority of images seen on the Internet are secondary to youth exhibitionism alone and if noted, professionals should strongly consider teen prostitution.
- Health care providers who specialize in child sexual abuse need continued training in asking the questions of whether images have been taken of the child, during their medical examinations.
- Therapists need to improve their comfort in the intervention of children exploited through pornography and the anticipated sexualized behaviors that often result.

Challenges

Web addiction

There is a lot of worry about what constant access to the computer, the Internet and other modern technologies is doing to children of today. Growing up without all these possibilities would be educationally crippling in this century. However, some experts have raised the question that the children may be too wired for their own good.

Sharon Cooper talks about enhancement of exhibitionism and compliant victimization as well

as web addiction, quoting a case with one adult sex offender incarcerated for child pornography. He admitted to his own sexual victimization as a youth and was asked how he would react if he came across images of himself on the Internet. His response was sheepish but candid in that he thought he would likely masturbate to the images.

Toddler pornography and sadistic images

The increase of toddler pornography is worrying, according to the disclosed images with child abuse. These images are also becoming more violent in nature and of course, these victims are non-verbal, and therefore easier to abuse. Recent studies have revealed that the majority of images leading to an arrest are prepubescent images. Many of the child abuse pictures are highly sadistic and contain a lot of bondage. These sadistic images urge us to think carefully about what is sadism when children are the victims. Is not anal and vaginal penetration of a toddler and preschooler another form of sadism? The pain would be very significant. Perhaps just the very young age of a victim should be enough to consider rating such images as sadistic, if there is any form of gross penetration.

Compliant victimisation

Sharon Cooper calls for more knowledge about how the sexualization of children and the modern technologies may effect the objectification of boys and girls. Does it for instance make them more vulnerable and easy to 'trick' or persuade into taking pictures of themselves and post or even sell the photos online? Many child victims do not disclose abuse out of shame and guilt. Abusive images can make it even harder as the victims who are afraid of what others may think about their involvement in the abuse. Recent reports have shown the use of cell phone cameras as extortion of sexual assault victims by older youths.

It is important to discuss how compliant victimisation is gradually coerced by offenders. This form of online grooming is a needed topic of study and understanding for members of child abuse teams so that they will instantly recognize the techniques used by offenders who lure children into self-exploitive behaviours.

Another area of education needed is the realization that the majority of under-aged victims will be

sexually mature long before they are chrono logically legally mature. There are a significant number of teen images on the Internet which are discounted because investigators are not sure that they constitute under-aged victims. Consequently, since the completion of puberty requires almost 5 years, analysts need to be knowledgeable about incomplete sexual maturation in boys and girls so that the additionally large number of teen images will be included in data bases and efforts will be made to rescue these victims as well.

Covert victimisation

It is necessary to call attention to covert victimization and how to prevent and assist the victims and their caregivers. Sharon Cooper reports a case of a mentally impaired adolescent whose stepfather sexually abused her and covertly videotaped her. When the mother discovered the tape, she asked the therapist what to do with the recording - should she use the tape to teach her daughter of the dangers of further "bad touching"?

Early puberty

There is no doubt that puberty is occurring in children earlier than ever. However, the sexual maturation does not correspond to the development of the brain. Sharon Cooper asks what it means to have plenty of children with an adult body but a very immature brain. Research has confirmed with serial brain magnetic resonance imaging (MRIs) that the brain matures from the occipital lobe (at the base of the brain) forward to the frontal lobe. The latter is the last to become mature and the prefrontal cortex part of the brain is the site of impulse control, judgement, and emotional responses.

Also, she warns us about the need to understand the challenges for gay and lesbian teens, considering the amount of sexual abuse involving young adolescent boys in Internet-related settings. Though many organizations predict that one out of four girls will be sexually abused in childhood and one out of seven boys, online sexual abuse images show a different distribution. Nearly 45% of images online are male victims.

Youth Offenders

One key question is how to look at youth offenders who are downloading images. Is it sexual exploitat -

r tion or is it sexual exploration? This is particularly relevant to the age of the victims in images and the age of the youth offender. In addition, the subsequent consequences can be catastrophic for a youth who in fact may have become addicted to Internet pornography and its easy accessibility. It is clear that adults have become so addicted, and why should we not recognize the increased risks for youths.

Conclusion

Finally, Sharon Cooper declares that child sexual abuse images may lead to:

- Extortion into more abuse and prostitution.
- Education of the normalcy of sex with adults.
- Escalation to more sexually explicit, graphic and violent abuse.
- Entry into prostitution by family members who market their children online.

She urges us to thoroughly think about where to go from here to protect and prevent children from abuse through the Internet and other communication and information technologies. Measures on all levels have to be considered: the individual, family, community and society at large.

The Second Youth Internet Safety Survey

Janis Wolak, J.D is a reserach Assistant Professor att the Crime against Children Research Center of the University of New Hamshire, U.S.A. She is the author and co-author of numerous articles about child victimization, Internet –related sex crimes, and youth Internet use and a director of the First an Second Youth Internet Safety Surveys and the National Juvenile Online Victimization Study.

Janis Wolak presents the results of the second Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-2). This is a telephone survey of a national sample of 1500 young people, ages 10 through 17, about experiences with the Internet in the US, with the reservation that the issues may be different in Europe than in US.

The first Youth Internet Safety Survey in 2000 was prompted by a number of factors - the enormous growth of the Internet in the 1990's and the fact that children and adolescents were flocking to the Internet. There were growing concerns about sex offenders using the Internet to target victims. The amount of pornography online increased rapidly and questions were raised about whether kids were being exposed to sexually explicit material. Another aim of the first study was to find out how children were being exposed, with some people saying kids had to go out and find it while others said that pornography was finding the kids. There were also reports about people using the Internet to threaten and scare and harass children. It was in response to these concerns that the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children funded the first Youth Internet Safety Survey.

The second survey was conducted five years later, in 2005. It asked youth, 10-17 years old, about what happened to them using the Internet during the last year. 1 500 telephone interviews were made, with the permission of the parents. A number of focus groups with young people were held before the interviews. Janis Wolak says that it was remarkably easy to talk to children about the concerns. The researchers at the Crimes against Children Research Center have also conducted over 600 interviews with law enforcement investigators about criminal cases involving Internet-related sex offenses against youth.

Some interesting changes have taken place between 2000 and 2005. Janis Wolak emphasizes that the results give average patterns among young people using the Internet.

Information from the police

News reports in the U.S. have created an inaccurate stereotype of "Internet predators." News stories describe such offenders as pedophiles that use the Internet to target grade school children; lie about their identities, ages and motives; trick children into divulging their names and addresses; and abduct and forcibly assault their victims.

Much of the Internet safety information that children and teenagers hear is based on these incorrect assumptions. They are told not to correspond online with strangers, not to give out identifying information and not to go alone to meetings. However, we know that adolescents in particular widely ignore this advice.

What actually happens in these cases is quite different compared to the stereotype described in news stories. When researchers interviewed law enforcement investigators, they found that 99 % of the victims were 13 years old or older. None were younger than 12 years old. 24 % of the victims were boys, a lot of them gay.

Almost all of the offenders were men who met the victims in chat rooms and through profiles, via Instant messaging (IM) and e-mail. The offenders befriended and romanced the victims. Many communicated online with victims for a month or more, exchanging pictures, making phone calls, and sending gifts and/or money. Many victims felt love or close friendship for offenders.

Janis Wolak reports that the offenders were considerably older than the victims. The majority were white men, older than 25 years. Only 5% of offenders deceived victims by claiming to be other youth. Most were open about being older adults and open about their sexual intentions.

Most first encounters with victims happened in chat rooms. The chat rooms included sites oriented to teenagers, to specific geographic locations, to dating and romance, to gays and in a very few cases to sexual encounters between adults and mi-nors. Men who met victims online in places other than chat rooms appeared to use profiles posted by youth. One man targeted his victims by searching profiles for the word "flirt." Another found a girl's birth date in her profile and sent her an electronic birthday card to initiate the acquaintance

A decline in sexual solicitations

Osne of the aims of the YISS-2 survey, Janis Wolak continues, was to try to grasp the question how these crimes develop and to find out what children can tell us about sexual solicitations on the Internet. Sexual solicitations were defined as online requests to engage in sexual activities or sexual talk, or to give personal sexual information that were unwanted or made by a person 5 or more years older. Sexual solicitations can cover a variety of events from fairly mild incidents - like someone asking for a girl's bra size - to serious incidents like an adult trying to meet an underage girl or boy in person for sex.

There is good news and bad news about sexual solicitations, says Janis Wolak.

The second survey shows a decline of almost one third in unwanted sexual solicitations since the first survey, from 19 % to 13 %.

There are a number of reasons for the decrease. Some of the reduction seems to be due to youth being more cautions about interacting with strangers online. Fewer young people were talking to persons they did not know face-to-face. The number of youth that used the Internet to chat, e-mail or through Instant messaging with strangers decreased by 6%, from 40% to 34%. Fewer said they had formed close friendships with people they met online, a decline of almost one third, from 16% to 11%. There was also a considerable decline in chat room use, which was almost cut in half, from 56% to 30%.

The awareness of dangers on the Internet has grown among young people. Many of the participants in the focus groups had absorbed prevention advices about online predators. They often talked about chat rooms as unpleasant places with unsavory people and they were very aware of sleazy adults using the Internet to get to know kids for sexual reasons.

What youth said

Girl, 12: "I went into the chat room and they asked me if I wanted to have cybersex. I was asking them what kind of music they liked and stuff."

Boy, 11, who was playing an online game with a man, 20: "He asked me something personal, something about a man's privates."

Girl, 14: "I was chatting on the Internet and this guy just popped up in an Instant message and started talking really dirty to me and saying things that I had never heard of before. He told me he was 30 years old and then he said, `LOL' (laugh out loud)."

No Decline in Aggressive Solicitations

The researchers defined a subgroup of sexual solicitations – aggressive solicitations – that were more serious because they involved actual or attempted offline contact. Aggressive solicitations were defined as offline contact with the solicitor through mail, by telephone or in person - or attempts or requests for offline contact. These were more dangerous because they threatened to spill over into real life. This, says Janis Wolak, is where the bad news comes in.

Even if fewer kids were getting solicited, the number of children getting the aggressive solicitations - the ones most likely to evolve into crimes - did not decline. It was 3% in 2000 in comparison with 4% in 2005. Researchers also did NOT find that more kids were brushing off these incidents. Even with fewer incidents, the number of kids who were very or extremely frightened or upset by what happened stayed more or less the same, 5 % in 2000 and 4% 2005. While none of the solicited youth were sexually assaulted as a result of an online sexual solicitation in 2000, online solicitations had led to sexual assaults in two cases in the second survey.

Requests for sexual pictures

Researchers found a new area of concern. 4% of youth said that online solicitors had asked them to take sexual photographs of themselves and send them online to solicitors. (Only one said that he actually had sent a photo.) We did not ask about this in the first survey because youth did not bring this up during the focus groups we did back in 1999. Many of the kids we talked to in the most recent

focus groups told us about being asked to take sexual pictures of themselves.

What Youth Said

Boy, 15: A teenage girl "asked me to get naked on `cam' but I just ignored her."

Girl, 16: "This guy IM'ed [me] and asked me to take off my shirt."

Girl, 16: "I was on AOL Instant Messenger and this boy, who was a friend that I had known for a long time, asked me to finger myself in front of the web cam. I just told him that if he ever asked me that again, I would never talk to him again."

Girl, 12: A man in his 30s "asked me to describe myself and to stick in a pen in my private parts and set up a digital camera and show the parts of my body."

Girl, 17: A man in a Yahoo chat room "offered me $1000 to expose myself to him. I recorded [what he wrote] and gave it to the police."

Online Relationships with Older People

One source of sexual solicitations that has received much attention in the media is older "Internet predators" that use the Internet to meet and develop close friendships or romances with youth and then sexually solicit them. To assess this, Janis Wolak continues, we asked youth questions about online relationships with people who were 5 or more years older. As in the first survey, most of the online relationships with older people seemed benign. Close friendship was defined as a relationship with "someone you could talk to online about things that were real important to you."

3% of youth had formed close friendships with people 5 or more years older they met online.

1% had a face-to-face meeting with an older person they met online

Most of the youth who reported close online friendships were 15-17 years old.

What Youth Said

A boy, 16, became friends with a 40-year-old woman in a chat room about psychic phenomena. They exchanged pictures and telephone calls. They met face-to-face in a public place. One of his parents and a friend went along. He said, "She's really nice."

An 11-year-old boy became friends with a young man, 18, in a gaming site. There was no exchange of pictures or offline contact of any sort. The boy said, "He is a nice guy. He has not done anything bad."

7 youth (0,5%) told interviewers about relationships with older people that included sexual elements. The incidents included the older person asking the youth for sexually explicit photographs of themselves, sending the youth sexually explicit photographs, having some degree of sexual physical contact with the youth or acting in some other way that showed a sexual interest in the youth. These cases were counted as solicitations because of age differences between the youth and older person, whether or not a youth was disturbed by the sexual element in the relationship.

What Youth Said

A 12-year-old girl met an 18-year-old man online, through Instant messaging (IM). She became uncomfortable when he asked her to have cybersex. She said, "I never gave him my e-mail. I would never give [out my] address, city or anything."

A 16-year-old girl became afraid of a 32-year-old man she met online. He wanted a sexual picture of her and used the Internet to find out personal information about her. She said, "When he told me all the things that he knew about me, [it] was enough to make me stop going to that site altogether. He tried to contact me after this happened and I wouldn't send a reply back to him. He hasn't bothered me since."

Kids brought up how it was possible for others to find out private information about them. Some could be attributable to spyware installed secretly.

2 girls and 1 boy, all age 17, had consensual sexual relationships with people 5 or more years older they met online. The older people were ages 22, 23 and 24.

Unwanted Exposure to Pornography

Unwanted exposure was defined as:

• Without seeking or expecting sexual material.

• Being exposed to pictures of naked people or people having sex.

• When doing online searches, surfing the web, opening e-mail, Instant messaging, or links.

• Distressing exposure - youth rated themselves as very or extremely upset as a result of the incident.

The increase of unwanted exposure to pornography was very dramatic, from 25% in 2000 to 34% in 2005 that had at least one such experience in the last year.

Technological changes may be one reason for the increase, for instance higher capacity of computers to receive, store and transmit images, the size of hard drives, the amount of memory, DSL lines, the development of digital photography, web cams and streaming video. Five years ago, many computers did not have enough memory to store images and were too slow for downloading.

Other reasons of the increase may be more aggressive and unethical marketing of pornography online, through pop-up and banner ads, SPAM, mailware, spyware, adware, pornware, malicious installers, hijacking, and unauthorized links. Spyware and adware may be included in many online games and music files that youth download (www.unwantedlinks.com).

In 43% of the incidents, the youth saw pictures of naked people only. 57% saw images that were more sexually explicit. 37% were exposed to images where people were having sex, 13% to pictures showing sexual violence and 10% to pictures of "animals and other strange things".

The exposures appeared to happen mostly when youth searched online for things of typical interest to youth, X-Men, skate board tricks, drum beats, cheerleading stunts, cars, song lyrics, hairstyles, patches for software, and school projects, involving topics such as Romeo and Juliet, famous poets, Benjamin Franklin, fire prevention, DNA, liquids, squid and forensic serology.

Overall, youth named a wide range of topics as subjects of web searches that brought up unwanted sexual material. Virtually all of these topics seemed quite appropriate. It is easy to conclude that the operators of pornography websites are making deliberate attempts to lureyouth to them - or that pornography is so pervasive almost any kind of search will dredge it up.

What Youth Said

Girl, 13: "I was getting directions for my Mom …and I was trying to click the Destination part of Mapquest and a website came up that had a web cam and a picture of a naked lady on there. It had pretty graphic words on there also."

Boy, 13: "It was a picture of Homer and Marge. [They were] naked and you can probably guess the rest."

Boy, 14: "I opened a link. It took me to a site and there was a pop up [of] a huge orgy and there were other things. Someone sent me [the] link and I guess there was a virus on his computer because he didn't mean to send it."

Boy, 15: "I was talking to my cousin by AOL Instant Messenger when one popup with porn [came up]. Then more porn pop ups kept coming and I had to shut my computer down. It may have happened when I disabled the pop up blocker so I could listen to music and forgot to bring it back."

Boy, 10: "I was searching in Google and a link came up that I clicked on, and it was a website that had naked people on it…. I closed it right away. Then pop-up ads kept coming up that were about dirty things. This was only an accident and I told my parents."

Boy, 12: "I was going to a froot loops site… It took me to this weird website. I saw people with half sex changes who looked part male and part female and who were naked. I spelled `froot' wrong. … I spelled it `fruit' instead of `froot'."

Janis Wolak says that in the study they did not specifically ask if youth saw child pornography because they did not believe youth could reliably assess the ages of the people shown in photographs. However, two boys specifically mentioned seeing child pornography. An 11-year-old boy said he saw pictures of "naked men with young boys" while he was doing an online search from a computer in the living room of his home. A 17-year-old boy was looking for video games online from a computer in his bedroom. He said, "I clicked on a link and I did not know what it was. It took me to an underage porn site, which is illegal…I know you're not allowed to go to those. It was disguised as a different link." Neither boy told anyone what happened.

Exposure incidents that were very or extremely upsetting to youth - distressing exposures - also increased, from 6% in 2000 to 9% 2005. While 3% may not seem like much, it is an increase of 50%.

Youth were asked open-ended questions about why they thought specific instances of unwanted

exposure happened. Many seemed to view the Internet as strewn with pornography that could only be avoided with vigilance. These youth seemed to attribute their exposures to letting their guard down and said for example that the incident happened because: "I spelled a word wrong" , "I guess I wasn't being careful", "I was not clear enough doing the search", "I was dumb enough to click on the link" and "I didn't read the information underneath the link." In other words, some youth appeared to be blaming themselves for the unwanted exposures.

What Youth Said
Boy, 17: "People who run porn sites purposely buy old domain web sites and they change the web sites to what [they're] not supposed to be."

Boy, 17: "I go to web sites about racing dirt bikes and when I'm on there pop-up ads come up with naked pictures of girls and guys. … Some of the sites have swimsuit calendars on them and it kind of opens the door for other pornographic images to appear."
Some youth had more sophisticated views of how pornography was being marketed on the Internet.

Boy, 17: "Whoever put it on there wanted someone to get interested. Someone who wanted to see those kinds of pictures would click on it and it would spark an interest."

Boy, 17: "The porn market is really big. … I think they just want young people to go there."

There was considerable overlap between wanted and unwanted exposure to pornography. Both of them increased. 18% of youth said they went to x-rated sites on purpose. About half of the youth with wanted exposure also had unwanted exposure.

Some risk factors for wanted and unwanted exposures were identified:

• Unwanted: teen, file sharing images and depression.

• Wanted: teen, male, delinquency and depression.

• Threats and Harassments.

Online harassment has gotten increased attention in the five years since the first Youth Internet Safety Survey. Stories about people using the Internet to threaten, embarrass or humiliate youth have been widely reported in the media. Some of this

behavior involves threats to assault or harm youth, their friends, family, or property. Some involves efforts to embarrass or humiliate youth, including spreading rumors about sexual activity.

Threats and harassments also increased, defined as "threats or other offensive behavior (not sexual solicitation) sent online to the victim, or sent or posted online about the youth for others to see." In 2000 6% of the youth had experienced such incidents. Five years later there had been an increase of 3%.

One reason for the increase may be that the number of youth admitting to rudeness more than doubled and the number who said they harassed other people increased even more. We know that being rude or harassing others is highly related to being harassed.

Outside of the data, we have some other ideas about why harassment has increased since 2000. Possible explanations include:

• More Internet access by youth with behavior problems.

• Deteriorating civility.

• Online bullying and harassment becoming institutionalized among youth.

• More youth-created vehicles for online harassment, such as "rating" sites, blogs & online journals, etc.

What Youth Said
Girl, 12: "These people from school were calling me a prostitute and whore … and saying I was raped. [It happened] because I'm an easy target. I didn't let it bother me until about a month ago and [then] I started getting physical with people."

Posting Personal Information Online
There was a large increase in the number of youth who posted personal information and pictures online in the second survey. 34% had posted their real names, telephone numbers, home addresses or the names of their schools online where anyone could see; and 18% had posted pictures of themselves. In 2000 only 11% of youth had posted any such personal information and only 5% had posted pictures.

These increases may be at least partly related to the popularity among adolescents of blogs, online

journals and profiles, which allow youth to create elaborate websites about their lives. These types of websites were not part a part of youth culture when the first survey was conducted.

Going to X-Rated Sites on Purpose
There was an increase in the numbers of youth going to X-rated sites on purpose, from 8% in 2000 to 13% in 2005.

Janis Wolak: In 2000, we were concerned that youth were not telling us about going to these sites voluntarily so we added some more context to the question. Still, we found fewer youth going to these sites on purpose than the numbers of youth being exposed involuntarily. It is possible that youth are so inundated by this material on an involuntary basis, that any curiosity about the material has been fulfilled. Not surprisingly, most of these youth were older boys.

Talking about Sex with Strangers Online
We saw something of a decline in report of youth talking about sex online with strangers, although this did not reach significance level. This is consistent with our finding that fewer youth were talking with strangers online, from 7% in 2000 to 5% in 2005. About half of these youth were girls and the majority was age 14 or older.
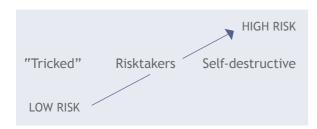
Risky behavior often happens in groups
Much of the prevention messages we currently provide youth , says Janis Wolak, assume that youth are alone when they either engage in risky behavior or have unwanted experiences. Yet, we were interested in whether this was actually the case. We found that many of the unwanted experiences (ranging from 29% of exposure incidents to 41% of solicitation incidents) and around 45% of risky behavior occurred when youth were using the Internet in the physical presence of their friends. Although this is a finding that needs to be explored further, we may need to adjust some of our prevention messages to include youth who are not alone when they are using the Internet.

More information about the Second Youth Internet Safety Survey on www.unh.edu/ccrc/

The Degree of Risk taking

Åsa Landberg is a psychologist and a psycho-therapist specialised in therapy with abused children. She works at Save the Children´s Centre for Children and Adolescents in Crisis in Stockholm, Sweden. She has met a number of teenagers that were abused offline after being contacted online. Considering risk taking, she finds it meaningful to identify different groups of victims, depending on the degree of risk taking. Åsa Landberg illustrates the different degrees of risk taking among the teenagers with the figure below:

HIGH RISK

"Tricked"   Risktakers   Self-destructive

LOW RISK

The degree of risk taking has implications for treatment strategies chosen as well as for preventive programmes and strategies.

She has found a group who is really testing the limits of the Internet – young people doing dangerous things that they know they are not supposed to do. Some young people have a more self-destructive trait than others and these differences account in her view for the fact that there are different degrees of compliant victimisation.

"Tricked" or mildly **risk taking** children and teenagers who have been sexually violated are often help-seeking and see themselves as victims. The **self-destructive** children and teenagers seldom see themselves as victims. They claim that they have control over their own behaviour and that they have made their own choices. They are not motivated to change their dangerous internet behaviour. But they are often troubled by adult reactions to their behaviour and by the restrictions that have followed. It is often possible to create a working alliance, a strong relationship, with these young persons with the overt purpose of assisting them in coping with the adult world. This working relationship can later develop into a therapeutic alliance.

The self-destructive, dangerous behaviour on the internet is most often linked to self-destructive behaviours in other areas. The teenagers may abuse alcohol or drugs, harm themselves or show eating disorders. Many of them have a background of abuse and neglect.

Example: A 14-year old girl was groomed on the Internet by an adult man who after some time staying in touch over the Internet said he wanted to meet with her. Initially she said no, at which point he threatened her to break the contact. He had told her that he was 25 years old but when she met him she realised that he was much older. Still, she did not leave, but seemingly voluntarily followed him to his house. They had sex and she subsequently fell in love with the man.
The man and the relationship was discovered by the police and the man was sentenced to prison. When he was released the young girl sought him up and continued the sexual relation. He went to prison once more.

It is important to think about teenagers as active agents on the Internet instead of the common picture of them as passive consumers.

Example: A 16-year old girl had no previous record of sexual abuse, but her father was physically abusing both the girl and her mother. The girl actively sought sexual contact with adult men and sold her virginity on the Internet.

Example: A 13-year old boy with a long background of physical abuse and neglect arranged meetings and sold sex to older men on the Internet.

Most teenagers in the self-destructive group state that the contact with the abuser gave them something positive in return. The young girl who fell in love with an adult man explained that he made her feel safe and gave her the protection that she needed. The boy who sold sex on the Internet declared that he finally had found a way to get both money and sex. In both cases, the youngsters felt that something valuable was destroyed by the adult world through the disclosure of the abuse. Even if none of them would be assessed as truly healthy kids, the conflict between the victims' feelings and the assumptions of the adult world of the harm and victimisation they suffer does create a problem.

The abused teenagers in the **self destructive** group often feel that they received admiration, a sense of importance, love, money, sex, safety etc. In the eyes of the adult world, they are manipulated victims. How may we develop a common ground where the two viewpoints may constructively meet? The issue of control as well as that of sexuality has to be considered. The parents often feel totally out of control, as does sometimes the therapist. The teenager claims to be in control but the adults consider them to have lost all control over their lives.

A lot of these teenagers, says Åsa Landgren, do not want to be a child – they prefer to see themselves and to act as sexually active adults. A teenager has a right to his or her own sexuality, but where can we draw the line between right to sex and sexual addiction?

A risky behaviour on the Internet may have various reasons, like lack of adult support, friends, love or a record of previous abuse. For the therapist it is crucial to listen to the teenager's own explanations. The risky behaviour may be the only alternative that they see to fulfil their actual needs. We don't have to agree that they have made the right decision and we might see other options but we have to treat them, their needs, choices and their view of life with respect. The therapist can provide them with other alternatives only if he or she knows what the individual is lacking. It is most often necessary to make big changes in the teenager's life to fulfil their needs.

Risky behaviour on the Internet

Anders Nyman is a Psychologist and a Psycho-therapist, working in a government-comission on abuse and neglect of children in fosterhomes and institutions in Sweden during the period 1930-1980. Anders is one of the founders of the Boys´clinic at Swedish Save the Children from where he has a long experience of clinical work with sexually abused children and young offenders. He is the author of several books and articles on treatment of sexually abused children and young offenders. Anders Nyman has been teaching in this field for several years around the world. Anders was commissioned by World Childhood Foundation to carry out a pilot study on riskbehavior among young people in Internetrelated environments. A report: *On-line Victimisation* was published in 2006. Anders is also a member of the Advisory Board at World Childhood Foundation and since 2004 comissioned by the government as a film censor at Statens biografbyrå (The National Swedish Board of Film Classification).

On-line Vicimisation (2006)[13] is the first report concerning support to children and young persons abused and exploited on the Internet in an ongoing project run by BUP-Elefanten, a child- and adolescent psychiatric outpatient clinic specialising in child sexual and physical abuse in Linköping, Sweden. Research and methodological development in the fields of aggression/sexuality and abuse are important areas for the clinic.

The project: "Support to children and youth abused and exploited on the Internet", is financed by World Childhood Foundation. One of the aims of the project is to learn more about the values of young people in regard to the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Another aim is to get more knowledge about how young people are affected by offences on the Internet. And what are their experiences, thoughts and feelings regarding risky behaviours in Internet settings?

The purpose of the projectt is also to provide professionals assisting victims of Internet related abuse with better tools and methods in order to protect children and to be able to offer the offended individuals adequate and proper treatment.

Collected experiences from colleagues

Anders Nyman has interviewed colleagues at five different treatment units for young people suffering from abuse. He asked them about their collected experiences concerning Internet related abuse and the victims' needs of support. Of special interest was what children themselves said had happened and what the professionals thought about risky behaviours and risk groups on the Internet. Is it the same youngsters who are at risk on the Internet as in other situations and in other contexts? And, finally, are specific methods and skills needed when giving support to young victims of Internet abuse?

One conclusion of the interviews is that there is a difference in risks and dangers connected to ICT in comparison with situations "in real life". Meeting strangers in a chat room is qualitatively different from meeting someone you do not know in a discotheque. To get in touch with unknown persons online is probably a little bit more dangerous and risky. The new technique, coupled with the widespread access to mobile phones and web cameras, also seems to have altered values among youth, especially regarding intimate images in for instance sexual situations. There are reasons to take into serious consideration what the risks for young people online are, in what ways they can be abused and how they can be assisted if they become victims of online abuse. The ICT seems to create and enhance dangerous behaviours both among abusers and young people.

Anders Nyman reports that some colleagues he interviewed thought that the Internet attracts a somewhat different group of children than you would find in off-line settings considered to be dangerous. The professionals he interviewed said that they could identify more victims from middle-class families, where access to a computer and a minimum level of skills and creativity created the breeding ground for a dangerous and risky behaviour online. Several of the young persons the clinicians in the report had identified were somehow not the "drop-outs" that often can be identified among other children putting themselves at risk in off-line settings.

A step-by-step process

Anders Nyman describes risky behaviour on the Internet as being in a staircase where each step leads to new dangers. This description comes from how young victims themselves have described what happened and how professionals assisting them describe their experiences.

Such a 'step-by-step process' is a well-known phenomenon among clinicians assisting clients that are suffering from problems related to dependency and risky behaviour linked to dependency. The consecutive steps leading to a more and more risky behaviour on the Internet are not surrounded by 'familiar' warning signals. The Internet as a conduit quite the opposite, seems to signal that you are in control and that you are safe. This since no one else but the individual at the computer decides when to turn it off or on - it is only to press the button. This erroneous feeling of security may amplify a young person's tendency towards a more risk taking behaviour. It may be more difficult to recognise when danger starts becoming real.

For a young person, entering the staircase, it is impossible to know what will be the result should he or she continue down the steps. Anywhere in such a gradual process, it is hard to identify the real risks and dangers. One abused girl told her therapist: "When I was in the middle of the staircase, I was not even aware that I was there".

Anders Nyman identifies the different steps in the staircase of risky online behaviour as follows:

1. To reveal some personal data, like name, passwords, phone number, address or special secrets.

2. To chat about sexual matters with an unknown person.

3. To upload or share sexually indicative pictures of yourself and/or your friends.

4. To become involved in live web cam sex with an unknown person.

5. To date someone offline that you have met online, without proper safety arrangements.

6. To knowingly date adults offline that you have met online.

7. To send pictures for payment.

8. To pose live on the web cam or to have web cam sex and for payment.

9. To date offline someone you have met online and have sex for payment.

10. To offer sex offline and online for payment.

Anders Nyman suggests to the participants to the expert meeting that such a staircase model could be used in order to consider how risky behaviour in ICT-settings develops. He also calls for more knowledge and discussions about the risks related to the Internet, based upon experiences from young people that have been abused and exploited, in order to strengthen the protection of children and in order to formulate more effective preventive strategies than we have seen so far.

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13. "Drabbad online", Anders Nyman, BUP Elefanten, Landstinget i Östergötland, World Childhood Foundation, Sweden 2006.

So what's the problem?

Dr Ethel Quayle is a lecturer in the Department of Applied Psychology and researcher with the COPINE project, University College Cork, Ireland. She is a clinical psychologist and is course director for postgraduate training in cognitive behaviour therapy. As a practitioner she has worked with both sex offenders and their victims and for the last seven years has been working in the area of Internet abuse images.

Ethel Quayle has a lot of experience and knowledge as a researcher in the COPINE Project (Combating Paedophile Information Networks in Europe). She emphasises that it is important not to focus only on what is pathological to the cost of what is good and healthy with ICT. We must also be aware of the differences in perceptions and behaviours between youngsters and adults. However, serious problems connected with ICT cannot be ignored, as in the following two, opposite and extreme cases, which have been reported recently in the news.

A schoolgirl who sent sexual images of herself to her boyfriend by camera phone

There was a disclosure of images showing a girl with school uniform in intimate situations. The images were discovered after a schoolchild's complaint, afraid that his parents would blame him if they saw the photos on his camera phone. The police identified a local girl appearing in the pictures, which was leaked to the press who published the information. But there had been a mistake - the identified girl was not the one in the images!

The girl in the photos had admitted to have had pictures of her taken by her boyfriend on the mobile phone, as well as pictures that she took herself. He sent them to a friend. The friend distributed the images and in some weeks they were in the possession of large numbers of 14-16 year olds. Legal action against those who produced the photos was discussed, as well as against those who distributed them. The information from the police said that anyone who had the photos on their computer could risk 14 years in prison as it was a criminal activity. But the young people wondered why there was such a fuss about it. They did not feel the need to talk about it. 40 000 teenagers could have been involved, but remarkably enough, only one of them said anything.

A schoolboy selling web cam images of himself for money

A boy who was comfortable with the new technologies got himself a web camera. He did not have a lot of friends and thought that this could be a way of meeting new girls. He posted images of himself on a site called www.spotlive.com. Several men contacted him. He remembers the first contacts as pleasant. On of the men persuaded him to make a wish list so that people could look at it and send him presents. Then the problems arose. The boy started to respond to requests to take off his clothes in front of the camera, and the abuse developed step-by-step. Each new step never appeared so different from the former. Finally, 1 500 people payed him to perform sexually before the camera.

Where do we start?

We have to be conscious that there are several gaps in our knowledge, says Ethel Quayle, for instance concerning different perceptions between youth and adults, and we need to be prepared to discuss matters as:

- What is online sexual behaviour in relation to young people?
- a 'slaphappy' behaviour may be regarded as normal by young people, but as a sexual assault by grown-ups.
- What constitutes problematic/harmful sexual behaviour?
- there are different opinions about what is harmful, regarding for instance sexual language or physical slapping recorded and distributed. Where are the boundaries between harmful and not harmful behaviour? Who is to decide? What is harmful in one country may not be it in another.
- How far can adult models inform us?

There is a range of other questions that we also have to ask. For example, it is still unknown how many people we are talking about. We do not know how many young people are engaged in sexual activities online, nor how many are engaged in sexually abusive behaviour related to the new technologies or if the number of involved youth actually is increasing or decreasing.

However, there is a concern that self-victimising activities are enhanced and facilitated by ICT, for instance through camera phones, web cams, social networking sites, chat rooms/Instant messaging (IM) and blogs.

The social context

The social world is increasingly experienced through ICT which most of us have access to. The modern technologies give immediate access to visual and audio material without further 'processing'. The virtual reality is here, not only for children, but also for adults. It is very difficult to imagine a world without the Internet, says Ethel Quayle, we cannot turn the clock back.

Young people have been asked about what they are doing on the Internet and which are their favourite sites in Canadian surveys. One 13-year old boy commented: "Adults just don't get it. We're surrounded by porn everywhere we go. It's everywhere - in the movies we watch, the magazines we read, the music videos we see."

It is important to remember that children are not passive consumers on the Internet, rather active agents. They are increasingly socially networking through ICT and there are more and more such sites online, for instance www.MySpace.com and www.bebo.com. Some social networking sites are even run by teenagers, indicating that children are not just at the consuming end of the line, they are producing the line themselves.

There are also images on these sites. Some of the pictures are really exquisite, but in the middle of them there may be other more problematic photos. Many young people post images of themselves to have them rated by others. The boundary between non-sexual and sexual pictures is often blurred. More or less open sexual invitations can be found on the social networking sites. The following occurred on MySpace.com: "who I'd like to meet: Cool kids that are open minded and that like porn and want to be apart "who I'd like to meet: Cool kids that are open minded and that like porn and want to be apart of my movement to make it better... I'm the guy that can make it happen for real... Eon McKai, producer of alt-porn). Send me a pic and a one sentence assay about why you can do this... You can link to a pic in the forms below or email me at..."

Not only children and young people, but also more and more adults go online, using the social networking sites and blogs. There are nearly 36 million blogs on the Internet.[14] Many of them, both youth and grownups, are posting intimate thoughts and compromising pictures of themselves online. Ethel Quayle states that we do not know why, the mechanisms behind, how it will affect offline lives or if this will have impact on future social relations.

A social networking site like www.bebo.com can offer immense possibilities of getting in touch with the outside world like:..."send email, exchange voice messages, share photos... make voice calls using Skype... big difference is that they are using individual tools as if they were all part of a single tool... a kind of interactive, multimedia channel... all your means of communication are available on Bebo and so are all of your friends..."

Perceived risks for adolescents

So what are the perceived risks for adolescents?

- Exposure to incorrect information about human sexual behaviour
- Exposure to age inappropriate sexual materials
- Potential to develop sexually compulsive behaviour
- Potential to develop sexual 'addiction'
- Enhancement of deviant sexual fantasies
- Masturbation to materials downloaded[15]

Young people are curious and interested about sexuality. In many instances at least some of their sexual behaviour may be viewed as 'compliance'[16] even if this does not detract from the illegality of the activity or shift notions of blame. The increasing accounts of 'self-victimisation' may fit with risk

14. Technorati 2006.

15. Longo 2004.

16. Lanning, 2002

taking behaviours in adolescence. Considering the importance of a developmental framework we have to be aware that what might be risky for one youth, may not be risky for another. "Unlike adults, adolescents are still very much "in flux." No aspect of their development, including their cognitive development, is fixed or stable. In addition, their life circumstances often are very unstable. In a very real sense, we are trying to assess the risk of "moving targets." (p 1).[17]

The new generation is a 'wired' one. 92% of UK children and young people, aged 9-19, have school access to the Internet, with 75% having access at home.[18] In the same study, 71% of the 1 511 individuals have their own computer, 38% a mobile phone, 17% a digital TV and 8% a games console, all with Internet access.

Regarding accidental and intentional exposure to sexualized materials, Ethel Quayle continues, different studies present diverse results, such as the Second Youth Internet Safety Survey in the US, presented at the expert meeting by Janis Wolak. Some of the various results are the following:

• According to the SAFT-survey (2003), 1 in 5 children was invited to face-to-face meeting with a stranger, and 34 % had viewed a violent website, either accidentally or on purpose.

• Livingstone and Bober (2005) found high levels of exposure to online pornography, with 57% having come into contact with it.

• Most of this material was viewed unintentionally, through a pop-up advert, when searching for something else or through junk mail.

• 54% of these children claimed not to have been upset by it, but a significant minority did not like it.

Ethel Quayle asks how children and young people are affected by sexually explicit websites (SEW), quoting a report of Kanuga and Rosenfeld (2004):[19] "A notable finding was the perception of exposure to SEW on oneself. Results show that the participants perceived no impact on themselves. This perception may be problematic because previous research had documented negative effects of exposure to sexually explicit content… It may be that

adolescents are developmentally unable to judge how this content affects them or that there are other individual characteristics (e.g. liberal attitudes, attitudes toward censorship) that may affect their perceptions.… While it might not be possible to precisely define what constitutes normal sexual behaviour, there should be concern for young people with a relatively narrow perspective who are exposed to frequent images of behaviours such as sodomy, group sex, sadomasochistic practices, and bestiality."

A growing concern is resilience among young people and what factors keep them safe. The majority appears to use technology in a way that is life enhancing rather than damaging. Could it be because of internal factors contextually specific to the individual and/or specific to the medium?

The largest single group of offenders regarding illegal images was young people aged between 15-19 years, according to New Zeeland's Censorship Compliance Unit. The activities included downloading, trading and producing abuse images. This group was more likely to trade and/or possess images of teenagers and/or older children than any other group of individuals. The teenagers were most likely to select material showing children and young people with others of their age, but all possessed images of children and young people engaged in explicit sexual activity, including images of children aged between 2 and 7 years. School children were also proportionately more likely to trade and/or possess images of children and young people that suggested or implied incest.

Carr (2004)[20] felt that the data did provide clues as to the motivation for initially accessing this material and that it offered support for, "the concept of a sexually curious group of adolescents". Offenders identified as secondary school students were more likely than the others to collect large numbers of images that were well indexed. Finally, they were more frequently associated with the collection of images of older children and teenagers, portrayed with other children, and were much less likely to collect images of adult rape or the torture of adults or children.

It is important, says Ethel Quayle, to assess the function that the sexual behaviour serves for the

particular young person, stressing that an important indicator of sexual health for teenagers is the degree to which the sexual behaviour is in the service of developmentally appropriate sexual needs as opposed to primarily nonsexual needs.[21]

Up to now, we have not even asked questions like these, for instance if surfing the web, participating in chat rooms and engaging in Internet sex may be ways of trying on multiple identities to see which fit. Maybe it is a way to explore the personal identity through sexuality and to manage negative feelings?

Discussing situational or dispositional factors the focus has so far been largely on inherent qualities of the individual (adult or adolescent). But it might be useful instead to think about a rational choice model of planned behaviour and how the Internet 'affords' opportunities for problematic behaviour to arise.

Prevention and protection
It is necessary to consider the characteristics of Internet in order to develop preventive and protective programmes and effective guardianship for youth online.

Internet characteristics:
• Alter mood.

• Lessen social risk and remove inhibitions.

• Enable multiple self representations.

• Evidence of group dynamics.

• Validate, justify and offer an exchange medium.

• Challenge old concepts of regulation.

• Disrupt and challenge conventional hierarchies.

Ethel Quayle points out a number of things that can be done in order to make abuse online more difficult. The effort and the risk for the offender must increase. Rewards and provocation can be reduced and excuses should be removed.

The effort could be increased by adding to the difficulty of accessing material through web sites or other means, but not necessarily blocking access. This might be achieved by:

• Making access to target web sites more difficult,

• Actively blocking access to known illegal locations,

• controlling access to suspected locations,

• and deflecting potential offenders by routing users through information pages before access to pornographic sites.

This could in Ethel Quayle's view be managed by:

• increasing the perceived sense of external surveillance of the user, through more external guardianship (perhaps by conducting and publicising ISP monitoring activity),

• assisting natural surveillance through only allowing monitored discussion groups (or implementing a programme of random monitoring),

• reduce perceived anonymity that might be achieved, for example, by including in web browsers the IP address of the user,

• and strengthen formal surveillance.

Reduction of rewards could be achieved by:

• Making searching difficult through:

– direct intervention in the response of search engines to input of inappropriate terms (such as lolita, pre-teen, etc.) through a refusal to give search results,

– and warning header comment informing the user that accessing sites using these terms may result in illegal material, with perhaps a rider to note that the IP address of the user has been logged (this would also serve to increase the sense of surveillance).

Ethel Quayle concludes that to understand behaviour in the virtual world of the Internet, we do not have to generate new principles. However we do have to recognise that the structure of the Internet as we experience it has qualities that may influence how those forces that change and modify our behaviour impinge on us. Rather than seeing problems located in the individual or in the Internet, we need to see this as being a product of what the Internet affords for the individual. We need to extend our understanding of what might happen with an unregulated medium that lacks adequate guardianship, rather than criminalising the activities of young people.

17. Prentky and Righthand, 2003.

18. Livingstone and Bober, 2005.

19. Kanuga and Rosenfeld, 2004.

20. Carr, 2004.

21. Longo et al, 2002.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the expert group recognises the values of the Information and Communication Technologies, ICT, when safely and legally used, it expressed a deep concern regarding the serious consequences children abused in Internet settings suffer.

The expert meeting underlined the necessity to focus on the specifics of the impact of ICT-connected abuse and what this means in relation to treatment strategies, child protection initiatives and prevention programmes.

Four themes were presented during the expert meeting:

1. Children that are victimised in Internet related settings.
2. Children who have pictures of abuse posted and distributed on the Internet.
3. Children and young persons who seek contacts on the Internet.
4. Children who put themselves at risk on the Internet

These four themes were considered in a broad context, but primarily from the angle of support to children and young persons victimised through psychological and social approaches.

The final discussion emphasised the need to listen to young people in order to get more knowledge of their experiences, as well as the importance to learn from practitioners through compiling their experiences in assisting to children.

Finally, the expert group agreed on the concluding remarks presented in the following chapter. The most urgent matters and challenges that have to be considered are formulated as action points.

Children that are victimised in Internet related settings

There are millions of young people who use the Internet daily in a safe and healthy way. However, there is also a great number who may be victimised in ICT-settings. Exactly how many is not known. Various studies present different results, but it is a growing concern that there is no effective protection for children at risk of being groomed or in other ways victimised on the Internet.

There are different ways of attempting to get in contact with a child on the Internet for the purpose of abusing her or him as well as there are different ways of becoming a victim.

The Internet offender

The Internet offender may be a young person, for example a former boy- or girlfriend, who keep sending intimate questions or comments on a chat line or the mobile phone directly to the victim and/or others. He or she may also be a person who distributes or threatens to distribute abusive images of a young person. This form of bullying is a hot topic among youngsters and in schools, something that has to be considered when talking about ICT-connected abuse.

The offender may also be an adult who develops an online relationship, maybe to arrange for an offline meeting. This ICT offender may start the grooming process in a positive and caring way, to make the young person feel very special and important, but step-by-step transform the relationship into something else, through a gradual desensitisation of the child where the normalisation of sexual exchange occurs gradually. Some such offenders mask their identities or sexual intentions when they first contact young people, but many do not. Often victims know they are involved with adults who are seeking sexual relationships with them.

Also, there are Internet offenders who immediately ask young persons very intimate questions openly, for instance if they have had sex, if they want to test or if they want to sell sex.

The victim

On the other hand, there are young persons who at first intentionally seek for and access pornography, but end up in something unwanted. Some are groomed on chat lines while they seek contacts with peers. A conversation that starts in an innocent way may develop into something quite different. Some victims are gradually persuaded into an abusive encounter and may think of themselves as having taken an active part in the planning of the offline encounter. Others feel completely deceived, not knowing what led them into the abusive situation. The behaviour of some victims can be described as more "compliant" or self-destructive since

some young persons take more risks and enter into online sexual activities and some of them knowingly attend offline meetings with adults.

Among victimised children there are many who receive abusive comments, questions and/or images several times a day. Very little is known about what impact it has on a young person to be continuously contacted and reminded of different sexual matters in such a way. Also, there are children, even very young ones, who accidentally are exposed to pornography when they for instance visit sites for games or children's toys.

It is essential to get to know the history of the contacts taken in every individual case. Where and how it happened has important implications for assistance to the child, both in treatment and in court processes.

The Internet as a conduit

Among children who have been victims of Internet offences, there are many who describe that they experienced a rapid development of a very special and intimate friendship or romance with the abuser. The groomer may succeed in making the child believe that he or she is a very important and special person, maybe the groomer's only friend in the world. This may also subjectively be what the Internet offender believes to be true. There may be something in the Internet as a conduit that facilitates the development of intimate and qualitatively special relationships very fast, for good or bad.

It is an interactive medium that may allow the individual to feel disengaged from his or her ordinary context, especially when being alone in front of the computer, secretly accessing sites and chat rooms with no one else as a witness in the offline world. The sense of control, through deciding when to turn it off or on, may create a feeling of security. The sudden possibility of being who you really are, chatting about things you may never dare talk to anyone else about in person may also contribute to the immediacy and the speedy development of intimacy that we understand from many young people develops on the Internet. Something in the medium itself, a quality of the medium, may enhance the self-objectification of young persons. You become an object in the eyes of others in a way so that you become an object to yourself as well, alongside

the subjectivity you experience. It offers unlimited possibilities to get to know strangers and exchange ideas, without having to meet them in real life.

The silence of the child victimised in ICT settings

Young persons may not tell anyone about being offended via the Internet, partly because of embarrassment and shame, but there may also be a degree of self-compliance in the process of grooming that the Internet offender will use. In some victims, this may create a strong sense of guilt, while other victims may view their experience as love rather than exploitation. stronger in the case of Internet abuse than in other forms of abuse. The silence of children abused in Internet settings may make disclosure, assistance and justice difficult, although the evidence that can be gleaned from computers may make such cases easier to prosecute when they do come to light.. Therefore, it is even more important to develop new ways of assisting victims of Internet offending.

Legislation

The capacity of the Internet to make young persons more vulnerable has to be considered. A new law in the UK is designed to prevent grooming for sexual purposes: "this Bill will strengthen the law further to ensure that predatory sex offenders who contact a child, whether on the Internet or otherwise and then meet or travel to meet the child, with the intention of committing a sexual assault can be prosecuted" (Scottish Executive News, Briefing new Bills for 2004-2005 session, Tuesday September 7, 2004). [22]

In order to strengthen the protection for children at risk of being exposed to attempts at grooming, such legislation should be considered in more countries as well as making activities that could be problematic on the Internet more difficult. However, it is important not to obstruct healthy contacts between children and adults. We must not forget that some relationships between adults and young persons on the Internet may be beneficial for theyoung person. In curbing the abuse we must not forget the positive aspects of intergenerational communication.

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22. "Drabbad online", Anders Nyman, BUP Elefanten, Landstinget i Östergötland, World Childhood Foundation, Sweden, 2006.

Action points

The following issues demand urgent action regarding children victimised in Internet related settings.

More knowledge is needed about different groups of victims:

• Groomed online for abuse online.

• Groomed online for abuse offline.

Acknowledge the subjective experiences of the victims of grooming and the implications this has on assistance, with regard to different groups of victims:

• The "compliant", self-destructive young person who enter into "destructive" relationships.

• Completely deceived – unknowing.

• Risk-taking and testing – who enter into online sexual activities and sometimes offline meetings.

Consider actions where the special nature of the Internet as a conduit is targeted, as there are concerns about the speed at which intimacy develops on the Internet and the quality of relationships developed on the Internet:

• Speed.

• Intimacy.

• Immediacy.

• Quantity.

Develop more knowledge about the concerns that the Internet seems to enhance self-objectification of the young person.

Action towards establishing legislation on online grooming behaviour without obstructing healthy contacts between young persons and adults.

Establish effective protection for children on the Internet:

• Making behaviors that are known to be part of the grooming process more cumbersome by for example:

– making the uploading of certain categories of images difficult.

– more active taking down of suggestive images on teen-sites.

– implement the management of search tools and search engines to make searching of inappropriate materials (such as searching terms Lolita, pre-teen, etc.) more difficult.

Children who have pictures of their abuse posted and distributed on the Internet

Although child pornography is illegal, there are a lot of criminal and abusive images continuously distributed on the Internet. The discussion has so far mostly focused upon the legal aspects. There is a gap of knowledge about what effect picture taking and distribution of abusive images have on the victims.

Some young people have to live, facing the fact that there are abusive images of them distributed and redistributed on the Internet, totally out of control for them or anyone else. There are also children that maybe never will know about abusive images of them that are circulated, as well as there are cases that are disclosed many years after the pictures were taken. One must not forget the very young children who appear in abusive images, since they are nonverbal and cannot speak for themselves.

The picture-taking as a process

The process of picture taking and the involvement of the child varies. Some pictures may be taken without the child being aware. The child may have been photographed at a very early age, even before they had access to language. In these cases the abuser can be a caregiver or someone close, a person that the child is dependent upon. The abuser can make the victim think that the abuse and picture taking is something normal, something all children experience. The abuser can also use the images to threaten the child in different ways, pointing to the fact that the child may be smiling in the image to make him or her keep quiet about the abuse.

The victims may also have been deceived or persuaded into the picture taking, without knowing what would happen later to the images. Some young people get in touch with a stranger on a chat line who first asks for an ordinary picture, but gradually convinces them post more intimate images. In some cases the victim meets the groomer offline and experiences abuse that is recorded and distributed in ICT-settings.

Some young people are more risk-taking and post pictures of themselves on the Internet, not understanding the long-term consequences. With modern mobile phones and widespread access to web cameras it is easy to do.

For young people who get bullied by for instance former boyfriends or others, it can be excruciating to discover that images that were taken in trustful and intimate situations are distributed over and over again on the Internet and on mobile phones.

The perception of the victim

Some children victimised through abuse, picture taking and by having pictures posted on the Internet testify that even if the process of abuse was a very harmful experience, it is even harder to know that the abusive images are still there, being distributed and redistributed for years, totally out of control. They are afraid that someone will recognise them and they have to live with the knowledge that an countless strangers can access and use the abusive images, over and over again, even after the arrest and the trial.

Children may look happy in the pictures, even if the recording was an abusive and violent experience. Images that were taken in situations that were not abusive or threatening may none the less be perceived by the victim as abusive when she or he understands that they are being circulated. You have to be conscious that the abusive pictures probably do not correspond to the child's own memory of the abuse. Little is known about how young persons are affected when they discover themselves in highly sexualised pictures, maybe several years after the crime was committed.

It is impossible to know what the child has gone through only by looking at the images. Several accounts tell us that it is extremely difficult for a victim to talk about the images and the situation in which they were produced. Even if he or she is able to do so, it is often hard to express what actually took place and adults that have had pictures of their abuse taken, will now testify of the pain they go through when they fear that the pictures may turn up in some new police operation they may read about in the newspaper.

The abusive images discovered in any specific case may well be a minor part of the entire abusive experience. The child may even think that they are not the worst. They are perhaps not the pictures that initiated the abusive process. Other pictures, less abusive in an objective sense could for the child signify the start of the abuse. The ultimate goal of the abuser may be to have series of pictures of the child, especially if they want to make money out of selling child pornographic pictures. Series of pictures often include pictures that in any other context would best be described as harmless. Having one set of images however, you will never know if there are other and worse series of the same child not yet discovered on the Internet. The experts at the meeting expressed fear that images may be more and more becoming a part of sexual abuse, something that underlines the need for an awareness of the existence of cameras as we investigate and try to assist children that have been sexually abused.

The impact on treatment and rehabilitation

We have to learn more about what impact the abusive image may have on the child and on the rehabilitation process. Disclosure through discovery of abusive images might for example increase the risk of secondary traumatisation.

Sometimes children are brought to treatment years after the abuse, without knowing that there are pictures of the abuse on the Internet. Maybe someone else has discovered the abusive images and has brought the victim to treatment. It also happens that the young persons are aware of the pictures, but will not tell anyone about them, not even the therapist.

It is obvious that to confront the victim with the abusive images, both in treatment and in court hearings, increases the risk of stigmatising the child and of secondary traumatisation. However, it can also be helpful in the rehabilitation process, provided that the images are used in an adequate and skilled way, with respect to the child's integrity and rights.

For the therapists there are many difficult decisions to take. They need to form a position on how to treat the presence of pictures. Should the abusive

images be made available to the child? Should the child that is unaware of the existence of images of the abuse be told about the pictures? What about the family? What does the sight of the abusive images do to caregivers and even if parents do not see the pictures how does it affect the parenting ability to know of the existence of severely abusive images? How does it affect therapists and others who should assist the victim? These are issues that need to be considered carefully and individually, questions that child professionals must be prepared to respond to.

Prosecutors have to be aware of how difficult it is for children victims of abusive images distributed on the Internet, to testify in court. During the trial the victims may in some countries once again face, not only the abuse, but also the images and they know that all the other persons in the courtroom have seen the same pictures.

These are some of the aspects of the abusive image that have to be considered. All professionals who assist the victims must be aware of the taxonomy and impact of picture taking. To protect the safety and autonomy of the victims it is also of vital importance to develop ethics regarding the access to and the storage of abusive images – who should see the abusive image, when and why. Gate-keeping, assisting the child and the young person in managing the access of other persons to the abusive images, is important when assisting the victims.

Action points
The following issues demand urgent action regarding children who have pictures of their abuse posted and distributed on the Internet.

More knowledge is needed about the abusive image:

• Learning from practitioners through compiling experiences from assistance to children appearing in abusive images. Members of the expert group will develop a template to be able to analyse the cases by age, gender, the developmental stage of the victim and the process. [23]

• Consider and develop strategies and responses with regard to:

– the picture-taking as a process and the involvement of the child in the process.

– the abusive image may and may not be the starting point of the abuse.

– the picture may not correspond to the child's own memory of the abuse.

– the disclosure through discovery of abusive images may increase the risk of secondary traumatisation.

– when, why and who should have access to the abusive image: Ethics concerning access to and storage of images.

– the importance of gate-keeping – i.e. forming a position on access to pictures and supporting the child and the young person in denying others access to the pictures.

– move away from the concept of "victim identification" a term that is more to be used in criminal investigations to the term recognition, taking account more of the subjective experiences of the child and also the fact that image-taking may well be a part of child sexual abuse cases.

Develop views and share ideas on the effects picture-taking and distribution of images have on the abused child.

Develop rehabilitation strategies based on the gaps between what children express has happened to them and what the images reveal they have been exposed to.

Realise more training and education:

• Child sexual abuse (CSA) training for child protection staff and for all professionals working with children should be in place and should include training on Internet risks and possibilities.

• Training so that care staff becomes familiar with abusive images.

• Training for prosecutors should include knowledge of the specific qualities of the abusive image and the effects the existence of images have on children.

Develop child friendly investigations sensitive to the specific impact abusive images may have.

Children and young persons who seek contacts on the Internet
Young people want to get to know the world and have contact with others. The Internet offers unique possibilities for this purpose. It is an interactive forum where you can get in touch with strangers independent of age, gender, race, religion, location etc.

A increasing part of Internet users are children and young persons. They should not be regarded as passive consumers, but active agents on the Internet. Several reports describe how they use the Internet, but still there is little knowledge on how young persons themselves describe their interactions with the Internet and related techniques.

Many seem to be conscious about the risks inherent in having contacts with strangers on the Internet. There are several moderated chat rooms with advice designed especially for youngsters, teaching them how to behave safely. The majority of young people seem to know how they should use the Internet in a healthy and positive way. Sometimes they have their own way of finding out if a person is an adult pretending to be a young person or not, such as asking specific questions that only a young person can answer correctly.

However, there is a risk that a young person's wish to communicate with others will turn into something uncomfortable and harmful. The issue of sexuality among young people has to be considered. A teenager has a right to his/her sexuality as well as to discuss and explore it on the Internet. Some teenagers actively use the Internet as a way to meet sex-partners, either in virtual life or in real life, something that may end up as an abusive situation. For young homosexual persons the Internet can be the only place where they can talk freely to others about their sexuality. Cases where adults

have taken advantage of young persons' interest and search for and identity have however occurred. Adolescent boys have been persuaded to meet offline for sexual encounters. It may be hard for a young person to know the boundary between normal exchange of ideas and feelings and the beginning of an abusive process.

Action points
The following issues demand urgent action regarding children and young persons who seek contacts on the Internet.

Support, develop and understand how young persons use the Internet.

• **Learn more about young persons' own agency and activity considering:**

– the need to continue to explore the way young persons use the Internet in order to respond in the most appropriate, protective, yet non obtrusive, fashion, balancing between:

– on the one hand the view of normalising young persons' behavior on the Internet and

– on the other hand taking the fear of an increase of abusive experiences due to Internet use seriously.

In doing this the professional community should be able to assist policy makers to:

• Develop information and prevention tailored especially for young persons using the Internet in an exploratory fashion.

• Share young persons' experiences of risks and fun.

Children who put themselves at risk on the Internet
There is a gap of knowledge on children who put themselves at risk, and the factors behind self-victimising activities such as the taking and posting of intimate photos of themselves using mobile phones or web cameras adding the pictures to chat lines, social network sites or blogs.

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23. At the expert meeting Sharon Cooper, Linda Jonsson, Anders Nyman, Tink Palmer, Ethel Quayle and Carl-Göran Svedin took on to jointly look at how to develop the template. Lars Lööf will assist as necessary.

We do not know the extent to which young persons display risky behaviour on the Internet. Young persons' perceptions of what is problematic are not the same as adults'. It should be acknowledged that there are different opinions between generations about what is harmful and what is "normal" behaviour online as well as offline.

It is obvious that what is highly risky for one young person will not even be considered problematic by another. While most young persons will go no further than to leave some personal data on a chat line, like a nickname or a password, and have conversations with strangers, there are others who will send highly sexualised pictures of themselves to unknown persons, have web cam sex with strangers, date adults offline without safe arrangements and send pictures or pose in front of the web camera for payment.

Until now there are very few studies about children who put themselves at risk. Much more research need to be done based on the experiences from young people themselves. It is important to listen to all those who do cope with the Internet without being harmed as they can increase the knowledge about safe online behaviour versus risk-taking online behaviour.

There is a lot that can be done for children who put themselves at risk. Protection and prevention programmes should be developed and strengthened. Guidelines and recommendations for all professionals, including prosecutors, who assist victims should be published and disseminated.

Action points

The following issues demand urgent action in order to find qualitative assistance for children who put themselves at risk on the Internet.

Learn more about risk-taking online behaviour from young persons, through for example:

• Focus groups.

Establish peer group training. Peer education and prevention could become an international qualification.

• To internationally connect peer education groups might be a way of increasing the status of organisations that work with assistance to victims, such as ECPAT, Save the Children, NCMEC, ISafe etc.

Introduce amendments of investigative procedures and court procedures:

• Psychologists need to use their influence on the court system in relation to how Internet related criminal proceedings are handled.

Establish guidelines and recommendations for child psychiatric staff and child protection services on how to assess children with Internet abuse experiences, through:

• The development of a manual on the clinical implications for practitioners. [24]

Explore how to include the child's family in prevention, care, protection and rehabilitation.

Identify hitherto unfamiliar risk groups.

Concluding words

In the months that have passed since the expert meeting, the topics discussed have become more and more urgent: New cases where girls and boys have been abused after having been contacted in chat rooms have been revealed and in Sweden as well as in several other countries, a new legislation criminalising the attempt to contact a child for the purpose of meeting him or her off-line has been proposed.

As a result of the expert meeting the group of experts have, upon the initiative of the Swedish group at BUP Elefanten, jointly created an international online questionnaire in which professional experiences from treating child and adolescent victims of on-line sexual exploitation will be collected. [25] We hope it will serve as a helpful tool in the ongoing gathering of knowledge.

Professionals all around the world are increas-ingly struggling to assist children to make sense out of abusive experiences in ICT settings and the impact these experiences have is more and more recognised and discussed. Initiatives are now underway to collect even more information from more colleagues all around the world, as was suggested at the expert meeting.

The initiators of this meeting, the Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation and the Working Group for Children at Risk under the Council of the Baltic Sea States, wish to thank the experts for their generous contribution to the meeting and for their assistance in making this report a reality. The two organisations continue to work towards improved assistance to abused and exploited children no matter where and in what context the abuse occurs. The Internet is a fantastic source of information and fun. The organisations behind this expert meeting and this report, intend to do our utmost to make it also as safe as possible.

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24. At the meeting Lars Lööf, Anders Nyman, Tink Palmer and Julia von Weiler took on the task of formulating such a manual.

25. The questionnaire will be available at www.nfbo.com

Appendix I: List of Participants

Participants at the Expert Meeting 29th to 31st of May 2006

Sharon Cooper, Developmental Forensic Paediatrics, PA, North Carolina, the U.S.A.

Katarzyna Fenik, Nobody's Children Foundation, Warszaw, Poland

Vernon Jones, Save the Children, Denmark

Linda Jonsson, BUP Elefanten, Linköping, Sweden

Åsa Landberg, Save the Children, Sweden

Bodil Långberg, Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden

Lars Lööf, Children's Unit, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Stockholm, Sweden

Cajsa Malmström, Swea Media, Sweden

Anders Nyman, Save the Children, Stockholm, Sweden

Tink Palmer, Stop It Now! The UK and Ireland

Ethel Quayle, Copine, Dept. Applied Psychology, University College Cork, Ireland

Jaci Quennell, Safeguarding Children Services, the UK

Carl Göran Svedin, Dep. Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Lund University Hospital, Sweden

Bengt Söderström, BUP mottagning Vasa, Stockholm, Sweden

Ingela Thalen, Swedish Children's Welfare Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden

Julia von Weiler, Innocence in Danger, Kind in Düsseldorf, Germany

Janis Wolak, Crimes against Children Research Center, University of New Hampshire, the U.S.A.

Ingrid Åkerman, National Board of Health and Welfare, Stockholm, Sweden