

Child safety and the internet: A workshop

National Child Protection Clearinghouse



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Outline

- λ Will discuss internet more broadly, but with a focus on child pornography
- λ Specifically
 - υ Internet and child exploitation
 - υ Child pornography offenders
 - υ Victims of child pornography
 - υ Legal framework
 - υ Online safety



Internet and child exploitation



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Taxonomy of different kinds of child pornography

λ Indicative	Normal settings
λ Nudist	Nude in normal setting
λ Erotica	Surreptitiously taken
λ Posing	Posed nude or semi-naked
λ Erotic posing	Provocatively posed
λ Explicit erotic posing	Emphasis on genitalia
λ Explicit sexual activity	Sexual activity no adult
λ Assault	Child sexual abuse by adult: digital touching
λ Gross assault	Child sexual abuse by adult: penetrative sex
λ Sadistic/bestiality	S&M or animal involved



What type of Internet content in relation to minors is prohibited?

- λ Child pornography
- λ Specifically in relation to the depiction of minors, the RC classification applies to materials that
 - υ describe or depict in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult, a person who is, or appears to be, a child under 18 (whether the person is engaged in sexual activity or not)



What types of Internet content are prohibited?

- λ Content which is (or would be) classified X by the Classification Board
 - υ real depictions of actual sexual activity.
- λ Content hosted in Australia which is classified R and not subject to a restricted access system which complies with criteria determined by ACMA. Content classified R is not considered suitable for minors.
 - υ material containing excessive and/or strong violence or sexual violence;
 - υ material containing implied or simulated sexual activity;
 - υ material that deals with issues or contains depictions which require an adult perspective.



Functions of internet for people with a sexual interest in children

- λ View, swap and collect child pornography
- λ Meet and engage in discussion with others who share a sexual interest in children
- λ Share sexual fantasies
- λ Meet children
- λ Groom children



Functions of child pornography

- λ Sexual arousal: To fulfill fantasies about
 - υ a specific child (may seek images of children with similar features)
 - υ a particular activity (seek specific scenarios)
- λ Collectibles
 - υ trade, share, catalogue and index material
- λ Commercial profit (production and/or trade)



Unique problems arising from child pornography on the internet

- λ Lack of borders/mobility
- λ Differences in international law
- λ Anonymity
- λ Accessibility
- λ Quantity
- λ Satiation and subsequent increasing thresholds for content
- λ Normalise deviant sexual interest
- λ Desire to replicate scenarios viewed on the internet
- λ New function - currency to develop trust



Child pornography offenders



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Types of child pornography offenders

- λ Situational Offender (dabbler)
 - υ Discovered unlimited access to pornography and sexual opportunities
- λ Sexually Indiscriminate Preferential Offender
 - υ Sexually indiscriminate with a broad interest in sexually deviant material
- λ 'Paedophile' Preferential Offender
 - υ Has a definite preference for children and will collect mainly child-focused material



Common justifications

- λ Content thresholds
 - υ never child rape
 - υ only happy children
 - υ never very young children
- λ Addiction
- λ in lieu of contact offence
- λ Doing no harm
 - υ only pictures
 - υ not abusing children



Do people who view child pornography go on to offend against children?

- λ Link between viewing and offending not known: significant knowledge gap
- λ Some, but not all who view also involved in contact offences
- λ Not clear what comes first:
 - υ interest in contact offences, followed by interest in internet
 - υ interest in internet, followed by interest in contact offences



Do people who view child pornography go on to offend against children?

- λ Do not know if those who do use internet then go on to offend would have offended anyway
- λ Child pornography
 - υ causal
 - υ correlational
- λ Much of rationale underpinning criminalisation of viewing child pornography is related to belief that it may be a causal factor in some contact offences



Discussion point #1

- λ Some viewers of child pornography claim to view child pornography as a means of release and claim that they engage with child pornography instead of committing a contact offence
- λ Discuss
 - υ Could there be preventive elements to viewing of child pornography?
 - υ If so, are there any means to enable the safe use of child pornography for this purpose?



Types of child pornography offences

- λ View
- λ View + collect child pornography
- λ View, collect + distribute child pornography
- λ View, collect and distribute child pornography + commit contact offences
- λ View, collect and distribute child pornography, commit contact offences + produce child pornography



Child pornography and contact offences

- λ Limited evidence
- λ Interviews with convicted offenders suggest that process is a key element
- λ Cannot tell who will proceed to contact offences
- λ Process inherent in interviews - suggests some will progress to contact offence
- λ From perspective of contact offences and with knowledge available not safe to allow any viewing of child pornography



Summary

- λ Adult sexual interest in children on the internet may be both legal and illegal
- λ Internet for sexual purposes extends beyond child pornography
- λ Need further research to investigate the relationship between viewing and offending
- λ Progression appears to be a key element



Victims of child pornography



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Types of victimisation

- λ Exploitation/abuse of children in creating child pornography
- λ Ongoing exploitation of victims by circulation of images
- λ Use of internet for grooming



Internet & Grooming

- λ Meet children through
 - υ Obtaining information about and targeting vulnerable children
 - υ Posing as a child in children's chat rooms
- λ Convince child to send photographs (appropriate, erotic, or pornographic)



Internet and Grooming cont.

- λ Involve children in sexualised discussion that may be increasingly explicit
- λ Expose child to pornography as a means of introducing and normalising sex
 - υ Pornography or sexual discussion may or may not involve children
- λ Arrange meetings in real life with the intent of abusing the child



Pseudo-photographs

- λ Child pornography in photographs and magazines - limited access
- λ Internet and scanners - increased accessibility
- λ Digital photography - no need for processing, open access
- λ Digital imaging software - child pornography may not represent a real child or actual abuse
 - υ Called a “pseudo-photograph” or “pseudo-image”



Discussion point #3

- λ With the development of digital imaging software home users now have the opportunity to create child pornography using pseudo images
- λ Discuss
 - υ Is this a victimless form of child pornography?
 - υ Should virtual child pornography be illegal?
 - υ Why / Why not?



Response



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Agencies with key responsibility

- λ NetAlert
- λ Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA, formerly ABA)
- λ Australian Federal Police Online Child Sex Exploitation Team



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NetAlert

- λ Australia's internet safety advisory body
- λ Established in 1999 to provide independent advice and education on internet safety and managing access to online content
- λ For tips and advice on internet safety for parents, teachers, children and others visit the website
- λ www.netalert.net.au
- λ 1800 880 176



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Australian Communications and Media Authority

- λ Responsible for regulation of internet content
- λ Complaints hotline, code of practice, community education



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To Make a complaint:

www.acma.gov.au

online@acma.gov.au

post/fax your complaint:

The Content Assessment Hotline Manager

Australian Communications and Media Authority

GPO Box Q500 Queen Victoria Building NSW 1230

FAX: (02) 9334 7799

Complaints about prohibited Internet content must be
in writing



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Australian Federal Police Online Child Sex Exploitation Team

- λ Investigative and coordination role
- λ Responsible for investigating online child exploitation: Pornography, Abuse, Grooming, and Procurement of children
- λ Internet sites operated from an Australian ISP
- λ Cases include those from: State and Territory Police, Aust. High Tech Crime Centre, Interpol, Government and non-government organisations, and Public



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To report suspicious online behaviour

www.afp.gov.au/afp/page/Crime/ReportCrime/

- λ Child in immediate danger call 000 or local police
- λ Any sites outside Australia referred to overseas law enforcement



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General concerns for children online

- λ Not only child pornography that is concerning
- λ May inadvertently or intentionally access adult pornographic or violent material
- λ Links or emails with innocent subjects that actually contain pornography
- λ Children being approached or observed in chat rooms
- λ Children's identities, location or vulnerability being sourced from material available online



How do you know if your child is at risk?

- λ Your child is receiving phone calls from people you don't know or is calling numbers you don't recognise
- λ Your child is receiving gifts or mail from people you don't know
- λ When you enter the room your child changes the screen or turns off the computer
- λ You find pornography on your child's computer



Online safety - tips for parents & children

- λ Place computer in activity centre of house
- λ Block children's access to specific sites - only partly effective
- λ Set time limits and suitable sites
- λ Closely supervise internet use



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Online safety - tips for parents & children

λ Discuss and agree upon precautions

- υ Never agree to meet with someone you have met online
- υ People may not be who they say they are online
- υ Encourage the use of pen names
- υ Remove address and contact details from emails
- υ Never respond to obscene or suggestive messages
- υ Don't send personal photos over the internet



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