

Protecting Children from Sexual Offenders: Research Needs

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What is CSEC?

- The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is sexual abuse of a minor for economic gain.
- It involves physical abuse, pornography, prostitution, and the smuggling of children or their images for unlawful purposes.



Number of known cases is growing



- Children are being kidnapped and sold into forced labor in the illegal sex industry.
- Some impoverished families are selling their children to traffickers in the hope of giving the children a better life.
- Reports of children being held captive in slave-like conditions where they are beaten, malnourished, threatened, and sexually exploited.
- “Voluntary” entry in CSEC market for economic survival.

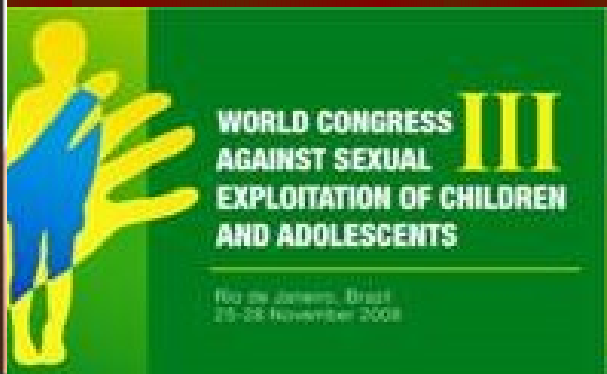


A “family” cycle of exploitation..

- Adult family member or friend sexually abuses a minor child in his or her care.
- Can escalate to systematic sexual abuse involving multiple children, and
- Photographing or videotaping sexual abuse and distributing it to others through the Internet.



Another CSEC cycle, more “organized”:



- Serial victimization of multiple children;
- Networks of adult exploiters & customers
- Kidnapping, smuggling, and sale of children and/or their images as commodities.



What is the true extent of CSEC?

- To date, no major effort exists to gather reliable data on the extent or trends in CSEC across locations.
- Last 10 years, more than 300,000 tips to U.S. hotline.
- Without more accurate knowledge of nature, extent, and trends, the impact of anti-CSEC efforts cannot be evaluated.



Evidence of different kinds of networks

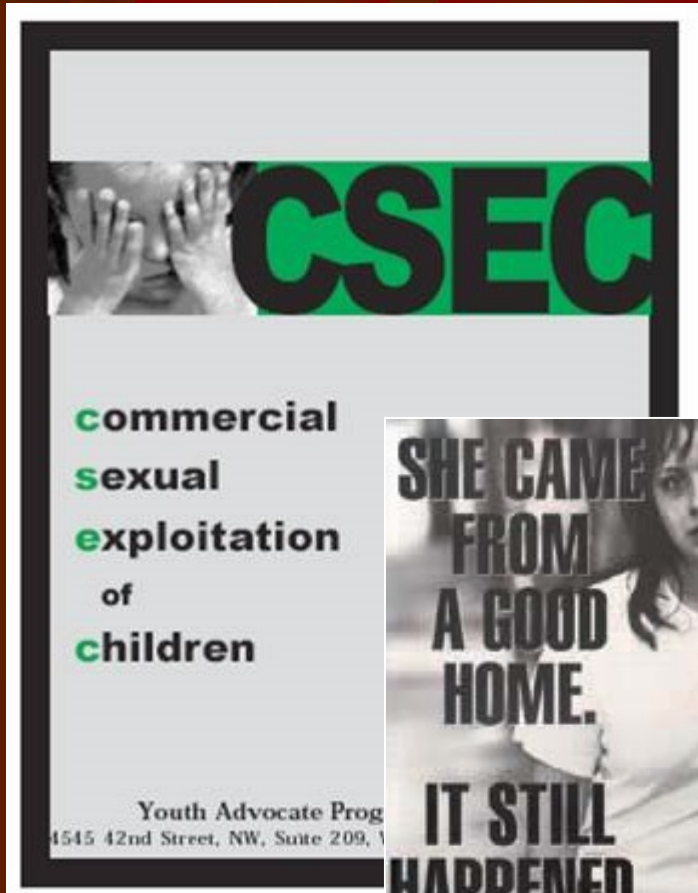
1. Family-based networks.
2. Pimps exploiting runaways.
3. Drugs, dependency as coercion.
4. Exploitation of desperate families who "sell" their children.



- a. Many are small, unconnected networks.
- b. Some tied to larger groups involving drugs and prostitution.
- c. Some larger networks in which exploiters exchange images and/or children internationally.



Common features of known cases



- Minors are exploited for monetary gain and the sexual gratification of the exploiters and their clients.
- New “recruits” are constantly sought.
- False promises of a “better life” are a central recruitment tool.
- Once exploited, children are often threatened or assaulted to ensure obedience and prevent escape.

Pornography (images) connection

- **Organized crime.** reported to involve young children, portraying them in photos and video as adults.
- **Child sex rings.** Child pornography produced by sex rings is used in members' personal collections and offered for sale or exchange via the Internet or e-mail.
- **Pedophiles.** Child pornography can help pedophiles justify their conduct and assist them in seducing victims and blackmailing children to avoid exposure.
- **Parents and other family members.** Children may be photographed by parents as part of intra-familial child sexual abuse.



What is needed most to be done?

Systematic, periodic research to document trends is needed most on the:

1. **Effort to keep pace with technology:** to prevent and intervene in CSEC networks.
2. **Impact of prosecutions** on organized CSEC networks.
3. **Efforts to educate:** potential victims, the public regarding detection and harms.
4. **Improving parental supervision and the status** of women and children in societies.



Without research, efforts to prevent and intervene in CSEC will lose public interest and support because of their undocumented impact.

In sum: periodic, trend research is needed..

Risk factor trends

1. Social/family status.
2. Economic correlates.
3. Ease of movement.
4. Level of demand.

Offender trends

1. Typology of offenders and networks.
2. Methods of exploitation.
3. Numbers of youth exploited in known cases.



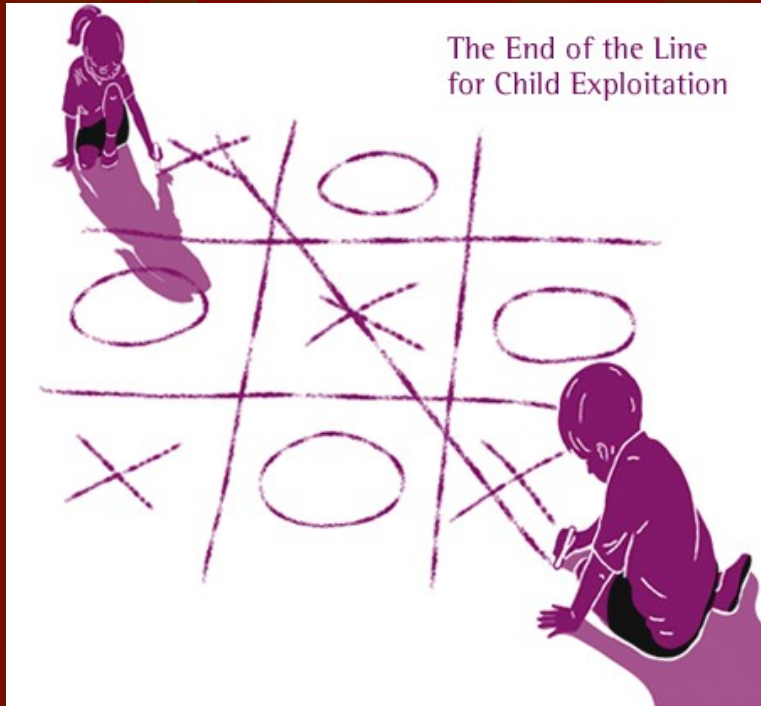
Protective factor trends

1. Laws and technology.
2. Enforcement efforts and their impact.
3. Treatment of victims.
4. Public education.

Trends in victim patterns

1. From abuse to exploitation.
2. Re-victimization patterns.
3. Reporting/non-reporting patterns.

Thank you for your attention!



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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
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Special REPORT



Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children:
What Do We Know and What Do We Do About It?

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij

Issues in International Crime

