

VIOLENCE

AGAINST CHILDREN

Violence against children impedes their development and violates their rights. To raise a call that it be stopped, the United Nations conducted a Global Study on Violence Against Children. This involved nine regional consultations; in June 2005, a delegation from East Asia and the Pacific, including children, met to discuss how children experience violence at home, in communities and on the streets, in educational settings, in institutions, in work situations, in conflict with law and in the on-line environment.

In East Asia and the Pacific, a coalition of regional agencies is working to raise awareness of the issues and explore solutions. As part of this, a series of monthly newsletters is examining a key issue of the UN violence study (global report to be published in October), providing background, highlighting progress, sharing key facts, figures and resources, as well as introducing agencies, activists and children in the region who are leading the push to end the violence.

Children speak out

Paroon Sanoonrat, Thai child delegate to the East Asia and Pacific regional consultation on violence against children in 2005, on children in chat rooms.

One of my friends has developed friendships with foreigners from the USA, Russia and Canada through the Internet. The initial communications were through “chatting”, then through mobile phone calls and text messaging. There have been positive benefits, for instance improving English language skills. So far the experience has not exposed my friend to any violence. But there is always a risk.

Chatting by using inappropriate language, such as sexually explicit language, is tolerated by young people as the two parties do not see or talk to each other face to face. It helps reduce the feeling of awkwardness. However, this view will change when young people are asked to take off clothes in front of a webcam or introduced to violent computer games.

The important thing is that children and young people must be aware of the harm in cyberspace and know how to protect themselves from that harm. Children and young people who experience violence in cyberspace, such as being lured by abusers, seem to be those whose family is not providing adequate protection or who experience some form of violence at home or peer pressure, or want to belong to a group and be accepted.

Nowadays, the age of children who can access cyberspace is younger and younger. It now seems to be common to see children in primary school with a mobile phone. At that young age, they

are unlikely to understand the harmful aspects that come with communication technologies. Consequently, they have less chance to protect themselves.

Paroon’s observation that it is possible to use the Internet safely is a crucial point when talking about violence in cyberspace. New communication technologies bring great benefits, both recreationally and socially. In pursuit of these benefits, children should not fear cyberspace, which is why it needs to become a safer place for them.



Children in Thailand play with their new “toy”. The rapid changes in mobile phone technology, plus increased connectivity across the region and the world, mean that laws and industry standards to protect children must be put in place and effectively enforced.

Credit: ECPAT

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Violence in cyberspace

Nok, an inquisitive teenage girl, joined an Internet chat room on the recommendation of a friend. In the chat room, people were talking about sex. Nok’s new online “friends” suggested that she install a webcam to make their conversations more interesting. She did not foresee any possible harm and bought one. Nok was soon coaxed into stripping in front of the webcam.

Next, the owner of an Internet site, who had seen her pictures, invited her to his house. She went. After having her drink spiked, she was raped and simultaneously filmed. The Internet owner then threatened to put the film on the Internet unless she had sex with him and numerous other men, in addition to stripping on his pay-per-view webcam site.¹

Nok was tricked into sexual exploitation by, and because of, cyberspace technologies. Contacted and coerced via online communication, she then unwillingly provided material to feed a demand for child pornography that has increased to unimaginable proportions since the introduction of the Internet.

The reasons that so many people have embraced the world of cyberspace – instant communication, unlimited access to knowledge and resources, ease of posting information for self-promotion or even re-invention – are the same reasons that have made it a dangerous place. And just as in the physical world, it is children who are most at risk.

On a global scale, children and young people represent one of the largest groups of users of new information technologies – the Internet, email, blogs, peer2peer communications, newsgroups, chat rooms, online games, webcams and mobile phones.

» continued pg.2

¹ Source: *The Nation, Thailand, 13/3/06.*

Violence in cyberspace » *continued from pg.1*

While adults use these tools extensively, these technologies are also used by young people in schools, at home, cyber cafes and other places for education, entertainment and socializing.

Although learning and playing in an online environment is an accepted, and to many an essential, part of life, most children underestimate the dangers. All children are at risk because they are trusting, imaginative and curious, and increasingly, they are online. ECPAT research has shown that children feel safe in cyberspace and very few of them clearly understand the risks of giving out personal information in what they consider an anonymous world. The linking of mobile phone technology with the Internet means that, in theory, many children are connected almost 24 hours a day and spend as much time (or more) interacting with online friends as they do with their physical friends.

Children may be talked into meeting child abusers or pornographers. They may set themselves up for other forms of physical abuse such as stalking or robbery. Exposure to violent images, especially

violent pornography, can be very damaging to children's ideas of intimacy. Children may more easily perpetrate violence using cyberspace; new forms of bullying include the use of Internet and mobile phone technology to send negative, insulting messages or forward real or false images to humiliate the victim.

In the Asia-Pacific region, sexual exploitation of children in virtual settings is of major concern. Where once a collection of child pornography would consist of a handful of video tapes, says David Butt, former prosecutor of child sex offences and ECPAT board member, "nowadays it is routine for law enforcement seizures to recover hundreds of thousands of images from a single child-abuse image collector." Countries like Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, already struggling to shed their reputation for child sex tourism, are now also faced with sex tourists making child pornography to share with the world.

In this way, cyberspace violence crosses over into the physical world even for children who are not online, including in developing countries. A recent phenomenon

is "real time" child abuse in which people watch a child being sexually assaulted live via the Internet. Many children do not know they are being filmed; some don't know that the technology exists to do so. In the Philippines, police data indicates that phone cameras or so-called "cybersex cafes" (where commercial sexual performances are broadcast in real time using web cameras) are increasingly being used to produce child pornography.

Violence against children in cyberspace is very real and its impact can be devastating: children who have found out that their images have been broadcast or used for pornography say that their suffering is long-lasting, because that image may be downloaded or reproduced hundreds or thousands of times for years to come. As technology changes rapidly, there is a need for continual pro-active research into its effects on the children who use it. Besides warning children of the dangers, agencies and media should be informing the general public and lobbying legislators to be ready to minimize the dangers of new technology and protect children from its negative aspects.

Global study, regional focus

Child delegates at the UN East Asia and Pacific consultation in 2005 (*Report on the East Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation on Violence Against Children*, Bangkok 14–16 June 2005, www.violencestudy.org) believe all children are at risk of cyberspace violence, although some are particularly vulnerable because they are in economically and socially difficult situations, they have already been sexually abused and/or exploited, they feel lonely and distanced from their parents and others or they have low self-esteem. Girls are at greater risk than boys.

Recommendations from the regional consultation call for:

- Education and awareness for both children and adults on how to use new technologies safely and responsibly.
- Child protection policies at all levels for the safe use of new technologies, including the communications industry and media.
- Improved funding for reporting hotlines, awareness-raising campaigns and interventions such as regulations to monitor the operation of Internet cafes.
- Psychosocial resources for children who have encountered harm.
- Youth participation in identifying and acting on solutions; for example, through children's forums.

ECPAT International, a network of child protection agencies working against child prostitution, pornography and trafficking, is leading the push for greater research, recognition and action around the issue of cyber-violence against children. ECPAT urgently calls for:

- The IT industry to expand its self-regulation to prevent harm and violence to children;
- Children as users to learn how to play a prominent role in counteracting violence in cyberspace;
- Governments to put in place laws and training that respond to the realities of Internet child abuse;
- A monitoring structure to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's Global Study on Violence Against Children.

Country innovations

Industry collaboration – Cambodia

The Cambodian police force is largely unfamiliar with computers. In October 2005, Microsoft in collaboration with Britain's National Criminal Intelligence Service conducted two weeks of intensive training in Phnom Penh on basic investigative and computer evidence-gathering techniques in relation to the growing phenomenon of online child pornography.

Microsoft also supported research by Friends-International into Internet cafe usage in 2005, which aimed to measure the potential for these establishments to combat child abuse. The main findings were that access to both pornographic sites and message boards was easy, unprotected, and even promoted by the Internet cafe owners. From this research, Friends-International began developing a sex education website to assist young Cambodians, launched in July 2006. Contact: *Marie Bizet, Friends-International*, childsafe@friendsinternational.org

Children say "Make-IT-Safe" – Philippines

In 2005, ECPAT launched a global campaign called "Make-IT-Safe" aiming to get the IT industry and governments to take responsibility for making online and interactive technologies safe for children and young people. Supporters of the campaign include technology industry leaders, service providers, governments, children, youth and the general public.

In August 2006, child participants at a National Consultation of Children and Young People Against Child Pornography in the Philippines declared that they would work together to protect young Filipinos from the potential harm posed by cyberspace technology. As well as developing and distributing materials and online campaigns, the children decided to lobby the government to clean up the Internet cafe industry through insistence on "Make-IT-Safe" certification. The priority for NGOs, said the children, should be to provide better data and research on child abuse and exploitation through cyberspace.

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Guidelines for online protection

ECPAT International produced a booklet, "Protecting Children Online", in Indonesian, Japanese, Thai and English. The Japanese version was launched in March 2002 with the National Police Agency and the Japan Teachers' Union both showing interest in using the guide. Subsequent launches to Internet service providers, NGOs, government agencies

and education bodies have occurred in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Download booklet in English (1.15 mb): www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/Publication/Other/English/Pdf_page/ecpat_onlinesafety.pdf
Contact: *Anjan Bose, ECPAT*, anjan@ecpat.net

Help available online

With so many children on the net, it makes sense to provide helplines that are net-, not telephone-, based. Child Helpline International, a global network of telephone helplines and outreach services for children and young people, recently branched out into online services. Safe online facilities provide a place where children can come to talk about their problems in a chat room monitored by trained counsellors. In addition their global portal contains the telephone numbers of 87 different helplines worldwide and contains links to child-focused child rights information and games.

Contact: *Mabel Wong*, mabel@childhelplineinternational.org

Awareness campaign has cyber-agenda – Cambodia

In Cambodia, UNICEF is working on advocacy materials to prevent "cyber-sexual exploitation" of children. This includes production of materials and a website in Khmer language with security information and safe Internet usage guidelines for children, parents and teachers. As well, information sessions have helped to secure the cooperation of Internet cafe managers to strengthen protection practices, and two high-ranking police officials have received training from the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok on how to identify child victims of pornography.

Contact: *Ana Janet Sunga, UNICEF Cambodia*, asunga@unicef.org



Child participants at the Philippines consultation prepare for their campaign to introduce "Make-IT-Safe" certification in Internet cafes.

What is happening?

At the 2005 regional consultation on violence against children in Bangkok, young people listed their concerns about cyberspace violence as follows:

"Children are cheated by bad people online."

Children may be tricked into sharing personal information, resulting in theft, fraud, stalking (via Internet or in person) and physical attacks. They are also threatened or blackmailed over information that could be used to embarrass or shame them. Children may be coaxed into posing naked with the images then posted online.

"Children meet up with the person they know online."

"Grooming", where a child is convinced by an adult to behave in a sexual way online and/or to meet up, usually for the purpose of sexual abuse, has been a major concern for some time. In this region, awareness campaigns are urgently required, especially in some developing countries where online grooming is closely linked to child sex tourism.

"Children see sexual and violent content online."

More and more children are accessing pornography online, with very negative results. Children who are exposed to pornographic images, movies, texts, audio, or cartoons, are far more likely to become sexually active at a young age, role-play sexual acts including rape and, for many girls, accept violent sexual exploitation from adults and their peers.

"Hateful language and abusive messages sent online and through mobile phones."

The psychological impact of bullying on children can lead to long-term problems. Repeated abusive emails from peers or strangers have the same effect as bullying in the physical world, especially where children carry and communicate using mobile phones, effectively keeping themselves online for most of the day.

New technology loses sight of children



An opinion piece by Japanese university student Arto Tsunano, 20, who has been an ECPAT child advocate since the age of 14.

Japan has recently seen a rise in popularity of “maid cafes”. When you enter these unique cafes, girls wearing maid uniforms greet you saying, “Welcome back, my master.” Then they cater to you with food and drink, still treating you as a master.

This type of cafe was created by the *otaku* culture (it literally means maniac people) who are into animations, comic books, computer and online games, some of which may contain child pornographic representations. About two years ago,

Japanese mass media picked up this movement, and since then more and more people have become involved in the cafes and *otaku* culture.

This means that many people, including children, are beginning to see child pornographic images through *otaku* culture as natural. Children have less opposition to online sexual propositions. Shockingly, Japanese children are now starting to post their own naked pictures on the Internet.

The Japanese government does not prohibit children from viewing pornographic or violent images in the general media or online, unlike other countries that impose rating systems as a screen. For instance, some weekly magazines with naked images can be bought at the local convenience store. In addition, few parents know about online filtering systems for the Internet. If children want to see pornography, there is nothing to stop them except actual parental supervision.

I tutor junior high school students as a “cram school” teacher. I hear them talking about and I see them learning from TV sex scenes, online and print pornography. Being aware of sexuality is natural for teenagers. But I think the Japanese sex education system is not

keeping up with the negative components of adult-driven sex media. Giving children so much one-sided sexual information without any limits is wrong.

I joined ECPAT/STOP Japan at the Second World Congress in Yokohama in 1999, when I was only 14 years old. At that time, everybody was interested in talking about the issues of commercial sexual exploitation of children because of the new laws introduced that year for prohibition of child prostitution and child pornography. But in the past few years, the circumstances around this issue have changed too rapidly for the laws to remain effective. The Internet has become more popular; most teenagers have their own cell phone and connecting with other people, including strangers, is easy.

Everybody knows that it would be hard and inconvenient without the Internet, cell phones and media. I believe that children think the same way. And subcultures like *otaku* are also important for Japanese culture.

So we need to be aware of new technology and how it could affect children. We need to start resolving this problem with a good rating system and a consistent sex education programme. I am convinced this is needed and that we need to start as soon as possible.

Raising the standards in reporting

The International Journalist Guidelines for Reporting on Issues Involving Children www.ifj.org/default.asp?index=192&Language=EN provide good direction for journalists. In addition, ECPAT has full recommendations and guidelines for effective campaigning on the issue (www.vaceastasiapacific.org/images/ecpatguide.doc) and the following advice:

- The Internet has allowed child sex abusers to create networks of support, resulting in a controversial claim from some of them that owning child pornography is a freedom of speech issue. Clearly, children have a fundamental right to live free of

sexual exploitation and abuse. This is a right that is not subordinate to the right of freedom of speech or expression. Discussions on morality and pornography take place at an adult level and rarely take into consideration the physical and psychological damage caused to children by cyberspace abuse.

- Be very careful in primary research. Many children simply do not know the risks of revealing their personal details to strangers in chat rooms. Never encourage a child to do it in case it increases his or her confidence in doing so with others. Under no circumstances name a child or print any images taken from the

Internet or some other “cyber” source that reveals an identity. The most ethical way to gain first-hand information is through an agency working with cyberspace protection, such as ECPAT.

- Explore the reasons why children are even more vulnerable to deception in cyberspace than in the physical world, including increased confidence, ease of expression and a false sense of anonymity. As well as exposing ways that paedophiles contact and groom children using the Internet, give examples of monitoring and successful prosecutions of those who offend.

Crossing borders to prosecute offenders

The false presumption of cyberspace anonymity may increase children's vulnerability, but it also trips up child abusers. International cooperation helps to locate and prosecute offenders involved in online violence.

Recently, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation contacted Thailand's Crime Against Child, Juvenile and Women Suppression Division for help. The FBI had discovered the broadcasting of photos depicting a foreign male sexually abusing Thai boys on the Internet. The Thai police identified the man through clues in the photos, collected evidence and applied for a court order to arrest him.

The suspect had initially entered Thailand as a tourist in the mid 1990s and became a resident, living and working in the south of Thailand, where he was employed in a tourism company. The investigation revealed that the suspect had lured Thai boys to his home to sexually abuse them. He would befriend them and then invite them into his home to play games and use his computer. He was also generous with food and money. Once he had established a bond with the boys, he would abuse them in the form of oral and anal sex, which he recorded and photographed and then broadcast on the Internet.

When the man was arrested, the police confiscated CDs, videos and photographs featuring the sexual abuse of children. They also found a camera, video camera, desk-top computer, notebook computer and various sex toys. Analysis of the confiscated materials eventually enabled the police to locate two boys who had been victims in this case: a Thai boy aged 17 and a Burmese boy aged 14.

Once the suspect was apprehended, the police worked closely with Fight Against Child Exploitation (FACE), a Thai NGO that investigates cases involving the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

While police questioned the man, FACE coordinated with the investigating police and attorney general officers, requesting a statement from the two boys to be taken. Unfortunately, the boys had left the area and could not be found. FACE

then coordinated with the police in other districts, requesting their assistance in finding the missing boys, who were the chief witnesses in the case. With the help of FACE and other police departments, the two boys were eventually found and taken to Bangkok to help with the case against the suspect.

The case is ongoing.

What more can governments do?

There is a need for countries to exchange information regarding child sex offenders. Currently, few countries monitor movements of suspected or known child sex offenders on their "watch lists" or actively alert immigration offices in other jurisdictions. There is no exchange of names of known offenders among countries. Thus, known sex offenders can easily travel abroad, moving in and out of countries freely. There is a need for Interpol, immigration authorities of all countries and embassy officials to meet and agree on a system for responsibly developing "watch lists".

Extra-territorial laws (which allow a national to be prosecuted in their home country for an offence committed in another country) have now been introduced in over 30 countries worldwide. However, application of these laws requires extensive collaboration and coordination among law enforcement in corresponding countries. For a case to be prosecuted extraterritorially, a number of conditions will determine its outcome:

Double criminality: The offence committed abroad is often required to be also an offence in the national's own country.

Double jeopardy: A person cannot be tried twice for the same offence, so if an offender has been prosecuted where the offence was committed (where the sentence may be minimal), he usually cannot be tried again in his home country for that offence.

Complaint: In most countries a prior complaint of the victim, or a formal request for prosecution from the foreign government, is necessary before the offender's country will prosecute him.

Applicable law: In most countries, the national law will be applied to the prosecution. But some countries will apply the law of the place where the offence was committed if it is more lenient than the national law.

Despite these challenges, there have been successful uses of extra-territorial laws. The United States has prosecuted a number of its citizens under the "Protect Act" (the U.S extra-territorial legislation), including known child sex offenders in this region.

One online child pornography network dating from 1993 was broken up by international police operations in 1997, leading to 91 arrests that year. However, by continuing to explore contacts and computer forensic clues from those arrested, police went on to conduct over 10,500 investigations that led to more than 3,000 convictions by 2003.

Source: *International Police Operations against Online Child Pornography*, www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi296t.html



A computer class in the Philippines. As well as learning all the benefits of new technologies, children need to learn how to stay safe when online.

Justice in cyberspace

Technology is changing too fast for laws to keep up. This region has the second-highest rate of growth in Internet connectivity in the world, and mobile phones and phone cameras are reducing the need for access to a PC. However, child exploitation through the use of new technologies remains largely unaddressed.

The following initiatives are helping to lessen the legislative gap, though some still fall short of what is needed.

- Japan is revising its legislation to respond to child pornography on the Internet. It is also a signatory country (the only one in the Asia-Pacific region) to the Convention on Cyber-Crime, which obliges signing countries to criminalize the electronic distribution of child pornography via the Internet or other means. However, these new laws are limited to visual representations, images and digital files of an entire child. Furthermore, Japanese law does not punish the mere possession of child pornography; its prohibitions are limited to distributing, selling, renting or displaying child pornography in public.

- In Thailand, in February 2006, the government instructed ISPs to remove pornographic materials (although not specifically child pornography). An ISP failing to comply is liable to a three-year prison term. In addition, the Clean Net project includes Clean Guard CD software, a blocking tool that works at the individual computer level; Pla-Whale Browser, another filter that blocks websites at the browser level; and Clean-Net, an education website for young people.

- In Australia, the Australian Broadcasting Authority set up an Online Hotline, which refers material to the appropriate law enforcement agency, such as the High-Tech Crimes Unit. The Criminal Code prohibits the use of carriage services (Internet, mobile phones, emails and telephones, faxes, radio and TV) to access, transmit, make available, publish or distribute child pornography. It also criminalizes the use of a carriage service to “groom” persons younger than 16.

- In Cambodia, a Second National Plan Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children 2005–2009 is being developed. It will include child pornography (about which there are currently no laws).

- The Indonesian Parliament is studying a draft bill on pornography (although not specific to child pornography) that would prohibit the printing, circulating, broadcasting and advertising of pornographic material and punish violators with up to 20 years’ imprisonment and fines. Current laws do not include audio or digital materials or simulated images.

- In New Zealand, the Department of Internal Affairs Censorship Compliance Unit was established to address child pornography on the Internet. Convictions average more than two a month. The Department has exposed offenders sharing information about how to meet children and, in some cases, offering children for abuse. Systems for blocking access to sites containing child sex abuse images will soon be adopted by all ISPs in the country, making it very difficult for anyone to access sites showing child sex abuse. Finally, the Crimes Amendment Act 2005 prohibits sexual ‘grooming’ of children online.

- In South Korea, the Illegal and Harmful Contents Report Center and Cyber Terror Response Center address harmful content circulating on the Internet. The Act on Protection of Youth from Sexual Exploitation was recently ratified, which prohibits producing, importing or exporting youth-exploiting obscene materials.

- In Taiwan, ten major Internet service providers and Internet content providers signed an agreement to protect children from harmful and illegal content transmitted via the Internet.

More detailed information on legal/policy reform in the region, together with that of other regions, can be obtained from ECPAT International’s latest Report on the Implementation of the Agenda for Action against CSEC, due for publication in late 2006.

In 1999, Cambodian authorities discovered how ill-equipped their laws were to deal with the menace of online exploitation.

An American living in Phnom Penh openly publicized his website, entitled “Rape Camp”, and claimed that the extreme sexual exploitation and torture that he was making available to subscribers was an appropriate way for both him, and the girls involved, to make money.

Cambodian Minister of Women’s Affairs, Mu Sochua, called for the pornographer’s arrest saying, “It’s an act against the dignity and value of Cambodian women and children.”

Although the man faced up to five years in jail in Cambodia for violating an existing law on human trafficking and sexual exploitation, United States officials intervened to have him deported. Cambodian officials also tried to ban the website, citing laws that protected Cambodian culture. But as the site was hosted in the United States, it remained on the Internet long after the man’s arrest.

Source: “Welcome to the rape camp: Sexual exploitation and the internet in Cambodia”, Donna Hughes/University of Rhode Island, www.uri.edu/arts/sci/wms/hughes/rapecamp.htm

Articles and angles

Cyberspace contributes to child trafficking

The display of pornographic photos of Cambodian children on the Internet has contributed to a perception among foreigners that Cambodia is likely to provide opportunities to sexually exploit children – exactly the reputation that it has been trying to lose for the past seven years. In 2005, law enforcement experts from Cambodia and the UK declared that Cambodia is a “top holiday destination for digital child pornographers and chat room paedophiles” and that “child sex tourism and online abuse is a serious and continuing concern in Cambodia.” Not only is cyberspace increasing the demand for children trafficked into the sex industry, but it is making it easier, with the Internet used by traffickers to send pictures of Cambodian victims to potential pimps.

Contact: *Chanveasna Chin, ECPAT Cambodia*, director@ecpatcambodia.org

Cafe culture unmonitored

Use of Internet cafes is popular in countries where owning a PC at home is not widespread, including Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. Here, children play online games and interact with each other as well as logging into chat rooms to talk to their cyberspace friends. Away from parental supervision, they receive little protection from cafe owners, and some owners may even assist in the sexual exploitation of children by introducing them to chat rooms.

Contact: *Marie Bizet, Friends-International*, childsafefriendsinternational.org

Child prostitution goes online

ECPAT Korea research in 2005 revealed that the Internet has become a popular conduit for the sex trade. The Anti-Cyber Terrorism Centre reports that more than 80% of sexual abusers are engaged in sexual exploitation through Internet chat rooms and postings, including a cyber escort service called Cyber Bodobang. Another form of Internet sexual exploitation is *wonjo kyojae* in which children and young people engage in sex services with older men.

In Japan, match-making or dating websites have become another well-known channel for domestic commercial sexual exploitation of

children. Japanese men, usually older and married, use pagers, computers and cell phones to arrange dates with school girls, who they then sexually exploit.

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New opportunities for bullying

Children’s attraction to technology-based communication has led to a surge in the amount of bullying and peer humiliation in cyberspace. Examples range from persistent abusive messaging or spreading of rumours to posting naked or provocative pictures of former girlfriends and boyfriends online (sometimes “morphed” to create a false yet incriminating image), then sending the link to family and friends. Though often anonymous, these attacks are easily traceable; as with other forms of bullying, the challenge is for victims to report their persecution. There is at least one confirmed case of suicide by a teenage boy as a result of a technology-based bullying campaign.

Contact: *Anjan Bose, ECPAT*, anjan@ecpat.net

No prosecution possible

In the Philippines, Internet and webcam technology have given rise to a new form of child exploiters known as “cybersex den operators”. They recruit minors who are lured to pose as “models” but are actually required to “chat” and show private body parts on a webcam or, worse, perform sexually explicit acts for online customers. The Philippine National Police reports that Internet child pornography/cybersex dens are widespread.

There is no specific law yet on child pornography in the country. Although raids have uncovered several dens and rescued the girls, attempts to prosecute den owners have failed.

Contact: *Dolores Alforte, ECPAT Philippines*, ecpatphi@im Manila.com.ph

Who owns cyberspace?

Governments, ISP (server) providers and IT industry leaders are all increasingly involved in finding solutions to cyberspace violence. However, the growing use of mobile phones to send and receive images means that phone companies now also have a moral responsibility to find ways to filter and control the content

of transmissions. Education campaigns and helplines for children plus deterrence campaigns for potential child sex offenders need to be offered both through the Internet and mobile phone communications networks.

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Phone cameras spark schoolyard violence

In Australia, a form of schoolyard bullying known as “happy slapping” has been reported, in which a child is set upon by a group and beaten, with the whole incident filmed on a mobile phone camera and forwarded to friends. The victims seem to be chosen at random and very few have made complaints, though one boy has been hospitalized as a result. Other forms of cyber-bullying also take place in schools, such as abusive messaging or secret filming/photographing.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Education, Science and Training, will fund research into the prevalence and nature of covert bullying practices, including bullying using technology, to inform effective interventions.

Contact: *DEST Media and Marketing*, info@dest.gov.au

Pornography desensitization

The demand for online images of child abuse appears to be increasing. One reason may be the way the online environment affects human behaviour by lowering inhibitions, and another may be desensitization to violent imagery. Television content has always been carefully vetted by appropriate censor boards, but the Internet is a free-for-all with few controls or protective measures over postings or downloads. When children are sexualized within mainstream media or where images of abuse remain legal, as in the case of *manga* (violent and sometimes pornographically violent) cartoons in Japan, both children and adults are less shocked by virtual violence and exploitation and may even begin to see it as normal.

Contact: *Junko Miyamoto, ECPAT*, kyofukai@titan.ocn.ne.jp

Further reading

Violence against children in cyberspace

Deborah Muir/ECPAT International, 2005
This comprehensive report was prepared by ECPAT for the UN Global Study on Violence against Children. It looks in detail at all aspects of violence against children in cyberspace plus offers suggestions for solutions to minimize the risks. www.vaceastasiapacific.org/images/ecpat1.pdf

Internet traders of child pornography and other censorship offenders in New Zealand

Angela Carr/Dept. of Internal Affairs, New Zealand, 2004

Profiling from New Zealand on people apprehended for Internet trading in child pornography has revealed a very different face to what might be expected. The majority of offenders are male students aged between 15 and 19, studying or closely involved with information technology, and living with parents, grandparents or a partner. [www.dia.govt.nz/Pubforms.nsf/URL/entirereport.pdf/\\$file/entirereport.pdf](http://www.dia.govt.nz/Pubforms.nsf/URL/entirereport.pdf/$file/entirereport.pdf)

Wise before their time: Young people, gender-based violence and pornography in Kandal Stung district

Dr Graham Fordham/World Vision, 2005

Children in Cambodia are increasingly online and the average age for first viewing pornography is now 13. This report shows through interviews and quantitative surveys the negative impact of early exposure to pornography in both girls and boys. www.vaceastasiapacific.org/images/wise_wv.pdf

International police operations against online child pornography

Tony Krone/Australian Institute of Criminology, 2005

Australian-based research on international child pornography networks, plus information on how they were tracked and arrested. This report shows how widespread Internet child abuse has become, but is also a clear warning to users and traders that they are not as anonymous as they believe themselves to be. www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi296t.html

Rapid appraisal of child pornography in the Philippines

Arnie C. Trinidad/UNICEF and UP CIDS-PST, 2004

An overview of how the Philippines came to be associated with child pornography and its current challenges, including the lack of effective monitoring of Internet content. www.childprotection.org.ph/monthlyfeatures/nov2k4a.doc

Our children at risk online, the example of Thailand

ECPAT International and UNICEF Thailand, 2002

The results of an online survey promoted through the Bangkok Post and other media partners to explore children's online behaviour. Almost all of the children in the survey had seen pornographic content online, some deliberately, others by accident. Many expressed embarrassment, frustration or humiliation over receiving subsequent SPAM emails or pop-up sites of a sexual nature that they were unable to stop. www.vaceastasiapacific.org/images/ecpat2.pdf

Country innovations » continued
from pg.3

Child-friendly online education – Taiwan

ECPAT Taiwan's weapon against cyberspace exploitation is a likeable, lively, digital character called E-Baby. Together with his friends Mouseman and E-Girl, E-Baby aims to teach elementary students to protect themselves while surfing the Internet. A series of several three-minute animated short stories, recorded on CD, are designed to catch children's attention. Once the CD is installed on a computer, E-Baby automatically appears on the screen every 30 minutes to remind children of safe rules while surfing. The CD was distributed to all elementary schools in Taiwan. It is also available to download from www.web547.org.tw
Contact: Janru Huang, ECPAT Taiwan, janru@ecpat.org.tw



Mouseman gives firm advice to E-Baby about meeting up with a stranger he has met online.

Credit: ECPAT

In accordance with child protection protocols, names have been changed and/or identities hidden of children who have suffered abuse.

The following agencies have provided funding for this series of newsletters:

