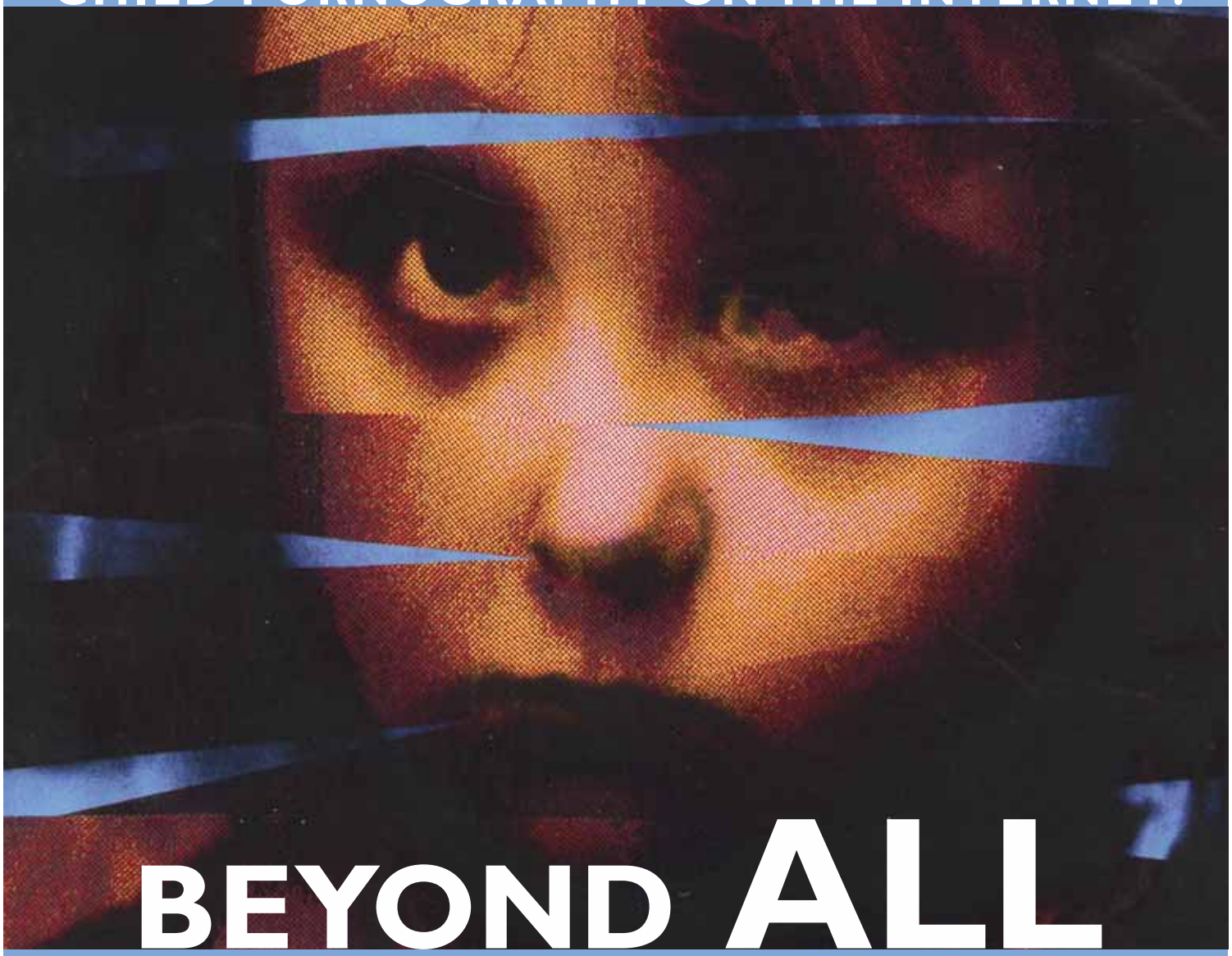
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET:



BEYOND ALL TOLERANCE

– A growing problem demanding new counter-measures

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Sweden

Save the Children Sweden fights for children's rights. We generate opinion and support children at risk in Sweden and the rest of the world.

ISBN 91 7321142 7
Code no. 3097

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Printing:	Partnerprint

Swedish title: Bortom All Tolerans – växande problem som kräver nya åtgärder

Note: The child in the picture on the cover has no connection to child pornography.

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Preface

The Internet has been of boundless benefit to information exchange and development, broadening the footprint of democracy and shrinking the world to where we can converse with virtually anyone who is connected. The Internet's trademark is internationalism.

Ironically but unsurprisingly, this tool of internationalism has hugely benefited the criminal. And chiefly the pornographic criminal. Whether the Internet has merely exposed the extent of child pornography crime or whether it has caused it to explode, is still unsure.

What is extremely relevant is the need for an international effort to stem the tide – but chiefly, to save or help the children affected today, in the past or in the future.

Save the Children Sweden has had a Hotline website in place for more than four years, receiving more than 22,000 tips about child pornography on the Web. The importance of such a channel and the importance of international co-operation are spelled out in the following report. Save the Children Sweden believe that public hotlines should be run and managed by the police; in any case, the function itself has been proved invaluable. If the same conclusion is reached in other countries, it is important to see that the national police are aware of this and are supported in any way possible.

What other organisations can do is up to them and dependent on specific national conditions. Save the Children Sweden has amassed valuable experience and is eager to share it with organisations, authorities and the police in any country.

Charlotte Petri Gornitzka
Secretary-General
Save the Children Sweden

Summary

Child pornography on the Internet is a growing problem. This is indicated by a Sweden-wide police raid on 25 May 2004, netting 118 men suspected of breaching child pornography laws. The men are suspected of buying child pornographic material on Internet sites, making on-line payments with credit cards.

The volume of child pornography on the Net is increasing rapidly. The volume is impossible even to estimate. Interpol has a picture database with 20,000 images of child pornography and estimates that the number of exploited children shown to be between 10,000 and 20,000. From the University of Cork's COPINE Project we know that for every week, four or five new children appear in child pornography Internet traffic. There is a continuous demand for new subject matter at the same time as older material remains in circulation. A number of extensive rings of Net-paedophiles have been uncovered in recent years. There have been considerable advances in international co-operation through Interpol and Europol, and various methods of monitoring the Internet have been developed. When possession of child pornographic materials was criminalized in Sweden in 1999 it was a boost for crime prevention activities in this field. Since 2000, more than 80 sentences have been handed down in Sweden for offences related to child pornography. The division within Sweden's National Criminal Investigation Department (Rikskriminalen) concerned with the issue, the Special Objects Unit, provides vital support for local police authorities.

The Save the Children Sweden Hotline was set up in January 2000. There were two reasons: because children have a self-evident right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation, we wanted to disrupt or stop traffic in child pornography over the Internet. The second reason was our need to accumulate knowledge so we could change the situation.

Since its launch more than four years ago, the Save the Children Sweden Hotline website has received more than 22,000 tips. Most have been about child pornography on the Web but child pornographic material is increasingly to be found in other Internet communications systems and technologies such as P2P, e-mail, and chat rooms. Our Hotline has been pro-active on-line and has been able to supplement the crime prevention work of the police. Thanks to tip-offs, the Hotline has contributed to the uncovering of several extensive rings of child pornography offenders. And if the pornographic material is familiar, the Hotline will contact the closest contactable point of origin on the Internet, for example a web host, which will generally delete the offensive material. In this way, the Hotline has been able to shut down thousands of child pornography home pages. The problem is that the material constantly re-appears elsewhere.

Many private citizens, teachers and social workers have contacted the Save the Children Sweden Hotline to discuss the vulnerability of children on the Internet and

1. According to Detective Inspector Anders Persson, Interpol.

because of real worry that children in their proximity can be involved in the production of child pornography. The Hotline has also established contact with IT actors in Sweden to inform them about the methods of disseminating child pornography, and also to offer instruction on the purely technical steps the industry should take to trace log files, etc.

Through our work with the Hotline, Save the Children Sweden has gathered in-depth knowledge about the exploitation of children on the Internet, about the traffic in child pornography and how paedophile rings operate on the Net. The responsibility for attacking child pornography crime on the Internet belongs to the police. Following up tip-offs and assessing the child pornographic material are central to crime fighting. The police should therefore set up a permanent national Hotline. Save the Children Sweden will gladly share our experiences. Child pornographic traffic on the Internet confronts us with a new kind of criminality and new aspects of the exploitation of children and their inadequate rights as victims of crime. Only a small number of the children have so far been identified.

As of May 2004, Interpol knows the identity of approximately 260 of the estimated 10-20,000 children police believe are involved.[2] The real figure is in fact higher, since Interpol cannot keep or access sufficient information from national police authorities in various countries. This complicates international co-operative efforts. As of April 2004, Sweden's National Criminal Investigation Department had identified 110 Swedish children that had been subjected to documented sexual abuse.[3]

Sexually exploited children in the images can easily disappear in the mountain of unidentified child pornography victims and thus remain susceptible to renewed abuse. These children are also unlikely to ever get help in working through their experiences or justice for the violations they were subjected to. There is a lack of know-how, experience and procedures for centring the issue on the individual child.

Some examples quoted in this report contains descriptions of children. The events are true, but all personal details have been changed to protect the children's identities.

2. According to Detective Inspector Anders Persson, Interpol.
3. According to Detective Inspector Annethe Ahlenius of Sweden's National Criminal Investigation Department Special Objects Unit.

Save the Children Sweden's suggestions and recommendations:

- **Step up police (Criminal Investigation Dept.) efforts to fight child pornography crimes.**
- **Establish a permanent, national police Hotline against child pornography crime.**
- **Keep the statute of limitations for child pornography crimes in force until the child in question has turned 18.**
- **Review the definition of 'child' in issues concerning child pornography crime.**
- **Establish clearly that child pornography crimes invite damage compensation for the child.**
- **Improve the international register for the identification of children.**
- **Produce ethical guidelines for information to affected children and their guardians.**
- **Consider a dedicated victims' fund for child pornography crime.**
- **Establish an Internet council to prevent Internet-related crimes directed at children, for example as an extension of the Swedish Council on Media Violence.**
- **Extend international police co-operation concerning child pornography crime.**

Child pornography – a growing problem

Child pornography – an underdeveloped knowledge area

The definition of child pornography is complicated –principally because child pornography is a poor description. The words imply a connection with 'ordinary' pornography; in some way based on (however repugnant it may be) voluntary participation. This claim, occasionally put forward, may apply adult pornography, but participation by children is never voluntary.

A significant problem is the lack of real knowledge of what child pornography implies for the children involved and the role it plays for the perpetrator or his behaviour.

Research into this area is in its infancy, in contrast to other types of child exploitation. There are several reasons, but principally that historically, child pornography was almost non-existent. It has emerged with a recognisable profile only in the last decade. This is due uniquely to the expansion of the Internet. Another explanation for the relative obscurity of the issue previously is that sexual abuse of children arouses strong antipathy, not only among people in general, but also with so-called experts: there has consequently been a strong reluctance to illuminate the phenomenon.

Child pornography is a new area of study where much remains to be done. The explosion in the volume of child pornographic material in the last 7–10 years because of the Internet means that the issue must now be taken seriously, not least within behavioural science.

The short history of child pornography

Save the Children Sweden's involvement in the child pornography issue dates from the early 1990s. Before then, child pornography was a non-issue. Child pornography, or the mere suspicion of its existence, was never the subject of public discussion. In the 1980s, there was only a single conviction in Sweden for a child pornography crime.

So there was much publicity at the uncovering of two rings between 1992 and '94, the first in Huddinge just outside Stockholm and the other in Norrköping, two hours south. In the Huddinge case, two men were convicted of child pornography crimes and received sentences of six and four months in jail.

In the investigation it was discovered that one of them had sexually abused children and he was later given an additional sentence of four years for sexual assault. Police raids on the men's homes uncovered about 160 video and celluloid films of child pornography.[4]

4. Svedin and Back, Varför berättar de inte? Om att utnyttjas i barnpornografi (Why don't they speak Out?)On being exploited in child pornography), Save the Children Sweden 2003

The main figures in the Huddinge ring had built up a stock of child pornographic videos over several years, and communicated with their market via a post office box.

They were inviting requests from other people in Sweden interested in accessing their material. The men would then compile cassettes with the relevant material. After a few years, they had a Sweden-wide contact network. They kept names and addresses in an ordinary file system. The material they were distributing had been produced by others, and often consisted of second- and third-generation video films. The standard was non-professional. Often, the producers were unknown rapists. How the accused men found the material has never been fully established; at the trial they named different origins and sources. Some material appeared to have been produced in Europe. Their operation was of non-commercial nature. Naturally, the men were paid for the cassettes but the transactions did not have a business character. In addition, there was no real marketing.

In the Norrköping case, in which the preliminary enquiry had started in 1992, a 27-year-old man was found guilty three years later of extensive distribution of child pornography. A police raid had found 200 video films and an address list for 15 potential customers. The man was taken into custody suspected of child pornography crimes and at the same time, searches were carried out at 12 different addresses across Sweden. As a result, 1,200 more films were confiscated and 13 people were charged, suspected of breaking the child pornography laws.[5]

The first child pornography ring with a computer connection in the early 1990s was the so-called Bamse ring in Denmark. It used the now outmoded BBS database technology, which involves a modem-assisted link between several computers, allowing them to communicate. This form of computer communication, in which computers call up each other, signalled the growth of the Internet in Sweden. Today, BBS is all but forgotten and all such communications activity is embedded in the Internet.

However, these three incidents launched a public discussion on child pornography in Sweden.

World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children 1996

In the early 1990s, Save the Children Sweden mounted a successful campaign to draw attention to the global trade in child sex, particularly the child sex tourism prevalent in several Southeast Asian countries.

An organisation called End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) was founded and the Save the Children Sweden representative to ECPAT came to play an important role at the first World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in August 1996. Sweden's Social Democratic government of the time was the host.

Save the Children Sweden's contribution to the congress was principally to share its experiences in treating sexually exploited children at the Save the Children Swe-

5. ibid

den Centre for Children and Youth in Crisis.

Save the Children Sweden was also active in planning the congress. At the congress itself, the Norwegian Children's Ombudsman, Trond Wauge, held a well-attended workshop where attendees could see, in real time, how child pornography is distributed via the Internet. An anonymous person in New Zealand sent three child pornography pictures during a so-called IRC chat to a person he believed shared his interest – in fact, it was the technician running the workshop's computer. An amazed silence fell as the pictures took shape on a large monitor. Something new had been revealed: child pornography was available in real time on computers linked to the Internet.

Changing the constitution

For Save the Children Sweden, the combined experiences from work with the sexual tourism campaign, the 1996 congress and the Huddinge and Norrköping paedophile rings led to a demand for changes in the Swedish legal framework. The principal reason was that the laws governing freedom of expression and the press protected possession of child pornography. The absurdity of the laws was further illuminated when a television channel, TV3, and several private citizens demanded copies of the material evidence for the Huddinge and Norrköping trials. Under the freedom of information law this was a legally viable demand, but the courts decided to disregard the principle and refused to release the material. Which led to a spirited debate in the media. But it was obvious that the laws regarding child pornography needed to be changed.

So Save the Children Sweden initiated and sustained a broad and long-term campaign: Stop Child Pornography. There was intensive public discussion, leading to a change in constitutional law.

Child pornography crimes have been moved from the sphere of laws governing mass media, and all constitutional edicts regarding child pornography have been annulled. Child pornography crimes are now within the criminal code. The change was made in January 1999. Possession was made a criminal offence, as was import and export. According to Chapter 16 Paragraph 10a of the criminal code a person may be charged with a child pornography crime if the person:

1. Depicts children in pornographic images,
2. Spreads, transfers, puts at another's disposal, shows or in any other way makes such images accessible to someone else,
3. Acquires or offers such images of children,
4. Arranges contact between buyer and seller of such images of children or takes other or similar measures designed to facilitate trade in such images, or
5. Possesses such an image of a child or children.

The penalty for child pornography crime is prison for a maximum of two years, or, if the offence is a minor one, a fine or prison for a maximum of six months. If the offence is serious, the penalty is prison for a minimum of six months and a maximum of four years.

A 'child' is defined as a person not yet past puberty or, when it is apparent in the image or the circumstances surrounding the image, under 18 years of age.

When the preparatory official study of child pornography was made public, the investigators stated that the issue had been resolved. The panel also stated that the problem was in all probability a minor one and that the numbers of Swedish children in the evidence were small. The material discovered through the Huddinge and Norrköping rings was surely all that had been circulating in Sweden. The study was presented at a time when Internet access in Sweden was in its infancy. Nobody could imagine what was to come. Not even Save the Children Sweden.

At the time, the only other organisation within the Save the Children Alliance aware of the problem of child exploitation on the Internet was Norway's Save the Children, Redd Barna. As early as late 1996, stimulated by the first World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, they started their equivalent of a Hotline.

From late 1996, the Norwegian public could alert Redd Barna through its website to occurrences of child pornography. Norway already had a law forbidding any contact with child pornography, even when digitally stored, and the Norwegian police were early to address crime through the Internet.

When possession of child pornography was criminalized in Sweden on 1 January 1999, it helped the fight against crime. Several large paedophile networks have been uncovered and brought to justice, both in Sweden and abroad. International cooperation through Interpol and Europol has progressed considerably and various forms of tracking methods adapted to the Internet have been developed. Since 2000, there have been more than 80 convictions in Sweden. The Special Objects Unit, known as the child pornography group, within Sweden's Criminal Investigation Department provides important support for local police authorities.

Training and educational efforts led by the Swedish Office of the Prosecutor-General and other authorities have increased expertise among lawyers, prosecutors and judges on trafficking in child pornography on the Internet.

The Örebro child pornography case, 1999

In April 1999, a 22-year-old child minder in Örebro, west-central Sweden, was charged with sexual assault and large-scale dissemination of child pornography via the Internet. Following a tip from the French police and a decision by the public prosecutor to permit a search, Örebro police uncovered what was to become the biggest child pornography case in Sweden after the Huddinge and Norrköping rings. It was a case that built largely on the suspect's Internet activities.

The police search discovered a number of computers, diskettes and CDs with more than 47,000 child pornographic pictures and series of pictures, as well as a large number of video films showing abuses committed by the suspect. It was quickly revealed that the man had abused several children at the day-care centre where he worked. The case received wide publicity and was given high priority by the police and prosecutors.

Twelve children could be identified through analysis of the confiscated material.

According to police officers in charge of the preliminary investigation, it was soon apparent that there were frightening similarities between the images the man had downloaded, his video films and video diary, and his own abuse of children. Via an FTP server, an ordinary Internet-linked PC, the man had become a library-exchange for child pornography. The server, which he called "Heaven", was in his home, allowed visitors to download child pornography in exchange for an equivalent volume of new material. Since the server had many visitors and was well known in paedophile circles, the man had amassed a large stock. His own pictures were spread through the system out onto the Internet. In his testimony, the man said he had been interested in computers from early teenage years and had spent considerable time learning Internet technology and its possibilities. While nursing college, he had set up the college's computer room. He was using the Net by 1995 and was already interested in child pornography and had begun his collection. He told of various ruses to disguise his activities and how he had made a game of hiding, encrypting and spreading child pornography, and how he had established a "secret room" on the Internet. At the day-care centre where he worked, the man was well liked and seen as helpful and trustworthy.

The video films seized in his home provided another picture – of someone extremely dangerous for children and whose abuse of children and actions defy description. Much of the trial evidence has been classified confidential in consideration of the children and their families. The perpetrator has been placed in a closed psychiatric institution with release subject to review. In practice, this means indefinite incarceration.

Huddinge – a case with many levels

The Huddinge case in 2003 is of special interest, since it has so many aspects. It revealed the vulnerability of children in child pornography and showed successful international police co-operation, close co-operation between local authorities – and the insufficiency of current laws.

On 19 November 2003 Huddinge district court sentenced a 43-year-old man to seven years in prison for grave sexual abuse of a minor, sexual abuse of a minor and grave offences against the child pornography laws. He was also ordered to pay damages equivalent to 150,000 EURO to nine children. He appealed but later withdrew the appeal.

For years, national and international police and hotlines in several countries had plotted the man's activities. He had begun to spread child pornography via the Internet in 1997. Over the years, the material grew in volume and spread. Thirty-seven children in his material have now been identified. The material included everything from pictures of naked girls to pictures of serious assault - some of the girls occured repeatedly, other children sporadically. His production appears to have ceased after mid-2000. No new material was transmitted between late 2000 and early 2001, but the old material continued to circulate.

At an Interpol meeting in June 2001, the Norwegian police took on the case and tried to trace the origin of the pictures. The police had at that stage 1,600 pictures

and a number of video films showing the same girls. The video material had also been spread via the Internet. The material was systematised and in the next year, the Norwegian police contacted other national police authorities to try to chart traffic in that material.

By March 2003, the police had succeeded in identifying a man in Huddinge who was producing material during the period and the man was arrested. The arrest was made early one morning, preceded by meticulous co-ordination between the Norwegian and Swedish national police, social welfare authorities, representatives for child and adult psychiatric welfare, school authorities and local law officials.

The suspect was remanded in custody. All identified children and their families were visited by the police and social welfare authorities. A crisis group was set up and the children and their families were questioned and offered crisis support. Subsequently, there were a number of meetings between parents and the authorities. All in all, the measures taken in connection with the arrest were a good template for how local authorities can both co-operate and provide support to affected children and their families. There were frequent meetings in the beginning, continuing until sentence was passed in November 2003.

The Huddinge case is unique in many ways and raises questions on many levels. How was it possible for the man to continue producing and distributing his material for so long without any of the children talking? What did the sentence imply for those involved? Is Swedish law adequate for a case like the Huddinge case? And how could the man operate for so long without being stopped?

In the Huddinge trial, the accused could not be found guilty of child pornography crimes related to 28 of the children identified since the statute of limitations on those incidents had expired. It is offensive that the statute of limitations obstructs the serving of justice on those responsible for such crimes. Children are denied justice and compensation for the crimes they were submitted to. Images spread on the Net are available for users all over the world, presumably forever. Sexual acts documented in pictures can have another damaging effect: living with the knowledge of having been filmed in a degrading situation and knowing that the images can be spread throughout the world can cause life-long trauma.[6] Save the Children Sweden believes that the statute of limitations for child pornography crimes should be allowed to start from when the child reaches its majority.

6. Svedin and Back, Varför berättar de inte? Om att utnyttjas i barnpornografi (Why don't they speak Out?) On being exploited in child pornography), Save the Children Sweden, 2003.

The character of the Internet and its technical dynamic

The development of the Internet in the last ten years can be likened to a technological revolution. Springing from the American military's ARPA system in the 1970s via limited use by international research networks to becoming public property, the Internet has dramatically changed the ground rules for communications and trade. The Net's character is determined by the technical architecture, the lack of standard ownership and its non-hierarchical nature. Whatever one's technical knowledge and interest, it is valuable to understand what makes the Internet tick.

Structure

The difference between the Internet and previous networks is that the Internet protocol is built non-hierarchically. For the user, this implies a fundamental difference. It allows communication between you and virtually anyone else who is connected to the Internet. The Internet is thus, by its nature, completely unlimited by boundaries; a local connection gives access to a global arena. The initiative and responsibility for each communication rests almost entirely with the individual user.

In Sweden, an estimated 80 percent of households have daily access to the Internet. Added to this is the Internet's strong foothold in schools and workplaces. Over the last ten years, our lives have been changed by what are in essence a simple accord, structure and standardisation. And there is no sign that this development is slowing - on the contrary

The Net: no owner, no hierarchical structure

IThe Internet has attracted tens of thousands of commercial actors. The traditional telephony companies have restructured to become important technology suppliers. In Sweden, large sums of state and local government money have been used to create infrastructure to provide broadband connection for citizens. But still, no one owns the Internet. The costs for access to the Internet can be compared to harbour or highway fees. The sea and the highway themselves are free.

The result of this is a level playing field for suppliers of hardware and software, large or small, legal or criminal. The Internet is an apparently endless and expanding market where commercial forces co-exist with public service as well as extremism. Control and ownership have been disengaged. Everyone sets his or her own conditions, needs and goals.

Many companies and organisations manage the registration of domain names and the distribution of IP numbers – the technical conditions for delivery of services to and from the Internet. There are almost infinite possibilities for those who wish to

do so directly and on-line, and at nominal cost. Network Information Centre Sweden AB (NICSE), wholly owned by the Internetstruktur foundation, which took over from the Swedish university computer net when the latter was ultimately swamped in the 1990s, runs Domänen.se (the Swedish Internet node). The Internet's different communications systems are all non-hierarchical by nature and character. There are, to be sure, demands for various forms of identity checks and verification for those who want to put up a website on a server, but the computer-savvy user has myriad opportunities to bypass or breach even the most advanced security systems. Which is why we read almost daily accounts of viruses attacking email systems, and billions of spam messages often with unwanted and repulsive contents. The big software companies have been forced to devote considerable resources to repairing security flaws and loopholes in their systems and products. It is not amiss to compare the Internet's current status to a battlefield. Or, in fact, to a reflection of our reality. A world where intentions are not always good, and where there are no guarantees of security. Not for anyone, least of all for children and youth.

Paedophiles and the way they use the Internet

Why does a person become a paedophile and develop a sexual interest in children? And what does child pornography do for a person with that sexual leaning? The term 'paedophile' is often used sloppily – not least in the media – and often incorrectly. By and large, the paedophile has come to be the general public's idea of a monster. Psychiatrists have a number of criteria that label someone a paedophile:

- The person in question must have had, over a period of at least six months, repeated, intensive, sexually stimulating fantasies; have had sexual urges or displayed behaviour involving one or several children not past puberty (usually younger than 13).
- Fantasies, sexual drive or behaviour make it evidently difficult for the person to function socially.
- The person in question is at least 16 and at least five years older than the child that is the object of his or her sexual fantasies and/or sexual actions.[7]

> "In purely psycho-sexual terms, the obsessed paedophile has never achieved an adult psycho-sexual identity and has 'stopped' somewhere along the way."
>
> (Kwarnmark & Tiderfors 1999)

A desire for evil, and the absence of hair and secretions are other characteristics mentioned by paedophiles when describing their fantasies and behaviour – and not least fear and occasionally repugnance at the thought of a grown woman's body. It is important to try to understand that the paedophile's interest in children is not only sexual but also social. They enjoy the company of children.

What is it about a child that attracts paedophiles? According to several studies, it is not necessarily low age, more the child's undeveloped body profile. In this emotionally obscure area, it is generally accepted that for an assault to take place, several other factors must be present.

Firstly, the paedophile must be motivated and have overridden his inner reservations and 'safety locks'. It must also be possible to approach a child sexually – that is, to have negated the child's resistance. This implies the elimination of external obstacles. The choice of time and place for the assault can therefore demand lengthy and careful planning and the child will sometimes have been 'groomed' for a long time so as not to offer resistance. In many cases, the paedophile will have devoted considerable time and energy to creating an optimal situation. The difficulties

7. According to the American DSM-IV sexual diagnosis manual.

involved mean that many paedophiles devote their energy instead to fantasising about a sexual attack, which is where the image of the abused child – child pornography – comes in.

The life of a paedophile, whether or not attacks take place, is a lonely one and contact with the like-minded via the Internet offers a kind of release from emotional isolation. These contacts, which mainly involve exchanges of pictures and films and accounts of real or claimed sexual conquests and fantasies, logically create a situation of risk and increased tolerance for sexual assault. But the link is neither clear nor simple. There are examples of active paedophiles who have refrained from assaulting children after beginning to collect and share child pornography on the Internet.

Sweden's National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) has charted sexual crimes against children involving exploitation[8] and that were reported to the police and proceeded against. The report analysed child pornography crimes among other issues, and showed that from 1993 to the first quarter of 2003, 180 people, all men, were found guilty of child pornography crimes in Sweden. Most were convicted for possession of child pornography (88 percent), that is, that the convicted criminals had stored illegal material, mostly on their own computers, after surfing the Internet for it. A third of the men were also convicted of spreading the material. Possession varied widely, from two child pornographic films to approximately 140,000 images. A majority of the child pornography crimes for the period are Internet-related. The monitoring report shows a connection between sex crimes against children and child pornography crimes. In almost 40 percent of the cases, the offenders were convicted of both crimes. Of those 40 percent, a fifth were convicted of sex crimes against children on at least one more occasion. Eighty percent of the children in the cases were assaulted by a person they knew well or slightly.

> Internet paedophiles in Sweden are, on average, 36 years old. It is not unusual for them to also commit sexual crimes against children in their own families or among acquaintances. The average Net paedophile is principally a collector of child pornography, but often spreads the material further afield. His favoured arena is the Internet.

Throughout the 1980s, only one conviction was handed down for a child pornography offence. In the last ten years, there have been almost 200 convictions. The conclusion that paedophiles have become more common is, however, not a straightforward one.

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8. The BRÅ report: Sexuell exploatering av barn- vad döljer sig bakom sexualbrottsstatistiken? (Sexual exploitation of children – what lies behind the statistics on sexual crimes?), 2003

The child in the picture

– the fragile rights of children exploited in child pornography

The Huddinge case, in which a person produced, possessed and spread child pornography over several years, was unusual. In contrast to earlier cases, a large number of children could be identified and sexual abuses could be interrupted. This resulted from co-operation between the Norwegian and Swedish police, where work by the Norwegians in identifying and tracing the children ultimately led to Sweden and Huddinge. The case was one of the largest in recent years, even by international comparison. Especially considering the production and dissemination of material over several years and the number of children involved.

In most cases where an offender is convicted, we do not know who the children in the images are. It is vital that the children are identified to protect them from further abuse. In its recent report, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) demonstrated the close connection between child pornography crimes and the sexual abuse of children. Of the 180 convictions between 1993 and 2003 for child pornography crimes, 38 percent of the offenders had also been found guilty of sexual abuse of children.

Child pornography traffic on the Internet poses new questions about the ruthless treatment of the children involved. There are no norms, no routines, not enough knowledge nor experience to let us know how to centralise the issue on the individual children. Who is the child? Where is she from? Is she still in danger? Has she been identified? Has she been helped? These questions are relevant for each of the tens of thousands of children involved. But the questions are posed too little and additionally there is nowhere to look for answers.

But even the Huddinge case, where the children were identified, raises many questions about the children's right to limit further dissemination. It is in the nature of the Internet that dissemination is possible globally and unfortunately this also implies that the possibility of removing the material from the Net is limited. Material that has found its way onto the Internet will therefore presumably always be there.

This means that the Huddinge experience is just one, albeit an important, step in the struggle against child pornography on the Internet. The issue of the right of exploited children to protection from further and future exposure is unfortunately still unaddressed.

It is neither oversight nor lack of interest or resources but rather an issue related to a new kind of crime and therefore new issues regarding victims and exploitation. Investigators and the judicial system have been caught unawares by the extent of these crimes, by the possibilities presented by new technology, by global distribution and are unfamiliar with or ignorant of ways to combine a children's perspective with this kind of crime fighting.

Pornographically exploited children are subject to an extra burden: added to the

abuse itself is the reminder of abuse in the existence of the material. This implies a problem that can complicate the treatment, social welfare efforts and other support exploited children have the right to. Just knowing that the material exists can exacerbate the child's trauma.

In extension, there are difficult ethical questions: who shall tell the child, and at what stage in its development, about the extent and spread of the material?

As of May 2004, Interpol knew the identity of about 260 of the estimated 10-20,000 children the police have seen in pornographic pictures. These children are spread across the world. The actual number of identified children is higher but Interpol either has not been given or cannot get sufficient information from national police in different countries.[9]

So we cannot know how great the real number is. Neither do we know how individual countries and local communities have tackled children's right to support and rehabilitation. And there is no repository of information about how justice has been served in these cases, or how confiscated material is handled. The problem is, therefore, that at the moment it is not possible to produce an overview of the real number of identified children. An exploited, abused child therefore risks disappearing into a 'child pornography pile' and being abused yet again. The child might never get help in processing its experiences or seeing justice done.

Child pornography from society's perspective

As of early 2004, Sweden's National Criminal Investigation Department is aware of 110 Swedish children in documented abuse situations.[10] A few years ago, it was only a handful. Statistically, there has been an astonishing, unpleasant, and from all points of view undesirable development.

Who owns the problem?

Obviously, from the crime point of view, child pornography is an issue for the police authorities. It is a local crime, and in a society where the majority of the population has daily access to the Internet in their homes, it is clear that the crime fighting aspect has to be the business of the police and the judicial system.

Over recent years, the Swedish National Criminal Investigation Department Special Objects Unit has put together a centralised organisation and developed methods to tackle child pornography.

Through the work of the Special Unit, Sweden and the Swedish police have also been instrumental in assembling skills and giving priority to the child pornography issue through international police co-operation in Interpol and Europol. The original Swedish database of images has become an important technical aid in charting the extent and origin of, and the connection between, individual pictures and series. This has been confirmed by police successes and co-operation in uncovering several

9. According to Detective Inspector Anders Persson, Interpol.
10. According to Detective Inspector Annethe Ahlenius of Sweden's National Criminal Investigation Department Special Objects Unit.

individual cases and rings. A good example is the Huddinge case in 2003. And from these experiences, the police have built up routines for communication, reconnaissance and co-operation. The establishment of national hotlines in many European countries has also been valuable for national and local police co-operation. In Sweden, the Save the Children Sweden Hotline and the police have co-operated beneficially and the Hotline has been able to contribute quality information, thanks to the many tips from the public. Through the Hotline, Save the Children Sweden has amassed in-depth knowledge about the traffic in child pornography and the exploitation of children on the Internet. But it cannot be a long-term undertaking for a volunteer organisation like Save the Children Sweden to run a national hotline. The responsibility for fighting child pornography and the crime it represents on the Internet belongs to the police. Work in following up tips and evaluating child pornographic material is an integral part of police work. Child pornography crimes are criminal activity that for all intents and purposes is Internet-related. The experiences of Save the Children Sweden over almost four years in trying to disrupt or stop traffic tell us that this type of crime is increasing rather than decreasing. Further, experiences tell us that there is no 'silver-bullet' solution to the problem and that crime-fighting activities are resource-intensive. It is therefore vital that police resources be strengthened. The problems that exist are principally related to resources. For part of 2003, the police's child pornography unit was undermanned and several positions were not filled. Simultaneously, the number of cases was increasing dramatically. Keeping in mind that building a case involves, for the police, extensive technical and time-consuming analysis of computers, CDs, hard disks, video cassettes and other digital media, the police unit worked under great pressure and with limited resources. The unit also acts as a centralised resources unit helping local police in preliminary investigations. It is also Sweden's principal interface with foreign police authorities and Interpol and Europol.

The important priorities are therefore resources and support for the development of methods, both centrally and with local police. Important is also the training at police colleges in sophisticated IT reconnaissance and crime fighting.

A national hotline, open for tips from the public, should be under police control. The Swedish National Police Board should seize the chance of reinforcing their already promising fight against child pornography by extending their current tip-off line to become a national hotline. It should be actively marketed to the general public, the IT industry and other important target groups. Save the Children Sweden would gladly contribute its experience.

It is hard to combat globalised crime with only national efforts and national laws. A clear example is when a Swedish newspaper's on-line chat room can be found guilty of posting racist comments at the same time as a Swedish TV channel, broadcasting to Swedish home viewers but from England and registered in the UK, gets away with similar misbehaviour. The only way to prosecute would be in the UK, since the chat room was on a server based abroad.

In Sweden, the Internet does not have a watchdog authority. The level of ambition among technology and software suppliers to act against the obvious negative aspects of the Internet is low and often limited by individual companies' interests.

The Save the Children Sweden Hotline

Background and launch in January 2000

As early as the mid-1990s, Save the Children Sweden knew about child pornography on the Internet. Private individuals would call to say what they had come across while Net surfing. Sometimes hand-written letters would arrive, or faxes and later e-mail. Attempts were made to process this information with the police, but there were no established routines. By late 1996 and early '97, the volume of information from the general public had increased markedly. To create some sort of structure, Save the Children Sweden linked its home page to the Norwegian sister organisation Redd Barna's hotline: children@risk.no.

This co-operative measure was the first step to the establishment of Save the Children Sweden's own Hotline.

Naturally, all incoming information from the public was not about child pornography. Sometimes there were complaints about crude and repulsive material just of a pornographic nature, but the problem was still clear. The trend was evident; there were slum areas on the Internet where child pornography was to be found in large volumes.

Several international court cases at the end of the 1990s were significant for the issue in Sweden, the Dutroux case in Belgium in particular. Something was happening on the Internet and Save the Children Sweden had no real insight into where, when and how. At times, the situation was both frustrating and hard to approach.

Save the Children Sweden began to discern an area where children were in danger, but we did not know much more than that. The team at the Save the Children Sweden Crisis Centre treating mainly boys subjected to sexual abuse had come across cases of children and youths who had been photographed or filmed during abuse. The children seldom knew where or how the material was saved or if it was ever distributed. Just that it existed.

Simultaneously, Save the Children Sweden was getting involved in the Daphne Project, discussing the issue of hotlines on a pan-European level. Within the framework of its Safer Internet Action Plan, the EU Commission wanted to make the Internet user-friendlier, safer and more open, principally for international trade. The plan also aimed to tackle the negative aspects of the Internet and support and stimulate various nationally based initiatives.

Several EU member states had also, on their own initiative, started hotlines after the mid-1990s. Some of the projects were financed and run by the IT industry or technology companies. Others were state-run or partly state-run. Some were entirely private.

In summary, these hotlines often had differing aims, but the common denomi-

nator was operating within, and with the help of, the Internet's own set of conditions and possibilities.

At a UN conference in Vienna in 1999, arranged jointly with the EU Commission, experiences were exchanged and a plan presented for further EU involvement. With its Safer Internet Action Plan, the EU Commission wanted member states to start, support and manage hotlines to counteract the spread of "harmful and illegal content on the Internet".

As a consequence, and after applying for funding from the EU Commission, Save the Children Sweden decided at the end of 1999 to start its own Hotline. It was launched at the turn of 1999/2000.

Daily work

At the start, the Save the Children Sweden Hotline built on three principles formulated at the 1999 UN conference in Vienna on child pornography on the Internet. The EU's Safer Internet Action Plan talks about the ART principle.

'**A**' stands for *available*; that is, a Hotline must be open for the public and be based principally on information from Internet users, and be visible especially on the Net.

'**R**' stands for *reliable*, which means that the Hotline must be credible and reliable. A long-term approach, persistency and other similar values are also important for the continuity of the work.

'**T**' stands for *transparent*, which means that the Hotline must be able to clearly account for WHAT is being done, WHY it is being done and also HOW the work is carried out.

As far as Save the Children Sweden was concerned, this meant that from the very outset of operative work, we tried to provide answers to these questions on our website and in other connections.

Because of this, our work has been met with little or no suspicion or criticism.

Two goals

1. With the self-evident right of children to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation as a departure point, we wanted to **stop or disrupt the traffic in child pornography on the Internet.**

2. We wanted to gather **enough information to make lasting changes to the status of children on the Internet.**

The Save the Children Sweden Hotline got off to a flying start. Information poured in via our website, where the public could post reports on where and how child pornography appeared on the Net.

The home page – a window on the Internet

On the same day as the Hotline started, we opened a homepage: www.rb.se/hotline – there are two versions, one in Swedish and one in English. Both have the same information and functionality. Apart from a few articles – what we know about the problem, what we are doing about it, and a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) – the most important function is to allow users to report incidents of child pornography.

The purpose of the Save the Children Sweden Hotline homepage is to allow the public to report when, how and under which circumstances people have come into contact with child pornography. The reporter can choose to be anonymous. A report sheet asks for the Internet level on which the material was discovered but a report can also be written in words of the reporter's own choosing. An automatic answer from the website points out that the Hotline cannot report back individually on follow-up work. It is also pointed out that the person reporting child pornography must, under all circumstances, delete any downloaded child pornography.

How information to the Hotline is processed

Incoming tips are saved to a database where every tip gets a number. The information is checked against earlier input in the database to see if it has already been registered and in some way acted on. In special cases, the reporter is contacted, sometimes even by telephone. This can be when a person has expressed the need to contact Hotline staff or if, for example, a company suspects that there is child pornography in its local area network.

Priorities for screening incoming tips:

1. **Is the information of real interest?** Is the material child pornographic or borderline pornography? Screening almost always involves Hotline staff looking at the material to make a judgement, and the human factor is therefore critical. For psychological reasons, this means some of the judgements will be haphazard. There is always the risk of faulty judgements, or that the staff become numbed or simply cannot cope mentally with the depravity of child pornography. Nevertheless, this first evaluation of incoming tips is always necessary.
2. **Is there any suspicion that the material reflects ongoing sexual abuse or sexual molestation of a child?** Especially if this seems to be happening locally in Sweden.

An example: *An agitated 14-year-old boy calls the Hotline to say that his mobile telephone number and e-mail address, together with a hard-core pornographic image, have been posted on a website known for prostitution contacts. The boy, living with a care family, has a terrified story of being called by about forty men in a single day, all wanting sex for money. Some have even threatened him.*

The Hotline contacts the person who owns the website in question and the boy's telephone operator service, then the police in the town where the boy lives. From the technical details gathered, it is proved beyond doubt that the ad was placed from a computer in a local college, to which only a few people have access.

Two months later, the police inform the Hotline that the complaint, suspected sexual molestation and child pornography offences, has been taken off their books because of lack of leads.

3. **Is the material new – that is, not seen before?** If the material is, or appears to be, new or if it contains clues that can identify its geographical origin (with material possibly produced in Sweden given top priority), the police are contacted immediately.
4. **Is the material familiar?** When the Hotline recognises material, be it individual pictures or films, and if its storage point can be traced, an e-mail message is sent to the closest point on the Internet that can be contacted. A common way to store child pornographic material on the Web is on one of the countless web hosts that offer free storage space for pictures, films or sound files. Often, web host owners or managers will immediately delete the offending material. Using this method,

the Hotline has closed down thousands of child pornographic home pages over the years. The Hotline has built up a working contact network and technical routines for this. But despite this, we can only note that our work has limited effect. The volume and circulation of the material is hard to estimate. We cannot even judge whether we have a realistic overview of the extent of the traffic. We have also learnt that material is continually resurfacing in different places.

Co-operation with Sweden's National Criminal Investigation Department's Special Objects Unit and pro-active measures on the Net

Especially in the first six months of operation, Hotline work was dominated by the search for practical methods. How would our operation relate to the work carried out on a daily basis by the police? How should the Hotline handle the amount of tips that came in? And what were the limits for what we could or should do?

In late 2000, a specific case became significant for our work and our relationship with the police. One of many incoming tips, snapped up from a well known Swedish sex chat site, led straight to a web-based community with an operation based on storing and spreading child pornography. The community was in fact an American web host that 52 people could access after a logging-in procedure. The community was barred to anyone without the right password. There was nothing unique in this – there are hundreds of thousands of similar web communities. What was special was the content: large amounts of child pornographic films and pictures - and that the members seemed to be in daily contact with each other, on the chat site and the community's bulletin board. All 52 wrote in Swedish and had e-mail addresses presumably belonging to Swedish users. The community was called Lillans Mysrum (roughly: junior's playroom) and was managed by someone calling himself Lillan.

The Hotline chose a pro-active course of action. By experience, we knew that this type of grouping could be very short-lived. At the slightest hint of suspicion, it is technically possible for an administrator to click on a few markers, change codes and shut down everything while still on-line. For an experienced administrator, all this can be done within minutes or even seconds. As quick as we could, Hotline saved onto our own computer all available information: pictures, films, e-mail address, screen dumps of bulletin boards and so on. Simultaneously, the police were alerted. Police reconnaissance and technical snooping shortly uncovered the identity of seven of the people involved in Sweden.

In January 2001, a go-ahead from the public prosecutor led to a raid on what was to that date the biggest known network of Internet child pornography offenders in Sweden. Police armed with search warrants raided all seven identified suspects on the same Tuesday morning. The operation went by the name of Operation Save the Children Sweden, and was widely publicised at the time.

The case strengthened the Hotline's relationship with the police. In recent years, Hotline has frequently contributed information shown to be of importance for the work being done by the police child pornography group, the Special Objects Unit at the National Criminal Investigation Department.

Hotline work in the last four years has largely been about gathering experience and trying to apply it in daily work, with the object of stopping or disrupting traffic in child pornography on the Internet. The easiest way to illustrate this is by describing several actual cases.

Russian child pornography pay sites

In recent years, a large number of web-based Russian child pornography sites have appeared, offering visitors membership payable by Visa, for example. The content of these sites is often familiar child pornography but also pictures of child apparently from that region. It is likely that these activities generate large sums of money and that the structure is a straightforward commercial one. In early 2004, Save the Children Sweden tried to shut down access to almost 700 of these sites. This was done through SUNET, the Swedish university network, actively blocking Swedish access to the specific addresses listed on the sites. In practice, this meant shutting off the link to a specific Russian server (a so-called peering partner) to Sweden. The result was that for a period, no one in Sweden could easily call up the sites via a Swedish Internet connection.

SUNET shut down a Russian Internet link to Sweden after being given specific IP numbers and so on by the Save the Children Sweden Hotline, which may be seen as an action aimed at stopping or disrupting the traffic of child pornography between Russia and Sweden. Such actions are probably in a legal grey area; who rules on what is technically permissible on the Internet? Access was blocked for a couple of weeks. Unfortunately, the server in question now has another link via Germany, making it once again possible to reach the sites from Sweden. To consistently chase up child pornography sites in the same way would call for totally different resources than the Save the Children Sweden Hotline commands. When a homepage is shut down, it seldom takes long before the material shows up in similar form somewhere else on the Net. The hope is that pro-active counter-actions will have an interruptive and decelerating effect. The larger problem is of course that the activity is allowed to continue in Russia and that the Russian authorities do very little against groups that exploit children in pornography.

Pictures of a single child can expose a global network

Pictures can sometimes provide clues to where perpetrators are. In November 2001, the Hotline received a tip about a series of pictures posted in a news group. The pictures turned out to have been produced only a few days previously. The Swedish Criminal Investigation Department was notified and in turn contacted the police authorities in a neighbouring Nordic country. Thanks to a small detail in one of the pictures, the perpetrator could be identified and arrested within 24 hours and the child was placed in care.

That should have wrapped up the case. But a search of the man's computer revealed extensive information about dissemination of child pornography and far-reaching contacts with other people on the Net with similar interests.

And four months later, the San Diego Chronicle in California printed its first article about what became known as Operation Hamlet. The operation was a wide-ranging international police collaboration to bring to justice a child pornography network linking several countries: the United States, UK, Denmark and Germany. The operation succeeded in identifying and stopping more than forty on-going sexual assaults on children. The paedophilic and child pornographic network was exposed.

The case illustrates how a tiny detail in a picture and a tip to a Hotline in combination with pro-active action and prepared collaboration with the police can at times produce the desired result.

However, and this is part of the child pornography issue, the picture of that child has already been spread and appears not infrequently in the flow of tips that the Hotline processes daily.

The Hotline's contacts with private individuals, teachers and social workers

When the Save the Children Sweden Hotline started, there were few experiences from similar operations to lean on. Initially, there was considerable news media attention, leading to a flood of tips via our homepage. People also called the Hotline on the telephone, often wanting to talk about their own experiences of abuse at the hands of others and their worry that their pictures might be circulating in child pornographic sites on the Net.

> "I was only 14 when it happened. A friend and I went down to a camping site and a guy talked us into coming into his caravan. He was at least 25. He was drinking wine and gave us beer. My friend went home but I stayed, and the man started touching me. It was the first time I ever got drunk and I didn't dare stop him. It was a real rape and it hurt badly. Afterwards, I threw up. I never dared tell my mother what had happened. But I remember he had a yellow jacket and he took a lot of pictures of me with a flash. I've been reading about child pornography rings in the paper and I'm really worried about those pictures."

Calls like that are not unusual. In the past four years, we have been in contact with people who have first-hand experience of the borderland where child pornography is produced in connection with actual sexual assaults. The connection is reinforced by experiences gleaned from the Save the Children Sweden boys' clinic, a treatment

operation providing therapeutic support to boys who have suffered abuse. More than 10 percent of the hundreds of boys to have undergone therapy say they were filmed and photographed during the abuse. Many teachers, social workers and relations of abused children have been in touch with the Hotline to talk about incidents of abuse in their proximity and their worry that the children have been involved in the production of pornography.

Typically, these cases miss society's protective net; the cases are hard to process and the accounts, gripping though they may be, seldom lead to concrete results in the shape of formal criminal charges. But they provide a frightening insight into the exploitation of children and the hidden statistics of the digital domain. The issue of the Internet, child abuse and child pornography is a moving one, but also one that society finds hard to tackle.

Hotline co-operation with other networks and actors

From the very early stages, it was clear that the Save the Children Sweden Hotline could not exist or be of any benefit without co-operating with other actors on the Internet: networks and operations that in some way had the same purpose. Today there is lively and, in part, extremely effective co-operation, principally in Europe, on the issue of child pornography and the Internet through INHOPE, a network of hotlines, mainly in Europe, supported by the EU Safer Internet Action Plan.

The purpose of INHOPE is the exchange of information and reports on the traffic in child pornography, and stimulation and support for new hotlines even in countries outside the EU. Co-operation includes sharing technical expertise and experience and educating and training important actors within the IT industry and among opinion makers.

Hotline administrations within the INHOPE group gather three to four times a year for conferences and meetings to compare experiences and know-how. The INHOPE network consists of active hotlines in 18 countries, among them those run by Save the Children Sweden's sister organisations in Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Italy.

INHOPE can be described as a network of experts; an international opinion-maker on issues related to the exploitation of children on the Internet; and a vital base for proper national expertise on "illegal and harmful content". It is an increasingly sophisticated contact network that permits the Save the Children Sweden Hotline to exchange information across national borders. In practice, when Save the Children Sweden's Hotline receives a tip that child pornography has been discovered on a server in Germany, we immediately notify our German INHOPE partners, and the German hotline notifies the German police and judicial authorities.

It has also been very important to establish contacts with Internet industry actors in Sweden. Hotline staff have delivered speeches and training sessions for the Swedish Internet industry's most important actors. Training has centred on information about how child pornography is spread but also technical advice on how to secure log files, etc., of traffic. There is currently a general lack of standardisation for this and as technology development accelerates, security and standardisation

often trail behind. True, most industry actors, in both hardware and software sectors, often maintain some kind of 'abuse division' where users can turn for help, but the quality of this activity varies strongly.

It has also been important for the Save the Children Sweden Hotline to reach out with information on what we are doing to the Internet environments where we suspect child pornography sometimes circulates – for example, in explicitly pornographic areas of the Internet. It is not unusual to find links to the Hotline in Swedish pornographic chat rooms and on web portals. We have been in direct contact with people and companies that supply pornographic material for the Internet.

This kind of 'marketing' towards the pornographic environment on the Internet might be seen as unethical, but has nevertheless provided us with vital information about child pornography over the years.

We have also actively entered Internet areas where the volume of child pornographic material is virtually immeasurable. In several of the popular file-exchange environments known as peer-to-peer (P2P) – technical areas where millions of youths and adults exchange music and films – we have attempted to reach the important actors with information on how and when to report suspected traffic in child pornography.

The P2P environment, using software available free on the Internet, has partly different technical structures and architectures, but the principle is that users share libraries of files from their own computers with all others on the Internet using the same program software. Popular programs are Limewire, Kaazaa and Direct Connect. With these, users can access an unlimited library of music files, for example, often in MP3 format.

Traffic between connected computers is in real time and the software lists the users' files according to name and type during a search. This type of file-exchange program and Internet environment, sometimes called 'Napster culture', represents a serious threat to the entertainment industry's copyright and commercial distribution of music and films. The industry's control of the market has been breached and producers of music and film have seen their sales figures dive.

Large amounts of child pornography circulate within the P2P environment, often coded so that only initiated users understand what a file name actually means. Since traffic is in real time, it is almost impossible to monitor.

The Save the Children Sweden Hotline has chosen to link to a number of so-called hubs at Direct Connect. These hubs resemble crossroads or meeting places for traffic and their operators are generally enthusiasts who manage technical distribution on a volunteer basis. However – and this has turned out to be important in several cases – they have a rough technical overview of traffic and can trace the IP numbers and so on of connected users. Through several meetings with hub operators in Sweden, the Hotline staff has been able to show them what to do if and when they have reason to suspect that a computer in Sweden has or is spreading child pornography. Through hub operators, we have come across cases where child pornography has been sent from a computer by mistake, when children were using them to download Internet music.

It is simply impossible in this Internet environment to maintain technically com-

prehensive supervision to effectively stop or disrupt child pornography traffic. The industry and program developers are at a loss to know how to deal with P2P traffic. Looking for child pornography sources is like looking for the proverbial needle in a haystack. Besides, traffic is continually changing and evolving as new software appears. The hope is that deterrents work – knowing that the police and Hotlines occasionally find offenders may restrict the activities of people who use the environment for child pornography exchange.

Keeping pace with the Internet's development, the emergence of new and hitherto unimagined technical developments and the continual appearance of more or less refined software, new ways are continuously emerging to conduct IT crime, not least new technical methods of moving child pornographic material.

The massive commitment by industry, underpinned by state-supported development, of third generation mobile telephony in Sweden and the Western world – that is, enabling quicker and better connection to the Internet via telephones with built-in cameras and so on – implies tougher challenges for the police, the industry and hotlines. Talk about the potential of new technology is characterised by the optimism of progress. The negative aspects, especially the exploitation of children and youths, are less frequently mentioned.

The extent of child pornography – the flow of tips to the Hotline

Since its launch four years ago, the Save the Children Sweden Hotline has received more than 22,000 tips via its homepage. The overwhelming majority have concerned child pornography in the form of photographs or film. Very early, it was clear that to process this flood of information, it was necessary to establish routines for sorting out and discarding pornographic material, however crude, from the core type: documentary pictures and films of pornographically exploited children. This means that much material has not been acted on, often drawings or paintings, stories and other texts.

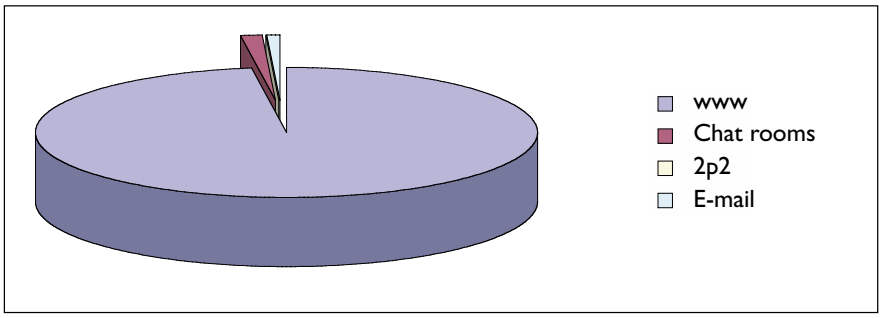
This kind of material is almost always connected to real child pornography. Obviously manipulated and computer-animated pictures where, for example, an adult's face has been mounted onto a child's body or vice-versa, have also been discarded.

This is to allow focus on the real work. To be sure, this kind of material turns up now and then in court cases, but as isolated pictures, it occupies a grey zone in Hotline work and has a low priority as information.

It has been deemed more important to try to understand, estimate and grasp the extent and volume of child pornography traffic on the Internet. How it has grown, changed character and adopted new ways of storage and dissemination. This work has not been simple, but the following compilation of statistics provides a profile of the flow we have seen over the past years.

Statistical division of tips and their type – August measurements 2000-2003

Division of tips for August 2000

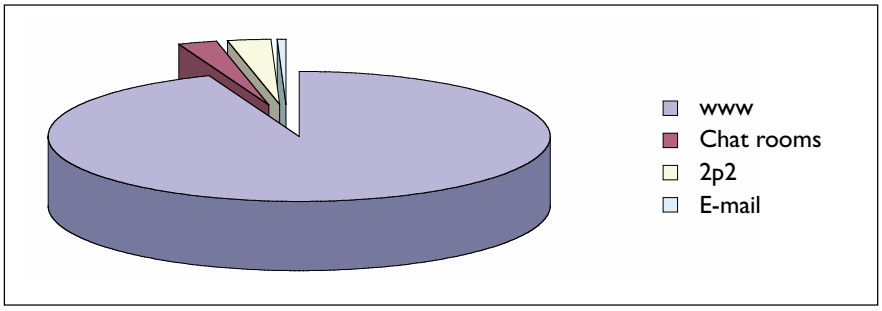


Facts: August 2000

Tips about child pornography on www:	557
Tips about child pornography in chat rooms:	8
Tips about child pornography via p2p:	1
Tips about child pornography via e-mail:	4

Comment: *Almost all August 2000 incoming tips via the homepage were about child pornography on the World Wide Web. Few related to the other communications systems on the Internet. At the time, P2P was a brand-new technology and mass distribution via file-sharing systems had barely begun.*

Division of tips for August 2001



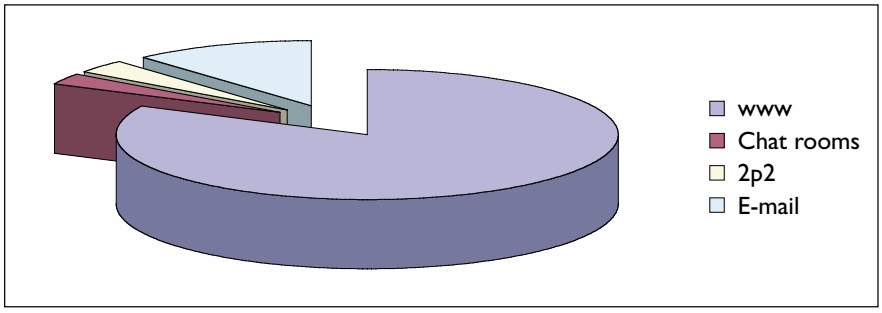
Facts: August 2001

Tips about child pornography on www:	809
Tips about child pornography in chat rooms:	22
Tips about child pornography via p2p:	25
Tips about child pornography via e-mail:	4

Comment: *By August 2001 the total number of tips had increased. As well as for tips about the occurrence of child pornography in chat rooms and the P2P network. Most probably, those technologies had enjoyed a general growth in popularity among children and youth. In 2001, several large chat communities (e.g. Lunarstorm) were launched in Sweden. Peo-*

ple began to talk about the increased use of the P2P networks as an indication of the expansion of 'Napster culture'. Another explanation for the increase in tips is the increase of links to the Hotline from other websites. Not unimportantly, the adult pornography industry in Sweden began to link to the Hotline homepage

Division of tips for August 2002



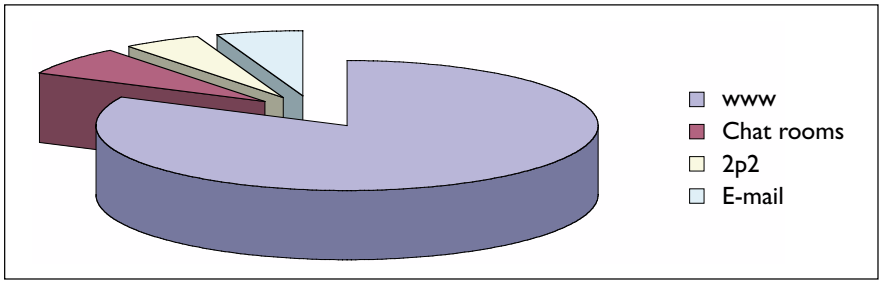
Facts: August 2002

Tips about child pornography on www:	713
Tips about child pornography in chat rooms:	22
Tips about child pornography via p2p:	29
Tips about child pornography via e-mail:	102

Comment: *A clear increase in tips about e-mails containing, or providing links to, child pornography. The explanation can be found partly in the general increase in spam mail. Another tendency in 2002 was an increase in telephone calls from the public, mostly requesting concrete advice: parents worried about their children's use of the Internet, and so on.*

The values for tips regarding chat rooms and P2P are similar to those of 2001.

Division of tips for August 2003

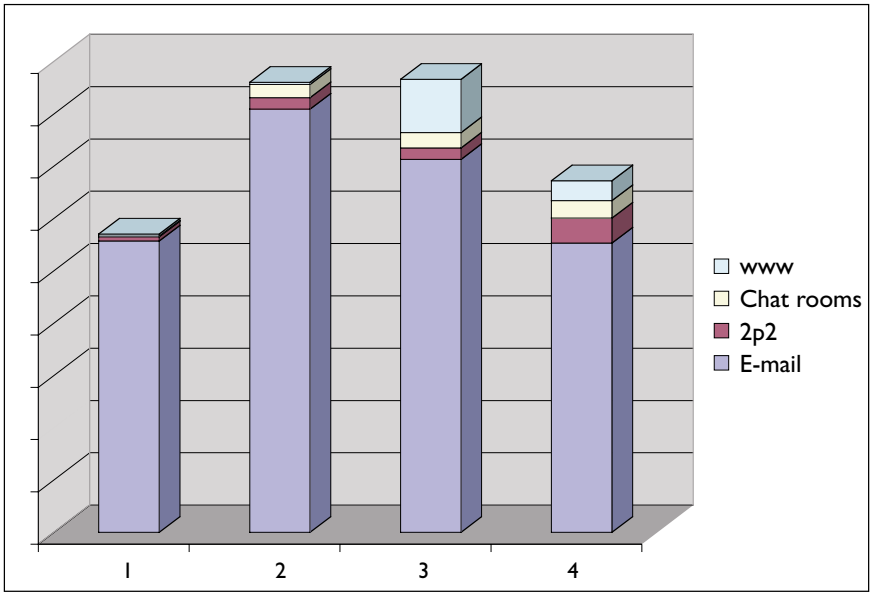


Facts: August 2003

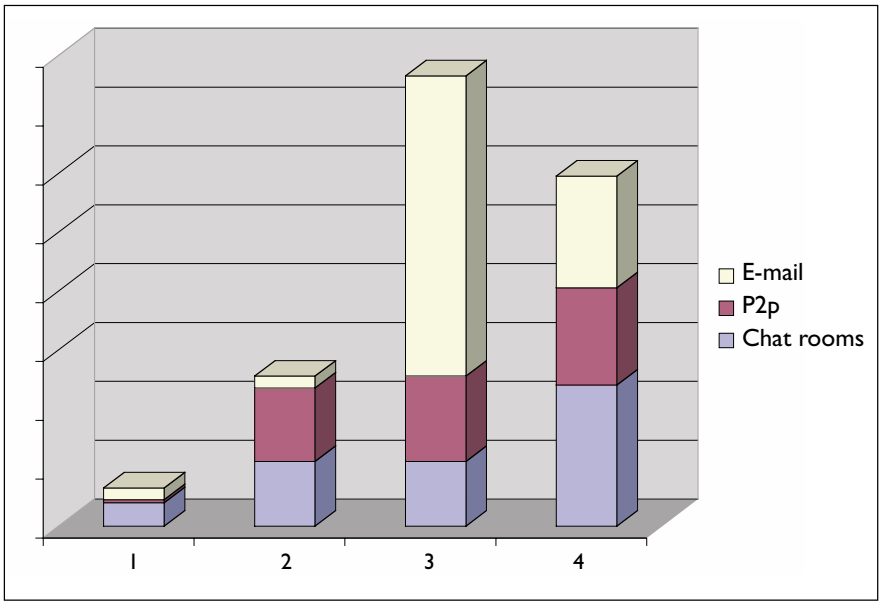
Tips about child pornography on www:	553
Tips about child pornography in chat rooms:	48
Tips about child pornography via p2p:	33
Tips about child pornography via e-mail:	39

Comment: *A general increases for chat rooms and P2P. A small decrease in tips regarding e-mails. This was probably due to increased use of anti-virus software such as spam filters. The increase in tips about chat rooms was disturbing, since on-line chatting is popular among children and youth.*

Division of tips and their type – August measurements 2000-2003
Graphic summary of tips received over four years



Increase in non-www tips for 2000-2003 (month of August)



Comment: *Child pornography is clearly sneaking into non-www communication tools on the Internet. The extent of this traffic is impossible to estimate in practical terms.*

In summary, child pornographic material is distributed via the Internet at all levels, and traffic in the material eagerly searches out new technologies for storage and dissemination. Over the years of our operation, the volume of tips to the Hotline has constantly increased and the tips tend to contain more information and more and more links. This also makes it a practicable impossibility, with the Hotline's current resource allocation, to make any exact statistics-based compilation of the amount of child pornographic material.

On the other hand, what we can see is:

- There are no indications that the flow is slowing: on the contrary;
- New technical means are constantly sprouting for encrypting, hiding and distributing material;
- The little research being done (principally at University College Cork in Ireland within the COPINE project supervised by Professor Max Taylor) shows that the number of children drawn into the traffic is consistently increasing. In 1998/99, a study was made of how much child pornographic material was being distributed within News Groups. Over one year, more than 50,000 child pornographic pictures were collected. A couple of thousand children were exposed, and for every week there was a new child, previously unseen. Parts of the study were repeated in 2002/2003 and it was noted that the weekly frequency of new children had doubled. In this connection, it should be pointed out that compared to other Internet systems, news groups make up a very minor part of traffic on the Internet.

So it is unclear how much child pornography there is on-line. An Interpol database has 200,000 child pornographic pictures. Interpol estimates the number of children involved at approximately 10–20,000.[11] Nor is it unusual for Swedish prosecutions of child pornography crimes to present thousands of images in evidence.

What is beyond doubt is that the problem is gigantic and not diminishing – and that the connection between the Internet and child pornography is hardly going to weaken in the future. On the contrary.

11. According to Detective Inspector Anders Persson, Interpol.

Suggestions and recommendations

Police work:

Dedicated child pornography units and increased manpower

If not already in place, dedicated units within national police forces are needed to build up a bank of skills for fighting child pornography crime. The number of cases has risen dramatically in recent years and many cases bring huge amounts of evidence material. Thus, dedicated units to maximise efficiency and more manpower to handle increasing volumes of evidence are needed.

Permanent national hotlines under the police

It must be a police responsibility to fight child pornography crime on the Internet. The work of accessing information and tips and judging what is pornographic material is a vital part of anti-crime work. Volunteer organisations with experience in dealing with child pornography cases would be able to share that experience and knowledge.

Extend police co-operation

Investigative work is needed to trace the origin of child pornographic pictures and films. It is important that the police in different countries can co-operate efficiently through Interpol and that national police authorities are given clear responsibilities. With increased manpower, Interpol would be able to conduct a better first scrutiny to determine the images' country of origin.

Legal changes:

The statute of limitations to start running from when the child has reached 18 years of age

To ensure that an abused child has a chance of getting justice and damages, the statute of limitations for child pornography crimes must be changed. The child suffers grave offence to its integrity and the crime merits a strong legal penalty. Images spread on the Internet will, in all probability, exist on the Internet forever. Sexual activities documented in images can provoke secondary harm and perhaps life-long trauma. The statute of limitations should begin to run from the age the child reaches its majority.

Review the definition of 'child'

Courts have ruled that because children in pornography have passed puberty and it is not clear, from the pictures or the circumstances, that they are under eighteen, crime

cannot be proved. Children should be protected if they are de facto under eighteen. For this reason, the definition of 'child' should be reviewed.

Help exploited children claim damages

Child pornographic material seriously damages the integrity of the child portrayed. The child should therefore be compensated. Relevant laws need review and clarification.

The rights of the exploited child:

Develop the international register

There is a strong need to focus on 'the child in the picture'. This is necessary even though there are so many children involved – or rather, because there are so many. Investigators must be able to find out which children have been identified and which cases have been cleared up in other countries even though the material is still in circulation. This is within the responsibility of Interpol and Europol. Interpol has information on about 260 of the estimated 10–20,000 children police have seen in pornographic pictures. But Interpol cannot access or collect material from national police forces in different countries. National police authorities should allocate resources for the use of international registers identifying children. This should be within the framework of international crime-fighting co-ordination.

Ethical guidelines for information to abused children and their guardians

There is a need for ethical guidelines for information for affected children and their guardians. When a child is identified in pornographic material the question arises: if, when, how the child should be told that the pictures have been spread on the Internet. The availability of professional support is vital. Social welfare authorities, investigating police agencies and psychiatric specialists are key groups.

A crime victims' fund

More resources are needed for the identification of abused children, damage compensation, research, and treatment of children subjected to child pornography crime. A special crime victims' fund could be fed by a fee on every child pornographic picture levied on convicted child sex abusers where the children in question have not been identified. Children subsequently identified could receive compensation directly from the fund, rather than through suing the perpetrators.

The Internet:

Establish an Internet council

There is a need for a council with a mandate to counteract Internet-related crimes against children. An important council task would be support and guidance to help children use the Internet safely. Another task would be to support the self-regulation the Internet industry says it is committed to, through training, advice and annual conferences with Internet industry actors. An Internet council could also stimulate education and research on child pornography and the exploitation of children on the Internet.

Appendix: technical glossary

Common Internet terms explained.

Address

The Web address of a specific page or resource on the World Wide Web, as it appears in a Web browser's Address or Location window. For example, www.rb.se (the Save the Children Sweden homepage). When you type a web address into your browser, the browser requests the IP address from a name server. After your computer receives the IP address, it shows you the web site that you wanted.

Attachment

A file attached to an e-mail message, such as a text file, a digitalised picture or a film clip. These usually open automatically when clicked upon in the e-mail client. Many Internet suppliers restrict the size of e-mail attachments. This is mainly to reduce the volume of traffic and conserve bandwidth, but also to reduce the risk of spreading viruses, which are often concealed in attachments.

Browser

A browser is your interface to the World Wide Web; it interprets hypertext links and lets you view sites and navigate from one Internet node to another. Also called a web-reader. Computers are usually delivered with a browser already installed. Most browsers are free and include a range of installation options that allow the user to, for example, block access to certain addresses and to protect the computer from unwanted access.

Broadband

If you connect to the Internet over a high-speed ISDN or ADSL modem, a cable modem, DSL line, T1, or satellite connection this is what is called Broadband Access. This is usually an "always on" connection, which means that you are always connected to the Internet without having to connect and log in each time. The Internet is thus an integral part of the computer's resources when in use.

Compact disc (CD)

A CD is a storage medium for large quantities of electronic data. Today CD have largely replaced vinyl for the commercial distribution of audio files (audio or music CDs). Most computers have a built-in CD drive that can read and write several different CD formats. Most computer software is delivered on **CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read Only Media)** - CD-ROM media is read-only media that holds about 650 MB of data. CD drives can write up to 650 MB of data onto specialized CD-R media **(Compact Disk Recordable)**. This media is more expensive compared to the mass-produced CDs that software is generally distributed on, but cheap for the amount of data you can store on it. CD-R media is a WORM technology. You can Write to it Once and Read

Many times, but you cannot erase anything you have written. CD drives can also write to CD-RW (**CD-ReWriteable**). CD-RW media is more expensive than CD-R media, but it can be written to more than once in the same location, much like a hard drive or floppy disk on a computer Standard CD-RW disks store up to 640 MB of data similar to CD-ROM and CD-R disks.

DVD

(**Digital Variable/Versatile/Video Disc**) – This is much like a CD-ROM except that it stores over 7 times as much data (4.7–18 GB). The first wave of DVD drives was read-only devices, but newer versions (such as DVD-R/+R/-RW/+RW/-RAM) are beginning to work with write-once and recordable media. DVDs are commonly used to distribute motion pictures.

Chatting

A system that permits real-time communication between computers over the Internet. Chatting is generally text-based and 'chat rooms' allow users to reach a large number of others at the same time. Some chat rooms allow users to send or show pictures or film clips (often from webcams) in real time. Chat postings can be saved for later access. Chats can be free or moderated, which means that postings are checked by a moderator before being accepted. Chatting is largely a youth phenomenon. Chat rooms can be technically sophisticated or simple. Many chat platforms allow private chat rooms where the communications are visible to only a few. A chat conference is when a number of users enter a room for a limited time to chat.

Community

This term is used to describe a place on the Internet grouping several services, such as chat rooms, web pages or storage facilities for text, sound and images. Often, a community will have a theme or a business idea. Communities can be completely open or only partly accessible after logging in with a password. Some communities are closed and accessible only to members.

Computer network, local network – LAN

A number of computers connected to each other, allowing users to exchange programs and files through an agreed hierarchical structure. A local computer network can easily be connected to the Internet but can also be shielded from intrusion from unwanted visitors in various ways. A local network can also be made invisible on the Internet but still allow access to the Internet. A local network can include everything from a couple of computers to a global company network.

Cyberspace

A common expression describing the Internet and its uses.

Disk

A disk is a readable and/or recordable storage medium for data, either a built-in hard disk, a floppy disk or a diskette such as a CD or a DVD. New storage technologies are being developed all the time e.g., portable hard disks, flashcards and so on. Many MP3 music players contain some form of fixed storage media. On the Internet there is an almost infinite choice of servers offering huge data storage possibilities, often as a free service.

E-commerce

This refers to trade over the Internet – computer systems that allow on-line ordering of, and payment for, goods and services. The major credit card companies and banks have different systems for secure payments over the Internet. This is an expanding area and several thousand e-commerce transactions take place every second, around the clock.

Encryption software

Software that turns encodes data into, making it unreadable to all but the sender and recipient who have access to a key and can unlock the encryption. One popular and free encryption program, PGP, provides what is for all practical purposes unbreakable encryptation. There are many similar programs in circulation on the Internet. A relatively common way to hide child pornographic material is to hide the real picture behind an innocent one. To access the hidden picture, a password is needed. There are several programs available that permit this type of encryption.

E-mail

A message sent across the Internet. It can be sent from one person to another or to an almost infinite number of other people. It is the most common form of communication on the Internet.

E-mail address

A personal address that is unique on the Internet. Always includes the @ sign.

Filter

One or more programs that block incoming digital information from the Internet. These programs usually work by recognising certain colours or words that are stored in a database. Today, e-mail programs and other Internet utilities are often supplied with filters so that the user can block both certain types of senders and content. Unfortunately, many filter programs are too rudimentary to be really effective.

Instant messaging

A form of chatting, in which a certain kind of program such as ICQ or Microsoft Messenger, allows users to be in contact with each other in real time whenever they are on-line. Can be compared to a bulletin board where users can post text and pictures in real time to reach other people accessing the system. Most systems require registration before allowing access to the service. The system is popular among youth. Once registered, it is simple to search for a specific person within the same system and call him or her up. Millions use these systems around the clock. One problem is that a user can be subjected to unwanted contacts and spam.

Internet

The global network of computers constantly connected to each other using standardized communications protocols, specifically TCP/IP.

Internet café/Cybercafé

Normally a public premises with computers or terminals and access to the Internet, combined with a normal café. The degree of security and supervision varies markedly in these environments.

Internet service provider (ISP)

A technology company providing a connection to the Internet. Users pay a fee for the service. There is strong competition between ISPs and most also offer

other services besides the web surfing. For example, a number of e-mail addresses, website hosting, etc.

IP address

A unique numeric identifier of a device connected to the Internet. IP stands for Internet Protocol. IP Addresses are similar to phone numbers in that they are a way of uniquely identifying you for others (usually computers) to be able to communicate and/or contact you. Every IP Address consists of 4 numbers separated by periods, with each number between 0 and 255, for example 212.209.12.213. An IP address can also be used to denote specific resources in a local network, for example a printer. As an IP address is in number form it is easy for computers to handle, but difficult for users to remember. The lists of domain names and their associated IP addresses are located in name servers. A name server works like telephone directory assistance.

LAN

Local Area Network – A data communications system confined to a limited geographical area (up to about 10km) with moderate to high data rates (100kbps to 100Mbps). The area served may consist of a single building, a cluster of buildings or a campus. LAN users usually share devices (scanners, printers, etc.), have common access to files and software, and access to a high-speed Internet connection.

Modem

The hardware that allows computers to access the Internet, usually via a telephone wire. Today, most computers have built-in modems. Transfer speed is constantly increasing and **cable television modems** allow a large increase. ISDN or ADSL modems are telephone-connected modems that maintain high speeds. Other types use wireless transfer via mobile telephony. A relatively new system for wireless data transfer – 3G telephony lets you access the Internet using a laptop computer and a mobile phone. Many modern 3G phones are also equipped with software for the reception and transmission of text, pictures and e-mail via the Internet directly in the telephone itself.

Moderated chat

A chat room with some kind of supervision, either checking/censuring postings before they are accepted, or monitoring on-line traffic and blocking out anyone who breaks the chat room rules. It is usually easy for someone who has been blocked to change identity and get back in again.

News groups

News groups are like open e-mail lists or bulletin boards where anyone who wants to can participate. Each message sent to a group can be read by all the participants. It is easy to attach something – for example a picture or a film clip – to a message. There are hundreds of thousands of news groups on the Internet and child pornography is frequent in some. Several large Swedish ISPs have chosen to block some of these news groups but it is easy to access them in various other ways.

P2P (peer-to-peer)

A networking technique that allows of file sharing between individual computers connected to the Internet. No host server is involved in this exchange. There are several programs, usually pro-

vided free of charge that enable this technology. The breakthrough for P2P traffic came with the Napster music exchange program. Popular programs are Direct Connect, Kaazaa and Limewire. Users expose a directory on their personal computer so that others can download files from it. Traffic is virtually unsurveyable and threatens both the traditional distribution channels for film and music as well as copyright rules and laws. It is easy to use P2P to distribute child pornographic material in real time.

Password

A unique code needed for access to a website or password-protected material on the Internet. There are different systems for the encryption of files for which a unique password is needed to open the file itself.

Posting

This generally means a contribution to a news group or in a chat room. Postings are usually made via e-mail.

Search engine

A service on the Internet that searches for indexed material, files, web pages, pictures and films. There are many search engines and companies that provide various ways of searching. Two popular ones are Google and AltaVista. Several of them leverage huge amounts of information. Since computers perform the job, someone searching for an item runs the risk of gathering both repugnant and illegal material, which is obviously a problem for schools.

Server

A host computer. A computer on the Internet that supplies information or services, for example to an e-mail server or web server.

Site

A unique place on the Internet. The term is often used to mean a web address.

Spam

Mass dispatches via e-mail. Generally unwanted material without a more or less anonymous sender. Much spam includes pornographic material or links to pornographic websites. Sometimes even child pornography is included. Spam creates problems for companies and organisations, since there is the constant danger that it contains viruses and because it fills up e-mail servers. Many spam attacks exploit e-mail servers with inadequate security and monitoring.

Surfing

A common term for navigating between web sites.

URL

Universal Resource Locator – The address of a file residing on the Internet. It contains the Internet name of the machine containing the data and the path to the file. The address also includes the protocol to be used, such as HTTP, HTTPS, or FTP. For example the Save the Children Sweden homepage – http://www.rb.se/sv/1000.aspx?flash=yes

Usenet

Another term for news groups.

Virus

A program created to infiltrate users' computers and cause damage and confusion. Viruses cause immense prob-

lems on the Internet, often crashing entire networks. Viruses often arrive in spam or in e-mail attachments. When they find their way into a computer, they can destroy large amounts of information. At worst, they can 'occupy' a computer and make it unusable.

The Web

Absolutely the most common form of information presentation on the Internet. The Web (the abbreviation for World Wide Web) is a sophisticated graphic combination of text and pictures with embedded hyperlinks. A website is often called a homepage.

Webcam

A video camera connected to a computer that can, using various software programs, transmit still pictures and video to others on the Internet. A webcam allows real-time transmission of video from a computer.

Save the Children Sweden fights for children's rights. We stimulate awareness and support children in exploitative situations in Sweden and elsewhere.

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