Controlling Child Pornography

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Overview

- Background to the problem
- Role of the Internet in child pornography
- Profile of users
- Controlling Internet child pornography
Background to the Problem

What do we mean by child pornography?

- Varying legal definitions of ‘child’ and ‘pornography’
- Non-legal definition: any record of sexual activity involving a prepubescent person
- May involve still photographs, videos and audio recordings
- Variable in degree of graphic content
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Indicative</td>
<td>Non-sexualised images from legal sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nudist</td>
<td>Naked images from legal sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Erotica</td>
<td>Images of varying nakedness taken secretly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Posing</td>
<td>Posed images of varying nakedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Erotic Posing</td>
<td>Sexualised posed images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Explicit erotic posing</td>
<td>Images emphasising genitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Explicit sexual activity</td>
<td>Images involving sexual activity by children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Assault</td>
<td>Images involving sexual touching by adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Gross assault</td>
<td>Images involving sexual acts by adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sadistic/bestiality</td>
<td>Images involving pain or animals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
History:

- Sexualisation of children ancient
- ‘Pornography’ began with camera in 19th c
- Increase in 1960s
- Success in controlling hard copy
- Explosion with Internet in 1980s
- Need for new approaches
Victims of child pornography:

- Most know the producer of the image
- Twice victimised – direct and indirect

Short term effects
- Physical pain
- Psychological distress
- Pressure to cooperate – shame and loyalty

Long term effects
- Psychological effect intensify
- Distorted model of sexuality
Legal Responses to Child Pornography:

- 1880s – age of consent 10.
- 1978 – first federal law on child pornography
- 1988 - first law specifying computers
- 1998 – abortive attempts to tighten laws re virtual images and ‘apparent’ age
- Subsequent amendments to federal law
Current Legal Situation in US:

- Child anyone under 18
- More stringent standard applied to children that to adults
- Possession is an offence
- Variation in legislation among states, and internationally
The Role of the Internet in Child Pornography

- Access to vast quantities
- Instantly available
- Accessed ‘anonymously’ and in private
- Networking and image-sharing
- Inexpensive
- High quality and durable
- Convenient storage
- Variety of formats
- Modifiable digital images (e.g., morphing)
Size of problem:

- Difficult to be accurate about size
- More than 1 million images at any one time
- 200 new images daily
- Offenders in possession of up to half-million images
- One site 1 million images in a month
- 50,000-100,000 active in child pornography rings – 1/3 from US
Components of the Problem:

- **Production**
  - Creation of images
  - Premium on new images
  - Professional – may not be attracted to children
  - Amateurs – trade home-made images
  - Growth with high-quality digital equipment
Distribution

- Uploading and dissemination of images
- Cross state/international borders
- Infrequent in open areas of net (e.g., web-sites)
- Email/chatrooms risky because of police stings
- Most commonly via newsgroups and P2P
Methods of distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web-sites</td>
<td>Little available - quickly shutdown by ISPs and police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web-cam</td>
<td>Broadcast in real-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>Sent as attachment – risky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsgroups</td>
<td>Dedicated child pornography groups – favoured method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>Advice on techniques and site ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat rooms</td>
<td>To locate children – risky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2P</td>
<td>Permit closed groups to trade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Downloading
  - Accessing images
  - May require password or fee
  - Images do not have to be saved
  - Increasingly require good computer skills
  - Producers, distributors and downloaders may be same person
Sources of digital evidence:

- The offender’s computer
  - Hard drive
  - Log records
- Hand-held devices
  - Embedded computer systems
- Servers
  - IP addresses
- On-line activity
  - Digger engine software
Profile of Users

- No one type
  - Not necessarily involved in hands-on offending
  - Come from all walks of life
  - Three broad psychological categories
    - Recreational
    - At-risk
    - Sexual compulsive
## Offending typology (Krone 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Browsers</td>
<td>Stumble across images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private fantasizers</td>
<td>Create digital images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trawlers</td>
<td>Seek out through open browsers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-secure collectors</td>
<td>Collect from open chat rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure collectors</td>
<td>Closed newsgroups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groomers</td>
<td>Develop on-line relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abusers</td>
<td>Sexually abuse children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producers</td>
<td>Record sexual abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributors</td>
<td>Disseminate images</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Role of pornography in sexual offending:

- Pornography use is an expression of existing sexual interests
- Pornography is used to prime the individual to offend
- Pornography has a corrosive effect
- Pornography has a cathartic effect
- Pornography is a by-product of paedophilia
Controlling Internet Child Pornography

**Challenges**
- Structure of the Internet
- Uncertainties of jurisdiction
- Lack of regulation
- Differences in legislation
- Expertise of offenders
- Adaptation of Internet technology
- Volume of Internet activity
General considerations

- Acquire technical knowledge and expertise
- Establish links with other agencies
- Establish links with ISPs
- Prioritise efforts
Specific responses:

- **Computer industry self regulation**
  - Removing illegal sites
  - Establishing complaints sites/hotlines
  - Filtering browsers/search engines
Legislative regulation

- Making ISPs legally responsible for site content
- Requiring preservation of ISP records
- Requiring user verification
- Regulating anonymous remailers
- Using key escrowed encryption
Related industries

- Blocking credit card transactions
- Boycotting sites by advertisers
Workplace responses

- Adopting and enforcing workplace codes of conduct
- Auditing computer use
- Filtering web usage
Citizens’ groups
- Educating the public
- Searching the Internet
Parental strategies

- Use of filtering software
- Review web ratings
- Use of child-oriented search engines
Law enforcement responses

- Locating child pornography sites
- Conducting undercover sting operations
- Setting up honey trap sites
- Publicizing crackdowns
- Traditional criminal investigations
Major law enforcement operations:

- Operation Avalanche
- Operation Cathedral
- operation Candyman
- Operation Pin
Key agencies involved in controlling internet child pornography:

- Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section
  - [www.usdoj.gov/criminal/ceos/childporn.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/ceos/childporn.html)
- CyberSmuggling Center
  - [http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/home](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/home)
- Cyber Tipline
  - [http://www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com)
- Innocent Images
  - [http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/cac/innocent.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/cac/innocent.htm)
- Internet Crimes Against Children
  - [http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/index.htm](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/index.htm)
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- US Postal Inspection Service
Conclusions

- Internet has transformed the problem of child pornography
- Offenders vary in their level of interest and involvement in hands-on offending
- Controlling the Internet presents unique difficulties
- Local police departments can play a key role in combating Internet child pornography
Further Reading