Law Enforcement Agencies play a critical role in working with youth, families and schools when youth have been victimized by cyberbullying, self/peer exploitation, luring and sexual violence. Open communication and a coordinated response plan can result in action that is swift and helpful in order to mitigate the trauma. Law Enforcement has a central role in the ongoing investigations which involve direct communication with youth and families. These communications impact the overall health and wellness of the youth and can be the difference between a life of trauma and a life of recovery.

The Important Role of Law Enforcement Agencies

Cyberbullying Risk Assessment Guide

The issue of cyberbullying is diverse and complex given that much of the harm facing young people involves sexuality and technology in combination with the onslaught of bullying behaviour. To assist schools in identifying children at risk of harm, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection is creating a resource guide to help Principals, Teachers and Counsellors address and intervene in cases of extreme cyberbullying. The guide will provide information with regards to schools’ authority to act and respond to crisis situations when sexual exploitation, technology and bullying collide.

Considerations for Law Enforcement: If an intimate image of a youth was circulating at a school and a student was being cyberbullied as a result of that image, consider how you would work with the school to:

- Notify the parents of the students involved without overexposing the affected student?
- Interview the affected youth to determine severity of harm?
- Develop a plan for containing the content?
- Assess the emotional well-being of the affected youth?

If you are interested in learning more about these new educational resources for educators and law enforcement agencies, please contact the Canadian Centre for Child Protection at contact@protectchildren.ca.

Available in French on request.

“CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION” is trade-mark of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc. registered in Canada.
The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (protectchildren.ca) is a charitable organization dedicated to the personal safety of all children. Our goal is to reduce child victimization by providing national programs and services to Canadians. The Canadian Centre operates Kids in the Know (kidsintheknow.ca) — an interactive safety education program for increasing the personal safety of children; MissingKids.ca (missingkids.ca) — Canada’s missing children resource and response centre; Commit to Kids (commit2kids.ca) — a program to help organizations prevent child sexual abuse, and Cybertip.ca (cybertip.ca) — Canada’s tipline for reporting the online sexual exploitation of children.

Cybertip.ca receives an average of 2,000 reports per month from Canadians and is a part of the Government of Canada’s National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet. The knowledge gained from cases reported to Cybertip.ca informs our personal safety strategies for children and youth, particularly within the Kids in the Know program.

In the last few years, Cybertip.ca has seen a marked increase in reports from youth ranging from 12 to 17 years of age. Recognizing the diverse and complex nature of this issue and our role in protecting children from online sexual exploitation, our organization is developing two new educational modules focused on addressing sexual exploitation, sexual violence, technology and bullying among youth.
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Education Module for Grades 7/8 will help manage online risks

An education module for Grades 7/8 is being created in response to emerging online risks and recent tragedies involving young people in Canada. In an effort to reduce the incidence of adolescent sexual exploitation, the unit will address adults using technology to exploit children for a sexual purpose, self/peer exploitation (sexting or selfies) and cyberbullying.

Lessons will address the following issues:

- How personal boundaries increase personal safety
- How to establish personal boundaries
- Identifying behavior that presents risk to sexual exploitation (online and offline)
- Identifying the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships (online and offline)
- Responding to unsafe situations and getting help

Did You Know?

- For many youth, dating relationships begin before high school; a study released by Teenage Research Unlimited reported that 72% of youth were involved in dating relationships by age 14.
- Only half of all tweens claim to know the warning signs of a bad/hurtful dating relationship. Only 54% said they would know what to do if a friend came to them for help.
- Youth between the ages of 13-14 are very vulnerable to online luring, which is the use of “telecommunications” to communicate with someone known or believed to be under the age of 18 to make it easier to commit a sexual offence against that person.
- According to a recent study released by Media Smarts, mean or cruel online behaviour spikes in Grade 7 and increases in Grade 8.

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Education Module for Grades 9/10 will empower youth

An education module for Grades 9/10 is being created in response to instances of sexual violence among youth. In an effort to educate youth about sexual consent, respect and healthy relationships, this unit will address the many misconceptions about sexual consent in our society and create opportunities for empowering youth to make healthy choices in difficult situations.

Lessons will address the following issues:

- Attitudes and beliefs that contribute to sexual violence
- Information about what constitutes sexual consent and what doesn’t
- Understanding healthy from unhealthy relationships
- Knowing how to help a friend who discloses sexual abuse or assault
- Knowing where to go for help

Did You Know?

- The rate of sexual assault for Canadians aged 15 to 24 was almost 18 times greater than the rate recorded for Canadians aged 55 years and older.
- Sexual assault incidents are most likely to occur when a victim and offender are known to each other.
- Violence in an adolescent relationship sets the stage for problems in future relationships, including intimate partner violence and sexual violence perpetration and/or victimization throughout life.

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1Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series. Sexual Assault in Canada 2004 by Shannon Brennan and Andrea Taylor-Butts, 2008


4Canadian Centre for Child Protection

5Kids in the Know national programs and services to Canadians. The Canadian Centre operates to the personal safety of all children. Our goal is to reduce child victimization by providing protective strategies for children and youth, particularly within the Internet.

Cybertip.ca — Canada’s tipline for reporting the online sexual exploitation of children.

Commit to Kids — a program to help organizations prevent child sexual abuse, and MissingKids.ca — an interactive safety education program for increasing the personal safety of kidsintheknow.ca

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According to a recent study released by Media Smarts, mean or cruel online comments are common among youth. Teenage Research Unlimited reported that 72% of youth were involved in dating situations by the age of 15. In an effort to reduce the incidence of dating violence, our organization is developing two new educational modules focused on addressing sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or assault and/or victimization.
Law Enforcement Agencies play a critical role in working with youth, families and schools when youth have been victimized by cyberbullying, self/peer exploitation, luring and sexual violence. Open communication and a coordinated response plan can result in action that is swift and helpful in order to mitigate the trauma. Law Enforcement has a central role in the ongoing investigations which involve direct communication with youth and families. These communications impact the overall health and wellness of the youth and can be the difference between a life of trauma and a life of recovery.

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