



STAY SAFE FROM ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION



ECPAT International is a global network of civil society organisations working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. It seeks to ensure that children everywhere enjoy their fundamental rights free and secure from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation.





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Written by : Biva Rajbhandari, ECPAT International Child and Youth Participation Programme.

Additional Credits: Marie-Laure Lemineur, Junita Upadhyay, Mark Capaldi, Anjan Bose, Mariana Yevsyukova, Valentina Vitali, Supriya Kasaju and members of the ECPAT International Child and Youth Advisory Committee (EICYAC)

Edited by: Stephanie Delaney, John Carr

Design by: Manida Naebklang

ECPAT International

328/1 Phayathai Road, Ratchathewi

Bangkok 10400, Thailand

Tel: +66 2 215 3388, + 66 2 611 0972

Fax: +66 2 215 8272

Email: info@ecpat.net, media@ecpat.net

Website: www.ecpat.net

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A stylized illustration of two figures, one wearing glasses, holding a large yellow sign with the text 'WELCOME TO THE GUIDE!' in green capital letters. The figures are represented by simple green shapes for heads, bodies, and legs.

WELCOME TO THE GUIDE!

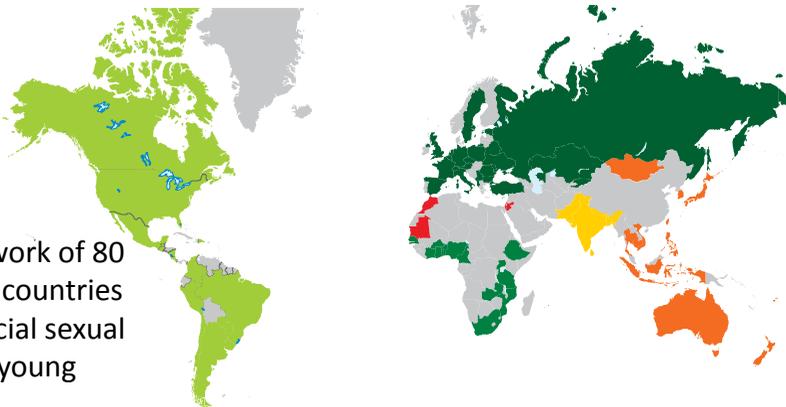
The Guide has been written to tell children and young people about sexual exploitation online. We hope you will find it interesting and useful. If you want to know more about this issue or get advice or help after reading the guide, you can find the addresses of organisations working to end all forms of the sexual exploitation of children online on pages 26-27.

ECPAT INTERNATIONAL

ECPAT stands for

**END CHILD PROSTITUTION,
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND
TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN
FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES.**

ECPAT International is a network of 80 member organisations in 74 countries working to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children and young people.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In this guide we use the term 'children and young people' and 'child and young person' to describe anyone aged under 18 years old. We also sometimes just use the word 'child, 'children' or 'youth' to mean anyone under 18 years old.

ABUSER, OFFENDER OR EXPLOITER

In this guide we use the terms abuser, offender and exploiter to mean the same thing: someone who sexually abuses a child.

WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (CSA)?

Child care professionals often use the term “**child sexual abuse**”. Child sexual abuse happens when an adult or a young person involves another child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully understand, or is unable to give informed consent to, or for which he or she is not ready for (perhaps because of his or her age or level of development). Child sexual abuse is intended to satisfy the needs of the abuser, not the child that is being abused. Child sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, rape, touching genitals or sexual intercourse with a child. It also consists of non-physical contact such as involving children in watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually explicit ways and exposing them to inappropriate sexual materials.



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What about youth who are the age of sexual consent in their country and engage in sexual relations with adults? Don't they have the right to choose?

In some countries youth can agree to have sex when they are younger than 18 years old if they have reached the legal age of sexual consent. Some young people are therefore engaged in sexual relationships with adults. However, if the adult records sexual videos or pictures of the young person and sells it to others, then the youth is being exploited by the adult *even if the young person has agreed*.

To protect all children it is important that no children are exploited. Even if some children and young people say they agreed to have sexual relations or be abused, *their consent is irrelevant and the abuse is considered a crime*.

WHAT IS THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN (CSEC)?

Commercial sexual exploitation happens when someone, usually an adult (but it can also be another young person) takes advantage sexually of a child and someone benefits from it because a payment is made (either with money or through gifts, favours or services). Often, where such a payment is made, it will not go directly to the child or young person who is being abused, but it is instead given to someone else who has power over the child.

Since the child or young person is being taken advantage of in this way, we say he or she has been 'exploited', and because the abuser is giving money or something else of value, this is a form of commercial transaction. For these reasons, the correct way of describing what has happened when a child or young person is sexually abused or taken advantage of by others for gain is to say the child has been 'commercially sexually exploited'. This kind of abuse can happen online, for example through the use of several different types of information and communications technology (ICT) devices.

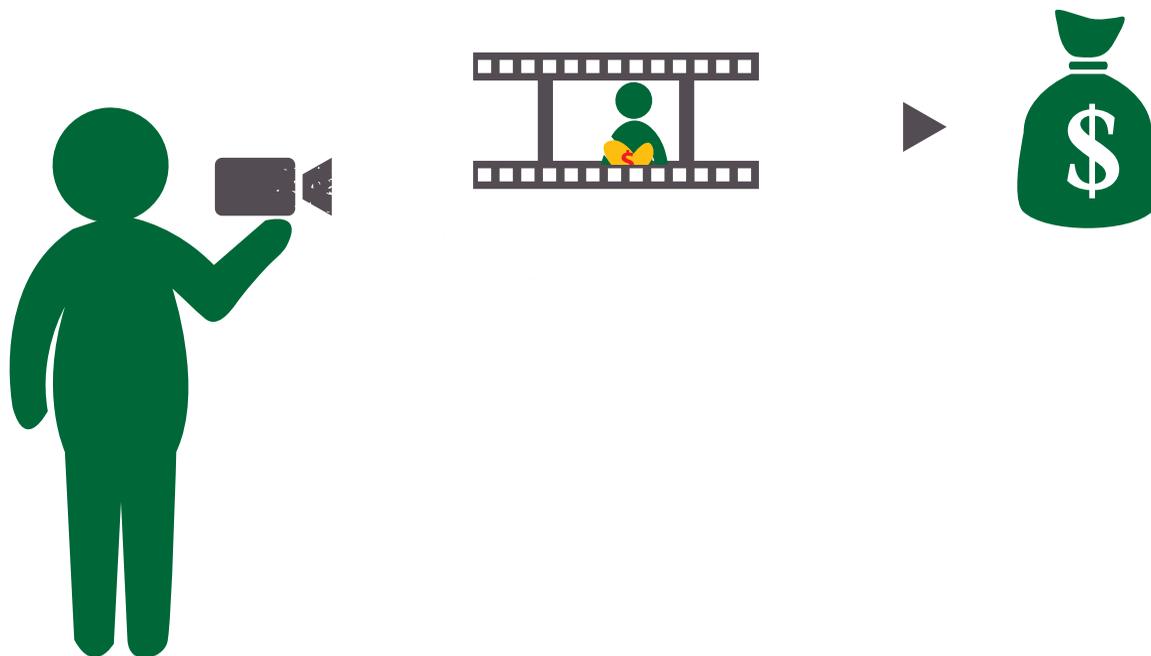
Some examples of extreme forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children occurred in 2013/2014 when it emerged that a number of parents in the Philippines had arranged for their children to be sexually abused online in front of webcams. To be able to watch the abuse, the viewers had to make a payment, all or part of which ended up in the pockets of the parents or intermediaries.



WHAT ARE OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN, SOME OF WHICH MIGHT BECOME COMMERCIALISED?

Most cases of sexual abuse of children take place within the family or existing social circles and are committed by people whom children and young people know and trust. Sometimes the offenders can take pictures of the abuse with no intention of selling or exchanging them for gain, but they might change their minds and the images can be used for commercial purposes. This illustrates how, whatever the circumstances, the creation of sexualised images of children is an enormous evil which poses a great threat to their current and future welfare.

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What is cyber bullying?

Cyber bullying is when a peer uses electronic communication to send intimidating messages to another peer.

Many children or young people create sexualised images of themselves, entirely voluntarily, seemingly without any coercion. **This is known as sexting.**

Typically, these images are illegal and in many cases have led to the young person being prosecuted. Often the images are created by the child or young person to send them to his or her girlfriend or boyfriend, but sometime later, usually when the relationship ends, the images can find their way into other people's hands. And finally they will get out on to the Internet where they are likely to be picked up and collected by paedophiles who might trade or sell them. This takes us back to the point made earlier: whatever the circumstances, the creation of sexualised images of children poses a great threat to the child's current and future welfare.

Some children are bullied or coerced into producing sexualised images of themselves or they are asked to perform sexual acts against the threat of the images being more widely distributed, for example among school friends or family. Often this sort of behaviour is referred to as *sextortion*.

WHAT IS ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?

There are various ways children and young people can be abused and exploited online. This guide focuses on **commercial sexual exploitation online**. Examples of this include when a person takes sexualised photos of a child to sell them online, or when a person buys online videos of children being abused.

As already noted, the offender could be someone who knows the child but that is not always the case. The abuser may live a long way away, possibly even in a different country. The Internet allows abusers to make contact with the child and also enables them to carry out the abuse online.

An offender might seek to manipulate a child into engaging in unlawful sexual activity by winning his or her trust and friendship. This is known as **grooming**. Grooming is when an adult gets to know a child by befriending, encouraging or tricking him or her in order to become involved in a sexual act or relationship. There have been many cases of grooming where the relationship has begun on the Internet. In many countries it is a criminal offence for an adult to groom a child, but grooming can also happen between children and other young people.

As part of the grooming process, offenders might also persuade a child to watch children involved in sex or look at **child sexual abuse materials** to convince him or her that this is normal.



After gaining the trust of the child, an offender might force him or her into an exploitative situation. This means the offender will give money, presents, food or special favours to sexually exploit the child or watch a child online being exploited by another person.

If the child refuses to be exploited then the offender might verbally or sexually harass or threaten him or her in some other way, such as hurting his or her family.



Why do we prefer to say 'child sexual abuse materials' rather than 'child pornography'?

Child sexual abuse materials can be text, pictures, sounds or videos of a child engaged in sexual activities, images of sexual parts of a child or images of a fake child that looks like a real one (e.g. images generated by computer programme).

We use the term 'materials' because this is broader than just pornography and includes text, audio, video, pictures and even cartoon-like images of children.

We also use child sexual abuse material because the term 'pornography' may give the impression that children agree to participate in the serious abuses shown.

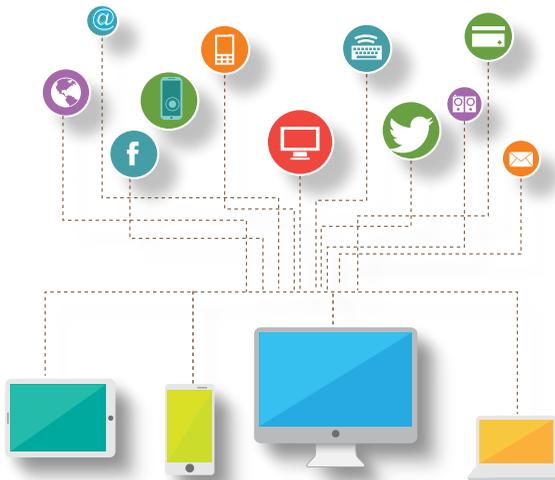
WHERE DOES ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION HAPPEN AND HOW MIGHT IMAGES OF IT BE DISTRIBUTED?

Online sexual exploitation can take place anywhere, but it usually occurs somewhere that is familiar to the young person. A familiar setting could be a child's home, a family member's house, or a neighbourhood cybercafe.

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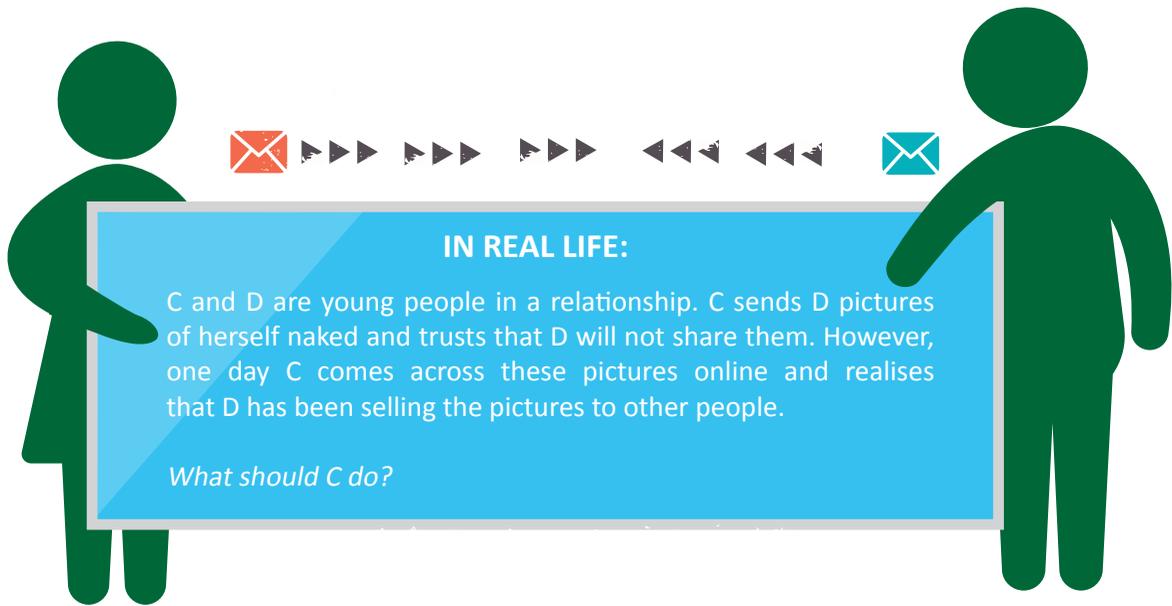
Children and youth are exploited in the privacy of their homes. Chat rooms, **peer-to-peer networks** and social media are used by offenders to try and gain access to them and distribute sexual abuse materials.

Online sexual exploitation can also occur if children are taken from the place they live to another place or when sexual exploiters travel with the intention of having sex with young people in another country or another city within the same country. In these cases the children are abused, and images of the abuse are shared online through the use of technologies such as phones or other mobile devices.



What is a peer-to-peer network? (P-2-P)

A peer-to-peer network is a system of personal computers that can exchange files directly with every other computer in the network.



IN REAL LIFE:

C and D are young people in a relationship. C sends D pictures of herself naked and trusts that D will not share them. However, one day C comes across these pictures online and realises that D has been selling the pictures to other people.

What should C do?



Taking Action-Example from Southeast Asia

ECPAT Philippines worked with *Sali ka Bata*, a community mobile theatre advocacy group made up of children and youth. Their idea was to raise awareness about the different forms of CSEC such as online sexual exploitation and to empower young people so that they are better skilled to avoid such situations.

Members of the theatre group performed in vulnerable communities, held discussions and led workshops. They also created an action plan to fight against CSEC, and distributed awareness raising materials so that people were better informed about CSEC.

WHO SEXUALLY ABUSES AND EXPLOITS CHILDREN ONLINE?

A common but wrong idea about online child sexual exploiters is that they are old, lonely men. This is not always true. Online sexual offenders can be women and other young people but typically they are adult men of all ages and professions. They come from various social classes, ethnicities and religions. They might have families, be one of the exploited child's family members, or be strangers.

Sexual exploiters often claim to be someone else on the Internet. For example, they might pretend to be a child's friend to convince the child to send revealing pictures or videos. The offender will then exploit the child by distributing the pictures and videos on the Internet for other people to buy and see.

Sometimes people who produce and distribute online sexual abuse materials are part of an organised crime gang. Organised gangs are very dangerous and are usually involved in other criminal activities.

Some online child sexual exploiters play a role in producing sexual abusive materials while others take pleasure in viewing materials as they download. To collect and possess sexual abusive materials is a crime in many countries.



Taking Action-Example from North America

Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada hosted educational events about how children can stay safe online. Speakers having experience with victims of cyber bullying gave presentations. High school and university students were able to attend and reported that they wanted to share the information with their peers. One idea of doing so, is for youth to organise an event in school to encourage friends to join the campaign in staying safe online and offline.



IN REAL LIFE:

Mr.P is a fisherman from a small village in Southeast Asia. A few months of the year are off-season for Mr.P so he has to earn extra money for his family. Mr.P and his wife hear that they can earn money by taking pictures of their 10 year old daughter and 5 year old son in sexualised poses and putting these on the Internet.

Mr.P and his wife think that since the pictures were taken in a private setting like their home it would not cause any harm. They believe that the pictures would only be viewed by a few people who pay them money in return. Since their children are not getting physically hurt, Mr.P and his wife think it must be OK.

How might Mr.P and his wife's actions hurt their children in the future?

WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?

All children and young people regardless of their background or where they live can be at risk of online sexual exploitation. However, living in a vulnerable environment such as being very poor, or being abused or feeling lonely and having low self-esteem, can put children at more risk of sexual exploitation.



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Sometimes victims of online sexual exploitation are young people who have access to technologies themselves or know others who have access to it and photograph or videotape them. However, keep in mind that children do not need access to the Internet or mobile phones to become victims. Many are approached by their exploiters offline and then, technologies are used in the process of exploitation at a later stage.



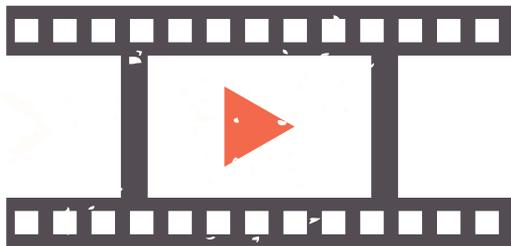


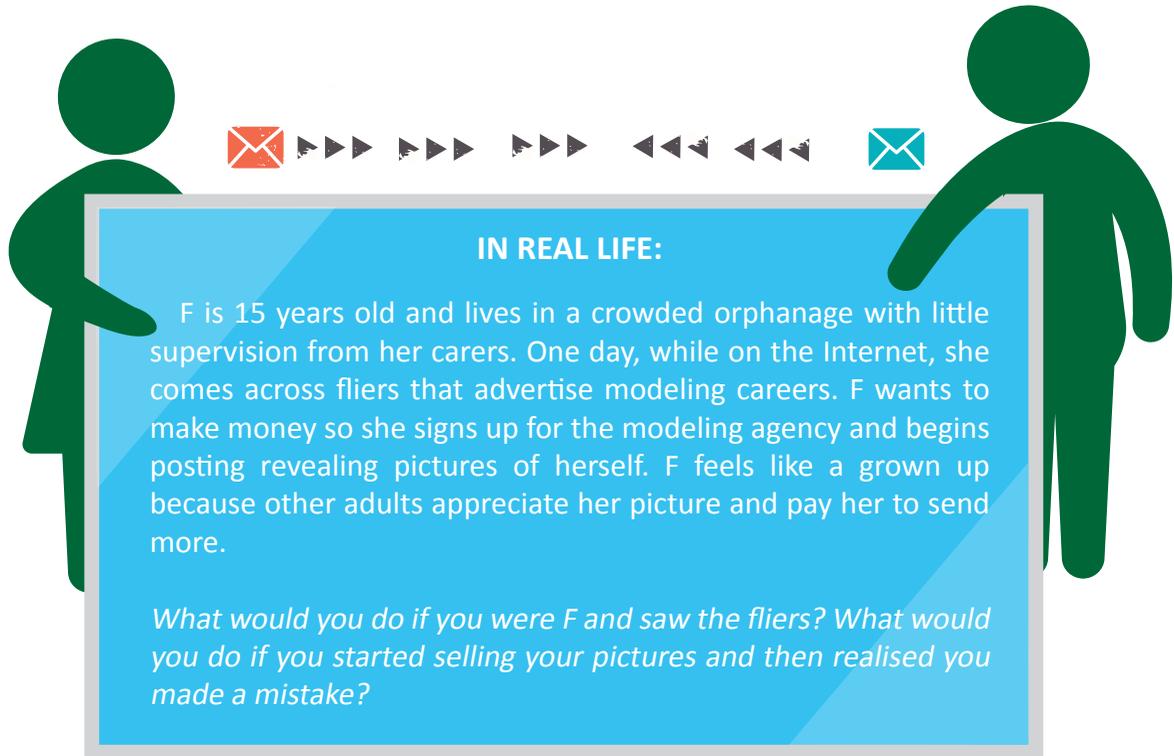
What about youth who seek sexual relationships with adults, online and offline, by selling or sharing their own images and videos?

Some young people think that engaging in such activities is normal for different reasons. In some cases, it might be the influence from the media or friends that make young people believe it is normal to publicly share such pictures. Young people may also be curious about intimacy and romance or want to learn about relationships and sex.

Other reasons for youth to engage with adults online can be that it makes them feel 'grown up'. The protection of a computer screen can make them believe they are 'safe'. However, it is easy to forget that adults often manipulate children.

Everyone makes mistakes and any young person or child who feels unsafe, online or offline, should tell someone they trust. This may be embarrassing, or the young person might worry that people will think it is his or her fault, but it is better to feel protected than try to cope alone.





IN REAL LIFE:

F is 15 years old and lives in a crowded orphanage with little supervision from her carers. One day, while on the Internet, she comes across fliers that advertise modeling careers. F wants to make money so she signs up for the modeling agency and begins posting revealing pictures of herself. F feels like a grown up because other adults appreciate her picture and pay her to send more.

What would you do if you were F and saw the fliers? What would you do if you started selling your pictures and then realised you made a mistake?

WHAT HARM IS DONE TO CHILDREN?

Children and young people who experience online sexual exploitation can suffer physical, mental and emotional trauma such as depression, low self-esteem and lack of confidence. This can leave them with long-term problems. Children and young people may find it difficult to trust others and may have nightmares. They may also isolate themselves because they feel that the images hide the abuse they experienced as they are sometimes made to look like willing participants.

Children may also feel shame and humiliation at the thought of being recognised and fear that this will never go away. Indeed, it is difficult to remove images and videos online as these materials spread quickly and all over the world. The thought of people still having access to their images and videos over and over again, even when they become adults, might be a heavy burden for the victims.





Taking Action—Example from Africa

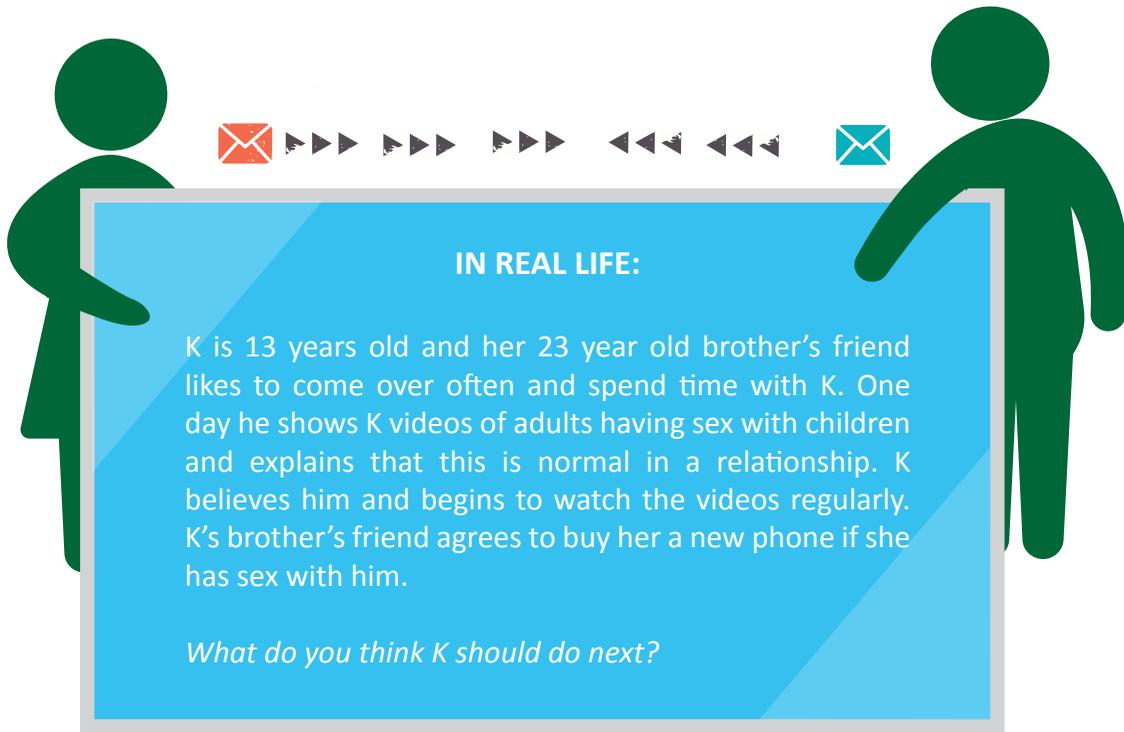
In January 2013, ECPAT International collaborated with membership organisations in Africa to conduct a youth-led study on the usage of ICTs.

Here are some facts that were found:

- Almost 82% of children in Gambia access the Internet at a cybercafe.
- In Uganda, over 50% of children said they saw children their age or younger in sexual abuse materials.
- Around 85% of children in Togo exchange files through Bluetooth and MMS.
- Over 50% of children have seen sexual abuse materials on the Internet in Kenya.
- In Cameroon, only 20% of children said their school had events that talked about Internet safety.

For more information access the report at: <http://bit.ly/1fQQKnk>

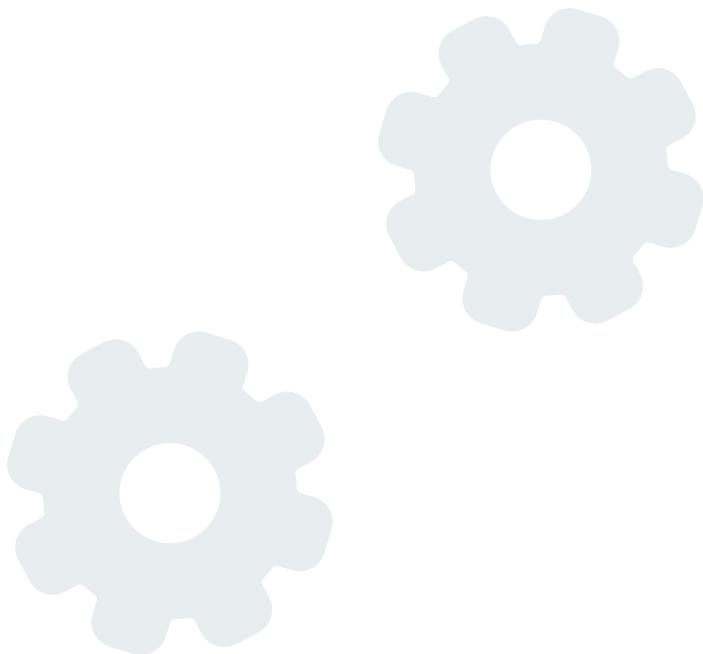




IN REAL LIFE:

K is 13 years old and her 23 year old brother's friend likes to come over often and spend time with K. One day he shows K videos of adults having sex with children and explains that this is normal in a relationship. K believes him and begins to watch the videos regularly. K's brother's friend agrees to buy her a new phone if she has sex with him.

What do you think K should do next?



WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

There are different kinds of laws, including international and regional treaties and national legal acts.

International laws are normally made up of agreements between many countries and set certain standards for national laws and policies. The most important international agreement regarding child sexual exploitation online is the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC). It says that children and young people should be protected from all kinds of sexual exploitation, including the production, the possession, the access to and the distribution of child pornography.

There are also a number of regional legal agreements. In Europe, the most important are the Council of Europe Conventions on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention), on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) and the European Union Directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. These laws make producing, distributing and possessing online sexual abuse material a crime and state that offenders should be punished.

UNDER 18
YOU ARE
PROTECTED
BY LAW



Taking Action-Example from Europe

ECPAT groups in UK, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium started a 'make-IT-safe' campaign that enhanced the knowledge of youth on safe and responsible use of the Internet and new technology.

Young people were trained to be "experts" on online safety like adjusting Facebook security settings. They then helped and supported other peers in being safe online.

The Lanzarote Convention is the first international treaty to prohibit cyber grooming. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which is signed by most African countries, also mentions that children should not be used in pornographic activities, performances, and materials. An African Convention on Cybercrime has been adopted in 2014 criminalising child abuse materials.

Each country has its own national (sometimes called 'domestic') laws. Once a country has signed and ratified an international agreement, it is then supposed to adapt its national laws to meet the international standards set up in the signed agreement. Even though there are national laws meant to protect children and young people, they are not always protected in reality as expected. Some countries have domestic laws that address online sexual abuse while others are still slow to update their laws. Other times, the law is in place but no action is taken.



IN REAL LIFE:

Mrs R is a science teacher. She buys and collects child sexual abuse material from the Internet and views it for her pleasure. Mrs R believes that the police cannot catch her because she has not shared any personal information on the Internet. One day, the police appeared at Mrs R's house and arrested her for possession of child sexual abuse materials. The police have traced her computer. Possessing such material is a serious crime.



The Internet's global connection also makes it difficult to track down people who have produced or accessed materials and countries have to work together to exchange information so offenders can be caught and victims identified and rescued. In some countries there are special protection and police units that children can turn to for help and guidance. Unfortunately, there are not enough trained police or professionals to investigate and track down every offender or victim. In some cases, exploiters who are caught might pay 'compensation' to the child or young person or their family to avoid action being taken.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT ALWAYS PROTECTED

WHAT CAN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DO TO HELP IN COMBATING ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?



SPEAKING OUT

If you think a child is being cyber bullied, groomed or exploited online, please tell someone. Depending on the situation, this might mean talking to an adult you trust, or going to the police or child protection services. If you are not sure about the best thing to do, contact a child helpline or one of the other organisations on pages 26-27 and ask for their advice.

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TALKING TO YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

To stay safe online and avoid sexual abuse materials, you can talk to your parents or guardians about blocking websites displaying child abuse images or videos.



SPREADING THE WORD

Talk to your friends and family about what you have read in this guide, and raise awareness about the problem of online sexual exploitation. Warn your friends about the possible risks related to job offers, promises of attractive modelling careers or family or friends taking pictures or videos that are too revealing even if it is in the privacy of a familiar setting.



TAKING ACTION

There are lots of actions that children and young people can take to help combat online abuse. Examples include:

- finding out if there is a child hotline / helpline or somewhere to report online abuse in your country, and if not, writing letters and working with organisations to get one started;
- talking to a teacher or principal in your school about inviting people to present on how to stay safe online;
- telling your parents/guardians about ways to make a safer use of the Internet or mobile phone, or asking them what advice they can give you on Internet safety.

Another idea is to celebrate the **Safer Internet Day** by distributing awareness materials or simply talking to your peers about how to use technologies and social media in a safer way. If you access the Internet in public places such as cybercafe, try to find out what the manager/owner knows on this issue and what safeguards are put in place for children.



Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day was started by INSAFE, a European network of awareness centres that promotes the safe and responsible use of the Internet and mobile devices by children and young people. The day aims to advocate for safe and responsible use of Internet by children and young people through public events and sharing ideas and information. Safer Internet Day is celebrated in more than 100 countries worldwide and every year INSAFE chooses a new emerging issue as a theme. Safer Internet Day takes place every year in the second week of February.

For more information visit www.saferinternetday.org

TIPS ON HOW TO STAY SAFE ONLINE



BE CAREFUL AND THINK TWICE:

When talking to someone you just met online, **think twice** before sharing your home address, telephone number or school's name or other personal information. **Be careful** when sending your picture, credit card or bank details to someone you don't know or just met.



LEARN TO SAY NO:

Remember you can say NO or choose to leave a chat room if someone says or writes something which makes you feel uncomfortable or worried.



IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO TELL SOME ONE:

If you have agreed to send a sexualised or revealing picture or video and you regret it or are scared, talk to a trusted person. If you think that someone is taking pictures or videos of you without your consent, tell someone you trust. Details of organisations you can contact if you would prefer not to speak to someone you know can be found on pages 26-27.



POSTING IS FOREVER:

Before you post or upload anything, remember that what is posted on the Internet is permanent, widespread, and hard to delete.



SET PRIVACY ON YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA:

Check the privacy settings on your social media and chat room accounts regularly and always make use of them to control who can chat with you or share your pictures and videos.



ORGANISATIONS WORKING TO END ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

There are many organisations working to end online sexual exploitation of children and young people. Here are some of the largest, working globally. You can contact them for more information or to find details about local organisations in your area:

GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS WHERE CHILDREN CAN REPORT ABUSE

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INHOPE is an active and collaborative network of hotlines in 45 countries worldwide, dealing with illegal content online and committed to stamping out child sexual abuse from the Internet. INHOPE Hotlines offer the public a way of anonymously reporting Internet material including child sexual abuse material they suspect to be illegal. If you found child sexual abuse material online, please visit the website to find a hotline in your country to report. (www.inhope.org)



Virtual Global Taskforce is dedicated to investigating online abuse and exploitation. Through the website, children and adults can 'Report Abuse' with the click of a button. You can report abuse in Australia, Canada, Italy, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, UAE, UK, and USA. (www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com)



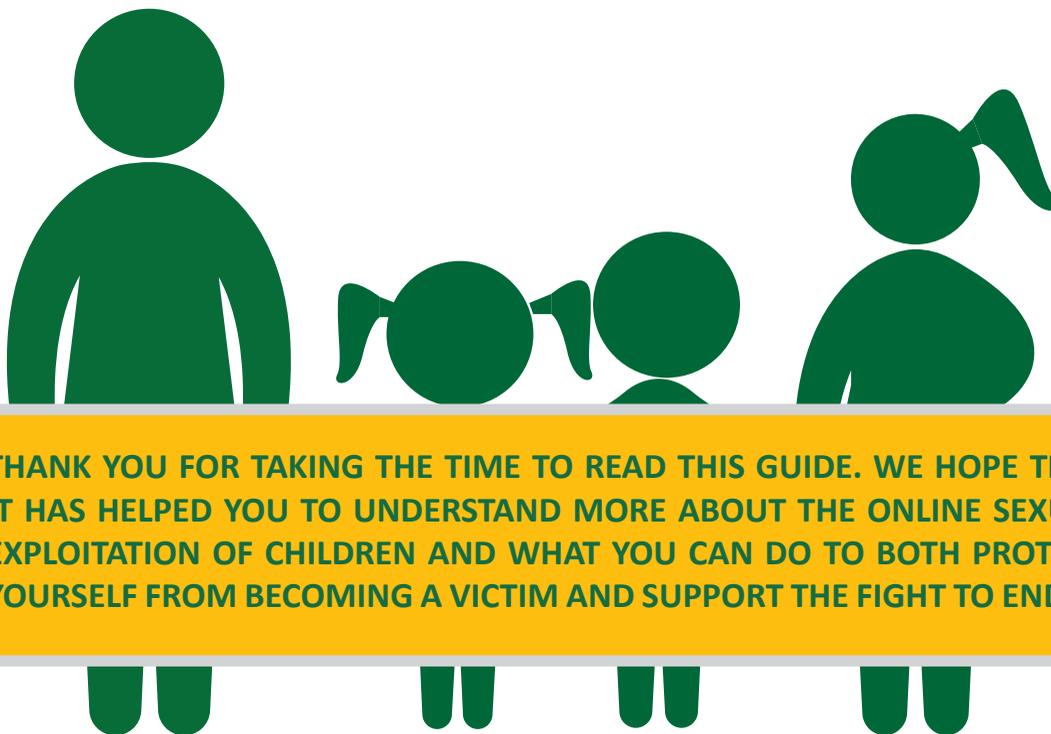
Child Helpline International establishes helplines all over the world. If you are a victim or know someone who is being/has been exploited please visit the website to find a helpline number in your country. (www.childhelplineinternational.org)

CHILD-FRIENDLY RESOURCES FOR ONLINE SAFETY

The websites below provide resources such as interactive games, tips or advice, and workshops for children of all ages, teachers/educators, and parents/guardians on staying safe online:

Organisation	Website
ECPAT International	www.ecpat.net
ChildNet International	www.childnet.com
*Think U Know	www.thinkuknow.com
Digizen	www.digizen.org
Kid Smart	www.kidsmart.org.uk
Stay Smart Online	www.staysmartonline.gov.au
NetSmartz Workshop (USA)	www.netsmartz.org
*Netsafe	www.netsafe.org.nz
*Cyber Kids (ECPAT New Zealand)	www.cyberkids.co.nz
European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online (eNACSO)	www.enacso.eu

* Website also provides a way for reporting online.



THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS GUIDE. WE HOPE THAT IT HAS HELPED YOU TO UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT THE ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO BOTH PROTECT YOURSELF FROM BECOMING A VICTIM AND SUPPORT THE FIGHT TO END IT.



ECPAT International

328/1 Phayathai Road, Ratchathewi Bangkok 10400 THAILAND

Tel: +66 2 215 3388, +66 2 611 0972

Fax: +66 2 215 8272

Email: info@ecpat.net

Website: www.ecpat.net