



Crimes against children

Exploitation via the Internet

The spread of the Internet and the anonymity it can provide, as well as technological advances such as high-speed connections and digital cameras, has made it easier for individuals with a sexual interest in children to record their activities, download files or share images online.

Child sexual exploitation on the Internet ranges from posed photos to visual recordings of brutal sexual crimes. The victim's suffering is likely to continue even after the actual abuse has stopped, as the Internet enables the images to be circulated indefinitely. Most producers fall into two broad categories: those with a sexual interest in children, and organized crime groups drawn to the huge profits involved by providing such images commercially.

Central point of contact

Because the Internet has no borders, uploading an illegal image essentially constitutes an international crime. Images can be easily taken and uploaded in one country and made available to anyone in the world with a computer and an Internet connection. Differing laws and police systems throughout the world necessitate the existence of a central body to collect, store, analyse and disseminate information on child exploitation on the Internet.

INTERPOL's unique position in the international law enforcement community gives it the resources and networks to fight this type of crime more effectively.

International Child Sexual Exploitation Image database

To help dedicated child exploitation investigators to analyze and share data with colleagues in other countries, INTERPOL manages the International Child Sexual Exploitation image database (ICSE DB), a powerful intelligence and investigation tool launched in March 2009.

Available to certified investigators in any member country via INTERPOL's secure I-24/7 network, the database uses image recognition software to connect victims and places. Users can upload material into the database and compare it against images seized worldwide. They can create investigations online, comment on material and consult colleagues on specific cases.

ICSE replaced the INTERPOL Child Abuse Image Database (ICAID), which served investigators at the General Secretariat for eight years and helped them to identify and rescue several hundred victims.

A holistic approach

The Organization promotes a holistic approach to fighting child exploitation on the Internet by encouraging countries to issue INTERPOL Green Notices, which can provide warnings and criminal intelligence on serious child offenders; co-ordinate joint operations between multiple member countries; and facilitate investigations at a regional level.

INTERPOL



Member countries can ask INTERPOL to issue Yellow Notices to help locate missing persons, especially minors. The General Secretariat also provides co-ordination and assistance in international operations, including training sessions, intelligence, briefings, analysis and technical advice.

Building partnerships and supporting training initiatives are core to INTERPOL's approach to fighting crimes against children. A specialist working group of law enforcement investigators has been established to facilitate and enhance the investigation of sexual crimes against children, including the organization of training courses on computer-facilitated crimes against children, with support from governmental and non-governmental organizations and private industry. It also hosts best practice and victim identification workshops which bring together experts to work in a concerted and concentrated manner to devise strategies and identify victims of abuse.

INTERPOL is a partner to the Virtual Global Taskforce which aims to build an effective, international partnership of law enforcement agencies to protect children from online sexual abuse. INTERPOL also participates in CIRCAMP, a law enforcement network fighting the production, online distribution of and access to child sexual abuse material.



www.interpol.int

Contact information

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For matters relating to specific crime cases, please contact your local police or the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in your country.