



Children's Charities' Coalition on Internet Safety

Press Release

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NSPCC launches campaign to keep children safe online

The NSPCC is calling for a clampdown on individuals who view and share indecent images of children in a new internet safety campaign launched today (Mon 15 June).

Sex offenders are increasingly sharing indecent images of children by setting up private spaces online using 'peer to peer' file sharing software. This is ordinarily used to share large files between friends or interest groups such as those featuring music downloads, big photographic images or academic material. The NSPCC wants the UK Government and industry to research and devise an action plan to stop the viewing and distribution of child abuse images in this way.

The campaign comes on the back of a new digital manifesto published by the Children's Charities Coalition on Internet Safety (CHIS), of which the NSPCC is a member. The manifesto features 42 recommendations to the UK Government, industry and others to give better protection to children online.

NSPCC and CHIS spokesperson, Zoe Hilton said: "Technology is advancing fast and we must keep ahead of the game. Offenders will go to any lengths to exploit new technologies.

"In the aftermath of Operation Ore* we expected the number of prosecutions and cautions involving child abuse images to have fallen dramatically from the historic peak of 2,234 in 2003. However, the figure remained relatively high at 1,402 in 2007. The problem of child abuse images is directly linked to the growth of the internet and new technologies.

"A large number of people continue to seek out these images in any way possible. The UK Government must be tenacious in its efforts to put in place measures to protect children online. It must also provide help for children who have been abused and who live with the knowledge that images of their abuse are being circulated in cyberspace."

Additional campaign calls include protecting children who use the internet on their mobile; ensuring social networking sites are doing all they can to protect young

users; pre-installation and pre-setting of child safety software; support for professionals; and therapeutic services for children who have been sexually abused.

Members of the public, and over 600,000 of the charity's contacts are being urged to sign a petition and will be contacted through a number of avenues including the media, email, the NSPCC website and direct mail. The petition sets out priorities for the new UK Council for Child Internet Safety (a recommendation of the Byron Review**), which reports directly to the Prime Minister.

Go to www.nspcc.org.uk/safetynetcampaign to sign up to the petition.

Ends

Media office on 020 7825 2712 out of hours mobile 07076 206 625

Notes to editors

*In early 2002 the US Postal Inspection Service informed the British police of thousands of Britons who had subscribed to US websites showing indecent images of children. The investigation into this list is codenamed Operation Ore.

** <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/byronreview/>

Jayne Ifeacho
media manager
NSPCC Media Office
42 Curtain Road
London EC2A 3NH
020 7825 2712
www.nspcc.org.uk

The Child's Voice Appeal - Let no cry go unheard
When a child needs help, ChildLine and the NSPCC Helpline may be their only hope. Make sure their cries are heard by giving whatever you can to the Child's Voice Appeal.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person, you can call the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000. Children and young people can call ChildLine confidentially on 0800 1111 to find out more about how to seek help.

To support the Child's Voice Appeal, please visit www.childsvoiceappeal.org.uk