

EPP Group Hearing 29 June 2016

Combatting Sexual Abuse of Children on the Internet

Internet Watch Foundation

Presented by Kristof Claesen



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NSPCC Press Release 21 June 2016 – United Kingdom

“The internet was used as a gateway by offenders to commit more than **3,000 sex crimes against children last year**, according to figures obtained by the NSPCC.”

“This is the first time police have been required to record - ‘**cyber flag**’ - any sexual crime against a child that involved the use of the internet and highlights a worrying trend, with an average of eight crimes a day being reported.”

CEO of NSPCC: “We know grooming is on the rise because children are increasingly telling our ChildLine service how they are being targeted online. **Predatory adults posing as children try to meet them or blackmail them into meeting up or performing sexual acts on webcams**, which obviously terrifies them and can leave some feeling suicidal.”



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Overview

- The work of the Internet Watch Foundation
- Social Networks and Online Child Sexual Abuse
 - Child Sexual Abuse: Content
 - Child Sexual Abuse: Contact
 - Child Sexual Abuse: Conduct
- What can Providers of Social Media and Interactive Services do?



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What is the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)?

- Registered charity, independent from Government and Law Enforcement
- Based in the United Kingdom
- Team of over 30 people, including 12 Internet Content Analysts
- Funded by the online industry (+ 120 Members) and the EU
- Remit includes:
 - Child sexual abuse material, hosted anywhere in the world
 - Criminally obscene adult content, hosted in the UK
 - Non-Photographic child sexual abuse material, hosted in the UK
- A multi-stakeholder model working closely with the online industry and law enforcement



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IWF 2015 HEADLINES

941
webpages actioned
in a single record
breaking day

112,975
reports processed
by our Hotline: 52%
increase on 2014

417%
increase in reports of
child sexual abuse
images and video
since 2013

121
internet industry
Members working
with us

69%
of victims assessed
as 10 or under

34%
of images were
category A – which
is rape or sexual
torture of children

Only **0.2%**
of the world's known
child sexual abuse
imagery is hosted
in the UK

68,092
reports confirmed
as child sexual
abuse URLs:
118% increase
on 2014

3%
of victims assessed
as 2 or under

Online child sexual abuse – Social Networks

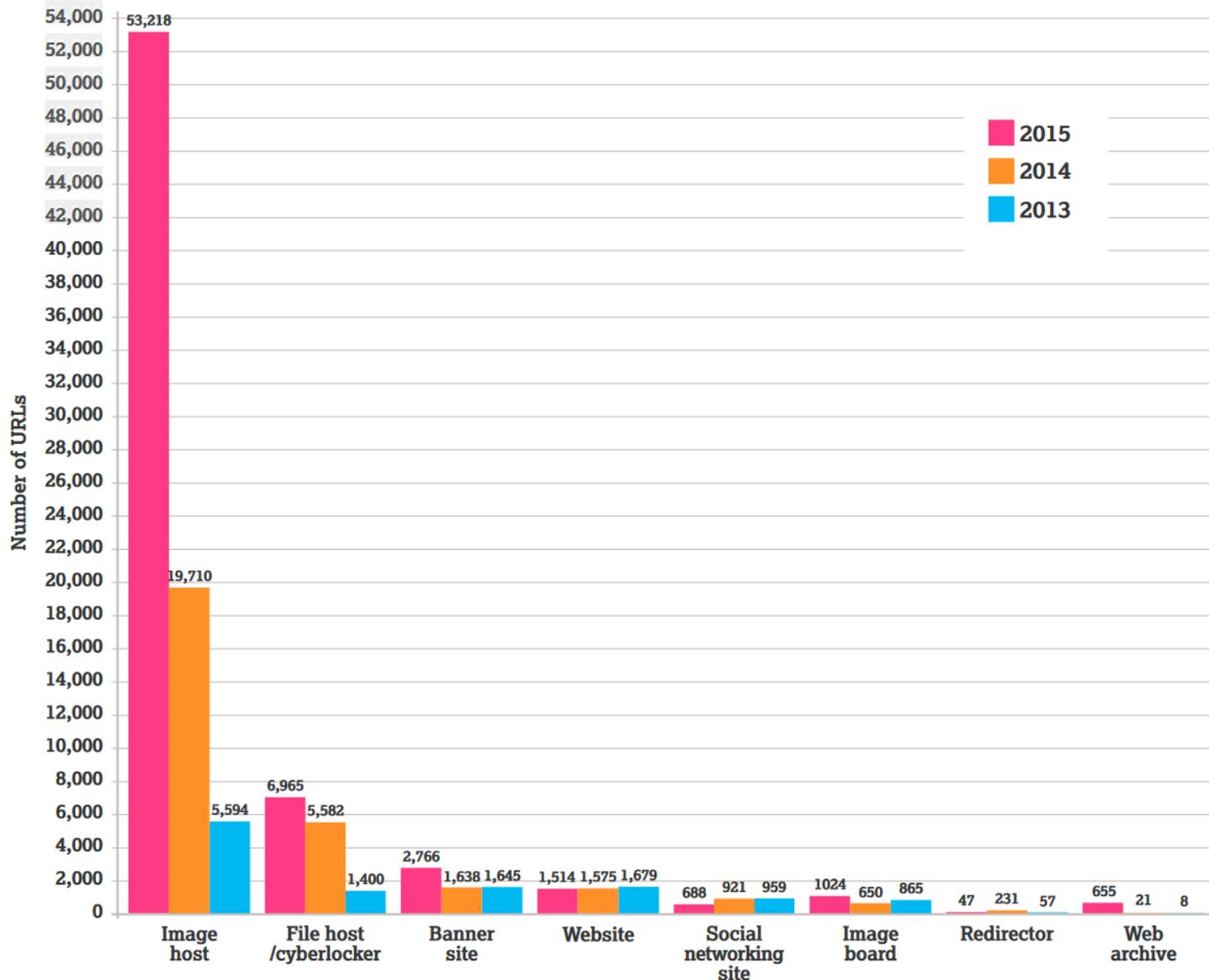
Risks	<u>Content:</u> Child as offline victim/recipient	<u>Contact:</u> Child as participant	<u>Conduct:</u> Child as actor
Child Sexual Abuse	Child sexual abuse imagery being distributed (+ potential exposure to this material)	Meeting strangers Being groomed	Creating/Uploading sexual explicit material (Self-generated)

Typology roughly based on work done by LSE/EU Kids Online

Caveat: Definition of ‘social network’

1. a network of social interactions and personal relationships.
2. a dedicated website or other application which enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, messages, images, etc.

Child Sexual Abuse: Content



Different types of services exploited for the distribution of child sexual abuse material.

- Social Networking Sites are not being abused that often (depending on the definition of 'social media')
- Potentially more visibility of child sexual abuse material due to high traffic on social media sites
- Whether or not a service is responsible not only depends on the amount of CSAM, but also on the actions taken

Child Sexual Abuse: Contact

Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online).

Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Grooming

Offenders build an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. This can be done by pretending to be someone they are not; offering advice or understanding; giving the child attention; using their professional position or reputation,...

Based on information provided by the NSPCC



Grooming and social media sites

Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child.

They can spend time learning about a young person's interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship. Sometimes the grooming escalates rapidly.

Groomers may look for:

- usernames or comments that are flirtatious or have a sexual meaning
- public comments that suggest a child has low self-esteem or is vulnerable.

Groomers don't always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of young people and wait to see who responds.

Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.



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Child Sexual Abuse: Conduct

‘Sexting’ – sending (someone) sexually explicit photographs or messages.

Research findings to date have varied widely as to the extent to which sexting occurs.

UK research found that **40%** of 11-18 year olds said they knew someone who had sent sexually explicit self-generated content, whilst research carried out in the United States found that cell-phone owning teens aged 12-17 years **4%** had sent a sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude image by text and **15%** had received one.

IWF Research into ‘Self-generated Sexually Explicit Images’:

- Increasing amount of self generated images/videos - **12,224** (88%) parasite websites
- Increasing use of webcams and livestream (voluntarily or through coercion)



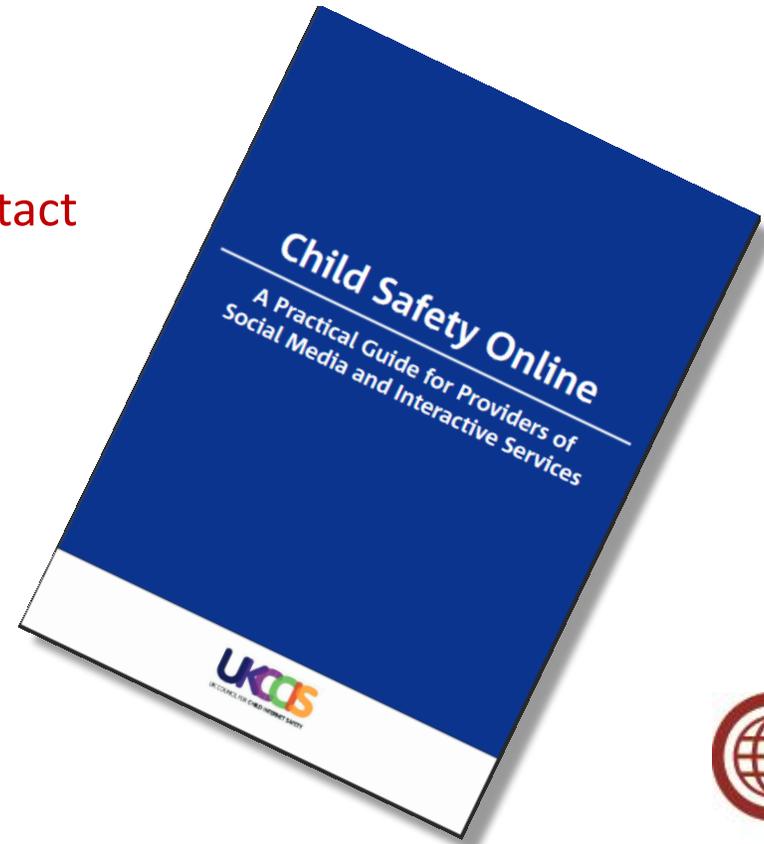
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What can social media services providers do?

'A Practical Guide for Providers of Social Media and Interactive Services'

1. Managing Content
2. Parental Controls
3. Dealing with Abuse/Misuse
4. **Dealing with Child Sexual Abuse Content and Illegal Contact**
 - Reporting functions
 - Training staff
 - Escalate reports to the appropriate channels
 - Inform users
5. Privacy and Controls
6. Education and Awareness



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Thanks for listening

www.iwf.org.uk

media@iwf.org.uk

01223 20 30 30



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