

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S CHAMPIONS BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children's Champions Board held at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 14 March 2007.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mrs V J Dagger, Mr I T N Jones, Mr S J G Koowaree (substitute for Mrs M E Featherstone), Mr W V Newman (substitute for Mrs M Newell) and Mr C T Wells.

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr T R Robinson (Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr K Arthur, Head of Children's Safeguards Service, CFE; Mrs K Lambourn, Policy and Performance Manager, Child Protection, CFE; Mrs A Jobey and Ms J Stevens, Social Workers, CFE; Miss R Chapman, e-Safety Officer, CFE; Mrs R Armstrong-Thompson, Senior Policy Officer, Communities; and Miss T A Grayell, Democratic Services Officer.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes

(Item A2 (a) and (b))

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2006 are correctly recorded and they be signed by the Chairman. The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2006 are already approved and signed, and are included for reference only.

2. Chairman's Announcements

(Item A3)

Margaret Featherstone

(1) The Chairman reported that she had recently spoken on the telephone to the Vice-Chairman, Margaret Featherstone, who was gradually recovering from illness. Margaret was keen to remain involved in the work of the Board, and was being kept up to date and contributing to its business by e-mail.

Communities Directorate

(2) The Chairman said how pleased she was that the Communities Directorate now had officer involvement in the work of the Board, and she warmly welcomed Ruth Armstrong-Thompson, Senior Policy Officer, to the meeting.

3. "Beyond all Tolerance" – a Presentation on Child Pornography on the Internet

(Item B1 – presentation by Social Workers Amanda Jobey and Jo Stevens)

(The slides used in this presentation are attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1)

(1) Mrs Jobey and Ms Stevens set out the growth the changing nature of the problem of child pornography, from the development of photography in the Victorian era to rapidly-

changing modern technology. The Chairman and Cabinet Member had previously seen and been impressed by the presentation at another meeting and had asked that it be shared with the Board to help Members' understanding of this growing problem.

- (2) In their presentation, Mrs Jobey and Ms Stevens highlighted the following:-
- (a) images of children and the severity of the acts portrayed in the images were clearly defined and graded from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most severe;
 - (b) child pornography was not just traded by adults – the youngest convicted perpetrator was a boy of 13;
 - (c) rapidly-evolving modern technology made images more easily accessible to viewers, reducing the perceived level of risk of those viewing and downloading them. The activity could be more private, being hidden in the user's own home. The rate of change of technology made the activity easier to hide and more difficult to track;
 - (d) filming the abuse of a child to use as pornography worsened the experience of that child by making a permanent record of the abuse, which could then be used to entrap other children. Children seen participating in pornographic material could be seen by others as accepting and colluding in the activity;
 - (e) abuse in childhood led to very real long-term damage to a child's education and their self-image, and their ability as an adult to form normal relationships and parent their own children effectively;
 - (f) The Lucy Faithful Foundation, which works with offenders who have accessed child abusive images, had received more referrals for risk assessment and management from Kent County Council than from any other local authority;
 - (g) other bodies working together to share intelligence to address the problem were Kent's Specialist Team – Protection of Adults and Children (PACT), the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOPC) and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC);
 - (h) British Telecom's 'Cleanfeed' programme blocked its subscribers from accessing pornographic images on screen. However, this technology did not record the details of users who attempted to access such material, so was not able to pass details to the Police for investigation;
- (3) Arising from the presentation, and in response to Members' questions, the following points were noted:-
- (a) although the majority of offenders were male, it was not exclusively so. The breakdown of users by class, age and ethnic origin was not known;
 - (b) it was very difficult to define the level of risk in each case – some internet activity would lead to contact activity, while other users may be sufficiently satisfied by internet use to avoid needing to move on to contact activity;
 - (c) users of internet pornography can now self-refer for help through various initiatives;

- (d) it was very important to destroy hardware thoroughly when it was finished with following criminal proceedings. There are cases of personal computers being reconditioned and reused in other countries with pornographic material still in the hard drive;
- (e) the speed of change of modern technology meant that research and intelligence needed also to be constantly updated.

(4) Members acknowledged the need to raise public awareness of the subject and suggested that the presentation be made to/issues be shared with Parent Teacher Associations and Local Boards.

(5) RESOLVED that the thorough and thought-provoking presentation be noted, with thanks, in particular the extent and complexity of the issue and the contribution of modern, rapid changing technology in increasing the challenge of identifying and addressing the problem.

4. e-Safety in Schools

(Item B2 – presentation by Rebecca Chapman, e-Safety Officer, CFE)

(The slides used in this presentation are attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2)

(1) Miss Chapman set out how the problems of safe internet use by young people is being tackled in schools by her team. The project was relatively new – one year only – but much innovative work had already been put in place.

(2) Miss Chapman's presentation highlighted the following points and concerns:-

- (a) the e-Safety team had identified the need for more effective ways to address the problem than just telling young people not to access material. It was important for parents and schools to accept that internet use and curiosity were the norm and that they needed to find a way of working around it. Parents and schools needed to heighten young people's awareness of the risks and educate them into safer habits so they could enjoy internet access in safety;
- (b) most information and training available was geared to secondary schools, so more work needed to be geared to primary schools;
- (c) the e-Safety project's aim was to provide every school with practical advice, to make sure all are aware of what constitutes an offence and are up-to-date with computer terms;
- (d) training was being extended to parents and governors, starting in March 2007. A wider public awareness campaign was also needed;
- (e) it was known that 1 in 12 children who used internet chat rooms had gone on to meet an internet contact in person. The e-Safety Project impressed upon young people the importance of always taking somebody (not necessarily a parent) with them when meeting a new contact and arranging a password or code to use as a way of ending the meeting, if necessary, or alerting others if they were uncomfortable;
- (f) Members were shown one of the videos which were used in schools to highlight the issues around e-Safety. The video showed measures which could be used by young people to report any attention they were not happy with by

clicking on an icon on the screen. This was an international system which allowed reporting of unwanted attention 24 hours a day.

(3) Arising from the presentation, and in response to Members' questions, the following points were noted:-

- (a) the Board could help spread awareness of the issue when it sends its Minutes to the Children, Families and Education Policy Overview Committee, and Board Members also have the opportunity to attend an e-Safety conference taking place at Kent Police Headquarters on 11 May. The issue could also be considered and followed up by the Kent Safeguarding Children Board;
- (b) Members made a number of suggestions of other bodies which could be used to publicise the e-Safety project:- Local Boards, Youth Advisory Groups, Kent Youth County Council and the Kent Youth Parliament. To these, Miss Chapman added that the team had trained Youth Workers in schools and were promoting the idea of making the issue part of the PSHE curriculum;
- (c) the e-Safety project had produced very helpful literature and online guidance materials to help parents understand the issue and keep up-to-date with technology. There was an online "dictionary" which parents could download which explained codes and slang used by children online to disguise what they were doing – eg., PAW means "parents are watching" and POS "parents looking over shoulder".
- (d) although children were ahead of their parents in their understanding of technology, this did not alter the fact that the responsibility for the child's safety was still with the parents/guardians.
- (e) Members acknowledged that a peer group often had much more influence over a young person's behaviour than their parent or school. Young people's peers were much likely to be listened to, so youth groups were a useful way to tackle the issue.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the thorough and thought-provoking presentation on this relatively new area of work be noted, with thanks, and;
- (b) the work being undertaken to address the issue at schools, with youth groups and with parents to raise awareness and help identify and tackle the issue be commended.

5. Discussion Item – How can the Board engage young people in its work and meetings?

(Item B3)

(1) Members had previously identified the need for the Board to consider how it might make more contact with children and young people and engage them in its work and meetings, so had scheduled a discussion item to allow time to gather initial thoughts and start to address the subject.

(2) Discussion covered how to engage young people, the importance of getting the right approach, particularly as the young people concerned in its work are vulnerable, and suggestions of mechanisms and organisations which the Board could make use of.

- (3) Points arising from the discussion were as follows:-
- (a) the Board could use issues it had already looked at (eg., show the e-Safety video and materials) to engage young people in discussion of the issues the Board has been addressing;
 - (b) the Board could go to meet young people rather than expecting young people to attend and conform to its meeting style. This would make young people feel less as if they were being summoned. Young people's groups could be asked if they wished to invite the Board;
 - (c) the Board should take advice from professionals about the best approach to use for vulnerable young people, especially when addressing sensitive issues;
 - (d) the Board should make optimum use of organisations made up of and run by young people themselves, as young people involved in these groups had put themselves forward to address issues and were proficient at and prepared to tackle them;
 - (e) by attending a youth conference, for example, the Board would be fitting in with an agenda set up by young people themselves;
 - (f) the Board could make use of the National Youth Theatre to present issues of concern in young people's own words. This had worked well at the Anti-Bullying Conference in November 2006;
 - (g) the Board could use school cluster meetings/governors' meetings as an initial approach. Possibly make use of the annual Democracy Week? Subjects, eg e-Safety, could be tackled first in the school environment with a link to the Board offered as a follow-up;
 - (h) organisations suggested for engagement were:- Upfront, Kent Youth County Council, Kent Youth Parliament, Kent Youth Forum and Youth Clubs.
- (4) RESOLVED that suggestions arising from the Board's initial discussion of the issue be considered by officers and key Members with a view to putting together a plan of action.

Child Pornography-An Internet Crime

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Historical Context

Paintings of children in erotic poses have existed over the centuries. However in 1839 the photographic process became public, opening up a new arena for those with an interest in sexual images of children.

By the late 1800's Child Pornography was widely available in Victorian England. In 1874 London police raided the studio of Henry Hayler and confiscated over 130,000 photographs of children which were considered indecent.

Its production, distribution and possession remained an illicit activity until the late 1960's and early 70's when it became a world-wide commercial industry following the relaxation of laws against the production of all pornography, including child pornography, though not in the UK

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On the 27th August 1984 the death of Thea Pumbroek prompted legislative changes to the law regarding the sale and production of child pornography in Holland.

Thea died of an overdose of cocaine in the bathroom of a room at a Holiday Inn in Amsterdam while being filmed for a pornographic video

Thea Was 6 Years Old

This tragedy gave impetus to the growing pressure on western governments to recognise the existence of Child Pornography and legislate against it. This resulted in a significant decline in its commercial distribution.

From this point the production and distribution of child pornography switched from commercial to an amateur "cottage industry" involving the swapping and sharing of images among paedophiles and other adults with a sexual interest in children.

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What is Child Pornography?

The term 'child pornography' is almost universally used when describing images of children subjected to sexual abuse to produce such material. However the word 'pornography' is an essential problem as it invokes a "nudge-nudge-wink-wink" reaction...and yet what is being discussed is the abuse and exploitation of children for sexual purposes.

Police and child protection agencies will not use the term 'child pornography' because they believe it trivialises the material and prefer phrases such as 'abusive images of children' or 'indecent images of children'

Edwards (2000) defined child pornography as a record of the systematic rape, abuse and torture of children on film and photograph and other electronic means.

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Grading of Images

Level 1 - Children Posing

Level 2 - Sexual Acts between Children

Level 3 Children and Adults (Non Penetrative)

Level 4 - Penetrative Acts Between Adults and Children

Level 5 - Sadist Acts between Children and Adults

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Who Is Downloading and Collecting Child Abuse Images?

Evidence from police operations show that the overwhelming majority of consumers of child abuse images are male and are represented in most professions.

The stereotype image of the paedophile as an easily identifiable 'dirty old man, in a shabby raincoat' who behaves strangely in public and stalks children, is not the reality. Many teenagers have also been convicted of downloading abusive images of children.

The youngest convicted of possessing these images was a 13 year old boy, who had 321 child abuse images downloaded from the Internet, including pictures of the abuse of babies.

Information from Greater Manchester Police reported that 80% of abusive images are recorded in the victims own home and that 30-40% of abuse cases were found to be perpetrated by teenage boys under 17.

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Why Do Paedophiles Collect Child Abuse Images?

Primarily, images are used to stimulate sexual arousal and drive.

Pictures validate and justify behaviour of those with a sexual interest in children

Pornography can also be used as part of the offenders grooming behaviour to lower a victims inhibitions and entrap other children into copying the sexual activity depicted.

The actual images themselves also preserves a child at the very age and stage of development that is most arousing to an offender

This will also be used as a method of blackmail to encourage further activity and to maintain silence

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The Relationship Between Child Pornography and Contact Sexual Offences

It has been argued that there are three groups of people who use the Internet for accessing child pornography: those who look at it out of curiosity, are turned off by it and never do it again; those who use it for sexual gratification and fantasy; those who see it and then act out their fantasies (Wellard, 2001)

Dobson (2003) noted that preliminary work in the UK points to the fact that between 1 in 3 and 1 in 5 of those arrested for possessing child pornography will be found to be abusing children.

Quayle (2002) identified how contact offences can be induced through material seen on the Internet:

- Imitation
- Permission Giving
- Reinforcing Existing Feelings

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The Scale of the Problem

In 1995, arguably the last year before the Internet started to take off in the UK, the Greater Manchester Police Abusive Images Unit seized a total of 12 indecent images of children. All of them on paper or video. In 1999 the same squad seized 41,000 all but three were on computer and came from the Internet. In December 2003 one man was found with 450,000 images. A long way from the 12 in 1995.

Well publicised police operations such as Operation Ore led to the names of 7,200 suspects being passed to forces in the UK after the US police broke up a paedophile website operation.

Police report that the swelling caseload of offences involving the downloading of images of child abuse is pushing their computer forensics teams to the limits.

According to police sources, over 300 people a month are being referred to special police paedophile units (2005)

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Locally

Social Service Child Protection Teams are seeing an increasing number of referrals from the police. Two years ago a referral was rare, today the Canterbury District is receiving at least 15 a year. This is more than one a month and this pattern is repeated throughout Kent.

This in itself may not be a reflection of the possible numbers of offenders in the district who are producing or downloading child pornography. The police only make a referral to child protection teams when the offender is in a household or relationship with a woman with children.

In Thanet recently, a man was caught by a credit card sweep of Child pornography websites in Operation Ore. He was married with a baby. He had 50,000 images, 200 were of level five, including pictures of babies. He has since received a prison sentence.

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The Impact on the Child

The impact of a child's involvement in child pornography is difficult to distinguish from that of the other forms of sexual exploitation that they were undergoing when the pictures were taken.

However, studies have looked at children involved in sex rings, prostitution and intra and extra-familial sexual and ritual abuse. Whilst many of the short and long-term symptoms were similar to those associated with other forms of sexual exploitation, some seem to be exacerbated by involvement in child pornography.

Feelings of powerlessness, shame and fear of disclosure were all heightened. Knowing there is a permanent record of their abuse being circulated for many years to come, induces a strong sense of powerlessness.

Concern over how they were portrayed i.e. that they seemed to be 'enjoying' it or the abuse that they were forced to inflict on other children, and that their image may have been used to entrap other children increases their feeling of shame.

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Identifying Vulnerable Children for Contact Offences

Ray Wyre-sexual crime expert, once said "Monsters don't get close to children, nice men do"

He will choose a job, social activity or relationship that will give him access to children, and target those with particular characteristics. These may be children in care, emotionally immature, with learning or social difficulties, problems with peer friendships; isolated in their families; children from single parent families; children who have been previously sexually abused and children with low self-esteem.

Child pornography can be used to 'groom' these children, by exposure to images of adults and children 'enjoying' sex to show the child that it is not wrong.

Issues relevant to the risk from the Internet include the trusting nature of children and their naivety, tied in with curiosity, rebellion and independence, making children the perfect target.

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Assessment Issues

The assessment of sexual offenders is complex and where Internet sex offenders are concerned it is exacerbated by a large number of unknowns.

Recent police operations have highlighted the potentially high prevalence rate of this kind of offending but it has only been recently that interest has been shown by psychologists.

The furtive and solitary nature of the behaviour coupled with its recency has meant that this has been a neglected area for researchers in sexual offending. As a result there is very little specifically designed for Internet sex offenders either in treatment and management terms or in assessment methods.

Quayle and Taylor -psychologists working at Cork University's psychology department found that those who accessed paedophile material on the internet varied. Some did so as a blueprint for future paedophile activities. Others accessed these materials as a substitute for following through with Paedophile behaviour.

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What Is Being Done to Combat Child Pornography?

The Latest measure from the Home Office is a unit to protect children in the UK from Internet paedophiles. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOPC) began operation in April 2006. It is staffed by 100 people including police and child welfare experts.

The Centre has taken on the work previously being done by the National Crime Squad and targets those who distribute child abuse images or "groom" children for abuse. It operates a 24hr service to report suspicious activity on the Internet.

Specialists from the telecommunications industry also work at the centre, which is part of the governments planned FBI style investigation bureau, the Serious Organised Crime Agency. (SOCA)

Kent have a specialist team-The Protection of Adults and Children Team which is based in Maidstone. This team deals with serious crime relating to sexual offences against children and adults and works in conjunction with CEOPC.

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CEOPC also offers information and advice to victims, and manages the national police database of child abuse images.

The police have a computer database called Childbase. It utilises the most powerful image recognition computer in the world, mapping the facial characteristics of each victim, and enabling cross-checks against millions of images in seconds. It will tell investigators instantly if there is a new victim.

It is available to every police force in the country and will eventually be used by overseas law enforcement agencies investigating child abuse images online. Information gleaned from some images have enabled police to find the victim and prosecute the offender.

The NSPCC is working in partnership with CEOPC. This has forged closer relationships and pooled resources with international organisations and overseas governments.

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Blocks on child pornography sites by ISP's is a way forward, currently net service providers are self regulating

BT has screening technology - The Cleanfeed programme prevents its 3 million domestic users from accessing child pornography content blacklisted by the Internet Watch Foundation. 35,000 images are blocked daily. This technology does not record the details of the person trying to view the banned images, so there is no information to hand to the police.

The relevant legislation in Britain is:
The Obscene Publications Acts of 1959 and 1964
The Protection of Children Act 1978
The Criminal Justice Act 1988
The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
The Sexual Offences Act 2003

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The Impact on future need and local resources

With the increasing number of cases of offenders charged with possession of child abusive images being referred to child protection teams, social workers need training in what constitutes a good assessment of risk to the children in the offenders family.

- Knowledge and an understanding of the offender is needed. This could be through training from therapeutic services specialising in this field.
- Knowledge of the legal process in dealing with offenders would be beneficial and could be delivered by police officers who have worked on criminal cases of this nature.
- There will undoubtedly be an implication on financial resources for the future as expert assessments may be required and historically these have proven to be expensive.

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- As this is a growing concern, procedures and protocols need to be put in place to give clear guidance on these matters.

There is no doubting the importance of protecting children from abuse by combating child pornography.

Those working in social welfare have an important role to ensure the focus is on child protection and improve support services for those children who have been identified from images.

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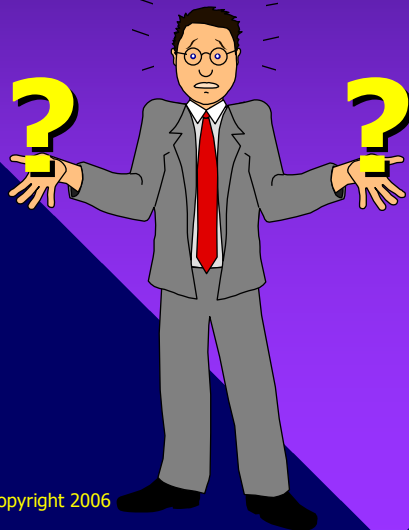
The use of the Internet by persons to distribute images of children being sexually abused will continue to increase in line with accessibility.

With increasing numbers of people acquiring mobile phones with picture, video and internet connections, the production and distribution of abusive images of children will find a new outlets

Frighteningly these abusers will be virtually impossible to detect as they leave no trace of the offender.

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ANY QUESTIONS ?



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e-Safety in Schools

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e-Safety in Schools



There are 3 ways to get something done;

Do it yourself

Hire someone

Tell your kids not to do it!





g people say that they have given out information, such as their full name, age, email address, phone number, hobbies or name of their school, to someone that they met on the Internet.

- One third 9-19 year olds who use the internet at least once a week report having received unwanted sexual (31%) or nasty comments
- 57% of weekly internet users have come into contact with online pornography



<http://www.clusterweb.org.uk?esafety>

<http://www.clusterweb.org.uk?esafetyblog>

<http://esafety.pbwiki.com>

