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To tell or not to tell? Youth's responses to unwanted Internet experiences

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Abstract

This study is one of the first that investigated youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences, not only for those youth who were bothered or distressed but for all youth who reported the experience. Three types of response were examined: telling someone about the incident and ending the unwanted situation by active or passive coping. Responses to the following unwanted Internet experiences were analysed: Sexual solicitation, online harassment and unwanted exposure to pornography. The study was based on data from the Third Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-3), a telephone survey with a nationally representative U.S. sample of 1,560 Internet users, ages 10 to 17, and their caretakers. Youth's responses to unwanted Internet experiences differ depending on the type of unwanted experiences, whether they are distressed or have other negative reactions caused by the incident and – to some degree – other youth characteristics and incident characteristics. For example, not all youth who are distressed tell someone and not all youth who tell someone are distressed. Also, the reasons for telling may differ depending on whom they tell, and youth tell somebody less often about their victimization if they also are online perpetrators, but of different types of unwanted Internet experiences. Internet safety information for parents and parents' active mediation of Internet safety does not seem to result in youth telling more often about unwanted Internet experiences.

Keywords: coping; disclosure; online harassment; Internet; youth

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Introduction

This paper focuses on youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences, whether they were distressed by the experience or not. It is important to learn more about how youth respond to unwanted Internet experiences and how this may be related to characteristics of the incident and the youth. This can inform both efforts to protect youth from harmful experiences and to promote their communication and self-management skills.

Many youth have access to the Internet at any time and the rise of privatized and mobile access has made it more difficult for caregivers to closely regulate their children's Internet safety (Dürager & Livingstone, 2012). Findings from the three Youth Internet Safety Surveys (YISS) conducted in 2000, 2005 and 2010 in the United States do not show the general increase of unwanted Internet experiences that may have been expected (Jones, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2012). Unwanted sexual solicitations declined from 19% in 2000 to 13% in 2005 and 9% in 2010. Online harassments increased significantly from 6% in 2000 to 9% in 2005 and 11% in 2010. Finally, youth reported a change in unwanted exposure to pornography from 25% in 2000 to 34% in 2005 and 23% in 2010 (Jones et al., 2012). To our knowledge, there are no such trend studies available from other countries. It is difficult to directly compare prevalence rates for Internet risks from different studies as studies differ depending on participants' age, how Internet risks are defined and how the questions are worded.

Youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences can be described in terms of coping strategies. Coping refers to behaviour that protects people from being psychologically harmed by problematic social experience (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Two basic modes of coping with stress are approach and avoidance, referring to emotional and cognitive activity that is oriented either toward or away from threat (Roth & Cohen, 1986). Two types of coping efforts are identified in the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) – 'Problem management' are strategies directed at changing a stressful situation while 'Emotional regulation' includes strategies aimed at changing the way one thinks or feels about a stressful situation. A qualitative study of adolescents' coping with cyberbullying identified technical coping (such as blocking the perpetrator), activity directed at the perpetrator, avoidance, seeking social support, and defensive strategies (such as devoting time to offline activities) (Sleglova & Cerna, 2011). Three coping strategies have been found in the EU Kids Online survey for those youth who were bothered by the experience

(Hasebrink, Görzig, Haddon, Kalmus, & Livingstone, 2011). First, youth with a 'fatalistic' or 'passive' coping strategy either hoped that the problem would go away or decided to stop using the Internet for a while. Second, a 'communicative' strategy involved talking about the problem to others. Finally, a 'proactive' strategy included either a more general attempt to 'fix the problem' or more Internet-specific strategies such as deleting the message or blocking the person who sent the message.

Coping strategies may vary depending on characteristics of the youth. Girls were found to be more likely than boys to talk to somebody about sexual messages or bullying while younger children were more likely than older kids to talk to somebody about exposure to sexual images (Hasebrink et al., 2011). Also, youth who felt more upset or youth who took longer to get over being upset were more likely to display a response of any kind, and those who engaged in more online activities were also more likely to use 'proactive' coping strategies (Hasebrink et al., 2011).

Youth may have reasons for not telling about unwanted Internet experiences. A Canadian study about cyberbullying with children age 10 to 13 (Mishna, Saini, & Solomon, 2009) found that youth might fear that computer privileges would be taken away, so that an action meant as protection by the parent actually would result in a punishment of the targeted youth.

Previous research has shown that online and offline risks are closely linked. Findings from the Second Youth Internet Safety Survey showed that 45% of youth who had been the target of online harassment knew the harasser in person before the incident and 25% reported an aggressive offline contact by the harasser (Ybarra, Mitchell, Wolak, & Finkelhor, 2006). The EU Kids Online survey found that being bullied offline increased the risk of being bullied online by 15 times and seeing sexual materials offline increased the risk of seeing them online by 17 times (Hasebrink et al., 2011). In that same study offline victimization was associated with the perception that corresponding online experiences were *less* harmful. The authors concluded that there seems to be a transfer of coping abilities from the offline to the online world (Hasebrink et al., 2011). Also, a study about Internet-initiated sexual abuse that had been reported to the police showed that youth did not report online abusive experiences as fully as they reported the offline abuse, possibly because they may regard offline meetings as more significant events than online acts (Leander, Christianson, & Granhag, 2008). Youth who are online victims may be online perpetrators as well. A population-based Finnish study found that 4.8% were cybervictims only, while 5.4% were both cybervictims and –bullies (Sourander et al., 2010). To our knowledge, no one has yet investigated how being both an online victim and an online perpetrator affects a youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences.

There is a lack of knowledge about how specific characteristics of different types of online risks are related to youth's responses to those risks. In group discussions with youth in 29 European countries, participants said that they would tell an adult about the experience if they perceived it as "serious" (Optem, 2007). In that study, youth mentioned as serious risks: contact with adult strangers, anything that could affect the computer itself (e.g. virus) or cause the user problems (e.g. excessive costs), but also exposure to child pornography or violent material. Youth age 12 to 14 years, in particular, said they would try to handle less serious experiences by themselves or with the help of siblings or friends of the same age (Optem, 2007).

Internet safety programs often advise parents and practitioners to encourage children and youth to tell an adult about unwanted online experiences. In the same way, Internet safety rules for children usually ask them to tell an adult about such experiences. See, for example, Common Sense Media's (2012) advices for parents about Internet safety or the Safety Pledges (n.d.) provided by NetSmartz for children of different ages. Parental mediation can reduce online risks and children's perception of harm (Dürager & Livingstone, 2012), but less is known about how parents' active mediation of safety actually increases youth's willingness to tell about unwanted Internet experiences.

There has been some discussion about the relationship between online risks and harm. Harm has been linked to a negative perception of the incident by the youth (Hasebrink et al., 2011). In the EU Kids Online study, youth were asked whether they had been "bothered" by the experience, where "bothered" was defined as something that "made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it" (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, & Ólafsson, 2011). In the present study, a continuum for negative perception of the incident was used, ranging from "not wanting" the experience to "being bothered" by the experience to "being distressed" as the most negative perception of the experience. Only youth who perceived the Internet experience as unwanted were asked to provide more details about the incident. Participants who had experienced more than one unwanted incident of the same type during the past year were asked to answer follow-up questions about the most bothersome. Finally, strong negative emotional reactions to the incident, such as feeling very or extremely upset, embarrassed, or afraid, were defined as distress.

This study is based on data from the Third Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-3). The central research question is how youth respond to unwanted Internet experiences, whether they were distressed or not. Three coping strategies – telling someone about the experience, active and passive coping – were investigated in relation to three types of unwanted Internet experiences - sexual solicitation, online harassment or unwanted exposure to pornography.

We investigated whether youth told someone about unwanted Internet experiences, whom they told, and reasons for not telling. We also investigated if telling someone was related to more serious incidents (see Measures for a definition of serious incidents) and youth characteristics such as gender, age, sociodemographics, distress, high offline risk, high amount of Internet use, and youth's own experience of online perpetration. Likewise, we studied whether youth used active or passive coping strategies to end the unwanted situation and how these strategies were related to characteristics of the youth or the incident.

We hypothesized that most youth would tell somebody about the experience and that youth would tell someone more often when they were distressed or when the incident was more serious. We expected different patterns with regard to

youth characteristics, such as females telling someone more often than males. We also expected that youth whose caregivers had received child Internet safety information or who had talked with their child about specific unwanted Internet experiences would more often tell someone about unwanted Internet experiences. We hypothesized that youth would use different coping strategies depending on the type of unwanted Internet experience and that they would use more active coping strategies if the incident was more serious, if the youth was more distressed, or had a high amount of Internet use.

Methods

Participants

The 3rd Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-3) was conducted to quantify and detail unwanted or problematic technology-facilitated experiences among youth. Data collection occurred between August, 2010 and January, 2011. YISS-3 was conducted via telephone surveys with a national sample of 1,560 youth Internet users, ages 10 to 17, and their parents. A sample size of 1,500 was pre-determined based upon a maximum expected sampling error of +/-2.5% at the 5% significance level. The sample is representative of all Internet using youth, ages 10 to 17, in the U.S. Human subject participation in YISS-3 was reviewed and approved by the University of New Hampshire Institutional Review Board and conformed to the rules mandated for research projects funded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Sampling Method

Abt Schulman, Ronca, and Bucuvalas, Inc. (SRBI), a national survey research firm, conducted the sampling, screening and telephone interviews for YISS-3. The main sample was drawn from a national sample of households with telephones developed by random digit dialing. Using standard dispositions as defined by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) (2011) the cooperation rate was 65 % (AAPOR Cooperation Rate 4-interviews/estimated eligible) and the refusal rate was 24 % (AAPOR Refusal Rate 2-refusals/estimated eligible). Due to increasing reliance of the U.S. population on cell phones only (Brick et al., 2007; Hu, Balluz, Battaglia, & Frankel, 2010), a cell-phone RDD sample was included in addition to the landline sample in the YISS-3 study. The original intention was to include a sample of 300 respondents from the cell phone sample in the final target sample of 1,500. However, due to problems with cell phone sample response rates, and given the required timeframe for the study, a decision was made to complete the survey once a total of approximately 1,500 landline completions had been reached. At the end of the data collection, 45 interviews had been completed by cell phone in addition to 1,515 landline interviews, resulting in a total sample size of 1,560. Analysis of youth demographic and Internet use characteristics between the cell phone and landline samples indicated the cell phone sample was accessing a harder to reach population of youth. Specifically, youth in the cell phone sample were more likely to be of Hispanic ethnicity and come from families with a single, never-married parent.

Sample Characteristics

Eligible respondents were youth, ages 10 to 17, who had used the Internet at least once a month for the past six months from any location, and a caregiver in each household. The original sample consists of 1,560 youth. The analyses in the current study were based on data from those participants who reported unwanted Internet experiences (sexual solicitation, online harassment or unwanted exposure to pornography) and who answered follow-up questions about whether they had told someone about the experience (n = 134, 174 or 346, respectively) or how the situation ended (n = 134, 170 or 348, respectively).

Procedure

In households with eligible children, interviewers asked to speak with the adult who was most familiar with that child's Internet use and after receiving informed consent, asked a series of questions about Internet use. Then the interviewer asked for permission to interview the child. Interviewers told parents that the youth interview would be confidential and include questions about "sexual material your child may have seen on the Internet," and that youth would receive $10 for participating. In households with more than one eligible youth, the one who used the Internet the most often was chosen as the respondent, following the same procedure as previous Youth Internet Safety Surveys (YISS-1 in 1999/2000 and YISS-2 in 2005).

After receiving parental permission, interviewers spoke with the youth and asked for permission to conduct an interview. Interviewers assured youth that their answers would be confidential and they could skip any question and end the interview at any time. Steps were taken to help ensure confidentiality and safety for youth participants, including asking mostly yes/no questions, checking at regular intervals that youth were in a private location, and providing Internet safety resources at the end of the interview. The average youth interview lasted 30 minutes and the average adult interview lasted 10 minutes.

Measures

Unwanted Internet experiences

Three types of unwanted Internet experiences during the past year were investigated *Sexual solicitation* was indicated if youth responded positively to at least one of the following three questions: "Did anyone on the Internet ever try to get you to talk about sex when you *did not want to*?" "Did anyone on the Internet ask you for sexual information about yourself when you did not want to answer such questions? I mean very personal questions, like what your body looks like or sexual things you have done?" and "Did anyone on the Internet ever ask you to *do* something sexual that you

did not want to do?" Youth who responded to at least one of the following two questions were classified as being the target of *Internet harassment*: "In the past year, did you ever feel worried or threatened because someone was bothering or harassing you online?" and "In the past year, did anyone ever use the Internet to threaten or embarrass you by posting or sending messages about you for other people to see?" *Unwanted exposure to pornography* was indicated if youth responded positively to at least one of the following three questions: "When you were doing an online search or surfing the web, did you ever find yourself in a web site that showed pictures of naked people or of people having sex when you *did not want to be in that kind of site*?" "Did you ever receive email or instant messages *that you did not want* with advertisements for or links to X-rated web sites?" (in a North-American context X-rated web sites means web sites providing sexually explicit material) and "Did you ever *open* a message or a link in a message that showed you actual pictures of naked people or of people having sex *that you did not want*?"

Youth who reported unwanted Internet experiences were asked follow-up questions about their response to this experience and characteristics of the incident, whether they had been bothered by the incident or not. If youth had the same type of unwanted Internet experience more than once in the past year, they were asked to provide details for the incident that was most bothersome.

Youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences

The main question about *telling someone* was "Have you talked to anyone about this happening?" Youth who responded positively were asked "Who have you talked to?" Multiple choices were possible and the answers were categorized as "Friend," "Parent," "Brother or sister," "Other adult relative," "Police, Internet Service Provider or CyberTipline," "Teacher or counselor," and "Other." Those who had not talked to anyone were asked "Why didn't you tell anyone?" and their answers were categorized as "Not serious enough/Happens all the time," "Too scared/Too embarrassing," "Thought might get in trouble or lose Internet access," and "Other."

Youth's answers to the question "How did this situation end?" were categorized as *Active coping* (Blocked or warned that person, Told them to stop, Changed contact information such as screen name, profile, email address or telephone number, Called police or Told teacher/parent), *Passive coping* (Situation stopped without youth doing anything, Youth left site or logged off), *Still happening* or *Other* (not specified).

Incident characteristics

Youth who indicated one or more unwanted Internet experiences during the past year answered follow-up questions about the incident/s. Youth who reported online sexual solicitation or online harassment were asked whether the same person or people did this more than once (yes/no), how long the incident went on for (answers were categorized as "One day" or "Two days or longer"), if there was more than one person who did this (yes/no) and if the youth knew the person who did this (or the most responsible person if there were more than one person) before this happened online (yes/no).

Youth who reported unwanted exposure to pornography when doing an online search or surfing were asked whether they could tell this was an X-rated site before they clicked on the link or entered the site (yes/no), and what kind of pictures they actually saw at the web site (pictures of naked person/people, pictures of people having sex, pictures of sexual things that were violent or sexual pictures that involved animals or other strange things). Youth who reported unwanted exposure to pornography when receiving email or instant messages with advertisements for or links to X-rated web sites were asked whether they could tell from the subject line that it contained sexual material (yes/no), whether they knew the sender, and what they actually saw when they opened the message or clicked on a link in the message (same alternatives as above).

Sexual solicitation and online harassment were defined as *serious* if the same perpetrator did it more than once or if there was more than one perpetrator, if the incident went on for two days or longer, or if the youth had known the perpetrator in person before the incident (as the risk for unwanted experiences both online and offline may be increased). Unwanted exposure to pornography was defined as serious when youth actually saw sexual pictures including violence, animals or other strange things or when they knew the sender.

Youth characteristics

Youth's distress about the incident was investigated by using three questions about how upset, embarrassed and afraid they felt about the experience. Youth who reported sexual solicitation or online harassment were asked all three questions while youth who reported unwanted exposure to pornography answered how upset and embarrassed they felt about the experience. A scale of 1 to 5 was used with 1 = not at all and 5 = extremely. The answers to each question were dichotomized with ratings of 4 or 5 indicating "Very or extremely upset/embarrassed/afraid". Youth who answered 3, 4 or 5 to the above mentioned questions also answered four questions about their reactions caused by the incident: "In the days after this happened, how much did this incident cause you to feel jumpy or irritable or have a hard time falling asleep or staying asleep?" "How much did this incident cause you to lose interest in things you usually care about, or feel like your emotions were shut down?" "How much did this incident make you feel like you didn't want to use the Internet anymore?" "How much did this incident cause you to think about what happened so much that you felt upset and like you couldn't stop thinking about it?" Answers were rated on a scale from 1 = not at all to 4 = all the time. The answers to each question were dichotomized by using one standard deviation above the mean as cut-off.

Socio-demographic information. Caregivers reported on the youth's gender, age, whether the youth lived with both biological parents, and the previous year's household income. Youth reported information on race and ethnicity.

High offline risk was defined as youth who reported offline physical or sexual abuse during the past year or a high

amount of conflict with a caregiver.

High amount of Internet use was determined from a factor analysis of the following four items: typically spending four or more days per week or two or more hours per day online, high experience in using the Internet, and high importance of the Internet for the youth. The factor analysis indicated one latent variable (Eigenvalue: 1.64; % of Variance: 40.96). A summated score was created (M = 0.49, SD = 0.30) and dichotomized at 1 SD above the mean to reflect High Internet use behaviour.

Online perpetration. Youth were asked whether they had *harassed* or *sexually solicited* someone else online in the past year. Concerning *online harassment behaviour*, respondents were asked whether they had: 1) made rude or nasty comments to someone on the Internet, 2) used the Internet to harass or embarrass someone you were mad at, 3) spread rumors about someone through the Internet, whether they were true or not, 4) shared something about someone with others online that was meant to be private, 5) posted or forwarded a video or picture of someone online that showed them being hurt or embarrassed for other people to see, 6) were involved in a group on a social networking site or other online site where the focus was making fun of someone else. The answers were combined in a single measure of "Any online harassment behaviour: yes/no". Four questions about respondents' *online sexual solicitation behaviour* were asked and combined into a single measure of "Any online sexual solicitation behaviour: yes/no". Youth were asked whether they: 1) had forwarded or posted sexual information about someone such as the number of people they have had sex with, 2) had tried to get someone to talk about sex online when they did not want to, 3) had asked someone online for sexual information about themselves when that person did not want to tell you. I mean really personal questions, like what his or her body looks like, or sexual things he or she has done, 4) had asked someone online to do something sexual when the other person did not want to.

Caregivers and Internet safety

Caregivers were asked whether they ever got information on child Internet safety from a speaker, like at school or church or another community group or whether they had been to a website that teaches parents and kids about being safe on the Internet (yes/no). Caregivers were also asked whether they ever talked to their child about: 1) people on the Internet who might want to talk to them about sex (yes/no), 2) people on the Internet who might threaten, harass or bother them (yes/no), 3) seeing X-rated pictures on the Internet (yes/no).

Data Analysis

SPSS 19.0 (IBM SPSS 19.0, 2011) was used for the analyses. Results are shown as frequencies (percent). Confidence Intervals (95% *CI*) were used when showing the frequency of telling someone about unwanted Internet experiences. Pearson χ^2 analyses were used in order to test statistical significance when youth who told someone about unwanted Internet experiences were compared with youth who did not tell someone and youth who used active coping when trying to resolve unwanted Internet situations were compared with youth who used passive coping. Also, caregivers who had received information about child Internet safety or talked with their child about specific Internet risks were compared with caregivers who had not using Pearson χ^2 analyses.

Results

Telling or Not Telling about Unwanted Internet Experiences

Youth told someone significantly more often about online harassment (75 %, 95% *CI*: 67-82%) than about sexual solicitation (53%, 95% CI: 45-62%) or unwanted exposure to pornography (42 %, 95 % *CI*: 37-48%).

Table 1 shows whom youth who disclosed their unwanted Internet experience talked with. For all types of unwanted Internet experience, youth most often told a friend or parent. Few youth told a teacher or counselor about sexual solicitation or unwanted exposure to pornography while 15% of those who told someone about online harassment chose to tell a teacher or counselor.

For all types of unwanted Internet experience, the most often mentioned reason for not telling anybody was that the incident was not serious enough or that it happens all the time, *Table 1.* Between 10 and 14 percent did not tell anybody because they were too scared or embarrassed while between two and seven percent did not tell because they thought they might get in trouble or lose Internet access.

Table 2 compares youth who had told someone about sexual solicitation or online harassment with youth who had not told someone. Youth were more likely to tell someone about sexual solicitation or online harassment if the incident had went on for two days or longer. They were also more likely to tell someone about sexual solicitation if the same perpetrator had done it more than once or if they had known the perpetrator in person before the incident. Female youth were more likely than male youth to tell someone about online harassment, while youth who lived with both biological parents were more likely to tell someone about sexual solicitation than youth who did not live with both parents. Youth who were distressed about sexual solicitation were not more likely than non-distressed youth to tell someone about what happened. On the other hand, youth who had experienced online harassment were more likely to tell someone if they had been very or extremely upset by the incident or if they both had been distressed and reported negative reactions caused by the incident.

Table 1. Telling Someone about Unwanted Internet Experiences and Reasons for Not Telling.

	Sexual solicitation	Online harassment	Unwanted exposure to pornography
	n = 134 % (*n*)	*n* = 174 % (*n*)	*n* = 346 % (*n*)
Told someone ▪	***n* = 71 (53%)**	***n* = 130 (75%)**	***n* = 146 (42%)**
Friend	69 (49)	50 (65)	39 (57)
Parent	35 (25)	55 (71)	60 (87)
Brother or sister	9 (6)	9 (12)	3 (4)
Other adult relative	4 (3)	7 (9)	6 (9)
Police, Internet Service Provider or CyberTipline	1 (1)	5 (7)	0
Teacher or counselor	3 (2)	15 (20)	2 (3)
Other	6 (4)	5 (6)	3 (5)
Reasons for not telling ▪	***n* = 63 (47%)**	***n* = 44 (25%)**	***n* = 200 (58%)**
Not serious enough/ Happens all the time	62 (39)	46 (20)	66 (132)
Too scared/ Too embarrassing	10 (6)	14 (6)	14 (28)
Thought might get in trouble or lose Internet access	2 (1)	2 (1)	7 (13)
Other	24 (15)	25 (11)	13 (26)
Missing	3 (2)	14 (6)	3 (6)

▪ Multiple choices possible.

Youth who experienced sexual solicitation or online harassment reported more often than youth without such experiences that they themselves had harassed or sexually solicited somebody else online. For example, among those who had been harassed online, 73 percent reported that they had harassed somebody else online, compared to 45 percent among those who had not been harassed online ($\chi 2$ = 47,020, *df* = 1, $p<.001$). Youth who had harassed somebody else online were less likely to tell someone about sexual solicitation than youth who had not harassed somebody else online, and youth who had sexually solicited somebody else online were less likely to tell someone about online harassment, *Table 2*.

Table 2. Comparison of Youth who Had Told or Not Told about Sexual Solicitation or Online Harassment.

	Sexual solicitation *n* = 134			Online harassment *n* = 174		
	Told someone % (*n*)	Did not tell someone % (*n*)	χ^2 *p* value	Told someone % (*n*)	Did not tell someone % (*n*)	χ^2 *p* value
Incident characteristics	***n* = 71**	***n* = 63**		***n* = 130**	***n* = 44**	
Same perpetrator/s more than once	35 (25)	13 (8)	.003	44 (57)	32 (14)	.161
Went on for two days or longer	48 (34)	30 (19)	.036	69 (90)	52 (23)	.042
More than one perpetrator	18 (13)	25 (16)	.320	28 (36)	21 (9)	.343
Knew perpetrator in person before incident ▪	42 (30)	22 (14)	.014	70 (91)	57 (25)	.109
Youth characteristics	***n* = 71**	***n* = 63**		***n* = 130**	***n* = 44**	
Female	80 (57)	70 (44)	.161	77 (100)	46 (20)	≤.001
Age: 10 to 12 years	4 (3)	6 (4)		12 (15)	18 (8)	
13 to 15 years	45 (32)	37 (23)		48 (62)	48 (21)	
16 or 17 years	51 (36)	57 (36)	.565	41 (53)	34 (15)	.479
Race: White, non-Hispanic	56 (40)	68 (43)		69 (90)	59 (26)	
Black, non-Hispanic	17 (12)	13 (8)		12 (15)	23 (10)	
Hispanic or Latino, any Race	17 (12)	11 (7)		11 (14)	5 (2)	
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1 (1)	5 (3)		2 (3)	2 (1)	
Asian	6 (4)	3 (2)		4 (5)	2 (1)	
Other (includes bi-racial)	1 (1)	0		2 (2)	2 (1)	
Don't know, not ascertainable	1 (1)	0	.490	1 (1)	7 (3)	.112
Youth lives with both biological parents	61 (43)	43 (27)	.041	56 (73)	64 (28)	.385
Annual household income: < $ 25,000	9 (6)	18 (11)		9 (12)	21 (9)	
$ 25,000 or more	78 (55)	73 (46)		79 (102)	73 (32)	
Don't know, missing	14 (10)	10 (6)	.246	12 (16)	7 (3)	.107
Distress about the incident						
Very or extremely upset	25 (18)	18 (11)	.268	48 (62)	16 (7)	< .001
Very or extremely embarrassed	25 (18)	14 (9)	.111	27 (35)	32 (14)	.533
Very or extremely afraid	17 (12)	14 (9)	.678	21 (27)	16 (7)	.482
Reactions caused by incident if upset, embarrassed and afraid [b]	***n* = 46**	***n* = 35**		***n* = 102**	***n* = 31**	
Felt jumpy, irritable, had trouble sleeping	17 (8)	14 (5)	.706	28 (28)	10 (3)	.040
Lost interest in things, emotions shut down	7 (3)	11 (4)	.458	16 (16)	3 (1)	.120
Didn't want to use the Internet	26 (12)	26 (9)	.970	28 (28)	13 (4)	.097
Couldn't stop thinking about the incident	22 (10)	20 (7)	.849	37 (38)	7 (2)	.001
	***n* = 71**	***n* = 63**		***n* = 130**	***n* = 44**	
High offline risk	24 (17)	35 (22)	.163	25 (33)	27 (12)	.805
High amount of Internet use	17 (12)	16 (10)	.873	22 (28)	16 (7)	.421
Online perpetration: Any harassment	65 (46)	83 (52)	.021	72 (94)	73 (32)	.957
Any sexual solicitation	16 (11)	16 (10)	.952	3 (4)	14 (6)	.009

▪ If several perpetrators: the person most responsible for what happened. [b] The questions were asked only to those who were upset, embarrassed and afraid about the incident.

Youth who were exposed to pornography while doing an online search or surfing and who saw pictures of people having sex were significantly more likely to tell someone, *Table 3.* Youth who were distressed about unwanted exposure to pornography and who did not want to use the Internet because of the incident were more likely to tell someone than youth without that reaction, *Table 3*.

Table 3. Comparison of Youth who Had Told or Not Told about Unwanted Exposure to Pornography.

	Unwanted exposure to pornography *n* = 346		
	Told someone % (*n*)	Did not tell someone % (*n*)	χ^2 *p* value
Incident characteristics			
1. Exposure while doing an online search or surfing:	***n* = 111**	***n* = 139**	
Could tell it was an X-rated site before enter	14 (15)	8 (11)	.150
Saw pictures of naked person/people	72 (80)	68 (95)	.523
Saw pictures of people having sex	31 (34)	19 (27)	.040
Saw sexual pictures including violence/animals/other strange things	12 (13)	9 (13)	.544
2. Received email or instant messages with advertisements for or links to X-rated web sites:	***n* = 41**	***n* = 69**	
Could tell from subject line that it contained sexual material	20 (8)	33 (23)	.119
Saw pictures of naked person/people	61 (25)	72 (49)	.230
Saw pictures of people having sex	32 (13)	27 (18)	.557
Saw sexual pictures including violence/animals /other strange things	22 (9)	15 (10)	.334
Knew sender	20 (8)	19 (13)	.960
Youth characteristics	***n* = 146**	***n* = 200**	
Female	56 (81)	44 (87)	.028
Age: 10 to 12 years	17 (25)	12 (24)	
13 to 15 years	47 (69)	42 (83)	
16 or 17 years	36 (52)	47 (93)	.101
Race: White, non-Hispanic	67 (98)	67 (134)	
Black, non-Hispanic	9 (13)	16 (32)	
Hispanic or Latino, any Race	14 (20)	10 (19)	
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	3 (5)	2 (4)	
Asian	1 (2)	5 (9)	
Other (includes bi-racial)	3 (4)	1 (1)	
Don't know, not ascertainable	3 (4)	1 (1)	.033
Youth lives with both biological parents	64 (94)	67 (133)	.682
Annual household income: < $ 25,000	14 (20)	9 (18)	
$ 25,000 or more	73 (106)	81 (161)	
Don't know, missing	14 (20)	11 (21)	.211
Distress about the incident			
Very or extremely upset	27 (39)	20 (39)	.113
Very or extremely embarrassed	31 (45)	24 (47)	.128
Reactions caused by incident if upset, embarrassed and afraid ▪	***n* = 86**	***n* = 101**	
Felt jumpy, irritable, had trouble sleeping	16 (14)	9 (9)	.126
Lost interest in things, emotions shut down	5 (4)	5 (5)	1.000
Didn't want to use the Internet	16 (14)	6 (6)	.023
Couldn't stop thinking about the incident	16 (14)	17 (17)	.919
	***n* = 146**	***n* = 200**	
High offline risk	16 (24)	21 (41)	.339
High amount of Internet use	13 (19)	18 (36)	.210
Online perpetration: Any harassment	63 (92)	69 (138)	.244
Any sexual solicitation	6 (9)	6 (12)	.950

▪ The questions were asked only to those who were upset or embarrassed.

Youth with any kind of distress were significantly more likely to tell a parent about any type of unwanted Internet experience (sexual solicitation: 36% of distressed had told a parent versus 12% of non-distressed; χ^2 = 9.882, *df* = 1, *p* = .002; online harassment: 55% versus 29%; χ^2 = 12.008, *df* = 1, *p* = .001; unwanted exposure to pornography: 36% versus 22%; χ^2 = 6.186, *df* = 1, *p* = .013). Youth who told a friend did not significantly differ from those who did not tell a friend with regard to distress.

Caregivers' Information about Internet Safety and Youth Telling about Unwanted Internet Experiences

About two thirds of parents whose children had reported any type of unwanted Internet experiences said that they had ever received information about child Internet safety, *Table 4*. Youth were *less* likely to tell someone or a parent about unwanted exposure to pornography if the caregiver had received information about child Internet safety, *Table 4*.

Table 4. Caregivers and Child Internet Safety in Relation to Youth Telling about Unwanted Internet Experiences.

	Yes % (*n*)	No % (*n*)	χ^2 *p*-value
Caregiver had ever received information about child Internet safety			
Sexual solicitation, *n* = 134	***n* = 88**	***n* = 46**	
Youth told someone	53 (47)	52 (24)	.892
Youth told parent	21 (18)	15 (7)	.460
Online harassment, *n* = 174	*n* = 110	*n* = 46	
Youth told someone	76 (84)	72 (46)	.511
Youth told parent	43 (47)	38 (24)	.499
Unwanted exposure to pornography, *n* = 346	*n* = 217	*n* = 129	
Youth told someone	38 (82)	50 (64)	.031
Youth told parent	21 (46)	32 (41)	.028
Caregiver had ever talked with child about people on the Internet who might want to talk to them about sex			
Sexual solicitation, *n* = 134	***n* = 125**	***n* = 9**	
Youth told someone	53 (66)	56 (5)	1.000
Youth told parent	19 (24)	11 (1)	1.000
Caregiver had ever talked with child about people on the Internet who might threaten harass or bother them			
Online harassment , *n* = 174	***n* = 157**	***n* = 17**	
Youth told someone	75 (118)	71 (12)	.769
Youth told parent	40 (62)	53 (9)	.284
Caregiver had ever talked with child about seeing X-rated pictures on the Internet			
Unwanted exposure to pornography, *n* = 346	***n* = 314**	***n* = 32**	
Youth told someone	41 (130)	50 (16)	.348
Youth told parent	25 (78)	28 (9)	.683

The caregivers of more than 90% of youth who reported sexual solicitation said that they had ever talked with the child about people on the Internet who might want to talk to them about sex. Likewise, a vast majority of caregivers of youth who reported online harassment or unwanted exposure to pornography had talked with the child about the corresponding Internet risks. Nevertheless, whether the caregiver talked with the child about these specific risks was not related to whether youth told someone about unwanted Internet experiences.

Active and Passive Coping with the Unwanted Internet Situation

Table 5 shows that the most often mentioned response to sexual solicitation was active coping, mainly blocking or warning the person/telling the person to stop. Active coping was also an often mentioned response to online harassment, but about one third of youth used other, not specified, responses. Incident characteristics and most youth characteristics were not related to whether youth used active or passive coping. Distressed youth more often used active coping if they could not stop thinking about the incident, did not want to use the Internet because of the incident (sexual solicitation), or felt jumpy/irritable/had trouble sleeping (online harassment).

Table 6 shows that passive coping - mainly leaving the site or logging off - was the response most often used to unwanted exposure to pornography. Incident and youth characteristics were not related to whether youth used active or passive coping, with a few exceptions. Youth who received email or instant messages with advertisements for or links to X-rated web sites and who saw pictures of a naked person or people were more likely than youth who had not seen such pictures under the same circumstances to use passive coping. Also, youth were more likely to use active coping as response to unwanted exposure to pornography if they had a high amount of Internet use.

Discussion

This study is one of the first that investigated youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences, whether they were distressed or not. The main results can be described as follows:

First, a majority of youth told someone about sexual solicitation or online harassment, but less than half of those with unwanted exposure to pornography told someone. In the EU Kids Online study only those who were bothered were taken into consideration; 77% of youth told someone about online bullying (defined as someone acting in a hurtful or nasty way online) and 53% told someone about seeing sexual images online (not specified whether unwanted or wanted), while sexual solicitation was not investigated (Livingstone et al., 2011). In both studies, youth were more likely to tell a teacher or counselor about online harassment than about other Internet risks. As online and offline harassment or bullying are often intertwined (Hasebrink et al., 2011; Sourander et al., 2010), it could be that some youth feel that teachers or counselors are relevant persons to give them support for both online and offline harassment. Previous findings that youth are reluctant to tell about unwanted Internet experiences because they fear that computer privileges would be taken away (Mishna et al., 2009) are not confirmed by our results. To take away or severely restrict youth's Internet access no longer seems to be a realistic option for caregivers. The more privatized use

Table 5. Active and Passive Coping with Sexual Solicitation and Online Harassment.

	Sexual solicitation			Online harassment		
	n = 134			*n* = 170		
	% (*n*)			% (*n*)		
How the situation ended [a]						
Active coping:						
Blocked or warned the person, told to stop	42 (56)			29 (49)		
Changed contact information	2 (3)			1 (2)		
Called police or told teacher/parent	3 (4)			9 (15)		
Passive coping:						
Stopped without youth doing anything	7 (9)			14 (24)		
Left site, logged off	29 (39)			9 (15)		
Other (not specified)	20 (27)			38 (65)		
Still happening	0			5 (8)		
	Active coping % (*n*)	**Passive coping % (*n*)**	**χ^2 *p* value**	**Active coping % (*n*)**	**Passive coping % (*n*)**	**χ^2 *p* value**
Incident characteristics	***n* = 61**	***n* = 46**		***n* = 64**	***n* = 38**	
Same perpetrator/s more than once	26 (16)	15 (7)	.170	47 (30)	29 (11)	.074
Went on for two days or longer	43 (26)	30 (14)	.197	66 (42)	53 (20)	.194
More than one perpetrator	16 (10)	26 (12)	.219	27 (17)	18 (7)	.349
Knew perpetrator in person before incident [b]	33 (20)	30 (14)	.796	63 (40)	55 (21)	.471
Youth characteristics	***n* = 61**	***n* = 46**		***n* = 64**	***n* = 38**	
Female	80 (49)	74 (34)	.431	75 (48)	63 (24)	.204
Age: 10 to 12 years	5 (3)	4 (2)		13 (8)	16 (6)	
13 to 15 years	39 (24)	50 (23)		53 (34)	42 (16)	
16 or 17 years	56 (34)	46 (21)	.545	34 (22)	42 (16)	.560
Race: White, non-Hispanic	64 (39)	63 (29)		66 (42)	68 (26)	
Black, non-Hispanic	16 (10)	15 (7)		9 (6)	13 (5)	
Hispanic or Latino, any Race	15 (9)	11 (5)		9 (6)	11 (4)	
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	2 (1)	4 (2)		3 (2)	3 (1)	
Asian	3 (2)	4 (2)		8 (5)	3 (1)	
Other (includes bi-racial)	0	2 (1)		0	3 (1)	
Don't know, not ascertainable	0	0	.788	5 (3)	0	.550
Youth lives with both biological parents	56 (34)	48 (22)	.417	59 (38)	63 (24)	.705
Annual household income: < $ 25,000	15 (9)	13 (6)		11 (7)	18 (7)	
$ 25,000 or more	69 (42)	80 (37)		73 (47)	71 (27)	
Don't know, missing	16 (10)	7 (3)	.268	16 (10)	11 (4)	.486
Distress about the incident						
Very or extremely upset	23 (14)	13 (6)	.193	34 (22)	29 (11)	.571
Very or extremely embarrassed	26 (16)	15 (7)	.170	25 (16)	26 (10)	.883
Very or extremely afraid	20 (12)	9 (4)	.115	22 (14)	13 (5)	.274
Reactions caused by incident if upset, embarrassed and afraid [c]	***n* = 39**	***n* = 26**		***n* = 49**	***n* = 31**	
Felt jumpy, irritable, had trouble sleeping	18 (7)	8 (2)	.296	35 (17)	10 (3)	.012
Lost interest in things, emotions shut down	10 (4)	4 (1)	.640	10 (5)	13 (4)	.710
Didn't want to use the Internet	36 (14)	8 (2)	.010	22 (11)	29 (9)	.508
Couldn't stop thinking about the incident	28 (11)	4 (1)	.020	37 (18)	13 (4)	.020
	***n* = 61**	***n* = 46**		***n* = 64**	***n* = 38**	
High offline risk	28 (17)	24 (11)	.645	27 (17)	26 (10)	.978
High amount of Internet use	16 (10)	11 (5)	.415	14 (9)	18 (7)	.558

[a] Multiple choices possible. [b] If several perpetrators: the person most responsible for what happened. [c] The questions were asked only to those who were upset, embarrassed and afraid about the incident.

of the Internet makes it harder to control and the Internet is a natural part of youth's everyday life and they would loose important opportunities without having Internet access.

Second, distressed youth told someone more often about online harassment or serious sexual solicitation. At the same time, distressed youth were more likely to tell a parent than non-distressed youth about all types of unwanted Internet experiences, while there was no such difference for youth who told friends. This underlines results from previous qualitative research that youth turn to parents for problems they perceive as more serious while they seek support from friends for less serious problems (Optem, 2007). It could also be that youth tell friends about unwanted Internet experiences as part of a self-presentational framework in order to create a sense of self by sharing "everyday" life experiences including transgressions (Pasupathi, McLean, & Weeks, 2009). Some youth perceive pornography as "funny" or "cool" (Staksrud & Livingstone, 2009) and simply may want to share the experience with a friend without being distressed. Not all youth who were distressed told someone and not all youth who told someone were distressed. This means that efforts to encourage distressed youth to tell someone in order to get support need to continue. On the other hand, it is of interest to further explore reasons for telling other than the perception of harm, and to put youth's response to unwanted Internet experiences in a broader context that is not only related to risk and harm. This is also underlined by the finding that more serious incidents do not necessarily lead to more telling.

Third, other than distress, few youth characteristics were related to telling someone about unwanted Internet experiences. Females were more likely than males to tell someone about online harassment or unwanted exposure to pornography. High offline risk, namely the experience of offline victimization or high amount of conflict with a caregiver, did not increase the likelihood of telling someone about online victimization, while youth who themselves

Table 6. Active and Passive Coping with Unwanted Exposure to Pornography.

	Unwanted exposure to pornography *n* = 348 % (*n*)		
How the situation ended[a]			
Active coping:			
Blocked or warned the person, told to stop	5 (16)		
Changed contact information	2 (6)		
Called police or told teacher/parent	3 (9)		
Passive coping:			
Stopped without youth doing anything	1 (4)		
Left site, logged off	77 (268)		
Other (not specified)	15 (53)		
Still happening	0.03 (1)		
	Active coping % (*n*)	**Passive coping % (*n*)**	**χ^2 *p* value**
Incident characteristics			
1. Exposure while doing an online search or surfing, *n* = 232	***n* = 13**	***n* = 219**	
Could tell it was an X-rated site before enter	0	11 (24)	.371
Saw pictures of naked person/people	46 (6)	71 (155)	.071
Saw pictures of people having sex	23 (3)	24 (52)	1.000
Saw sexual pictures including violence/animals/other strange things	15 (2)	10 (22)	.630
2. Received email or instant messages with advertisements for or links to X-rated web sites, *n* = 78	***n* = 21**	***n* = 57**	
Could tell from subject line that email contained sexual material	19 (4)	33 (19)	.220
Saw pictures of naked person/people	45 (9)	77 (44)	.007
Saw pictures of people having sex	30 (6)	28 (16)	.869
Saw sexual pictures including violence/animals/other strange things	25 (5)	18 (10)	.518
Knew sender	20 (4)	19 (11)	1.000
Youth characteristics	***n* = 31**	***n* = 266**	
Female	48 (15)	48 (128)	1.000
Age: 10 to 12 years	10 (3)	16 (42)	
13 to 15 years	52 (16)	44 (118)	
16 or 17 years	39 (12)	40 (106)	.601
Race: White, non-Hispanic	68 (21)	67 (179)	
Black, non-Hispanic	16 (5)	12 (33)	
Hispanic or Latino, any Race	10 (3)	12 (31)	
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0	3 (8)	
Asian	0	3 (8)	
Other (includes bi-racial)	3 (1)	1 (3)	
Don't know, not ascertainable	3 (1)	2 (4)	.723
Youth lives with both biological parents	68 (21)	66 (176)	.860
Annual household income: < $ 25,000	10 (3)	11 (28)	
$ 25,000 or more	77 (24)	77 (206)	
Don't know, missing	13 (4)	12 (32)	.982
Distress about the incident			
Very or extremely upset	19 (6)	24 (63)	.589
Very or extremely embarrassed	19 (6)	28 (74)	.315
Very or extremely afraid			
Reactions caused by incident if upset, embarrassed and afraid [b]	***n* =15**	***n* =148**	
Felt jumpy, irritable, had trouble sleeping	7 (1)	12 (18)	1.000
Lost interest in things, emotions shut down	7 (1)	5 (7)	.546
Didn't want to use the Internet	13 (2)	10 (15)	.658
Couldn't stop thinking about the incident	20 (3)	18 (26)	.732
	n=31	**n=266**	
High offline risk	26 (8)	19 (50)	.351
High amount of Internet use	32 (10)	14 (36)	.015

[a] Multiple choices possible. [b] The questions were asked only to those who were upset and embarrassed.

were online harassers or who had sexually solicitated somebody else online were less likely to tell someone about their own online victimization, but only if the type of online perpetration and victimization were not the same. The first finding is in line with previous research (Hasebrink et al., 2011; Leander et al., 2008). The second finding is surprising and it is important to further explore the relations between online perpetration and victimization. The chronological order of these incidents would be of special interest – do youth respond to victimization by perpetration or vice versa?

Fourth, and surprisingly, the hypothesis that Internet safety information for parents and parents' active mediation of Internet safety would be associated with youth telling *more* often about unwanted Internet experiences was not supported. Instead, our results show that youth tell *less* often about unwanted exposure to pornography if their caregiver had received information about child Internet safety. Previous research showed that people are less likely to disclose events that involve transgressions (Pasupathi et al., 2009). It could be that some youth who have been exposed to pornography do not want to disclose the experience because they feel guilty or responsible about what happened. Some youth could be discouraged instead of encouraged to disclose unwanted Internet experiences when caregivers talk with them about specific Internet risks. This stresses the importance of talking with youth about these

things in a non-evaluating way. On the other hand, our results also show that many youth do not tell about unwanted Internet experiences simply because they do not think that the incident was serious enough. It could also be that youth think that they already talked with their parent about such experiences. It is unclear whether youth disclosed or did not disclose as a consequence of having talked with their parents about Internet safety or vice versa. Findings from the EU Kids Online study implied that parents' active mediation of safety (such as giving safety or online behavior advice) and their monitoring of the child's Internet use were generally used *after* a child had experienced something upsetting online in order to prevent further problems (Dürager & Livingstone, 2012).

Finally, the use of active or passive coping strategies when resolving the unwanted Internet situation seems to depend on the type of unwanted incident rather than on incident or youth characteristics. Youth who reported sexual solicitation or online harassment used more active coping strategies while youth who experienced unwanted exposure to pornography used more passive coping strategies. Serious incidents were not more related to active coping than less serious incidents. Also, distressed youth did not use active coping strategies more often than non-distressed youth except when they also had other negative reactions caused by the incident. A relatively high number of youth used "other" – not specified – means to end the unwanted situation. This was the case especially for those who reported online harassment. These findings imply that youth may use strategies that differ from those usually expected. Focus groups with youth in further research could reveal more about these strategies. Surprisingly, a high amount of Internet use was related to more active coping only for youth who reported unwanted exposure to pornography. Most youth responded to unwanted exposure to pornography by using passive coping.

In contrast to our findings, the EU Kids Online study showed that youth who engaged in more online activities independent of type of online risk were less likely to use passive coping strategies such as stopping Internet use for a while and more often employed proactive strategies such as blocking the perpetrator (Hasebrink et al., 2011). Also, higher intensity and duration of harm were related to more passive coping strategies in that study. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that results from the YISS-3 and the EU Kids Online survey cannot be directly compared because online risks and harm were defined in different ways.

Limitations

First, because this study is cross-sectional, it is not always possible to know the chronological order in which things happened. For example, we do not know whether caregivers had received information about child Internet safety or talked with the child about specific Internet risks before or after the child's unwanted Internet experience.

Second, the response category "Other" in the question about how the situation ended was not specified. Thus, no further information was available that allowed for categorizing these answers as active or passive coping. As the amount of "Other" responses was relatively large, especially in the case of online harassment, the results concerning active and passive coping may be misleading.

Third, the response rate is reflective of a general decline in response rates for national telephone surveys (Curtin, Presser, & Singer, 2005; Keeter, Kennedy, Dimock, Best, & Craighill, 2006; Kempf & Remington, 2007) which face the challenges of caller ID, confusion with telemarketers, and survey saturation among the public. However, analyses suggest that the decline in participation has not influenced the validity of most surveys conducted by reputable surveying (Keeter et al., 2006). Keeter et al. (2006) note that compared to government benchmarks, the demographic and social composition of telephone survey samples are quite representative on most measures (p. 777).

Fourth, limiting participants to those that speak English is a drawback of the study.

Fifth, most caregivers of youth who reported unwanted Internet experiences in our study said they had talked with their child about that specific Internet risk. The answers could be influenced by social desirability, resulting in small numbers of caregivers who said that they had *not* talked with their child. Thus, the findings about the interaction between caregiver's Internet safety information and youth's telling about unwanted Internet experiences have to be interpreted with caution.

Conclusions

Two pathways toward a healthy development of youth have been suggested in an integrative model by Kia-Keating, Dowdy, Morgan, and Noam (2011): (a) a protective pathway, which, when risk is mediated or buffered by protection, support or intervention, leads to a positive outcome; (b) a promoting pathway, by which assets lead directly to healthy development. When applied to online risks, both pathways are needed. The following conclusions can be drawn based on findings from this study. Efforts to encourage distressed youth to tell someone about unwanted Internet experiences in order to get protection are needed. Taking away Internet privileges no longer seems to be an effective way of trying to protect youth with unwanted Internet experiences. It is unclear whether Internet safety information for parents and parents' active mediation of Internet safety resulted in youth telling more often about unwanted Internet experiences. A promoting pathway would enhance youth's coping strategies so that they are able to use a variety of strategies. It is important to find both ways to support youth who have been harmed by unwanted Internet experiences and to encourage youth to find their own adequate ways to respond to these experiences, whether they are distressed or not.

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About author(s)

Gisela Priebe, PhD, is a researcher at the University of Lund, Sweden, and a lecturer at the Linnæus University, Sweden. She received her PhD in child and adolescent psychiatry from the University of Lund in 2009. Her research focuses on youth sexuality, sexual abuse, Internet behaviour, sexual exploitation of youth and prostitution.

Kimberly J. Mitchell, PhD, is a research associate professor of psychology at the Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) at the University of New Hampshire. She received her PhD in experimental psychology from the University of Rhode Island in 1998. Her current areas of research include youth Internet victimization and juvenile prostitution, with particular emphasis on the developmental and mental health impact of such experiences.

David Finkelhor, prof., PhD, is director of Crimes against Children Research Center, codirector of the Family Research Laboratory and professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire. He has been studying the problems of child victimization, child maltreatment and family violence since 1977. He is well known for his conceptual and empirical work on the problem of child sexual abuse. He has also written about child homicide, missing and abducted children, children exposed to domestic and peer violence, and other forms of family violence. In his recent work, he has tried to unify and integrate knowledge about all diverse forms of child victimization in a field he has termed developmental victimology. He is editor and author of 11 books and more than 200 journal articles and book chapters.