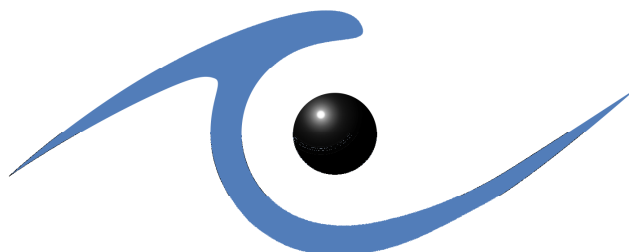


Meldpunt Kinderpornografie op Internet

The Dutch Hotline against child sexual abuse images on the Internet



Annual report 2008

Meldpunt Kinderporno/The Hotline against child abuse images on the Internet is supported financially by the Dutch Ministry of Justice and the European Commission.
Amsterdam, March 2009



Amsterdam, July 2009

Every child sexual abuse image is based on the abuse of a child. Even after the physical abuse has stopped, the abuse does not stop for the victims because the proof of it will forever be on the Internet.

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Meldpunt Kinderporno/ the Dutch Hotline against child sexual abuse images on the Internet 2008

Compared to 2007, the number of reports on child pornography in 2008 increased by almost ten per cent. It has been quite a hectic year for the Dutch Hotline against child sexual abuse images (hereafter: Meldpunt) with extra activities such as the conference on Grooming¹, the Cyber Groomer campaign, the many presentations and workshops done by Meldpunt. The hotline also took part in discussions with providers, popular teenage websites, police and the staff of the Ministry of Justice. This together with an intensive political lobby fully occupied the team of Meldpunt.

Even more than in recent years Meldpunt has taken a proactive attitude towards seeking cooperation with all parties within its field of action. In the past year the Cyber Groomer campaign contributed to an increase in the number of reports via the www.Helpwanted.nl site. Questions like 'How do I tell this my parents?' or 'I don't know what to do anymore!' are desperate cries out of emails from teenagers.

Reports on child pornography

In 2008 Meldpunt received a total of 8,155 reports. In comparison with 2007, this is an increase of 728. Of these reports 3,356 were prosecutable images according to article 240b, the child pornography article of the Dutch Penal Code. The largest portion of these reports concerned images hosted on foreign sites, such as the United States (1,250), Asia (570), EU countries (452) and Russia (189). Meldpunt submitted 532 reports of distribution of child abuse images from the Netherlands to the Child Sexual Abuse Images and Paedosexual Crimes Team of the National Police Services (KLPD). Compared to 2007, when there were 750, the number of reports did decrease somewhat, however, it still is considerably higher than in previous years, when the number was less than 100. So Meldpunt still finds this a disturbing development. The major part of the images concerns children from 0 to 10 years of age. In recent years Meldpunt has noticed the nature of the images becoming more violent and the victims younger.

Helpwanted

In 2007 Meldpunt launched the website www.helpwanted.nl. This was induced by an increase in the number of complaints about sexual abuse through profiling sites, chat and webcam. This website is intended for young people, who can report online sexual abuse here. In 2008 Meldpunt received a total of 255 reports via the website [Helpwanted.nl](http://www.Helpwanted.nl). About half (47%) of the reports are related to sexual abuse by way of chat: young internet users who were blackmailed by the threat of their sexually tinted images being spread on the internet in order to enforce sexual contact off line. So as to be able to better advise these young people Meldpunt intends to implement a chat application on the website www.helpwanted.nl in 2009.

The remaining reports were about violating portrait rights, cyber bullying, reports of child sexual abuse images on websites and peer-to-peer-networks (for example Limewire), and adult pornography.

¹Grooming is the process by which an adult or a young adult person, the 'groomer', approaches a minor and by way of false pretences tries (step by step) to win the child over. The ultimate goal is to sexually abuse the minor.

Conference on Online Grooming

On 22 May 2008, Meldpunt organised a conference on online grooming. Meldpunt seized this opportunity to jointly discuss ways of improving the battle against online grooming with various parties such as the police, children's rights organisations, Internet Service Providers, government, political parties and scientists. A report of this conference as well as the speech made by the Dutch Minister of Justice Hirsch Ballin can be found (in Dutch) on www.meldpunt-kinderporno.nl. In this speech the Minister expresses his gratitude to Meldpunt for its work and grants it subsidy at least until 2012.

Cyber groomer campaign

In the Spring of 2008 Meldpunt started a major campaign to make young people aware of the grooming phenomenon. The launch took place during the conference on online grooming. Part of the campaign consisted of a short film which had been developed under the authority of Meldpunt. Following on the launch this film was broadcasted by several television channels like MTV/TMF for some weeks. The campaign caused a lot of discussion, consequently the subject of grooming got a lot of attention.

Acknowledgements

Meldpunt would like to thank her sponsors and donors for their contributions to Meldpunt and for the realisation of the conference on online grooming, namely KPN, XS4ALL, Ilse Media and SIDN. Meldpunt also thanks the broadcasting stations who, free of charge or against a reduced tariff, have broadcast the television spot about online grooming as well as everybody who has given more publicity to our websites and the Cyber groomer campaign by placing banners or report buttons.

Organisation

Meldpunt Kinderporno/the 'Dutch Hotline for the Prevention of Child sexual abuse images on the Internet' was founded in 1995. There were calls to end child sexual abuse images on the Internet from the Internet industry and society at large. The police were then incapable of fulfilling this role. A number of representatives of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and individual Internet users subsequently took the initiative to set up the Hotline. The Minister of Justice at the time, Mrs. W. Sorgdrager, officially sanctioned the initially informal alliance in June 1996. As of 1998, Meldpunt has an office from which it carries out its activities.

Apart from the police, the privately initiated Meldpunt is the only organisation in the Netherlands to occupy itself with the fight against child sexual abuse images on the Internet and child sexual abuse online. Meldpunt does this by looking into the reports of child pornography that internet users come across on the Internet. A report can be made by filling in a form on the website www.meldpunt-kinderporno.nl. Besides reports from internet users, Meldpunt also receives reports from fellow hotlines that are connected to INHOPE (www.inhope.org). Since 2007 Meldpunt also receives reports through the website www.helpwanted.nl, a website, aimed specially at teenagers. Here young people can report online sexual abuse.

Objectives

- Combating the distribution of images of child sexual abuse. The goal of Meldpunt is to minimise the distribution of child sexual abuse images on the Internet. Reports about other criminal offences on the Internet are not part of its objective. Where possible, Meldpunt refers these reports to the proper authorities. Meldpunt does not actively seek out child abuse images but acts exclusively on the basis of reports from Internet users, ISPs and other (foreign) Hotlines. Active detection is a matter for the police.

- Prevention of child sexual abuse online. Meldpunt fulfils an important role in the prevention of child sexual abuse online. It also provides education to children, teenagers and parents about the use of the Internet through websites such as www.surfsafe.nl and www.helpwanted.nl and www.cyberlokkers.nl. On Helpwanted children can report child sexual abuse online.

Management and staff

The management board consists of three persons. Each board member has his or her own expertise and knowledge of a specific operational area of Meldpunt.

Chairman: Mr. J. Mulder

Treasurer: Mr. T. Erents

Board member: J.M. Wams

Four employees implement the activities of Meldpunt.

Subsidy

Meldpunt receives subsidies to support its activities from the Ministry of Justice and the European Commission via the *Safer Internet Plus Plan*. This programme intends to stimulate safe use of the Internet and new online technologies. Moreover, their goal is to reduce the supply of illegal content on the Internet. In December 2008, a joint request for subsidy from the National Awareness Node and Meldpunt has been granted by the European Commission. The National Awareness Node (part of the European Safer Internet Programme) also constitutes part of the Digibewust (Digital Awareness) campaign. The objective of the Awareness Node is the promotion of safe internet use and new, online communication technologies, particularly for children, and the prevention of illegal and harmful content.

Collaboration with the police

Meldpunt assists the police in the combat against the distribution of child abuse images by:

- sending on to the Child Sexual Abuse Images and Paedosexual Crime Unit of the National Police Services (KLPD), reports of images of child sexual abuse distributed from the Netherlands;
- sending on to the appropriate INHOPE Hotline, reports of images of child sexual abuse distributed from abroad.

The task of the police is not only to detect (digital) child pornography, but also to trace child abusers and producers, distributors and possessors of child abuse images and to identify the victims in the images. They do this of their own accord, but also in response to reports from citizens directly and from Meldpunt. Identification of the victims and perpetrators has the highest priority for the police. International collaboration is of great importance in this. The collaboration between the KLPD and Meldpunt is solid, since both parties keep each other informed about their mutual activities. The KLPD takes on all the cases Meldpunt passes on.

In April 2006 the Cyber crime Hotline (www.meldpuntcybercrime.nl) was set up by KLPD, an online police Hotline where citizens can report images of child sexual abuse on the Internet and where minors can report when they have been approached sexually on or via the Internet. The Cyber crime Hotline also deals with reports about radical or terrorist utterances publicised and distributed via the Internet.

Staff welfare

Every year, the staff of Meldpunt see thousands of images and videos in which children are depicted being sexually abused. Because of the onerous aspects of the work and the trauma this work can cause, the Meldpunt staff receive structural as well as on demand attention from a psychologist, to ensure its welfare.

Legislation

According to the Dutch Law, child pornography is any image of a sexual nature in which someone is depicted who has apparently not reached the age of eighteen. Distribution, public display, manufacture, import, transit, export or possession of these images is punishable. The concerning article of law also applies to digital and virtual images.

Article 240b of the Dutch Penal Code reads as follows:

1. A term of imprisonment of not more than four years or a fine of the fifth category shall be imposed on persons who distribute, publicly display, manufacture, import, transit, export or possess an image or a data carrier containing an image of a sexual act, in which a person who has apparently not reached the age of eighteen is involved or apparently involved.
2. A term of imprisonment of not more than six year or a fine of the fifth category shall be imposed upon persons who, by profession or custom, commit any of the serious offences defined in section 1.

This article has been drawn up in order to prevent that:

1. a minor is put in a situation in which he/she is used for the creation of images in which a sexual activity is involved according to article 240b of the Penal Code, in which he/she is involved alone and/or with others;
2. images to which article 240b of the Penal Code applies, are distributed (further) after production, publicly displayed or kept as property;
3. minors are encouraged or seduced into taking part in sexual behaviour and conduct that may become part of a subculture that promotes the sexual abuse of children.

Non-prosecutable according to Dutch law (art.240b) are:

1. Fictional texts about the sexual abuse of children;
2. Drawings of the sexual abuse of children;
3. Nudism and so-called 'modelling sites' with children.

Virtual child pornography

Although virtual child pornography has been prosecutable by law since 2002, it has been hard to get a person prosecuted. The main reason for this: there are no real children abused. The first case was in 2008: the Court in 's Hertogenbosch sentenced a 52-year-old-male to two years probation together with a ten year trial period for an 'instructive film' that was computer generated. In this film an imaginary girl (computer animated) can be seen to perform sexual acts on an invented (digital) man. According to the judges children do not distinguish between this film and films with real people acting in it. The conviction was unique in the Netherlands, because judges have never before judged virtual child porn with children in the leading role as a penal act.

Proposals of new laws

In October 2007 the Dutch Minister of Justice Mr. Hirsch Ballin, signed the Council of Europe Convention against the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. This treaty includes the following important alterations to be implemented in Dutch Law:

-Watching child pornography becomes punishable. After the introduction of this amendment people who pay to watch real-time offered child pornography can be prosecuted (and the penalty is a maximum of four years imprisonment). From their payment details or login data can be deduced whether a person has intentionally been watching child pornography. Then there is no need anymore to prove possession of child pornography, for example on hard disk, usb stick, dvd, etc.

- *'Grooming' will be made punishable. Due to the stipulation the 'groomer' can be prosecuted as soon as he records an encounter with a child. The term of imprisonment on this offence is two years maximum.*

The legislation has recently been submitted to the Dutch Lower House of Parliament for debate, the decision is expected for 2009.

Increasing penalties

From a sample survey carried out by the Dutch newspaper the Algemeen Dagblad in 2008, it appeared that despite new more stringent guidelines issued by the Public Prosecutor's Office, possessors of child pornography did not get any higher sentences. In 2007 the Public Prosecutor's Office decided that penalties for possession and distribution of child pornography must increase. The producers of child pornography should be given even higher penalties. Community Service is no longer fitting, possessors should expect to get between ten months to two years imprisonment. Minister of Justice, Mr. Ballin had asked for these more stringent guidelines.

The newspaper looked at 25 recent verdicts, in which producers and distributors of child pornography stood trial. In none of these 25 cases the suspect received a verdict fitting the new guidelines. In 17 cases the suspect received Community Service, in seven cases the judge gave a (suspended) sentence of one to six months detention. One man was sentenced to 18 months detention (half of which was suspended): he not only was in the possession of forbidden material, but had also produced and distributed child pornography himself.

Victims

Images of child sexual abuse

Meldpunt advocates speaking of 'child sexual abuse images' in stead of 'child pornography'. In the opinion of Meldpunt this reflects more accurately the seriousness of the crime. The term porn or child pornography implicates a degree of consent which certainly cannot be the case where child sexual abuse is concerned. Internationally, the term 'child abuse image' is also preferred increasingly above 'child pornography'. However, the name 'Meldpunt Kinderporno' will continue to exist for the time being because 'child pornography' is a legal term in the penal code.

The list of recommendations by the national police project to improve combating child pornography, published in December 2008, also discusses the use of the term child pornography. According to this report 'child pornography' reminds one too much of looking at dirty pictures, whereas it is a matter of serious physical and mental violence against children. The authors advocate speaking of recorded images of child sexual abuse.

Victim identification

Images of the sexual abuse of children are visual recordings of the sexual abuse of a child and are evidence of the crime committed. The children that appear in these images are exposed to humiliating, degrading and very frightening acts of a criminal nature. In some images they are beaten, exposed to sexual torture or subjected to bestiality. There are no images of child sexual abuse that are produced without the child having suffered or being exploited.

The database of the victim identification programme (CRIS) of the American National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) contains 18,558,977 images. In October 2008 only 1210 girls and 450 boys had been identified.

Possible causes for the low number of victims that are identified:

- many children that have been sexually abused keep this to themselves;
- the stakeholders involved do not work together sufficiently;
- investigation is primarily aimed at the perpetrator.

Unfortunately, there still is insufficient knowledge about the identity of the children that are being abused sexually for the making of this imagery. Of the images present in the CRIS database 45% of the children are in puberty, 49% in pre-puberty and 6% is a baby. Most children are white. Many of the images have been made within the children's own social circle.

In December 2008, the Chiefs of Police Council announced that the Dutch police force intends to redirect its focus of attention from downloader to victims and 'perpetrator groups' (producers of the material). The police will pursue the line of investigation further in order to get at child abusers, producers of child pornography and commercial distributors, who in the past could not be touched. The police will also make agreements with the Public Prosecutor's Office about the balance between the different investigations efforts and about improving the information position where child pornography is concerned. Pursuing the line of investigation further means a greater demand on capacity and time within the police force, but it will also mean more chance of saving victims from a situation of serious abuse. This national project will be a strong impetus for research and development and for the introduction of a standard technology at a national level. Furthermore, the national project will also in other areas lead to improvements, which will result in its final purpose, a more targeted way to combat child pornography. This approach involves regional as well as national police forces and a team of experts on child pornography from the National Police Services Agency.

The following newspaper report shows the enormous quantities of material that can be confiscated. Digital detectives drown in mountains of data they have to investigate.

08.12.2008

Paedophile was in possession of 50 million 'illegal images'

SLIEDRECHT/ROTTERDAM – The amount of child pornography confiscated in the house of Dirk-Jan P. (41) from Sliedrecht last July goes beyond anyone's imagination. At first the police already talked about 'millions' of photos and films, but the latest estimation by the Justice Department amounts from thirty to fifty million files.

This was declared by the Public Prosecutor Mrs. M. Spoomaker before the Rotterdam court of justice, Monday morning. There, only the procedural side of P's criminal case was subject. It may take several months before the content of the case will be treated, Mrs. Spoomaker admitted.

"We took seven terabytes of digital material at P's house. The criminal investigation department and the Dutch Forensic Institute are still in the middle of examining and classifying all this."

Seven terabytes equal seven thousand gigabytes. That is a total capacity of approximately 14 average contemporary pc's or almost 1,500 DVD's.

Source: AD.nl

Grooming

Grooming is the process by which an adult or young adult person, the 'groomer', approaches a minor and tries to win over the child (step by step) on false pretexts. The ultimate goal is to sexually abuse the minor. Grooming also occurs outside the Internet, thus in the 'real world' but particularly on the Internet, the possibilities for this type of abuse are immense. The Internet makes it easy to make contact with children in a relatively safe manner via, for example, chat-rooms.

Grooming phases

- Phase 1: start from a state of dependency
- Phase 2: 'equality'
- Phase 3: being special
- Phase 4: to share secrets
- Phase 5: sex

The perpetrator approaches the child in a friendly manner and tries to make contact by showing interest in hobby's, toys, children's games, pets and other things children are interested in. Thus a strong relationship is being built. Gradually, the perpetrator will add a sexual dimension to his interest, in which he tries to provoke the child to indecent or sexual behaviour. Although many perpetrators claim that the child does this out of its own free will, the perpetrator actually abuses his experience, greater knowledge and authority he has, for reason of being an adult only.

Which children are most at risk?

- Children between the age of 11 and 17
- Girls and homosexual boys
- Children who are very curious about sex
- Children who feel a need for a bond with another person/who are in need of personal attention
- Children who are lonely and/or depressive
- Children who have a bad relationship with their parents/educators
- Children who have been sexually abused before

In many cases children do not report to the police. A lot of victims blame themselves for the difficult situation they are in. Shame also is an important factor, since it is about images in which he or she is seen naked and this material is often being used by the groomer to blackmail them.

The number of children and young people being approached on the Internet with the ultimate purpose to sexually abuse them, is hard to establish. However, research into children's experiences on the Internet show a disturbing image. The idea of the 'dirty old man' still exists. In reality the perpetrators do not always seem to meet these preconceptions anymore.

By searching only for the 'dirty old man' the majority of the offenders (young perpetrators and/or professional criminals like the so-called 'loverboys') will not be caught.

17.12.2008

Pimps from the Hague were recruiting on the Internet

AMSTERDAM – Two brothers from the Hague have lured dozens of young women into prostitution via the Internet. This was declared by the police, who arrested the duo (22 and 26) last week.

This was in AD Monday. According to the newspaper the arrests were the result of a one-year investigation by the Hague and Amsterdam police. The two are suspected of recruiting their victims on the Internet, by way of popular social networking sites like Hyves, Netlog.com and Partyflock.nl. On Netlog one of the brothers' profile was still active Monday morning, but since then the page has been removed.

Grooming

The duo is said to have made contact with hundreds of young females, who they cosseted substantially. Gradually they drove their victims into prostitution, after which they demanded high amounts of 'protection money'. This non-violent approach is known as 'grooming'.

Besides the two brothers a third suspect was arrested in Nootdorp. The investigation into the prostitution network is still ongoing. The police are looking for more victims.

Source: Nu.nl

On 25 October 2007, the Minister of Justice Mr. Hirsch Ballin, signed the Convention of the Council of Europe to protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The Convention is viewed as an important step in the fight against the sexual abuse of minors and provides that looking at child abuse images and grooming children on the Internet both are offences. As soon as the Netherlands have the law in order, the Convention can be ratified. When five countries have ratified the Convention, it comes into effect. At the end of 2008 only Greece had ratified, but 32 countries did already sign.

Multi-stakeholder approach

Meldpunt advocates setting up a '**Safe Internet for children**' coalition. A multi-stakeholder approach, like CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) in the UK, Meldpunt deems highly desirable in the Netherlands. Within this approach the police, children's rights organisations and youth care providers, ICT companies, government and other interested parties work together to develop a comprehensive approach for the protection of children from sexual abuse. Meldpunt has the following recommendations for the three groups involved:

Politics and government:

- legislation to prevent sexual abuse online as well as offline
- has the task to provide education on the safe use of the Internet

Children and parents:

- should learn how to safely use new technologies

Chat providers/mobile operators:

- should be involved in the investigation into the online behaviour of children
- should provide more information about the safe use of the Internet to their customers
- should pay more attention to the protection of children

Activities

The activities of Meldpunt consist of:

- Receiving and processing reports
- Awareness raising
- Informing the media
- Collaboration with Dutch organisations in the field, government and non government
- Lobbying activities, primarily aimed at the political establishment
- International collaboration with other INHOPE hotlines, police networks and EU connections.

Receiving and processing reports

The primary task of Meldpunt is the processing of reports. The majority of these reports come directly from Internet users. The other reports come from associated Inhope hotlines. Meldpunt advises reporters against actively detecting themselves, however well-intentioned. Detection remains a police matter.

Report procedure

1. An Internet user reports online using the reporting form on Meldpunt's website: www.meldpunt-kinderporno.nl or www.helpwanted.nl
2. Meldpunt receives the report.
3. Meldpunt staff categorise and process the report. They check whether the material is covered by article 240b section 1 of the Dutch Penal Code. If there is any doubt about whether the images constitute a criminal offence, they consult with the Child Abuse Images and Paedosexual Crimes Team of the KLPD
4. If the reported material is prosecutable, the staff trace the origin of the material to where it is being distributed from.
5. If the material is being distributed from the Netherlands or from a country that has no associated Hotline, then the information is sent to the Child Abuse Images and Paedosexual Crimes Team of the KLPD. In the first case, it is a Dutch matter that falls under the responsibility of the KLPD. In the second case, the KLPD will deal with the matter via Interpol or otherwise.
6. If the material is not being distributed from the Netherlands but from another country with an INHOPE Hotline, then the information is sent to the hotline concerned.
7. On request and if possible, Meldpunt informs the reporter about the follow-up to his or her report.

If there is no question of a report pursuant to article 240b of the Dutch Penal Code, then Meldpunt refers the reporter to the proper authorities. In many cases, these are other hotlines, such as the Cyber Crime Hotline, Stichting Meld Misdaad Anoniem (Report Crime Anonymously), the Discrimination Hotline or the Advice and Child Abuse Reporting Centre or to the police local to the reporter. Appendix 1 consists of a reporting diagram in which all steps are described in order.

Awareness Raising

Meldpunt regularly receives reports and/or requests from parents and children who have been confronted with unwanted (sexual) experiences on the Internet. The better children and adults are informed about the pitfalls of the Internet, the fewer victims will be made. This is why Meldpunt pays a great deal of attention to awareness raising on its websites www.surfsafe.nl and www.helpwanted.nl. Since 1999 the website www.surfsafe.nl has been informing children of primary school age and their parents/educators. The website www.helpwanted.nl is aimed at youngsters above the age of 12.

Teenagers like to experiment and take risks. For example, in exploring their own sexuality, they are not always aware of the consequences of their (online) behaviour. When they get into trouble, they often dare not tell their parents, friends or other confidential advisors. Teenagers can turn to www.helpwanted.nl if they have had bothersome sexual experiences online. Using the reporting form, they can report their problems (anonymously). The staff of Meldpunt subsequently process the report.

Cyber Groomer Campaign

On 22 May of this year, during the Grooming Conference, Meldpunt launched the Cyber Groomer Campaign. Purpose of the campaign is 'creating awareness amongst young people about the grooming phenomenon'. An important part of the campaign is a video in which a girl bites back literary (by biting off the cyber groomer's finger).

The campaign caused a lot of discussion in the media (such as newspaper De Pers and TV program RTL Boulevard), but especially on websites that youngsters visit such as the Cyber Groomer Channel on You Tube and the platform for discussion on Go Supermodel. More than a thousand youngsters took actively part in the discussions on the various forums and almost 53,000 people visited www.cyberlokker.nl. The video has been watched on You Tube more than 50,000 times. Also the terms 'cyberlokker' (cyber groomer) and 'cyberlokkers' have been actively searched on. These two search terms now have already more than 4,000 hits.

Unfortunately, the discussion also brought forward a complaint. A parent found the video broadcasted on TMF too shocking due to its violent nature. As a result of this complaint, the Dutch Advertising Code Commission (a self-regulatory body of the media and advertising industry) judged the commercial according to the rules drawn up for this. Regrettably, the commission ruled the commercial to be too shocking for 12-18 years old and told the media concerned to stop broadcasting the commercial.

Due to this controversy, the advertising agency Lbi Oer together with Meldpunt had research done into the chat behaviour of young people between the age of 12 and 18 and into the effect of the commercial. For this 1,000 young people in that age category were interviewed.

Teenagers claim to be aware of the dangers of chatting with strangers. However, one out of five youngsters has arranged to meet face-to-face. According to this research, 9 per cent of the boys and 27 per cent of the girls have been chatting with someone who seemed nice initially, but turned to be unreliable later. In spite of the risks 18 per cent of the boys and 23 per cent of the girls have arranged to meet someone they got to know via the Internet face-to-face.

As a result of the Cyber Groomer Campaign Stichting Koei has developed educational material for secondary schools. For more information: www.stichtingkoei.nl

National collaboration

Organisations with whom Meldpunt consults regularly include:

ECPAT (campaigns against commercial sexual exploitations of children), www.Ecpat.nl

Digibewust and Digivaardig (Dutch Awareness node), www.digibewust.nl

Meldpunt Cyber crime (Police Hotline), www.meldpuntcybercrime.nl

NICC (National Infrastructure Cyber Crime), www.samentegencybercrime.nl

Children's Helpline (Youth care Agency), www.kindertelefoon.nl

My Child Online (Expertise Centre Youth and Media), www.mijnkindonline.nl

The Child Consumer (the Child Consumer Foundation), www.kinderconsument.nl

Expertise Centre Media Literacy, www.mediawijsheidexpertisecentrum.nl

De Waag Clinic (treatment sex offenders), www.hoevenstichting.nl

Lobbying activities

In 2008 Meldpunt has again consulted regularly with Members of Parliament and the policy advisors of the Ministry of Justice so as to put and keep the problem of child sexual abuse (on the Internet) on the political agenda. On the occasion of the General Consultation of the Lower House Committee for Justice, announced to be held at the beginning of December 2008, Meldpunt wrote in collaboration with ECPAT-the Netherlands a letter with recommendations. These recommendations can be found at the end of this annual report.

Filtering

In a report published in 2008, The Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) of the Ministry of Justice concluded that the police had no legal authority to block internet pages with child pornography on it. Since the police had no authority to determine what ISPs should filter or block, the Covenant with ISPs UPC, Scarlet and Kliksafe was not valid.

Moreover, according to the report blocking was not effective.

Momentarily, as part of a follow-up research into the possibilities of filtering, the Ministry of Justice is talking with all ISPs and other parties involved, among which Meldpunt. The research is being carried out by Andersson Elffers Felix in cooperation with the Information House. One of the possibilities being investigated is for an independent foundation to draw up a black list and keep it up to date.

Although filtering alone does not solve the problem of the distribution of child sexual abuse images, Meldpunt finds it very important that ISPs show society that they play an active part in the combat against the distribution of child pornography. To achieve this Meldpunt is talking with ISPs and Hosting Providers.

Media

In 2008 Meldpunt was also regularly asked to comment or respond to the news. The reporting in the media primarily concerned:

- increased distribution of child sexual abuse images;
- discussions about community service orders for the possession of child abuse images;
- tightening of the law and increased penalties;
- discussions about the blocking of child abuse images websites by Internet Providers;
- grooming and online sexual abuse of children.

Newsletter

Meldpunt publishes a digital newsletter that contains background information about online sexual child abuse and about Meldpunt's activities.

International collaboration

INHOPE

Meldpunt works closely with the members of INHOPE (www.inhope.org). INHOPE is an association of a large number of European and non-European hotlines that was founded in 1999, with Meldpunt as one of the founders. In 2008 five new members joined the INHOPE network. It now consists of 33 members. In 2008 Meldpunt received a Turkish delegation for a two-day-visit, the purpose of which was the transfer of knowledge.



Countries associated with INHOPE:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus (2 members), Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (3 members), Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy (2 members), Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Because the Internet is a worldwide phenomenon, INHOPE is striving to expand its network. The more countries join, the better the distribution of child abuse images can be prevented. Currently, there are talks with Russia, Turkey and South Africa about joining.

The function of INHOPE:

- send through reports to the INHOPE member of a hosting country
- support new Hotlines
- inform policy-makers, particularly at an international level
- exchange knowledge and expertise

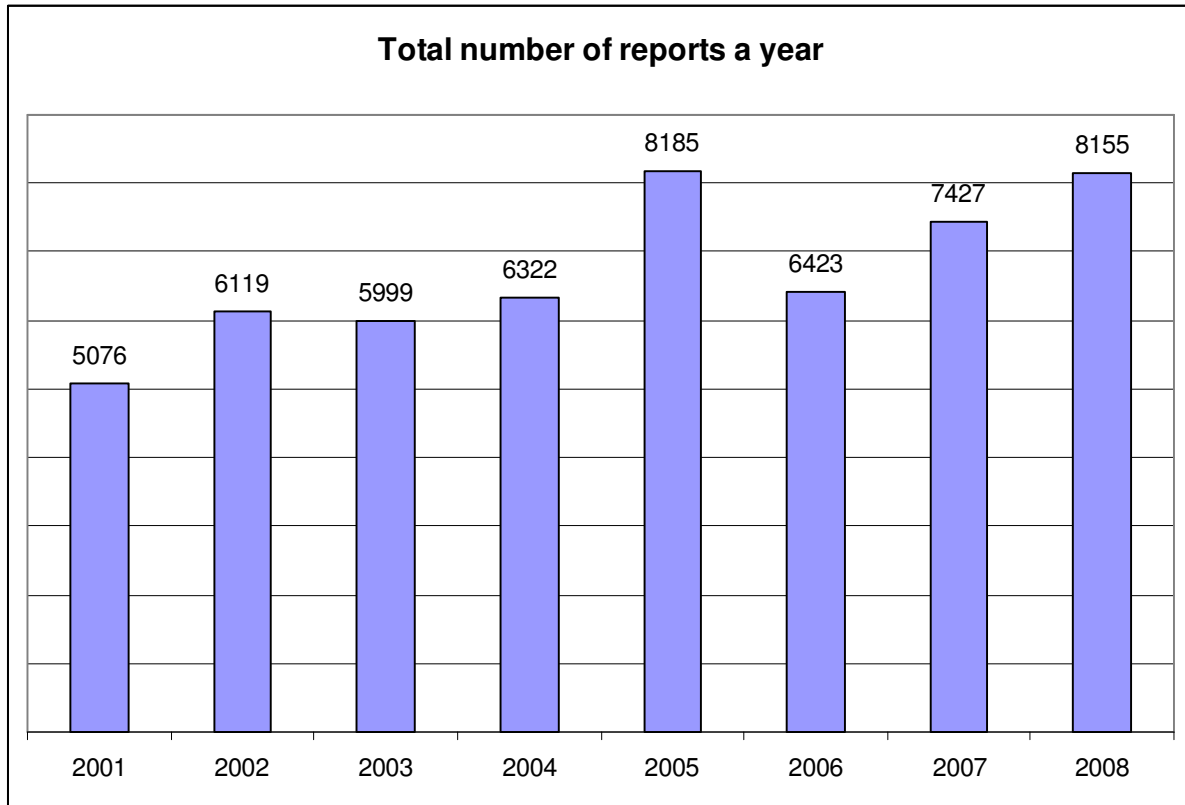
In 2008, Meldpunt forwarded 1,884 reports to Hotlines that are members of INHOPE. Meldpunt received 1,204 reports from the INHOPE network. The various Hotlines look at these reports and determine whether these are about child pornography according to national law. If this is the case, the reports are transferred to the police contact of the hotline concerned.

Other international organisations with whom Meldpunt has contact on a regularly basis are amongst others:

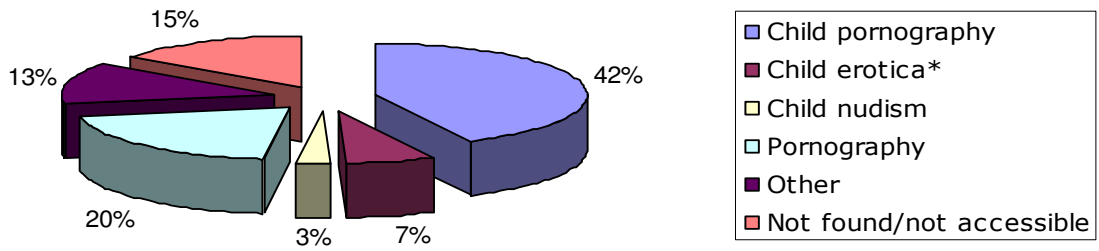
Save the Children (international children's right organisation), www.savethechildren.org
European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/ubdex_en.htm
Child exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), www.ceop.gov.uk
Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography (FCAP)
International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC), www.icmec.org

Figures and trends

In 2008 Meldpunt received a total of 8,155 reports. Based on article 240b section 1 of the Penal Code, 3,356 unique reports contained prosecutable material of a child pornographic nature. Of these, 532 were hosted in the Netherlands, 452 in EU countries, 1,250 in the United States, 570 in Asia and 189 in Russia. Meldpunt passed on to the Child abuse images and Paedosexual Crimes Team of the National Police Services Agency (KLPD) a total of 532 reports of child sexual images distributed from the Netherlands.

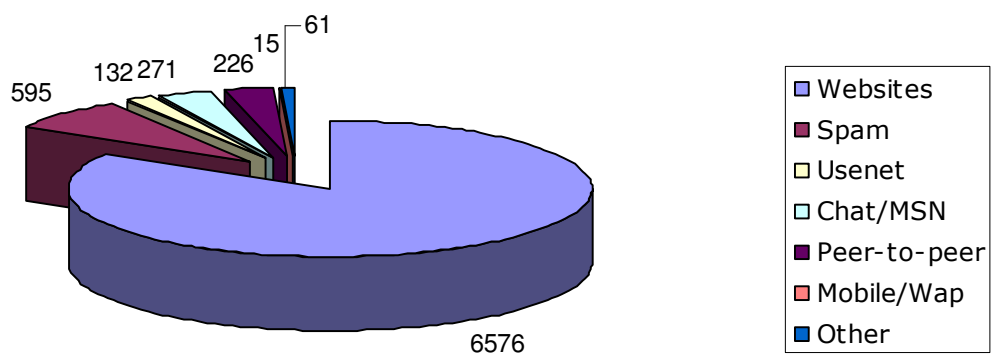


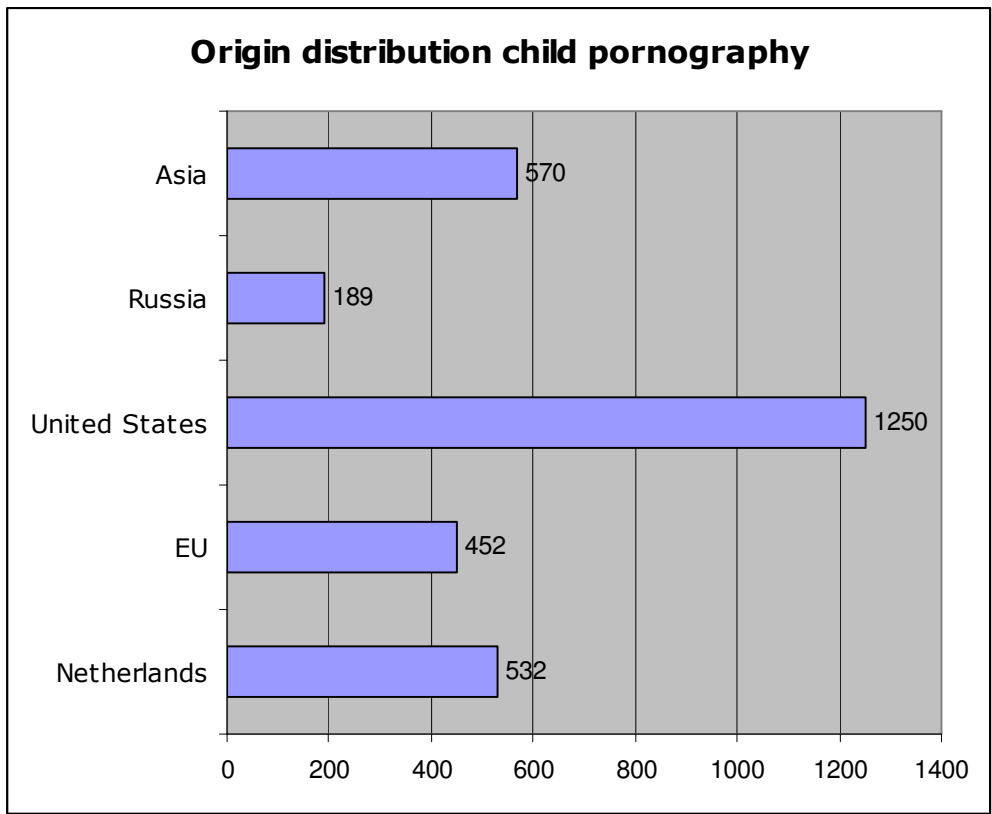
Reports after category



* so-called 'modelling sites' on which children (scantily dressed) are depicted in provocative poses, often emphasizing their genitalia.

Internet services

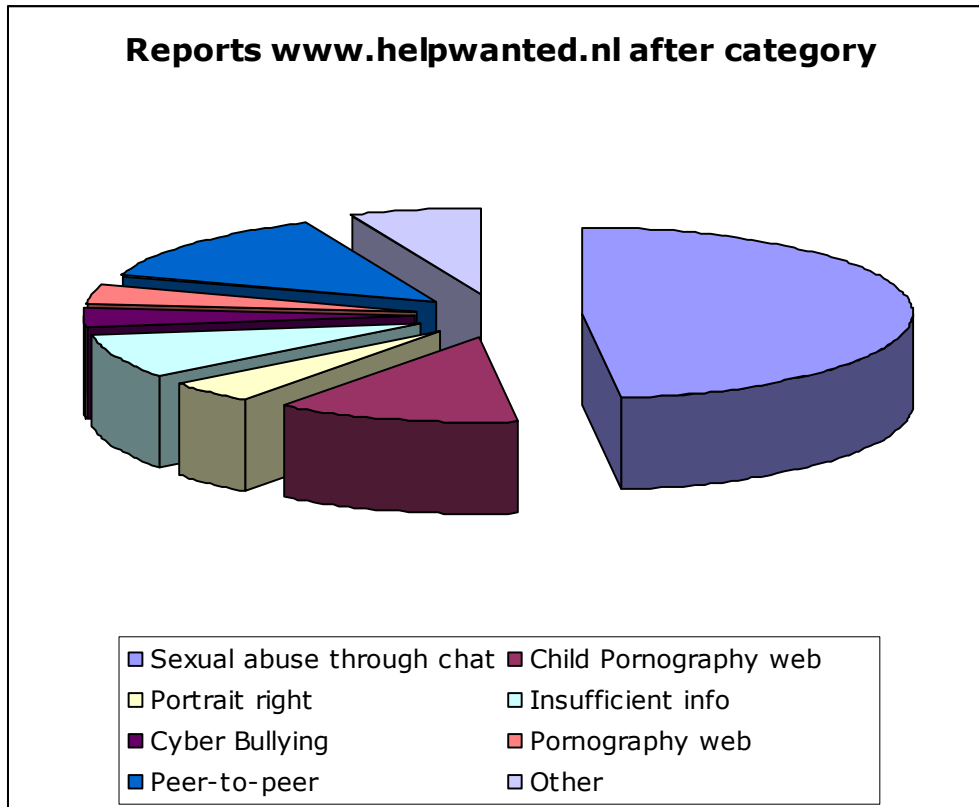




In 2008 Meldpunt has sent on 1,884 reports to hotline members associated with INHOPE. Other reports of child sexual abuse distributed from abroad, were sent on to the Child Abuse Images and Paedosexual Crimes Team of the National Police Services Agency (KLPD). Meldpunt received in total 1,204 reports from other hotlines.

HelpWanted

Through the website www.helpwanted.nl, Meldpunt received 255 reports from young internet users who for instance had been blackmailed into having sexual contact by threatening to distribute their sexually tinted images. 47% of the reports were about online sexual abuse, 12% was about cyber bullying, 5% about the confrontation with child pornography and 8% about the confrontation with pornography.



Description: I had already been talking with him on the Internet for a while and in the beginning everything went fine and we had fun until he suddenly asked me to undress in front of the cam, I did this then because he had some photo's of me he wanted to send around, so I did it because I was very scared, and now he threatened to go further but I did not want to do it, so now he going to send all photo's to everybody in the Netherlands and I don't know what to do, I'm afraid what shall I do, help!!! I am desperate!!!

Daily, Meldpunt comes across e-mails similar with these cries for help.

Cyber Crime Hotline

The number of reports Meldpunt received last year increased, despite the police setting up the Cyber Crime Hotline. This confirms that Meldpunt has a different position and other responsibilities than the police. It means Meldpunt has its own specific role in combating the distribution of child sexual abuse images on the Internet. Meldpunt distinguishes itself from the Police Hotline because Internet users can report to Meldpunt anonymously. Moreover, Meldpunt has with INHOPE an important and efficient international network at its disposal and via INHOPE and other (inter)national organisations. It also fulfils an important role in the international combat of child sexual abuse images on the Internet. Furthermore, thanks to its independent position, Meldpunt can put pressure on governments and politicians and is engaged in prevention by way of awareness raising.

National Project to improve the combat of child pornography

In the beginning of December 2008 the Dutch police published an improvement plan for the combat of child pornography. Its purpose lies in a more coherent and therefore more effective approach. Three of the most important pillars:

1. Change the focus of attention from individuals that download to producers and victims where it concerns detection and prosecution.
2. Deal with cases that are in stock, which makes it necessary to structurally increase the number of child pornography experts.
3. Improve activities, right through the whole chain, strategically as well as on the level of implementation.

Meanwhile, the Chiefs of Police Council has consented to the improvement plan. Meldpunt has been involved in developing the improvement programme and will also be involved in its implementation.

Recommendations to the Justice committee of the Dutch Lower Parliament

Presented in 2008 by Meldpunt and ECPAT

Filtering child pornography on the Internet

Meldpunt and ECPAT are very pleased with the initiatives to start filtering websites with films and images of child sexual abuse, although it is not the one and only solution to the problem. However, it is a step in the right direction. With this Internet Service Providers send a signal that they do not tolerate the distribution of child sexual abuse images. The government should therefore continue to stimulate such initiatives.

Judges should look at the child abuse images

Meldpunt and ECPAT advocate judges to actually look at the images in cases that are about the production, distribution and possession of child pornography. Currently, judges judge the contents of a case by means of a description in writing. Both organisations deem it of great importance for a judge to look at the seriousness of the abuse in the images in order to be able to make a correct judgement.

Peer-to-peer networks and news groups

In 2007 Meldpunt received 450 reports (226 in 2008) that were related to the distribution of child sexual abuse images in peer-to-peer networks and in news groups. Meldpunt and Ecpat think the police and the Ministry of Justice should give more priority to dealing with this way of distributing images of child sexual abuse.

Expanding capacity and expertise

Meldpunt and Ecpat advocate a national approach to the combat of child sexual abuse images and to the identification of victims and to give this priority. There should be enough capacity to make a national approach combining a coordinated univocal regional approach to a success and to make maximum use of the expertise and technology available. The appointment of a national `rapporteur on sexual exploitation of children is desirable to measure the effects of the policy and its implementation.

Multi-stakeholder approach necessary in the Netherlands

Meldpunt advocates the foundation of a `Safe internet for children´ coalition. A multi-stakeholder approach like CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) in the United Kingdom is also very desirable in the Netherlands, according to Meldpunt and ECPAT. Within this approach police, children´s right organisations, youth care, internet companies, government and other interested parties work together to develop a comprehensive approach to protect children against sexual abuse.

International collaboration

With regard to the international character of the Internet, Meldpunt and ECPAT recommend the Netherlands joining large international police groups like the *Virtual Global Taskforce*, which currently consists of the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Italy and the United States.

The *Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography (FCAP)* is an international coalition of banks, credit card companies and internet businesses, who jointly fight the commercial distribution in child pornography. Meldpunt and ECPAT hope that European and Dutch financial institutions and internet business will also form a European and ultimately a Dutch variant of the FCAP and for the government to play an encouraging role in this.

Research

Meldpunt and ECPAT recommend research into the long-term effects on minor victims of sexual abuse of which abuse photo's were made and distributed on the Internet. In this way

a therapeutic treatment may be developed specific for this group of victims. Moreover, Meldpunt and ECPAT advocate research to be done into the sexual abuse itself. How does this process develop that in the end leads to the production and possibly distribution of child pornography? In order to be able to help the victims this knowledge is of the utmost importance.

Operators of Porn sites should be obliged to prove adulthood of their actors

In 2008, the Dutch Lower Chamber asked the Minister of Justice for a law that obliges operators of porn sites to prove that their models have actually attained the age of majority (reversed burden of proof). Meldpunt sees many websites with models of whom it is difficult to determine whether the apparent age is below eighteen. Meldpunt and ECPAT would like such a law to be come effective within a short term.

Mobile Internet

With the increase of the Internet by way of mobile telephony, Meldpunt and ECPAT also expect an increase in the distribution of child pornography through this channel. Therefore both organisations hope that law enforcement will also give attention to this form of distribution. Meldpunt and ECPAT think that Dutch mobile operators should also actively contribute to the fight against this and the government should play an encouraging role here.

Prevention by way of education

Meldpunt signals a tendency of young people to victimize themselves. Children and teenagers take sexually tinted photographs or make films of themselves (for example by way of web cam) and send these by mobile phone and via the Internet or put them on their own profile site. With such images children and teenagers can be bullied or even blackmailed into sexual abuse and exploitation. For this reason Meldpunt and ECPAT advocate a national campaign to be conducted regularly amongst young people and their educators. This campaign should make young people and educators become aware of what consequences such actions may have. After all, once these pictures are online, they become available and accessible to everyone, for ever.

Commercial providers of social networking sites and chat sites have the responsibility for the safety of the services they offer to children and teenagers. They should try to prevent as much as possible for minor users of their services to end up in situations of abuse or exploitation.

Special powers of investigation

The implementation of special powers of investigation to law enforcement on the Internet should get more attention. This is the way to change the focus of investigation from the downloaders to the abusers and producers of child sexual abuse images. It is known to us that the Child Abuse Images and Paedosexual Crimes Team of the KLPD have plans in this direction and we find it highly desirable to give it priority.

Production of commercial sexual images of children should be prosecuted as human trafficking

Meldpunt comes across many paying websites with images of young children (often about ten years of age) in provocative poses dressed in erotic lingerie or swimwear. This material has clearly been produced for persons that have a sexual preference for children. The children are often recruited in countries where the legislation and law enforcement are not adequate and pose, often with the parents' knowledge, for a small fee.

Since it is not evident that this is a matter of sexual behaviour, the images are often found not punishable according to Article 240b of the Dutch Penal Code (concerning Child Pornography). Meldpunt and ECPAT regard these images as proof of the fact that advantage

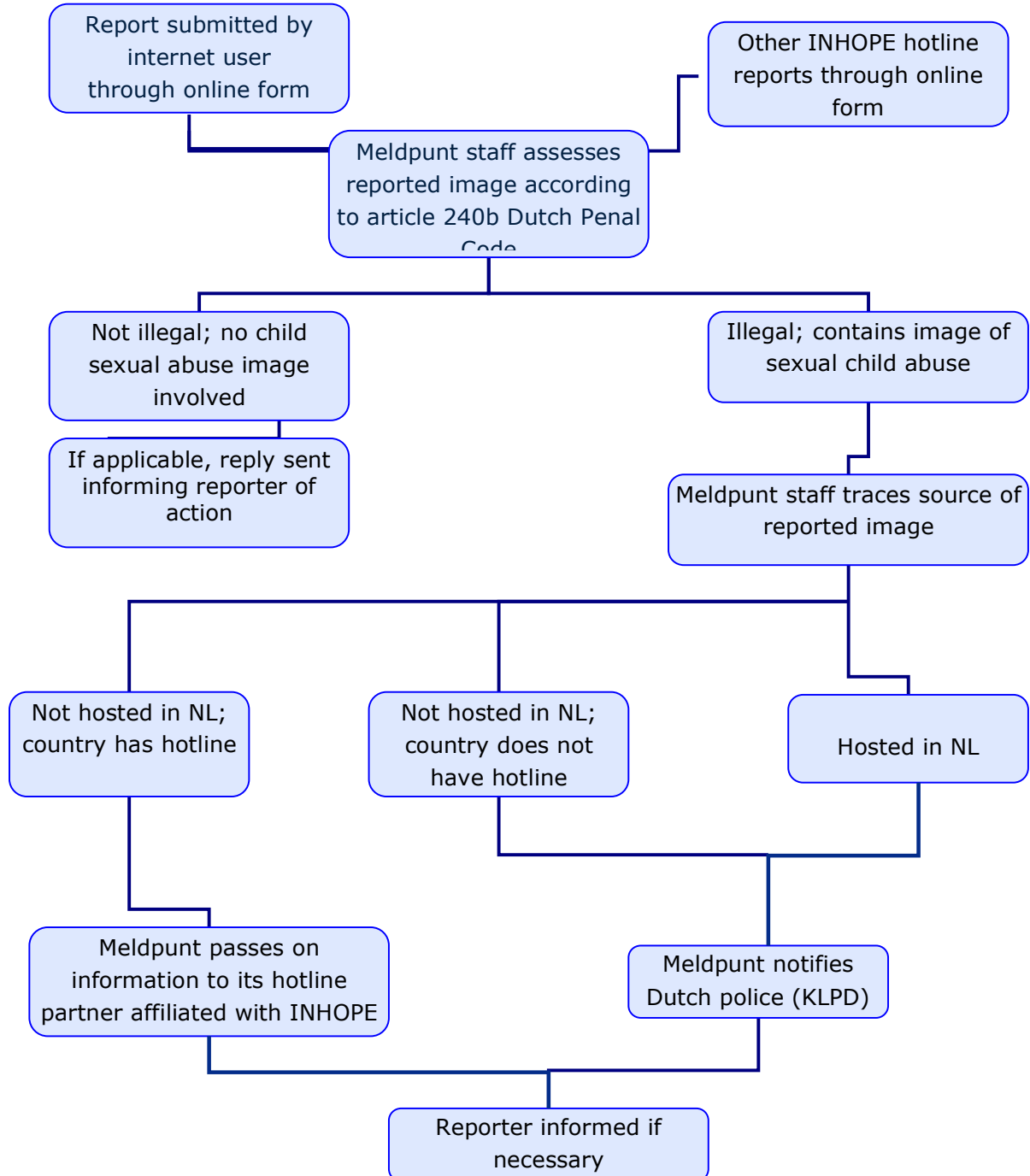
has been taken of the vulnerable position of these children and therefore consider it as a form of exploitation of children.

Meldpunt and ECPAT advocate prosecuting the production and distribution of the above-mentioned images in the Netherlands according to article 273f of the Dutch Penal Code (concerning human trafficking: profiting from the sexual exploitation of a minor).

Meldpunt also comes across commercial sites with images of young children of which some are punishable and some not. Non-punishable images concern children posing in a sexual way (for example like described in the last paragraph) and punishable images picture sexual acts, covered by article 240b. However, the photographs constitute part of a larger whole, a series.

Meldpunt and ECPAT are of the opinion that in such cases the whole series should be made liable to punishment, because the series serve one and the same commercial purpose and cannot be viewed separately. By letting all images fall under Article 273f, it is possible to combat commercial sexual exploitation. The Public Prosecutor can put forward as charges primary article 273f and alternatively article 240b of the Dutch Penal Code.

Appendix 1: Reporting diagram



Appedix 2: Press release

Meldpunt launches cyber grooming campaign

The kick off of the campaign took place during the Conference on online Grooming which Meldpunt organised on the 22nd of May. With this campaign Meldpunt wants to create awareness of grooming. Grooming is the active approach and enticement of a minor through the Internet and social networking sites or chat rooms for the purpose of sexual abuse. A television commercial aimed at young people between 12 and 18 years of age, is part of the campaign. With this commercial Meldpunt wants to raise awareness about the existence of online grooming among young people. Meldpunt hopes youngsters will signal the occurrence of grooming and undertake action themselves, even before they become a victim.

Cyber groomer

The commercial can be downloaded on www.cyberlokker.nl. This site contains information about grooming and cyber groomers. It also describes clearly what youngsters can do when they come across grooming online. Unwanted sexual experiences and sexual abuse can be reported by way of a report button that leads directly to the Meldpunt website HelpWanted (www.helpwanted.nl).

The commercial can be viewed on several television channels and is being spread online via websites for young people. Meldpunt also circulates posters through schools, general practitioners and police agencies and places banners on various Youth sites.

Prevention

Grooming also happens outside the Internet, but particularly on the Internet the possibilities for this form of abuse are huge. Internet provides the possibility to make contact relatively easy, for example through chat rooms. In the past years Meldpunt noticed an increase in the number of reports about abuse on chat and webcams. Meldpunt initiated this awareness raising campaign because prevention is the keyword to combat online sexual abuse. In this way Meldpunt wants to help decrease the number of cases of online sexual abuse and grooming.

Appedix 3: Press release

Young people say they are aware of the dangers of chatting with strangers. However, one out of five meets face-to-face with someone they only know from the Internet. So it appears from a survey held among a thousand youngsters between 12 and 18 years of age.

Recently Meldpunt launched the campaign "Cyber groomers don't let go, so block them". This campaign aims at enlarging the youth' awareness of the methods a cyber groomer uses 'to groom' his victims. Teenagers know very well that cyber groomers are active on the Internet. By this campaign Meldpunt wants to achieve for the youth to recognize a cyber groomer and undertake action when they come into contact with a cyber groomer.

As a result of that campaign, the behaviour of the target group has been surveyed. 9% of the boys and 27% of the girls has chatted with someone who at first seemed very nice, but turned out to be unreliable later on. Despite the risks 18% of the boys and 23% of the girls has met in person someone they know through the Internet. Ten facts about the use of the Internet by young people and six suggestions for them:

Ten facts:

1. 58% of the girls say they chat on a daily basis. For boys this percentage is 47%.
2. 84% of the girls have now and then blocked someone on MSN who they did not know. 62% of boys have done this sometimes.
3. 61% of the girls have sometimes added someone to MSN they did not know. Of the boys 55% have done so.
4. 10% of the 12-18-years-olds also use the webcam when they chat with strangers.
5. 27% of the girls did sometimes chat with someone who at first seemed nice, but later on turned to be unreliable. 9% of the boys have had such an experience.
6. 16% of the boys say to have been bothered by someone on the Internet. In case of girls this percentage is much higher, 49%.
7. 23% of the girls have met face-to-face with someone they know from the Internet. Of the boys 18% have done this.
8. 39% of the boys do sometimes talk with their parents about chat friends. 56% of the girls do so.
9. 83% of the boys say there are no rules about the use of a webcam at their home. For girls this is 81%.
10. Of the respondents that do have rules at home girls indicate more often (90%) than boys (65%) that they keep to those rules.

Six suggestions for young people:

1. On the Internet you never know who you are dealing with.
2. Do not ever supply personal details to others.
3. Do not arrange to meet someone you know through the Internet easily.
4. Inform your parents or an adult in advance about your date.
5. Think about what you do in front of a webcam! Once a (nude) picture or -video is on the Internet, it will stay there for ever.
6. Do not let yourself be blackmailed, but get help! Talk about it with someone you trust or report it to www.helpwanted.nl.