

Challenges, Requirements & 'What Works'?

The International Working Group on Best Practice in the Management of Online Child Sexual Offending (IWG_OSO)

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IWG OSO Co-founders



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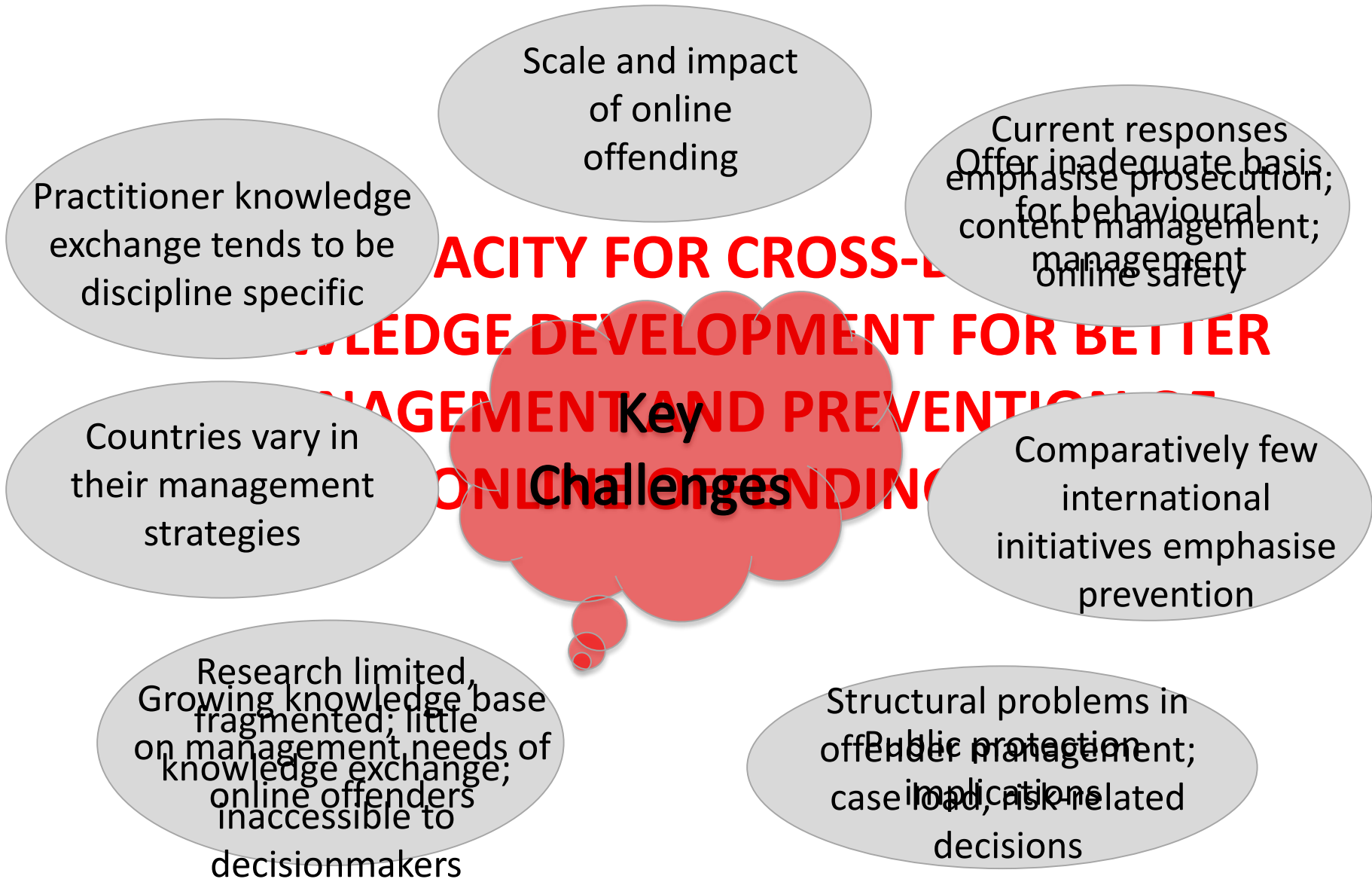


Hannah L. Merdian (PhD) is a principal lecturer at the University of Lincoln and co-lead of onlineProtect, a research and consultation program on online child protection.

Overview

- ① **RATIONALE AND CONTEXT** for the IWG_OSO
- ② **AIMS** of the IWG_OSO and its 4-year, international consultation process
- ③ **IWG RESEARCH:** The 2016 IWG_OSO Delphi consultation with international experts
- ④ **MAJOR FINDINGS** of the IWG_OSO's consultation process
- ⑤ **NEXT STEPS & DISCUSSION**

Rationale for an IWG_OSO



CSEM ('child pornography') offending increasing – why?

- Technological: data speed, mobile devices
- The 'triple A': Accessibility - Affordability - Anonymity
- Background level of adult sexual interest in children
- Children more active & sexually engaged online: social networking, 'sexting', accessing pornography
- Internet-based 'shaping' of sexual interests?

Sexual Interest in Children in Community Males

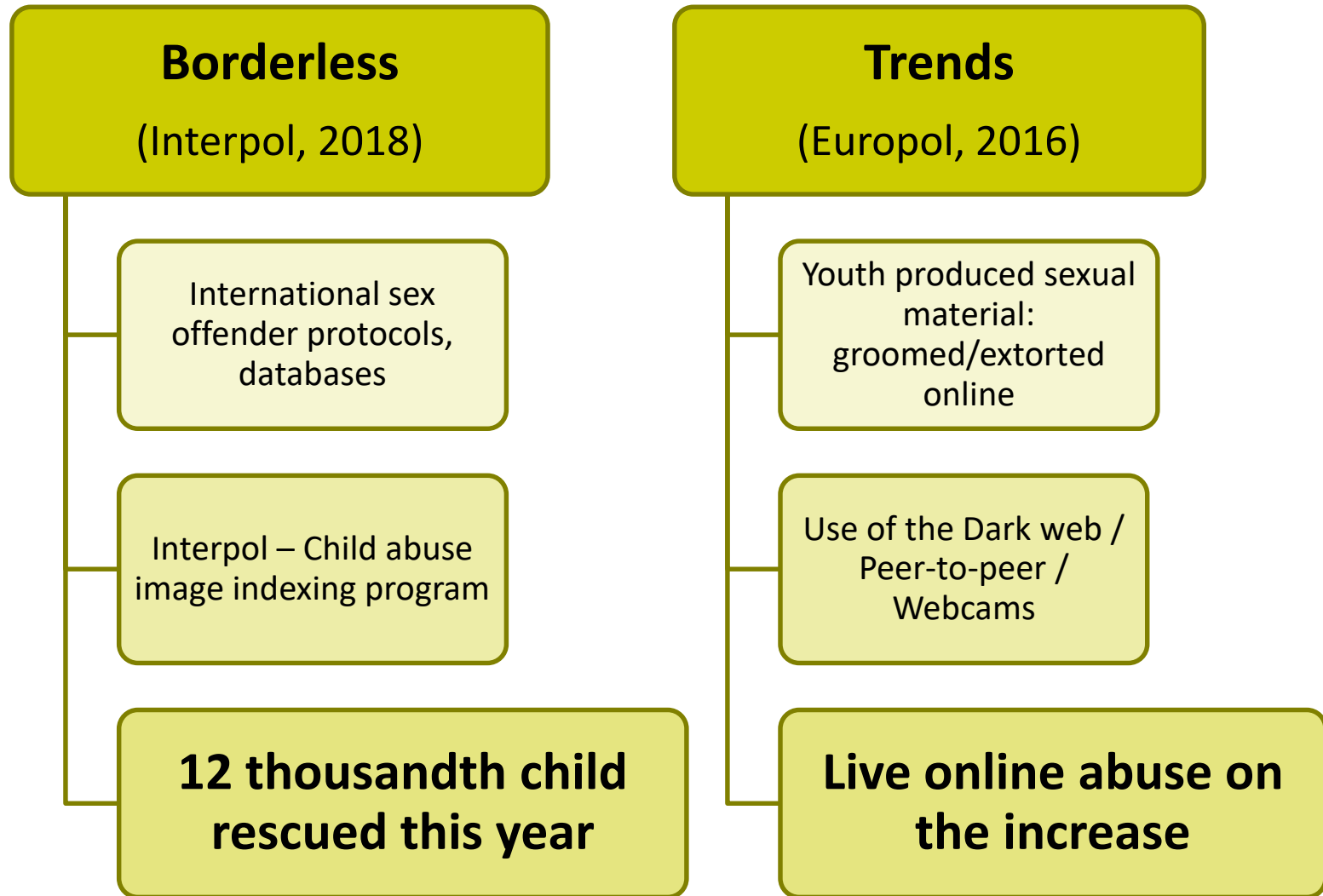
Dombert et al. (2015): Online survey of 8,718 German males

- 5.5%: paedophilic sexual interest: fantasy, paid a child for sexual services, travelled into another country with the intent to have sexual contact with a child
- 4.1%: sexual fantasies of prepubescent children (girls > boys > both)
- 1.7% CSEM use, 2.4% prepubescent contact sex offending (0.7% both)



- Increasing evidence of genetic loading/ anomalous neurodevelopment in paedophilia: frontal / executive functioning (Cantor et al., 2006-2016)

The international breadth of the problem



Online Live Streaming of Child Sexual Abuse

Dutch children's charity Terre des Hommes used a computer-generated 10 year old child **Sweetie** who was “available” for online for sexual behaviour

⇒ identified 1,000 people willing to pay for online sexual exploitation

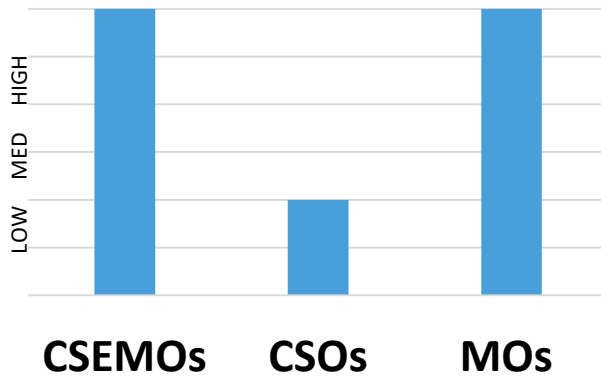
**IS THIS VIEWING OR
CONTACT SEX OFFENDING?**

WHO IS CONTACT OFFENDING?

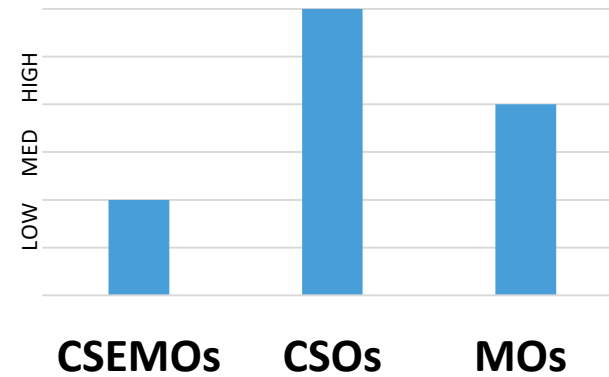


CSEM Offenders: Risk Indicators: “Cross-Over”

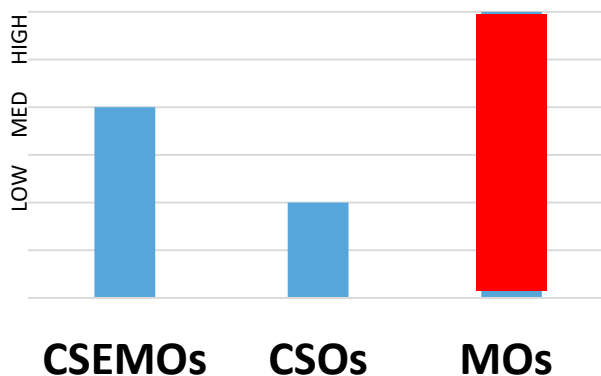
Access to the Internet



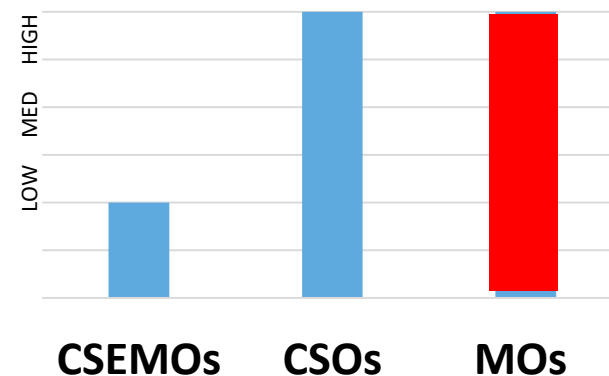
Access to Children



Sexual Interest in Children



Antisocial Traits



Highest risk: Mixed Offenders: Characteristics

High levels of paedophilia

High levels of antisociality

Access to children

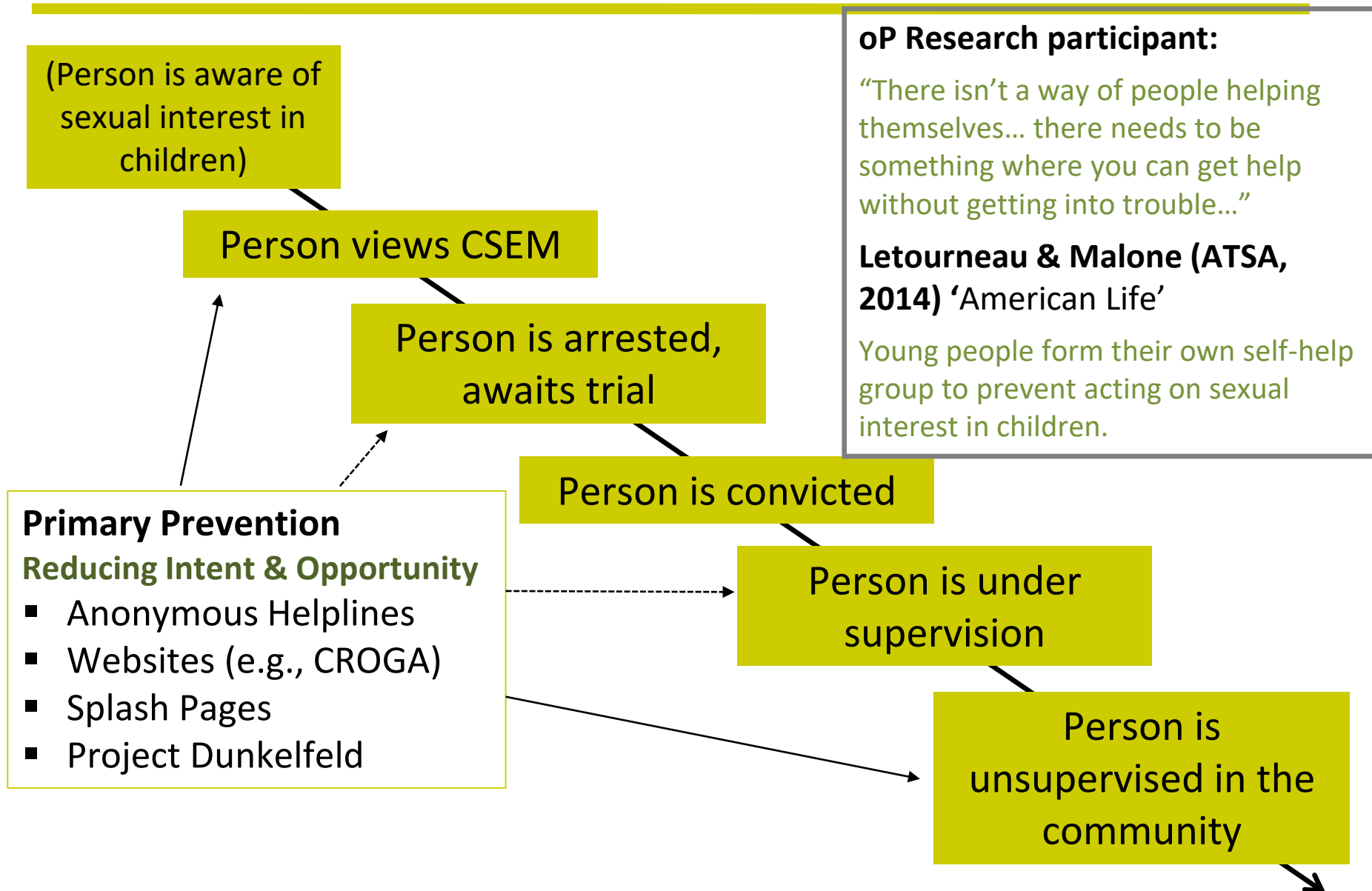
Few psychological barriers

While reliable identification of MOs is a core objective of management and prevention strategies, the issue is much broader than this...

So where do we start?

With the person, at the very beginning...

Offending time-line: Detection, treatment, prevention



IWG_OSO: Aims

Develop effective, evidence-based practice for the management and prevention of online child sex offending

- Steer international research to address key empirical requirements
 - Improve quality of empirical research
 - Focus research on practitioners' and policymakers' immediate needs
 - Bring front-line practice into line with the research evidence
- Increase practitioner-academic knowledge exchange
 - Mutual identification of research and practice challenges
 - Promote effective coordination of domain research, policy and practice
 - Evidence-led recommendations for management policy and practice

Policing

Prosecution

Risk Assessment

Prevention

Treatment

Desistance

Education

IWG_OSO CONSULTATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2014 – IATSO CONFERENCE, PORTO

22 APRIL 2015 – NCA CEOP COMMAND, LONDON

**17 SEPTEMBER 2015 – NOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE,
DUBLIN**

MAY-JULY 2016 – INTERNATIONAL DELPHI SURVEY

SEPTEMBER 2016 – IATSO CONFERENCE, COPENHAGEN

**AUGUST 2018 (FINAL) – IATSO CONFERENCE, VILNIUS;
YTVC CONFERENCE, BRISBANE**

Aims of IWG_OSO Consultations

- Identify key challenges in the assessment, management and prevention of online child sexual offending behaviour
- Identify and disseminate current good practice examples at different points in the offending cycle / at different stages in the criminal justice process:
 - investigation & prosecution
 - offender management
 - approaches to desistance and prevention
- The themes identified in the initial consultations informed a **2016 Delphi Survey...**
(by Emma Tyrrell, onlineProtect, Maastricht University & the IWG_OSO)

Delphi Survey (May-July 2016)

Demographics

Role

21% were Law Enforcement

19% were Academics/ Researchers

17% were Treatment/ Intervention

17% worked in Mental Health Services

14% were Policy Makers/ Government Bodies

12% worked in Charities / NGOs

Respondents from:

Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and United States.

Delphi Survey (May-July 2016)

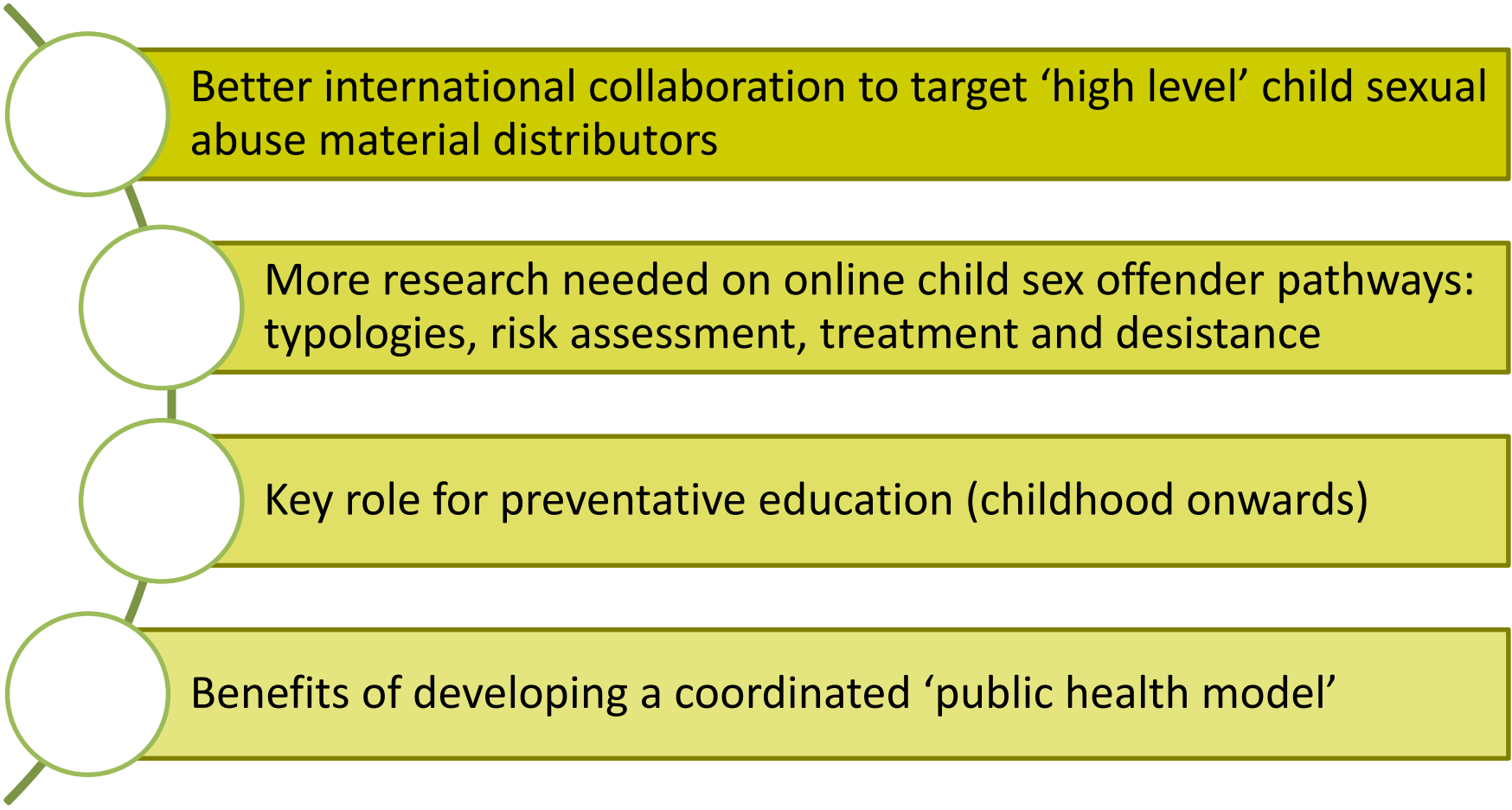
- Multi-professional group of 2,000 experts accessed through networks of academia, Europol, IWG, NCA, and onlineProtect
- **Round 1:** responses and comments to 18 questions or statements
- **Round 2:** responses and comments to 20 questions shaped by responses to round 1
- **Round 3:** semi-structured online interviews (46) with professionals from 11 countries - thematic qualitative analysis results elaborated on key quantitative findings

IWG_OSO FINDINGS

Challenges, Requirements and "What works" for Better Management and Prevention of Online Child Sex Offending Behaviour

Delphi Survey (May-July 2016)

Over-arching conclusions



Better international collaboration to target 'high level' child sexual abuse material distributors

More research needed on online child sex offender pathways: typologies, risk assessment, treatment and desistance

Key role for preventative education (childhood onwards)

Benefits of developing a coordinated 'public health model'

Policing, Investigation & Prosecution

Key challenges & good practice examples

INVESTIGATIVE WORKFLOWS

Online child sex offending is now a high volume crime requires intensive investigation

Investigative workflow revisions

Police Scotland: Policy decision to reduce processing time for forensic examination and charge /prosecute at the earliest possible juncture.

20% (forensic) staff increase
=> significant increase in case processing rates
=> 0 suicides in 2 years

RISK-RELATED DECISION MAKING

Making assessments of risk and offence severity in the face of high case load

Behavioural Investigative Advice

Dutch National Police: BIA function within its child exploitation team to support risk-related decision-making, research, policy

Investigative Decision Supports, e.g. KIRAT (Long et al., 2013); P2P STePS (Brennan & Hammond, 2017); iCOP (Peersman et al., 2016) for case prioritisation decisions

PREVENTION?

How can law enforcement best contribute to offence prevention?

Most Delphi respondents thought police performance indicators should include prevention

But there is limited information about internet offenders to aid strategy

Reluctance to engage in prevention programmes for unconvicted offenders

Legal & ethical issues

Treatment, Desistance, Deterrence & Prevention

Key challenges & good practice examples

TARGETED, PROPORTIONATE INTERVENTIONS

Briefer, smarter interventions

Provision of confidential helplines (e.g. Stop-it-Now UK, Netherlands and Germany)

to engage offenders /potential offenders and family members ASAP

Generalisation of treatment effects to community:
Evidence that community monitoring and support (e.g. COSA) can play a role for high risk offenders

IDENTIFY OFFENCE ESCALATION AND 'CROSSOVER'

Babchishin et al. (2015) meta-analyses differentiate CSEM vs Contact offence propensities and situational factors

Merdian et al. (2016) identify features differentiating 'fantasy driven' vs 'contract driven' online offenders

Need to identify pathways to online child sex offending / different offending sub-types (e.g. onlineProtect pathways)

DETERRENCE AND PREVENTION

Deterrence films (e.g. LFF) and internet splash pages - effect on public attitudes

Adoption of a public health model similar to Dunkelfeld

Self-help websites: Dunkelfeld 'Troubled desire', 'Just dreaming of them' (youth populations), LFF 'Get help'

ECSA Toolkit for children, adults, communities, situational

Moore Centre for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse: education, support



Wider context of sex, the internet and relationships

- **30% of international internet traffic is pornography**

- Pornography is increasingly aggressive and demeaning, driven by profit and gender inequality

- **94 billion porn videos viewed in 2016 [64 million porn site visits per day]**

- 61% of pornography traffic is on mobile devices, and increasingly accessed by children

- **90% boys (13) & 60% girls (16) viewed pornography**

- Affecting brain development, sexual attitudes and functioning
Sex education “too little, too late, too biological”

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

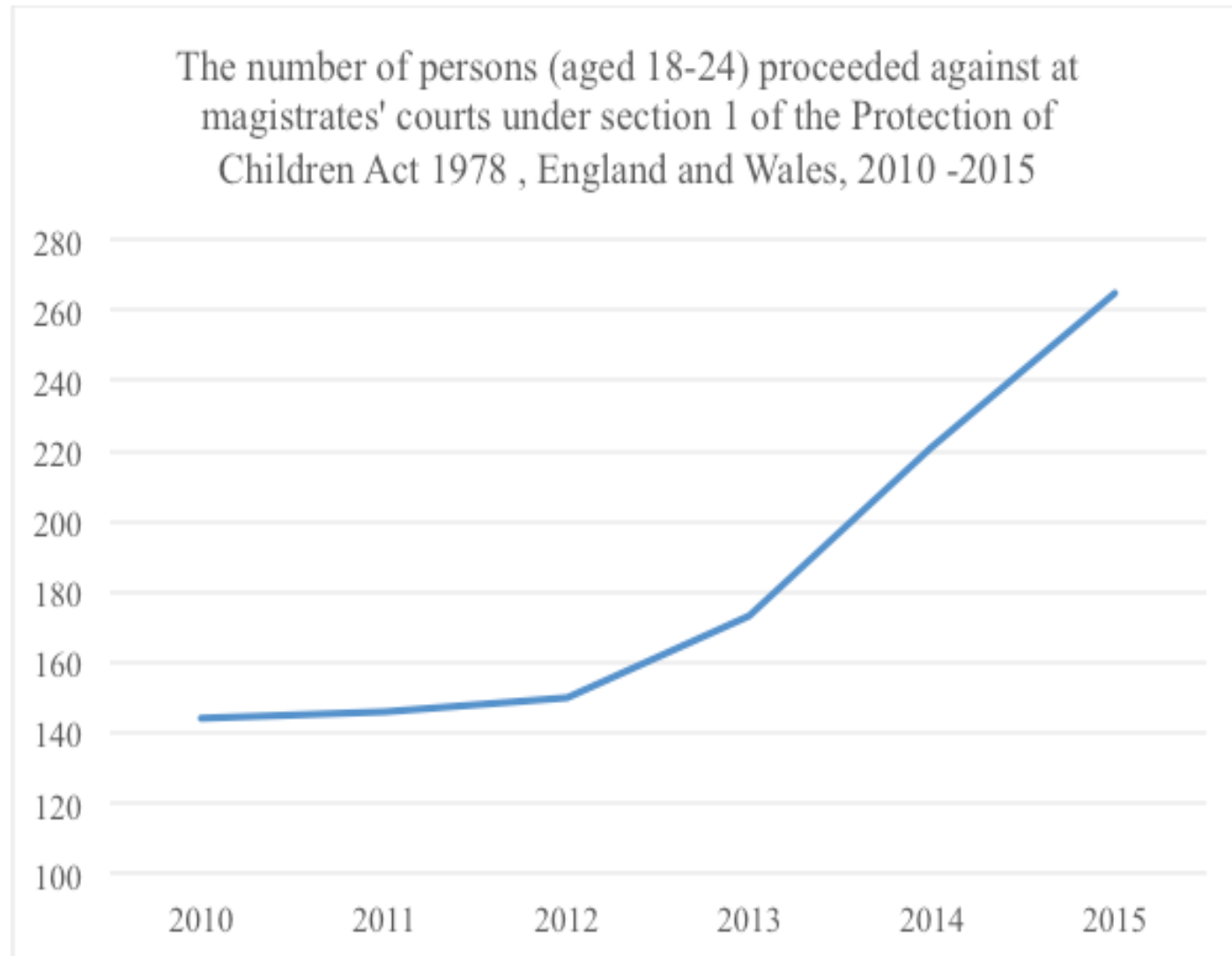
- Explicit, legally problematic materials produced by young people in the context of sexting activity
 - ‘youth produced sexual materials’: pictures created by minors (age 17 or younger) that depict minors and that constitute an indecent image under relevant legislation (Wolak & Finkelhor, 2011)
- Production of this material is mainly consensual (Quayle et al., 2015)
- However some exploitation, coercion, deception and subsequent abuses can feature (ECPAT International, 2018)
- Some adult perpetrated; much is peer perpetrated.
- **Establishing a mechanism for reliable identification of cases where criminal harm features is a major challenge, as is risk formulation and management.**

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery: Abuse and Exploitation

When we talk about online peer-on peer abuse with children...

- Little recognition that the perpetrators are doing anything wrong
- General attitude of negativity toward the victim
- Lack of awareness of relevant legislative position on sexting behaviour
- Failure to recognise coercion or exploitation in harmful sexting practices among peers, or the fact that this is unacceptable
- Apathy to the prevalence of sexting/self generation of sexual images
 - “...but this is normal.”

Rise in young offenders



Recent UK newspaper headlines

Denmark Facebook sex video: More than 1,000 young people charged

🕒 15 January 2018

[f](#) [📧](#) [🐦](#) [✉️](#) [Share](#)



GETTY IMAGES

A police superintendent said the charges come as a warning to young people never to share sex videos.

More than 1,000 young people have been charged by police in Denmark with distributing sexually explicit material.

HOME > NEWS >

Teenage b

The 14-year-
prospects ev

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ting

Save

Children and Young People

Challenges & Requirements

- *(Jon Brown; Head of Development and Strategy, NSPCC)*
- Further work to improve victim identification capacity at community level as well as the development of therapeutic programmes for children and young people who have been abused online
- Further work to enhance and promote the voice of the child to better inform prevention, management and deterrence activities related to online child sex offending
 - Who is listening to children and young people?
 - **IMPORTANTLY** – addressing the needs of children engaged with youth-produced content; reporting is a key issue
- Need for increased preventative work in schools to reduce the risk of children being targeted groomed and abused online
 - Whether in peer-perpetrated or adult perpetrated contexts
- Need to understand vulnerabilities to youth engagement in HSB online

Future Research

Challenges & Requirements

(Kelly Babchishin, Public Safety Canada; The Royal's IMHR)

- **Risk factors for cross-over**
 - Conduct studies on cross-over (CSEM Offenders ▶ Mixed Offenders)
 - Incorporate legal pornography use as additional outcome (moving from illegal to legal material) and target non-adjudicated CSEM users
 - *Implications:* inform preventative education efforts (how to reduce first access to illegal CSEM), risk assessment and treatment effort
- **Situational factors that influence CSEM use**
 - Conduct research on the situational components of CSEM offending (affordances?)
 - *Implications:* inform preventative education efforts (e.g. modifying websites, pop-ups)
- **Validated risk assessment tools**
 - Especially those for CSEM offender without any other contact sexual offence history
 - *Implications:* can inform supervision efforts, case prioritization



Prevention

From  to “Don’t get Started”



Approaches to Prevention

- **Tertiary prevention:**
 - Intervening with preparators and victims after exploitation has occurred
 - Too many cases for this to fully work
- **Secondary prevention:**
 - Targeting ‘at risk’ groups for intervention
 - Ethical and practical problems identifying who
- **Primary prevention:**
 - Tackling underlying causes: cultural, social, situational, blurred line between ‘victims’ and ‘perpetrators’
 - *US legislator: “Are we talking about kids or perpetrators”*
[Nicole Pittman, ATSA Conference, 2017]

Primary and Secondary Prevention

- Personal, social, sexual education from early age
- Internet / social media service provider engagement
- Early access to help and support if difficulties arise
- Help phone-lines and web-sites
- Coordinated multiagency response: education, health, social care, law enforcement, charities
- Risk and need-based access to treatment levels

Barriers to Change / Next steps

- Barrier to resource provision for current or potential victims/offenders
 - Lack of understanding in wider public and at governmental level – need for education/awareness raising re CSEM offending and victimisation
 - Parental resistance re fuller sexual, social and internet education
 - Stigma, negative media coverage, ill-informed public opinion
- Challenge to funding access for prevention resources and services for victims/offenders
 - Participants noted there is already a huge demand on government funding for other psychological and forensic/legal areas – emphasis on detection/prosecution, victim vs offender intervention, etc..
- Report launch – Q1, 2019
- Further funding for platform to develop research and evidence-led intervention in key areas

NSPCC (UK) Educational materials



NSPCC

presents



PANTOSAURUS

IWG_OSO Collaborators



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

West London
Mental Health
NHS Trust



NSPCC



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN



INTERPOL

onlinePROTECT

Pathways of Risk and Offender Typologies in the
Exploitation of Children through Technology



The Royal's
Institute of Mental Health Research
affiliated with the University of Ottawa

Institut de recherche en santé mentale
du Royal

affilié avec l'Université d'Ottawa

IATSO

International Association for the
Treatment of Sexual Offenders

terre des hommes

stops child exploitation



Karolinska
Institutet



EUROPEAN CYBERCRIME CENTRE

EC³
EUROPOL

[Questions & Thoughts]

Thank you!

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