

MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY IN MANITOBA

2022-23 ANNUAL REVIEW

cybertip!ca[®]



CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION®

Helping families. Protecting children.

This report was prepared in June 2023 by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc. (“C3P”). It highlights C3P’s role under Manitoba’s mandatory reporting legislation and is a summary of activities from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 within the Province of Manitoba. Unless otherwise indicated, statistics and figures referenced in this document were compiled by C3P based on records it maintains, and represent the time period between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. Reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the records.

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Terminology used in this report:

“Child sexual abuse material,” “child sexual abuse imagery,” or “CSAM” vs “child pornography”

The term “child sexual abuse material” (or “CSAM”) has the same meaning as the term “child pornography” as defined in s.163.1 of the *Criminal Code*. It is the term recommended in the *Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (known as the “Luxembourg Guidelines”).¹ The term “child pornography” will only be used when the *Criminal Code* term is required in context.

Social Media & Public Awareness Terminology:

Social media statistics related to awareness campaigns created by C3P are provided by and pulled from platforms such as Facebook®, Instagram®, Snapchat®, TikTok®, YouTube®, Pinterest®, and Twitter®. C3P regularly collects this information from its social media accounts and compiles point-in-time information at the end of campaigns.

A social media account is considered to have been “reached” if a post about the particular query (a post, Tweet®, handle, hashtag, etc.) appeared in the newsfeed of that social media account over the period being measured. “Impressions” are the number of times a post is displayed in a newsfeed, whether or not it is viewed and whether or not the newsfeed is unique (this term is also used in the context of physical public awareness — see below). “Link clicks” refers to the number of clicks on links within the ad. “Engagement” refers to how users interact with your content. Engagement includes “likes,” “comments,” “shares,” and other interactions, depending on the platform.

Physical public awareness is typically measured in terms of “impressions”. Impressions are the number of times a public awareness medium is seen, whether or not the viewer is unique. Impressions in this context are estimates provided by the company that supplied the physical promotional space.

Website Traffic, Video Views, and PDF Downloads

Website “visits,” webpage “views,” and “downloads” are based on stats compiled by C3P on a daily basis. “Visits” are the number of times a website is accessed. “Views” are the number of times a particular web page is accessed on a website, not including PDF downloads. “Views” also refers to the number of times a video is played on a social media site (see below). “Downloads” refer to the number of times a PDF is downloaded.

¹ ECPAT International, *Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (adopted 28 January 2016), online: <http://luxembourgguidelines.org/english-version/>.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection	2
2022-23 Highlights	4
2022-23 Manitoba Mandatory Report Case Examples	6
Additional Highlights	7
Training, Education, and Resources	8
Virtual Presentations	8
Training for Law Enforcement Agencies and Crowns	10
Public Awareness Campaigns	11
Mandatory Reporting	11
Cybertip.ca Anniversary	15
Cybertip.ca Alerts	16
Project Arachnid	17
New Innovations to Reduce the Backlog	18
Breaking the Cycle of Abuse for Survivors	18
Research: Knowledge Influences Change	19
Supporting Victims/Survivors	23
Advocacy and Understanding the Unique Needs of Survivors: Case Example	24
Facilitating the Recording and Use of Victim and Community Impact Statements in Manitoba	26
Moving Forward	28

THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (“C3P”) is a national charity dedicated to the personal safety of all children. The organization’s goal is to reduce the sexual abuse and exploitation of children through programs, services, and resources for Canadian families, educators, child-serving organizations, law enforcement, and other parties. C3P also operates Cybertip!ca® — Canada’s national tipline to report child sexual abuse and exploitation on the internet; and Project Arachnid® — a web platform designed to detect known images of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) on the clear and dark web and issue removal notices to industry.

Cybertip.ca has been operational since September 26, 2002, and was adopted under the Government of Canada’s National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet in May 2004. In December 2011, C3P (through our Cybertip.ca program) was named within the regulations² under *An Act respecting the mandatory reporting of Internet child pornography by persons who provide an Internet service*³ as the designated reporting entity under section 2.

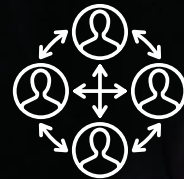
The public submits reports to Cybertip.ca involving one of the following types of crimes commonly committed against children online:



Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)



Luring a Child



Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images (NCDII)



Making Sexually Explicit Material Available to a Child



Agreement or Arrangement with Another Person to Commit a Sexual Offence Against a Child



Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children



Trafficking of Children



Travelling to Sexually Exploit a Child

² The *Internet Child Pornography Reporting Regulations*, SOR/2011-292, is made pursuant to the *An Act Respecting the Mandatory Reporting of Internet Child Pornography by Persons who Provide an Internet Service*, SC 2011, c 4, and pertains to the obligations set out in section 2 of the Act.

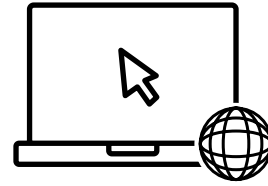
³ *An Act Respecting the Mandatory Reporting of Internet Child Pornography by Persons who Provide an Internet Service*, SC 2011, c 4, s 2.

As of March 31, 2023, Cybertip.ca has received a total of **393,297 reports** from the public and processed a total of **23,750,492 reports** related to notices through Project Arachnid. In 2022-23, Cybertip.ca received **22,120 reports** with a total of 45,667 URLs from the public, and processed **14,961,698 reports** related to notices through Project Arachnid. Cybertip.ca has seen a decrease in public reports pertaining to websites hosting CSAM. Factors that may have contributed to this include Project Arachnid's efficiency in detecting known CSAM and quickly issuing notices for removal, as well as updates to the Cybertip.ca report form which now allow for multiple URLs to be submitted in a single report. Additionally, we have seen a marked increase in the complexity of reports Cybertip.ca is receiving. Reports involving online sexual violence are resource intensive in nature and require multiple department support and external outreach.

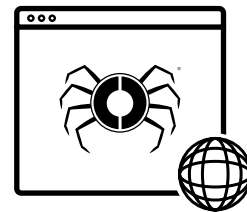
Approximately **99%** of the child sexual exploitation (CSE) reports processed in 2022-23 were either forwarded to one, or a combination of, the following entities: law enforcement agencies (LEAs), child welfare agencies, and/or other international hotlines, or a notice was sent to an electronic service provider (ESP).

As of March 31, 2023, Cybertip.ca was aware of **at least 620 arrests executed by LEAs and at least 550 children removed from abusive environments** in connection with reports submitted to the tipline by the Canadian public since inception.

IN 2022-23:

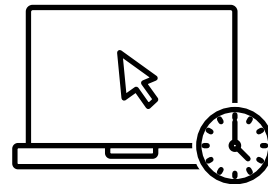


22,120 reports with a total of **45,667 URLs** from the public

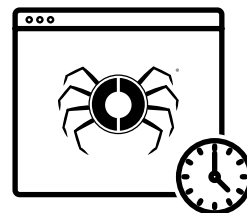


14,961,698 reports related to notices through Project Arachnid

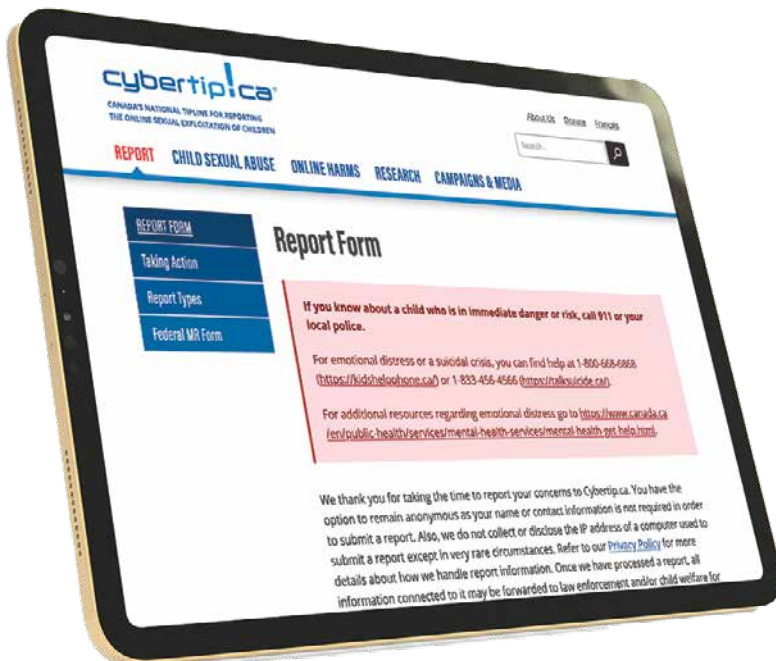
SINCE INCEPTION:



393,297 total reports from the public



23,750,492 total reports related to notices through Project Arachnid

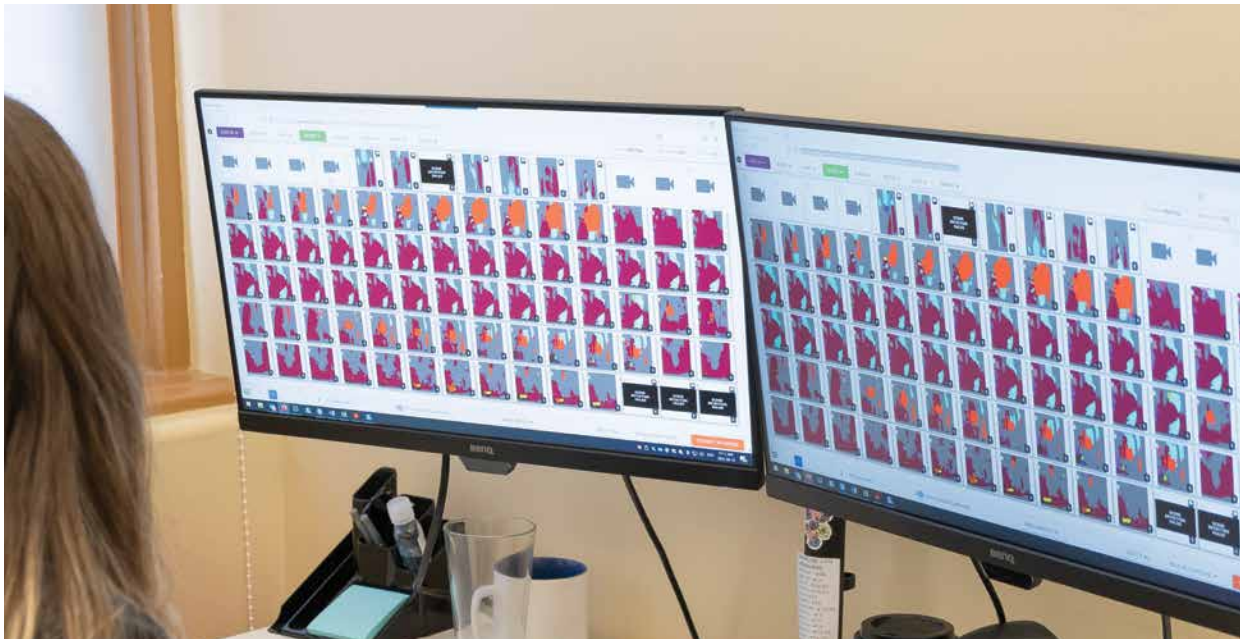


2022-23 HIGHLIGHTS

The *Child Pornography Reporting Regulation*,⁴ M.R. 79/2009, under the *Child and Family Services Act* (the “Act”),⁵ together obligate all people in Manitoba to report suspected “child pornography” to C3P for assessment, which is done through Cybertip.ca. **The goal of mandatory reporting is to facilitate the reporting of children potentially in need of protection.**

Where Cybertip.ca has determined that a CSAM incident may have occurred in Manitoba, Cybertip.ca reports the matter to a child and family services agency, an LEA, or both as necessary, as per the Act, and takes further action as may be set out in the regulations to the Act.

A **total of 5,858 reports**⁶ have been submitted by individuals within Manitoba and classified as CSAM since the proclamation of mandatory reporting of “child pornography” in Manitoba in 2009. Of the reports received through mandatory reporting since inception, 2,083 were forwarded to a LEA, sent to another international hotline, or a notice was issued to a service provider for removal. A total of 218 reports were classified as CSAM and containing information on an identified child victim and/or suspect in Manitoba have been forwarded to child welfare since proclamation on April 15, 2009. The majority of what is reported by individuals within Manitoba does not relate to content/incidents within the province. **This demonstrates the importance of having a reporting entity to vet and forward reports to the appropriate agencies/jurisdictions and is consistent with the triaging rate for other provinces.**



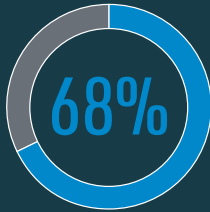
4 M.R. 79/2009

5 C.C.S.M. c. C80

6 Cybertip.ca receives reports pertaining to online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Cybertip.ca reports are received through the Cybertip.ca report form (<https://cybertip.ca/report>), or through the Cybertip.ca toll-free phone line. Individuals reporting to Cybertip.ca through these mechanisms are made aware that information they provide about the online victimization of a child/youth may be sent to law enforcement or child welfare.

Cybertip.ca inquiries are not submitted through the Cybertip.ca report form. Inquiries are received through the Cybertip.ca toll-free phone line, email, and/or the Cybertip.ca online Contact Us form (<https://cybertip.ca/contact>). Inquiries may also be received through C3P's other online Contact Us forms, such as NeedHelpNow.ca (<https://needhelpnow.ca/app/en/contact>), ProjectArachnid.ca (<https://projectarachnid.ca/en/contact/>), and ProtectChildren.ca (<https://protectchildren.ca/en/survivors/contact/>). Inquiries typically involve individuals looking for advice about situations prior to submitting a report, seeking avenues for assistance without involving law enforcement, or requesting educational resources.

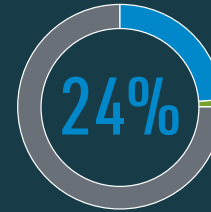
Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, Cybertip.ca processed **387 reports** submitted by individuals within Manitoba under the category of CSAM. Of these 387 reports:



68% of the reported incidents⁷ pertained to websites, and reports included a total of **481 reported URLs**



24% of reports pertained to incidents on mobile devices, chat, instant messaging, or online gaming platforms



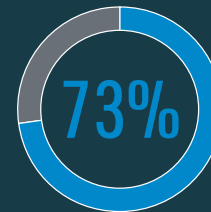
24% of the incidents were classified⁸ as CSAM and another **1%** of incidents were classified as harmful material of a child



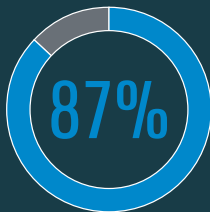
11% of incidents involved an online luring component



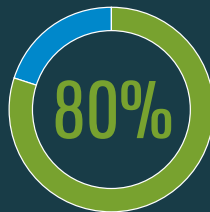
98% of reports were submitted through Cybertip.ca's online report form, while the remaining **2%** were submitted via the toll-free phone line



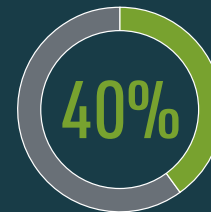
73% of individuals reporting CSAM concerns chose not to provide contact information



87% of individuals that submitted a report involving child victims and/or suspect information provided their contact information



80% of reporting persons purported to be an adult (18 years old or older), and the remaining **20%** indicated they were under 18⁹



40% of reports submitted by individuals within Manitoba and classified by the reporting person as CSAM were forwarded to LEAs/other international hotlines or a notice was issued to an ESP to have the reported material removed

⁷ Reports are broken down into their component parts based on the number of incidents in a report. For example, one public report may contain information about a website and a chatroom. This would be considered two separate incidents and are analyzed independently.

⁸ Each incident is assigned a secondary (Cybertip.ca) classification by a child protection analyst. This is either a confirmation or correction of the reporting person's classification.

⁹ If the reporting person selected parent/guardian or professional they were classified as an adult.



15 reports were classified by Cybertip.ca as CSAM and were sent to child welfare and LEAs within Manitoba



Seven reports were classified by Cybertip.ca as something other than CSAM and were forwarded to child welfare



Feedback from child welfare on the 15 reports classified by Cybertip.ca as CSAM includes:

- One report concluded as an Unsubstantiated Allegation
- Four reports were forwarded to local/regional Child and Family Services agencies for investigation consideration and/or follow up/safety assessment
- Nine reports remain as Open Investigation
- One remained without feedback at the time of publishing this report

2022-23 Manitoba Mandatory Reporting Case Examples

1. In July 2022, Cybertip.ca received a report regarding a male who allegedly showed another individual CSAM on several occasions. The report was forwarded to both law enforcement and child welfare. Child welfare is currently investigating the allegations.
2. In August 2022, Cybertip.ca received a report regarding alleged CSAM found on the device of a male. Allegations included that non-explicit images of a girl known to the male were intermingled with the child sexual abuse images. The report was forwarded to both law enforcement and child welfare. Child welfare is currently investigating the allegations.



Additional Highlights

In 2022-23, C3P engaged in the following activities, which helped to underscore the ongoing significance of training, education, and public awareness. Further detail is provided in subsequent sections:



515+ Manitoba educators, parents/guardians, childcare workers, and students were reached through webinars hosted by C3P education staff. **Pg. 8**



Executing public awareness campaigns to raise awareness about Cybertip.ca's services and the issues C3P witnesses through reports to Cybertip.ca **Pg. 11**



43,600+ professionals and volunteers were given access to online training in Manitoba on the issue of child sexual abuse through Commit to Kids® trainings, expert series, and human trafficking video. **Pg. 8**



54,700+ Kids in the Know® and Teatree Tells™ digital lesson accounts, including child sexual abuse prevention, and online safety lessons, were provided to educators across Manitoba. **Pg. 8**



Contributing victim impact statements ("VIS") and community impact statements ("CIS") in Manitoba courts and across Canada, and providing presentations to Manitoba Crowns and Crowns across Canada on relevant case law. **Pg. 26**



Releasing a report which further explored the prevalence of child sexual abuse and victimization in Canadian schools. **Pg. 19**

Government of Canada Advisory Group

C3P's Executive Director, Lianna McDonald, was selected to be a part of a 12-person expert advisory group tasked to provide the Minister of Canadian Heritage with advice on how to design federal legislative and regulatory framework to address harmful content online. This was a critical opportunity for C3P to share our expertise, unique data, and understanding of what is happening online to children and youth to create change for future generations. C3P contributed to the development of the legislation by sharing what we have witnessed through reports to Cybertip.ca over the past 21 years and what we have learned from working directly with victim/survivors.

Meeting with Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General

On October 13, C3P's Associate Executive Director, Signy Arnason, met with federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) Ministers of Justice and Attorney Generals from across Canada. She discussed what C3P is seeing through Cybertip.ca reports and victims contacting C3P after experiencing online sexual violence. She also tabled a letter from survivors calling for effective, protective internet regulation. The presentation focused on the need for legislation that protects children online and supportive measures for victims.

TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND RESOURCES

In 2022-23, C3P provided training and resources for educators and other professionals working with children as it relates to the issue of sexually exploited children. This included:



62,800+ education and awareness resources distributed in Manitoba.



515+ Manitoba educators, parents/guardians, childcare workers, and post-secondary students reached through webinars hosted by C3P education staff.



43,600+ professionals and volunteers in Manitoba given access to online training on the issue of child sexual abuse through the Commit to Kids trainings, expert series, and human trafficking videos.



54,700+ Kids in the Know and Teatree Tells digital lesson accounts, including child sexual abuse prevention, and online safety lessons, were provided to educators across Manitoba.

Virtual Presentations

TUNING IN

In 2022-23, the C3P education team facilitated 29 digital sessions to educators, parents, and other child serving organizations, reaching approximately 1,345 participants across Canada. In Manitoba, our education team presented to 515+ educators, parents/guardians, childcare workers, and students through webinar and in-person sessions.

C3P continues to facilitate up-to-date presentations for educators surrounding child protection within school environments. The discussions cover C3P resources, which include Kids in the Know, an interactive safety education program designed with age appropriate lessons for students from kindergarten to Grade 12; Commit to Kids, a training program that helps child-serving organizations reduce the risk of sexual abuse and create safer environments for children in their care; and current tactics in online child exploitation C3P witnesses through Cybertip.ca reports.

Representatives from C3P's Cybertip.ca and Support Services staff also presented virtually and in-person at nine events in Manitoba in 2022-23. Presentations informed LEA, educators, government officials, and other child serving organizations and/or child advocates about the services offered by Cybertip.ca and the support team, trends in online victimization, missing children cases, and the prevalence of sextortion¹⁰ across Canada.

¹⁰ The act of "sextortion" involves a person threatening to disseminate sexually explicit or intimate images or videos of another person without their consent, for the purpose of obtaining additional images, sexual acts, or for financial gain.

RECOVERY AND HEALING FROM TRAUMA IS POSSIBLE

Experiencing trauma can make it difficult to understand what happened, and find ways to cope with difficult thoughts and feelings. C3P developed a series of trauma education videos with the help of experts Anne Gill, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, and with feedback from Aleah Fontaine, MA, PhD Candidate in Clinical Psychology, from the University of Manitoba. C3P hopes these videos can be a source of accurate and helpful information for victims/survivors of child sexual abuse (whether it happened online or in person), as well as supportive friends and family, in their healing process.

We have received great feedback from a number of survivors, family members, and other professionals. All of this has resulted in an invaluable resource for individuals who have experienced trauma, those who are a support for someone who has experienced trauma, and anyone looking to understand more about trauma.

Within three months, the Trauma Education Video Series has received over 1,800 views.

“Excellent job. I love [sic] provides an opportunity for individuals to recognize their own unique response to trauma and develop personal strategies to cope with the impact and build upon their own resilience.”

– Professional associated with law enforcement, psychotherapy/counselling

“This is an excellent video that I can see myself recommending to people, especially those working with (i.e.: Licensed Group Care Facility Staff) children and youth who have experienced trauma.”

– Professional working in child welfare



Training for Law Enforcement Agencies, Child Advocates, and Legal Professionals

Law Enforcement Agencies

C3P provides Manitoba LEAs, victim services, and child and youth advocacy centres with education, awareness, and prevention resources. In the past year, **5,145 print resources**, **166 online training accounts**, which included access to Commit to Kids and the Expert Interview Series, and **249 digital lessons** were provided to these agencies to support their work with children and families.

Presentations for Legal Professionals

C3P's legal department continued to develop connections with Crown attorneys across Canada through presentations in the past year. The legal team presented to Manitoba Crown attorneys on three occasions in the past year. Two of these presentations were semi-annual case law update presentations, which included updates on new legal decisions related to CSAM, luring, and other tech-facilitated sexual offences, including NCDII. The third presentation involved representatives of both the legal department and Cybertip.ca, who provided Manitoba Crowns new to internet child exploitation cases with insight into Cybertip.ca, Project Arachnid, VISs and CISs, C3P law resources for Crowns, and other resources available for children and families through the C3P.

The team continued to contribute oral and written submissions to governments on legislation that is relevant to the protection of children and the rights of survivors of child sexual abuse. After speaking before a provincial government committee (the Manitoba Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development) for the first time on Manitoba Bill-43, *The Disclosure to Protection Against Intimate Partner Violence Act*,¹¹ C3P's legal department was invited to participate in the working group to examine how to implement the law.

The legal team met with a number of stakeholders and participated in various roundtables on a range of important topics, including online harms and regulation, reducing sexual harm to children, the intersection of child sexual abuse and animal sexual abuse, NCDII laws, and reforming Canada's approach to publication bans.

¹¹ S.M. 2022, c.44

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

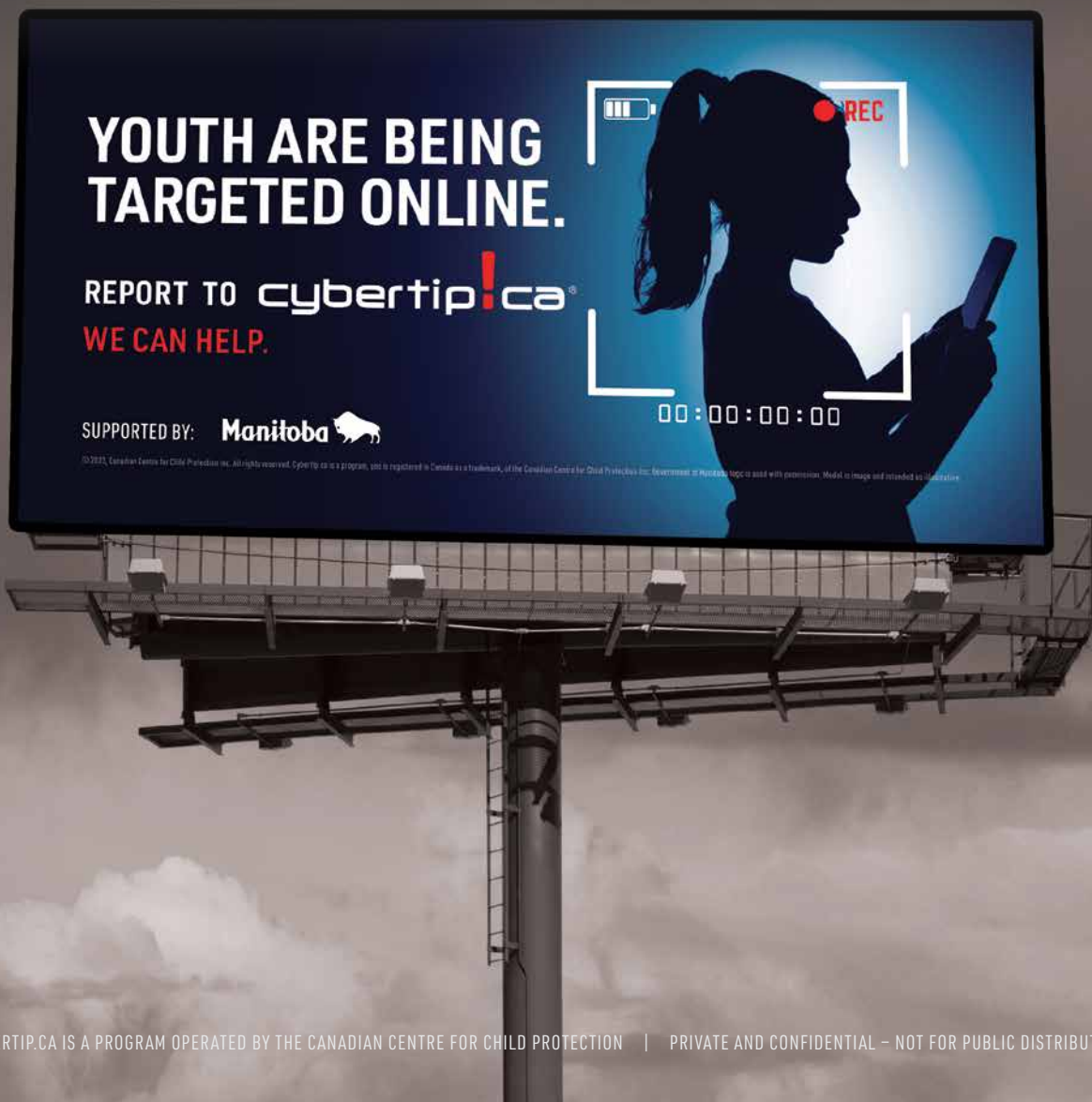
Mandatory Reporting

Cybertip.ca is tasked with raising the public's awareness in the province of Manitoba regarding the mandatory reporting of "child pornography." Public awareness and outreach activities continue to be a key focus for Cybertip.ca.

C3P's annual Mandatory Reporting campaign, which focuses on the message directed to the general public that all perceived instances of CSAM available online must be reported to Cybertip.ca, ran from February 6 – March 31, 2023. The campaign was advertised on social media and traditional out of home placements, such as billboards, benches, and transit shelters.

Our billboards and traditional print ads had a reach of **17.6+ million** and was seen by Manitobans across 11 communities, towns, and cities.

The social media campaign received over **2.6+ million impressions** across Facebook®, Instagram®, and YouTube®.



Why aren't children protected online like they are offline?

Right now, social media platforms provide those who are seeking to harm children with direct and unsupervised access to our kids 24–7, and the risk of harm is rising. Cybertip.ca witnessed a 36% increase in the overall online victimization of children in 2022 compared to 2021. Unlike offline, where governments have rules and regulations for companies and spaces that serve children, online guardrails simply do not exist in the same way. The responsibility and blame has entirely — and unfairly — been placed on parents.

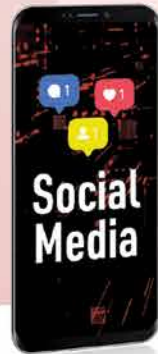
Children now have devices wherever they go, making it impossible for parents to oversee all of their child's online activity. Canada needs regulations that protect children online in the same way we ensure their safety offline.

We encouraged Canadians to share the campaign and reach out to their MP's about the need to prioritize online regulation which resulted in more than **937,000 impressions** across social media. The campaign hit **20.6+ million impressions** through digital billboards across Canada, and more than **200,000 impressions** in Winnipeg through restaurant and washroom ads.

The landing page for the campaign received an average of 170+ page views per day from March 1–31, 2023.

REGULATIONS THAT KEEP KIDS SAFE

10+ 0



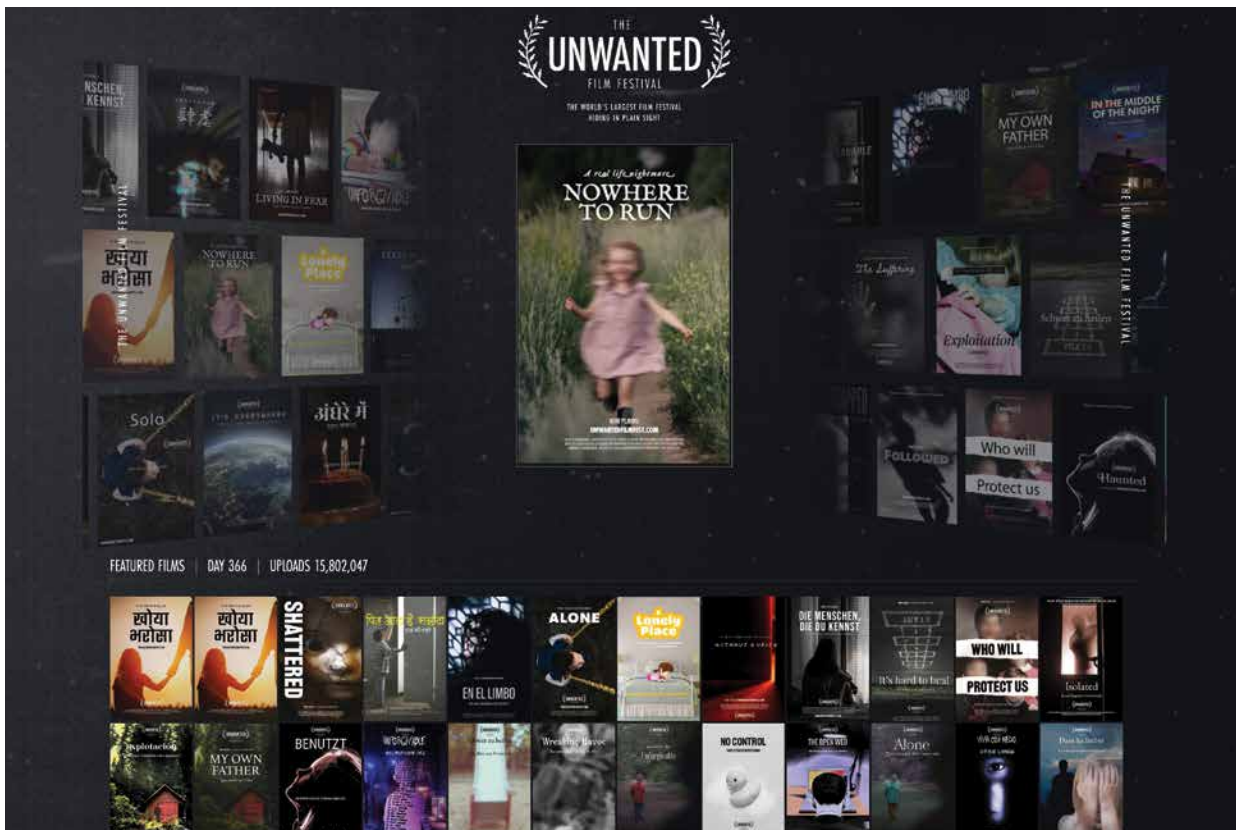
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"MY OWN FATHER." | "AS YOUNG AS ONE." | "VIOLATED: THEY'LL NEVER FORGET."



Unwanted Film Festival

These are just a few of the chilling movie titles from the Unwanted Film Festival — a powerful visual representation of the unimaginable 85 million pieces of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) that were reported in 2021. When broken down, that's one piece of CSAM appearing online every two seconds; when combined, they make up more content than all the world's film festivals put together.

The festival, which launched as the Tribeca Film Festival wound down in New York City, utilized AI technology to generate millions of movie posters on the festival's website (UnwantedFilmFest.com). The titles and taglines were taken from real CSAM survivor accounts of how this material has profoundly affected all aspects of their lives, and how its continued availability only compounds their trauma and threatens their safety.

"It's hard to describe what it feels like to know that at any given moment someone somewhere is looking at images of me as a child being sexually abused and getting sick gratification from it. It's like I'm being abused over and over and over again."

– A survivor of CSAM

The Unwanted Film Festival's social media campaign hit **62,600+ impressions** organically.

UnwantedFilmFest.com was visited more than **2,700+ times** during the campaign from June 15 – 22, 2022, with hundreds of signatures added to the petition on opening day.

CALLING OUT BALENCIAGA

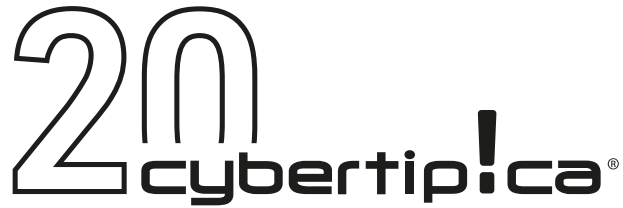
In late 2022, C3P released a brief campaign with the help of No Fixed Address (NFA), casting a spotlight on Balenciaga™ and their holiday campaign which featured children and sexualized toys. Balenciaga removed the controversial images November 22, 2022, but the images continued to spread, reaching over 331 million screens.

This happens every day with CSAM. Material that survivors don't have the luxury of 'removing.' Where is the public outrage for them?

Our organic campaign reached more than **11,800+ accounts** on Instagram and received more than **12,400+ impressions**. Across Twitter® and Facebook, the campaign climbed to **29,700+ impressions** and **1,000+ engagements**.



"Sorry" didn't stop the spread



Cybertip.ca marks 20 years of service

"We may not have known 20 years ago this is where we would be, but we have a clear vision of what needs to happen next to change the world for children."

– C3P Executive Director, Lianna McDonald

Cybertip.ca's first report came in on September 26, 2002, at roughly 11 a.m. Setting up a public tipline to report the online exploitation of children while the internet was still a new entity came with a lot of unknowns. We were unsure if we would get a single report. We could never have predicted the harms the internet would bring to children and youth over the next two decades, nor Canadians' reliance on the national tipline that today receives thousands of reports each month.

Over the 20 years of operating Cybertip.ca, C3P has witnessed the evolution of technology and how it has been weaponized against children. Without regulation and the safeguards afforded in the offline world, the internet has adversely flourished into an unrestricted space where children and adults mix. Offenders have unfettered access to children and youth as well as other like-minded individuals who validate, educate, and facilitate further harm.

Shortly after Cybertip.ca's anniversary, on October 6, 2022, survivors and families whose lives have been irreparably changed because of online sexual violence met with the Honourable Marco Mendicino, Minister of Public Safety, the Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, Minister of Canadian Heritage, and the Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. **The virtual roundtable, hosted by C3P, was the first time families and victims who represent the spectrum of online sexual violence against children – CSAM, sextortion, online grooming and luring, doxing, and stalking – have come together to advocate for change.**



"Cybertip.ca is an integral partner to law enforcement in the fight against online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Bottom line is you save lives!"

– Commissioner Brenda Lucki, Royal Canadian Mounted Police



"Cybertip.ca never sleeps. They have always been on guard and will continue to be. All citizens, especially parents, owe a huge debt of gratitude to those working at Cybertip.ca."

– Inspector Paul Krawczyk, Toronto Police Service



"For the past 20 years, the work accomplished by the dedicated people at Cybertip.ca has helped many Canadians navigate the trauma associated with online child sexual abuse. With admiration, the WPS congratulates Cybertip.ca on 20 years of protecting and supporting some of the most vulnerable members of our community."

– Chief Danny Smyth, Winnipeg Police Service



Cybertip.ca Alerts

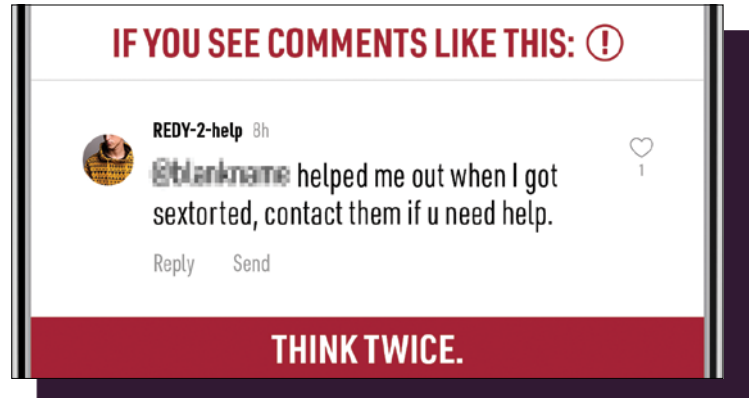
Cybertip.ca Alerts are notifications sent out to inform the public of concerning technology trends and new resources designed to increase children's personal safety. In 2022-23, Cybertip.ca issued **three Cybertip.ca Alerts**, which focused on tactics used to manipulate teens to facilitate harm:

January 2023, Think twice before accepting help with removing images online for a fee:

Victims of sextortion are at risk of additional harm by organizations or individuals that claim they can help get intimate images and videos back or removed for a fee.

March 2023, Age altering filters mislead victims:

Offenders manipulate youth by pretending to have things in common, like their age, their community, or their interests.



Alert: Think twice before accepting help with removing images online for a fee



Alert: Age altering filters mislead victims

cybertip!caTM
ALERTS

PROJECT ARACHNID

Project Arachnid is an innovative, victim-centric set of tools to combat the growing proliferation of CSAM on the internet. Processing tens of thousands of images per second, Project Arachnid is able to detect and address harmful content at a pace that far exceeds the capacity of traditional methods. Over the past six years, Project Arachnid has led to the removal of more than seven million images and videos of CSAM across more than **1,000 ESPs spanning nearly 100 countries.**

The platform has also evolved to issue notices on harmful-abusive material. As the name suggests, this material inflicts significant trauma on a victim, and may violate an ESP's terms of service, but may not necessarily meet a criminal threshold. Harmful-abusive material could include images associated with an abusive incident, contain partial nudity, or used in a sexualized context. The material could also include physical abuse, torture, or restrained children. Expanding Project Arachnid's reach to identify harmful-abusive material is imperative to continue reducing the availability of victims' most terrifying moments online.

Collaborating with child protection hotlines and analysts from around the world has enriched Project Arachnid while helping address the backlog of 40 million suspect images. This year, our global connections grew to include Lithuania, bringing the number of hotlines working in Project Arachnid to **13.**

In March 2023, Project Arachnid hit **25 million notices** for the removal of CSAM sent out across the globe. This substantial number is both a signal of Project Arachnid's success and an indication of how much the platform is needed.

These efforts are possible thanks to global allies working alongside C3P within Project Arachnid. Working together, we make a difference for survivors world-wide who do not have control over the distribution of their CSAM. Together we are offering hope.

The Project Arachnid platform is significantly enriched by collaborations with child protection hotlines, organizations, and other groups from around the world. Using a device called the Arachnid Orb™, other international allies work collaboratively with analysts from C3P to pool their collective expertise, reduce the duplication of assessment, and ultimately increase the number of notices that can be sent through Project Arachnid.

Since its launch in 2017, Project Arachnid has detected more than **54+ million suspect images** and sent **26+ million removal notices¹²** to content providers. In 2022-23, Project Arachnid detected an average of **719,000 unique suspect images per month.**

¹² As of March 31, 2023.



Rather than waiting for Project Arachnid to detect material and send a notice, industry can use Shield by Project Arachnid™ to assist in detecting known CSAM on their service, which will, in turn, speed up its removal. Currently 48 companies are utilizing Shield by Project Arachnid. Other companies, such as filtering providers, can download real-time lists of URLs that are believed to currently contain CSAM for filtering purposes.

New Innovations to Project Arachnid

Project Arachnid is always evolving to best combat the availability of CSAM online. In 2022-23, C3P developed and released our tool called Archon™, a simplified mechanism for submitting CSAM into Project Arachnid. C3P also launched a new URL management system in the past year that improves efficiency in adding URLs and domains to Shield by Project Arachnid, and provide a streamlined way for internet service providers (ISPs) participating in Cleanfeed Canada, as well as other companies utilizing Shield by Project Arachnid, to retrieve the list for blocking.

Breaking the Cycle of Abuse for Survivors

Knowing there is a system like Project Arachnid dedicated to detecting harmful images online and sending notifications for their removal offers some psychological relief for survivors. It also removes the burden of searching for and requesting the removal of their own imagery. C3P continues to work with survivors from around the world who have reached out to have their images/videos added to Project Arachnid rather than attempting to self-monitor this on their own.

"It's constant. It becomes the only thing you can think about, the only thing you care about. I had no time for anything else because I very quickly realized that at the time, if I wasn't going to do anything, no one would do anything... I honestly didn't notice a difference in the online harassment I was experiencing until Project Arachnid. Only then, I felt like I didn't have to do it myself because up until that point I had been doing it myself for 10 years."

– Survivor of online sexual violence

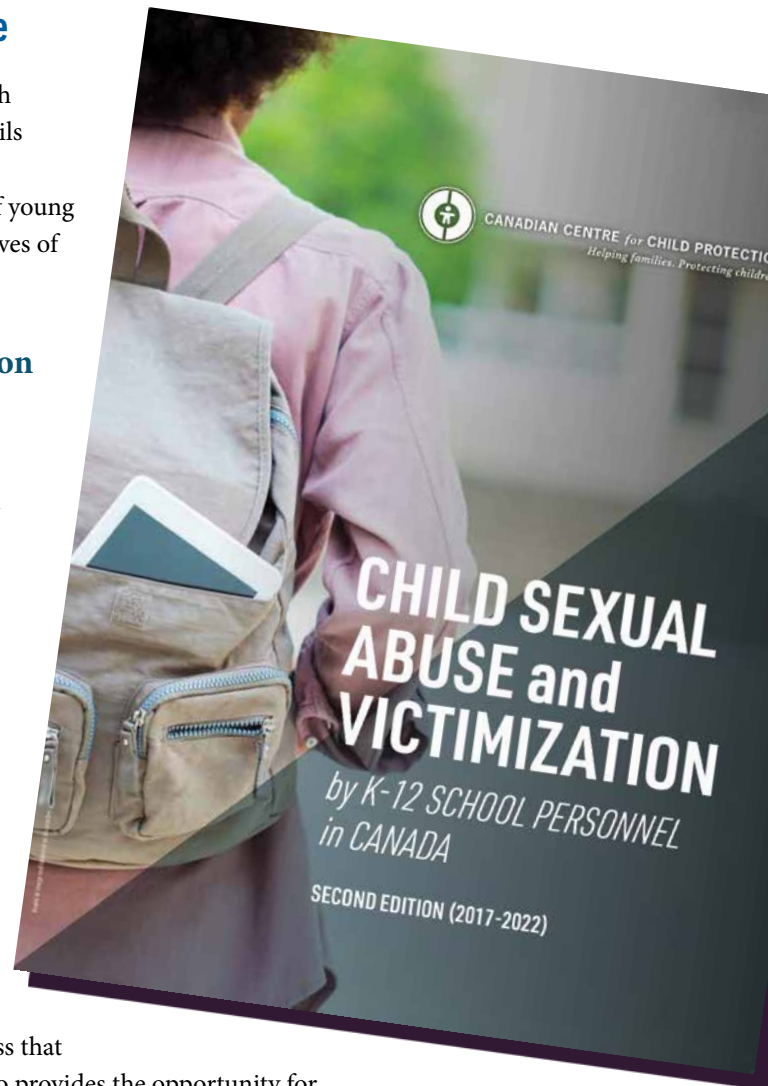
Research: Knowledge Influences Change

In 2022-23, C3P released four research reports examining a breadth of issues facing youth. Reports covered popular app store's guardrails for youth, or lack thereof, the frequency of child sexual abuse and victimization in Canadian schools, the experiences of thousands of young men and boys who experienced financial sextortion, and perspectives of parents and caregivers of victims of CSAM.

C3P releases **Child Sexual Abuse and Victimization by K-12 School Personnel in Canada** report

In November 2, 2022 C3P released a research report that found more than 500 students who were sexually victimized (or allegedly victimized) by school personnel between 2017–2021. This was a follow up to our 2018 report, the most comprehensive study ever done in Canada of child sexual abuse committed by school personnel. The findings and recommendations for action are intended to better equip key decision-makers in government and professional teacher associations to make effective, evidence-based changes that foster safe, healthy, and thriving learning environments within schools.

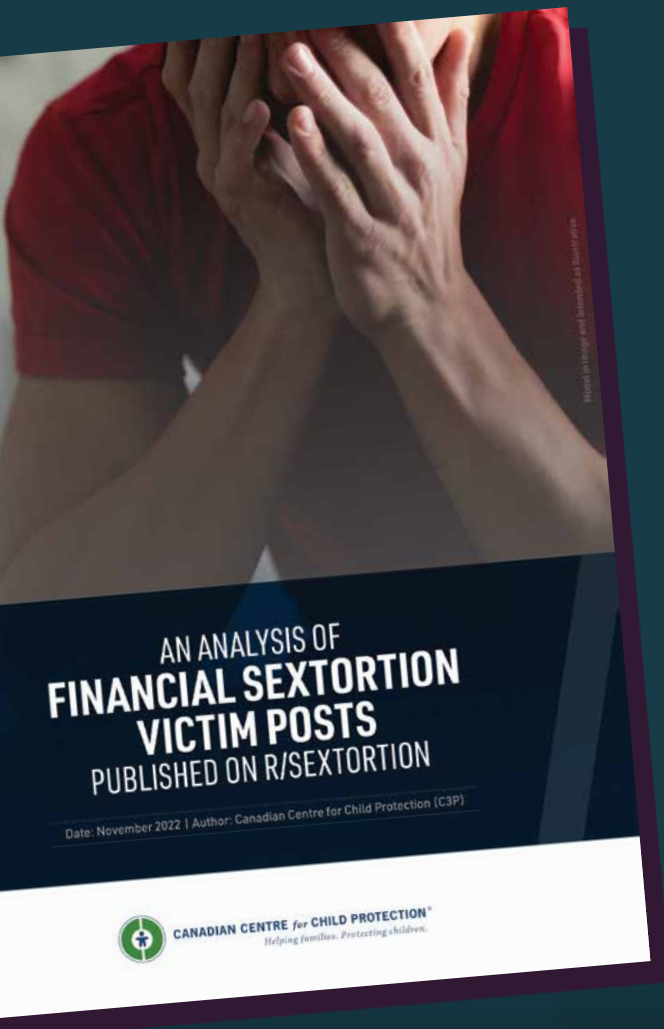
On the heels of this, on November 15, the Manitoba government announced their commitment to improving accountability and transparency related to misconduct in schools across Manitoba. In May, 2023, Bill 35, *The Education Administration Amendment Act (Teacher Certification and Professional Misconduct)*¹³ officially became law in Manitoba. The Act will help create a process that is more public, transparent, and accessible to all Manitobans. It also provides the opportunity for anyone who is concerned about professional misconduct of a teacher to have an accessible and open reporting mechanism, and for their concerns to be addressed in a more formal manner. The Act, received Royal Assent on May 30th, 2023, and will come into force upon proclamation. The Act puts student safety at the forefront, and brings Manitoba closer to victim-centric practices already seen across Canada in provinces includes British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario.



"This abuse has impacted us in terrible and life-altering ways. After discovering how similar our experiences were, despite being victimized by different teachers in different schools, provinces, and decades, we realized how similar and endemic sexual predation by school teachers is ... We decided to share our experiences in order to put a spotlight on the danger in our schools, and to educate the public and policymakers."

– Anne-Marie Robinson, member of Stop Educator Child Exploitation

C.C.S.M. c. E10.



An Analysis of Financial Sextortion Victims

C3P released an open-source analysis of first-hand accounts of sextortion shared publicly by victims on a support forum on Reddit. These 6,500+ accounts shed new light onto what has quickly become a public safety emergency affecting many Canadians and online users globally.

Key Takeaways

- Victim narratives suggest that when targeted by a financial sextortion attempt, an effective strategy is to not give in to an extorter's demands and cut off all communication.
- Social media platforms should ensure accounts for users under 18:
 - are by default private;
 - do not nudge them to add other users; and
 - do not incentivize them to share personal information, such as real-time location.
- Social media platforms should provide reporting options specific to blackmail and extortion that are responsive and capture the seriousness of users being aggressively and actively targeted.
- Information collected on the r/Sextortion forum shows extorters are using various online payment processors, including gift cards. Further research is needed to identify strategies to prevent extorters from exploiting these services to commit these crimes.





DEVASTATING LOSS OF MANITOBA TEEN: SEXTORTION HITS CLOSE TO HOME

Less than 200 km away from Winnipeg, the community of Pilot Mound, Manitoba has faced a considerable loss. Seventeen-year-old Daniel Lints died by suicide in February 2022 after he was blackmailed on Snapchat. Daniel, a Manitoba teenager with a loving family, witty sense of humour, and a bright future was a victim of sextortion. An offender pretending to be a young woman manipulated him into sending an explicit image and pressured him into sending money out of fear that the images would be leaked.

Within months of losing Daniel, his mother said that two other boys in their community of just over 600 people were targeted by sextorters.

The Lints family's story is not unique. Countless families are losing precious young lives because of sextortion. Social media platforms cannot remain unregulated, offering offenders easy access to young people around the world. How many more youth will lose their lives to this senseless crime before social media platforms are held accountable in their role of facilitating online sexual violence of children.

"Our family now tragically knows how easily anonymous online terrorists can access children.

Today, I am asking anyone who can make change happen to think on Danny's story – and all of the other children no longer with us. Please consider regulatory bills that will force social media companies to make their products safe for youth."

– Jill Lints

Parents' Perspectives on how Child Sexual Abuse Material Impacts the Entire Family

Findings from C3P's survey of parents of CSAM survivors shed new light on how this crime significantly impacts entire families. Twenty parents from around the globe whose children's sexual abuse was recorded gave their feedback, documenting how the abuse affected their health and well-being every day and sharing important insights into gaps in services and supports that must be addressed internationally.

To best support those impacted by these crimes, it is crucial to learn from their experiences and accordingly advocate for changes in policies, laws, and systems.

"Emotionally, I am shot, depressed, overwhelmed. I just want a normal life. I feel like we are living a series of crime shows."

– Survey respondent

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Parents of survivors from around the world completed the survey, including in Canada, the U.S., Mexico, the Netherlands, and Australia.

The report found that offenders' crimes drastically impacted survivors' parents; the crimes also negatively impacted the whole family, including in parenting approaches, financial and work responsibilities, and lost relationships; that families were continually met with inadequate and retraumatizing responses from government systems and technology companies; and, amidst the pain and upheaval, parents and their families were persistent and resilient.

Families of survivors are further harmed by failures of public health, child protective services, criminal justice, and technology companies. In order for these systems to better support families impacted by child sexual abuse material, C3P has prepared policy recommendations for each group:

- Implement public health approaches that provide ongoing, specialized therapy to survivors, their siblings, and parents at no cost to the family.
- Mandate trauma-informed training and practices for child protective services and criminal justice systems.
- End the unnecessary and traumatizing practice of showing survivors and their parents the abuse material.
- Create regulatory frameworks that ensure technology companies do their part to curtail cycles of abuse.

SUPPORTING VICTIMS/ SURVIVORS

We help those with nowhere else to turn. C3P links survivors and families to third party supports and ensures all accessible options are considered for each survivor. The casework team also helps locate appropriate therapeutic services, access financial supports, assist with safety planning, and implement protective supervision plans, among others. In addition, when possible, victims' abuse material is added to Project Arachnid to help disrupt the availability of the harmful/abusive material online.

In the last year, C3P has **managed more than 4,200 requests** from survivors, youth, and/or their caregivers with 5% of these requests originating from Manitoba. The support services team also assisted over **200 families and survivors** (17% coming from Manitobans) in understanding their options and eligibility for systems such as legal supports, therapy, or support services, provincial/territorial victim services, child welfare, assistance in applying for victim services funding programs, and for filing VISs.

"My gratitude to you and your team fills my heart. I regularly think about how your program I think saved my daughter's life. She is struggling with how the posts impacted her narrative about herself and her feeling of safety in the world but it is less so knowing that it is off the net and it comes up that you superheroes are there to help support."

- Mother of youth whose intimate images were shared

Throughout 2022-23, C3P assisted survivors and their families in reducing the risk of re-victimization and healing from online sexual violence. The majority of abuse reported to Cybertip.ca and NeedHelpNow.ca was related to sextortion. In these cases, online offenders used tactics like demanding their victim to send additional money or photos, harassed their victim online, and humiliated their victim.

Youth overwhelmingly reported to the tipline with concerns their images could be shared.

C3P also spends a great deal of time advocating for survivors/families within systems (e.g., coordinating with police, schools), working with families to provide education around trauma impacts and responses, and assisting with safety and supervision plans to increase general safety education and reduce the potential for re-victimization.

Case Example:

C3P provided support to a 15-year-old victim of online luring, who was exploited for a month before reaching out for support. The youth shared that their offender would incessantly request sexual images and would not leave the youth alone until they sent images. The youth felt afraid of disappointing their parents or causing them stress, and was hesitant to inform them of the situation. They also felt conflicted about ‘missing’ their offender and feeling alone.

C3P supports provided:

- Reported the incident to police and assisted the youth in understanding the police process.
- Supported the youth in feeling confident, blocking the offender, and ceasing contact.
- Walked youth through disclosing the situation to their parents.
- Worked with the youth on strategies on how to ask for more support from their parents.
- Worked with the youth to identify coping strategies.

"It was just too hard for me, so I gave in to him. He told me we weren't doing anything wrong. I told him no, so many times, but he wouldn't leave me alone. So I did it again, and again. He knows that I'm only 15."

- Victim of online luring



Survivors group marks five year anniversary with call to governments

"If we can have one good thing come out of the horror we have lived, it will be that our collective experience will be shared to spare current and future generations of children from the same fate."

- The Phoenix 11

C3P has the privilege of connecting with, hearing, and learning from survivors whose child sexual abuse was recorded and may have been distributed online. In addition to working with individual survivors, C3P works alongside a number of survivor advocacy groups, including the Phoenix 11, who banded together as a powerful force to challenge the inadequate responses to the prevalence of child sexual abuse images online.

Directed to the Five Country Ministerial, the Phoenix 11 reminded us all that over the past five years, the group has written dozens of statements to governments around the world, sharing their experiences as survivors, and pleading for help, without seeing governments tangibly holding tech companies accountable.

*"Any time we have been given the opportunity to explain the importance of ending online abuse and exploitation, we always end with the same ask: **that government step in and protect its most vulnerable citizens through meaningful legislation.**"*

- The Phoenix 11

Reiterating that we cannot wait for tech to do the right thing, the Phoenix 11 renewed their plea for comprehensive legislation that addresses what they believe are three important barriers to protecting children online:

1. Federal requirements that detail best practices for ESPs re: taking proactive action on the detection and removal of child sexual abuse material;
2. Removing flexibility for ESPs to determine what actually constitutes child sexual abuse material;
3. Allowance for legal consequences for ESPs who continue to choose profit over children by limiting liability protections currently afforded by section 230 of the *Communications Decency Act*.¹⁴

*"The Phoenix 11 continues to remain united in our commitment to combat the global epidemic of online harms against children in whatever ways we are able. Today we ask you to join us in this fight by taking measurable action on the key items above to combat this issue in the ways you are able. We simply have no more time to waste discussing the reasons why this should happen when we already know the answers. **Our children need us to act and they need us to act today – we must pass legislation to protect them now.**"*

- The Phoenix 11

¹⁴ 47 U.S. Code § 230

Making strides in survivor advocacy in Manitoba

Since 2016, C3P has been assisting identified survivors of CSAM, or their parents/guardians as the case may be, with recording VISs, as well as coordinating the submission of recorded and written VISs in legal proceedings across Canada. C3P also submits CISs, which allow groups and agencies, like C3P, to provide a sentencing court with a broader perspective in relation to the impacts of the offences before them. C3P has authored CISs on behalf of communities, such as identified and unidentified victims of CSAM, and victims of luring, as well as groups of survivors, like the Phoenix 11, to enable them to submit a CIS.

“The impacts on victims of child pornography crimes are independent of the impacts of the crimes of sexual assault and exploitation of these children. Child pornography crimes have major and often lifelong consequences. The images of their abuse, of the cruelty they have been subjected to, will never cease to haunt them. By participating in this virtual market, offenders are helping to perpetuate real impacts on victims.”

– The Honorable Benoit Gagnon, J.C.Q.¹⁵

In 2022-23, C3P **submitted at least one VIS and/or one CIS in approximately 80 different legal proceedings** across Canada, which is a **14% increase** compared to last year. C3P submitted **110 VISs in 23 different proceedings and 72 CISs in 63 proceedings**.¹⁶

In the past year, the volume of multiple VIS submissions also increased, and there was also a significant increase in bilingual VIS submissions in Quebec.

C3P had the largest Quebec submission to date, submitting 13 VISs on behalf of 16 victims in one proceeding (a 160% increase compared to the previous year), as well as two other large bilingual submissions in Quebec with at least 10 or more VISs.

There was also a significant interest in CISs in the past year. Many submissions included the Phoenix 11 CIS, C3P’s luring CIS, or a custom CIS authored by C3P. Custom CISs are drafted for unique cases often involving multiple offences, such as online luring, extortion, and/or CSAM offences. These types of cases may be especially egregious and have a number of different elements, such as a large number of victims, financial sextortion, and involvement of other children and animals. The custom CIS allows our organization to tailor the statement to the facts of the case.

Other notable happenings from this period:

- The **Phoenix 11 CIS** was requested for submission in **42 different proceedings**.
- C3P submitted the CIS developed for “Fabricated CSAM” (e.g. anime, cartoon drawings) for the first time in a Canadian proceeding. To our knowledge, this was the first time a Canadian court had received a CIS of this type for Fabricated CSAM.
- C3P developed and submitted three new CISs in Canadian proceedings:
 - **CIS for “Deepfake CSAM”** — This CIS was submitted in the form of a letter to the offender and was accepted by the court in *R c Larouche*, 2023 QCCQ 1853, where C3P submitted both CISs and VISs. Deepfake CSAM refers to CSAM that is produced using artificial intelligence software to combine pre-existing images of children, which essentially created “new” content.

¹⁵ In *R v Larouche*, 2023 QCCQ 1853 at para 31-15. Translated from original French to English using DeepL.com

¹⁶ Some proceedings also had at least one VIS and at least one CIS.

- **CIS for “Photoshopped CSAM”** — This CIS was submitted on behalf of identified and unidentified victims of CSAM, and discussed the harms of CSAM that are digitally altered, manipulated, or edited using image editing software. The CIS was in the form of a letter to the offender.
- **CIS for the agreement/arrangement offence** — C3P’s first ever CIS on the offence of agreeing or arranging to commit a sexual offence against a child was submitted. The CIS was written as a letter to the offender on behalf of all Canadian children, and explains how sexualized chats about a child, especially a real child in the offender’s life, can cause significant harm to that child and to all children.
- C3P created and submitted our first ever “reports” on specific offences (such as sextortion and luring) for use in sentencing proceedings. These reports were developed to help provide information to the court about the seriousness and prevalence of the offence, based on information gathered through operating Cybertip.ca and monitoring case law.
- After intervening on behalf of CSAM survivors in a “disclosure of evidence” hearing in 2019, C3P was once again granted leave to intervene on appeal. C3P submitted a written argument and made oral submissions with the assistance of a lawyer in Québec. **The argument highlighted the rights and interests of CSAM victims to ensure CSAM material is only used for a legitimate purpose.** The accused appeal was dismissed. Within the decision, the court took the opportunity to provide much needed guidance to lower courts on the issue of access to CSAM disclosure. The guidance was certainly influenced by the materials C3P filed, and is an important step forward in protecting the interests of CSAM survivors.

Some Manitoba developments include:

- **Presentation to Manitoba Court of King’s Bench justices:** For the first time, the C3P legal team presented in front of judges from a superior court at the Manitoba Court of King’s Bench judges in October 2022. Our presentation highlighted the need to keep personal details about online child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse victims out of legal decisions. Through case law monitoring, we routinely find victims’ personal information contained in legal decisions from across Canada, potentially placing victims and children in further harm’s way. Current trends and tactics we are seeing in online crimes against children reveal the numerous safety issues victims of online child sexual abuse and exploitation face and how certain personal details included in written judicial decisions can be misused to compromise the safety and security of victims and children. The presentation facilitated important connections, and we look forward to additional presentations in front of judge audiences scheduled for the coming year.
- **Bill 8 – Manitoba’s Judicial Training Bill:**¹⁷ C3P submitted a written brief on Bill 8 to the provincial Standing Committee Justice. Bill 8 requires new judges to take training on sexual assault law and social context. The overarching message of C3P’s submission is that sexual offences against children, including those facilitated through technology, must be addressed as part of the training that judges receive.
- **Bill 40 – Manitoba’s Human Trafficking Bill:**¹⁸ C3P submitted a written brief on Bill 40 to the provincial committee, which will studied the Bill. Bill 40 gives police the ability to request customer information from a hotel or online accommodation platform, and requires hotels, online accommodation platforms, taxi/Uber® drivers, and other person to report human trafficking to a police service. C3P’s submission emphasizes the need to enhance protections for children who may be trafficked due to their increased vulnerability.

¹⁷ Bill 8: *The Court of Appeal Amendment and Provincial Court Amendment Act*.

¹⁸ Bill 40: *The Hospitality Sector Customer Registry Act and Amendments to The Child And Family Services Act and The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act*.

MOVING FORWARD

Since the inception of Manitoba's mandatory reporting of child pornography legislation, we have witnessed the ongoing importance of public awareness, education, and training. For the 2023-24 fiscal year, C3P will continue to actively pursue the following objectives:

Leveraging Project Arachnid to reduce the availability of CSAM and harmful/abusive material

In 2022-23, Project Arachnid detected an average of 719,000 unique suspect images per month. As more CSAM and harmful/abusive images of children are classified, Project Arachnid continues to see an escalation in the volume of concerning images detected for analyst review. We anticipate this continuing in 2023-24.

Flagging VIS/CIS within Manitoba

C3P is assisting the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) with flagging in their cases if there are any images or videos of identified victims of CSAM whom have VISs available through C3P. VISs from survivors of CSAM can be filed in cases where images/videos of the victim appear in the materials possessed or accessed by the particular offender. The VIS give victims a voice in the court process and educate the court on the ongoing impact. Since the C3P has begun working with WPS, there has been a significant increase in the number of victims identified in collections, therefore increasing the number of VISs being filed by C3P on behalf of victims of CSAM in Manitoba. In 2023-24, we hope to work more closely with RCMP D Division on the same process. C3P will also continue to file CISs which allow agencies such as C3P to provide a sentencing court with a broader perspective in relation to the impacts of the offences before them. CISs can be particularly helpful where there are no, or very little, identified victims whose images are in the collection.

Advancing Support Services for Victims/Survivors

In the last year, C3P has **managed more than 4,200 requests** from survivors and youth — a 40% increase over the previous fiscal year. The support services team also assisted **over 200 families and survivors** (17% of these requests coming from Manitobans) in understanding their options and eligibility for systems such as legal supports, therapy, or support services, provincial/territorial victim services, child welfare, assistance in applying for victim services funding programs, and for filing VISs. We anticipate an increase in public requests for support as C3P advances the public promotion of these services within Manitoba and across Canada.

Digital and Training Resources for Child Welfare

C3P will continue to offer digital training and resources for child welfare professionals. New additions to the virtual training academy portal include the following:


- Further revisions to the Commit to Kids online training and revising the knowledge validation test;
- Continuing to add expert video series content, reorganizing the series, and providing a more guided learning experience by providing additional information and key takeaways for each profession;
- Connecting the Commit to Kids Foundational training to the Coaching Association of Canada, allowing coaches to earn one professional development point for completion;
- Updating modules and improving accessibility to the Kids in the Know online training.


Public Awareness Campaigns


In 2023-24, C3P will execute a public awareness campaign in Manitoba focused on reporting concerns involving online child sexual abuse and exploitation. This campaign will involve ads showcased through mediums such as billboards, social media, print, and video.




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