

Testimony

Of

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Of

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Tim Tebow Foundation

before
the

US House of Representatives
House Judiciary Committee

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Good morning, Chairman Biggs, Ranking Member Jackson Lee, honorable members of the committee, thank you for allowing us to speak with you today. My Name is Camille Cooper, I am Vice President of Anti-Human Trafficking & Child Exploitation at the Tim Tebow Foundation. All of us at TTF are blessed to be led by a man like Tim, who has the biggest heart I've ever known for hurting people all over the world. At TTF we have been blessed to be able to serve people in over ninety countries across the globe.

You've heard about the MVPs today. Tim talked to you about how important these unidentified children are. Jim told you how important HSI and Interpol are, and John told you about how important the ICACs are. I'm going to talk to you about how important you are.

In 2008, my former boss Grier Weeks and the former Wyoming ICAC Commander, Flint Waters, sat at this very table, before this same subcommittee and showed you a map filled with red dots (APPENDIX A). Those dots represented the approximate location of 500,000 offenders sharing images of children as young as infants and toddlers being raped and tortured. They warned the world that this illicit market demand for the rape of children could only be met with more images and new victims. They asked you to establish and support the ICAC Task Forces and you did. It was this committee that passed the Protect Our Children Act first and that program grew to 61 task Forces, at least one Task Force in each of your states. With your support the ICACs have arrested over 134,000 child exploitation offenders.

What does that mean to children?

For the first time we got a glimpse of these offenders. Around that time, Dr. Mike Bourke, who ran the sex offender treatment program at Butner Federal Prison and subsequently, the US Marshalls Sex Offender Targeting Center, studied possessors of images and found that 55-85% of these offenders are also contact offenders with an average of 13 victims each.

As investigations increased, so did the forensic demands. Memory increased on storage devices from megabytes to terabytes. This created a backlog that in some agencies was 2 years long.

Then, in 2009, Somer Thompson, a six-year-old girl, was abducted, raped, and murdered. Her murderer's laptop had been sitting on a police evidence shelf for two months. Her death was preventable. On his desktop was a video called "Toddler Insertion" of the rape of a 3-year-old girl. Her murder acted as a catalyst for Homeland Security, Special Operations Command and my former organization PROTECT, and we created a solution to the forensic backlog which is called the Hero Child Rescue Corps. It was this chamber that first provided funding for this special program, and it was the staff of this committee that helped draft both HERO Acts. Tens of thousands of children have been rescued and protected because of this program. So, thank you.

This brings me to why we are here today. Just as we predicted in 2008, as investigations, forensics and Cyber-tips have increased, images that have never been seen before – new images and new victims – have increased at an alarming rate.

Those new images are pouring in. Tim mentioned the more than 50,000 children in the Interpol database. But the FVEYs each have databases too. Each with millions of new images and tens of thousands of new victims.

System Failure

It's important for you to know how this happened so you can appreciate the importance of why we are here today. I'm going to take you upstream, past the distribution of the images, to the source of the abuse. For decades before the internet and smartphones with cameras, the only way to know if a child was being sexually abused was if the child disclosed.

Reports of sexual abuse have two tracks in the US. If you are raped by a neighbor, your case goes to law enforcement. If you are raped by a parent or caretaker, your case goes to social services. This is a diversion program for child rapists, established in federal law in 1974, ironically, as part of the Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act under the Social Security Act.

Incest victims get social workers as first responders, who can't collect evidence. These cases become he said/ she said and even when children are believed, under the law, courts are required to "reunify" these children with their rapist. So, for child sex abusers, the law incentivized "growing your own victims" so that you wouldn't go to jail.

This law was passed here in Congress because the sex offender treatment community sold Congress a bill of goods and told them that that incest offenders were just socially inept, amenable to treatment, and less dangerous than your stranger offenders. That rape within the family was a mental health issue not a crime. (APPENDIX B).

Back to the images

In 2018, Interpol and NCMEC both published studies that gave a glimpse into the universe of these abuse images. The most startling finding was who was producing most of these images. Unfortunately, many are Fathers and other family members. (APPENDIX C) Based on research by Ted and Liz Cross, we know that incest themed CSAM files are the most popular and have the highest correlation with sadistic abuse. (APPENDIX D)

As you can see from this chart, these offenders are people in your communities. These are your neighbors. These are guys you work with. You know the guy with all the cool games? Your daughter is friends with his daughter and has sleep overs at his house.

That's why victim identification is so critical. These offenders have come out into the light of day. For the first time in history, we don't have to just rely on children's outcries. We can follow the digital trail right to these children's doorstep.

Congress has recently had a lot of hearings to hold technology companies accountable. And that's necessary and important. But I would be remiss if I missed the opportunity to point out

the one company whose approach to Cyber-tips is focused on victim identification. Its Google. Now I know they aren't perfect. But when it comes to focusing on imminent harm, and saving kids enduring rape, they are doing it well. Their victim identification efforts should be a model for other tech companies.

You've heard Tim and Jim talk a lot about Interpol. Some of you might be wondering why we are asking you to support a database in France. Of all the FVEY databases that exist, the Interpol ICSE database is the most important because not all US victims' images will be found on US offenders' computers. Producers in the US share their images with offenders around the globe and when those countries do forensics, the new images get submitted to Interpol. Interpol partners with 196 countries. They are a non-partisan; civil service organization and they support law enforcement around the world. They have world class victim identification training and analysts. They simply don't have enough of them.

They have been overrun. They need more support. They need better technology.

Homeland Security Investigations is the most well positioned law enforcement agency to support the important work of Interpol's ICSE team. As Tim mentioned they have created the first US based victim identification operation at their victim identification lab at the Cyber Crimes Center called Operation Renewed Hope. That Operation has identified hundreds of children, half right here in the US, and it's just getting started. But we're talking about finding 50,000 children, it's a city of children we need to go find. They are fighting with a platoon, but they need a brigade.

We have three important requests today:

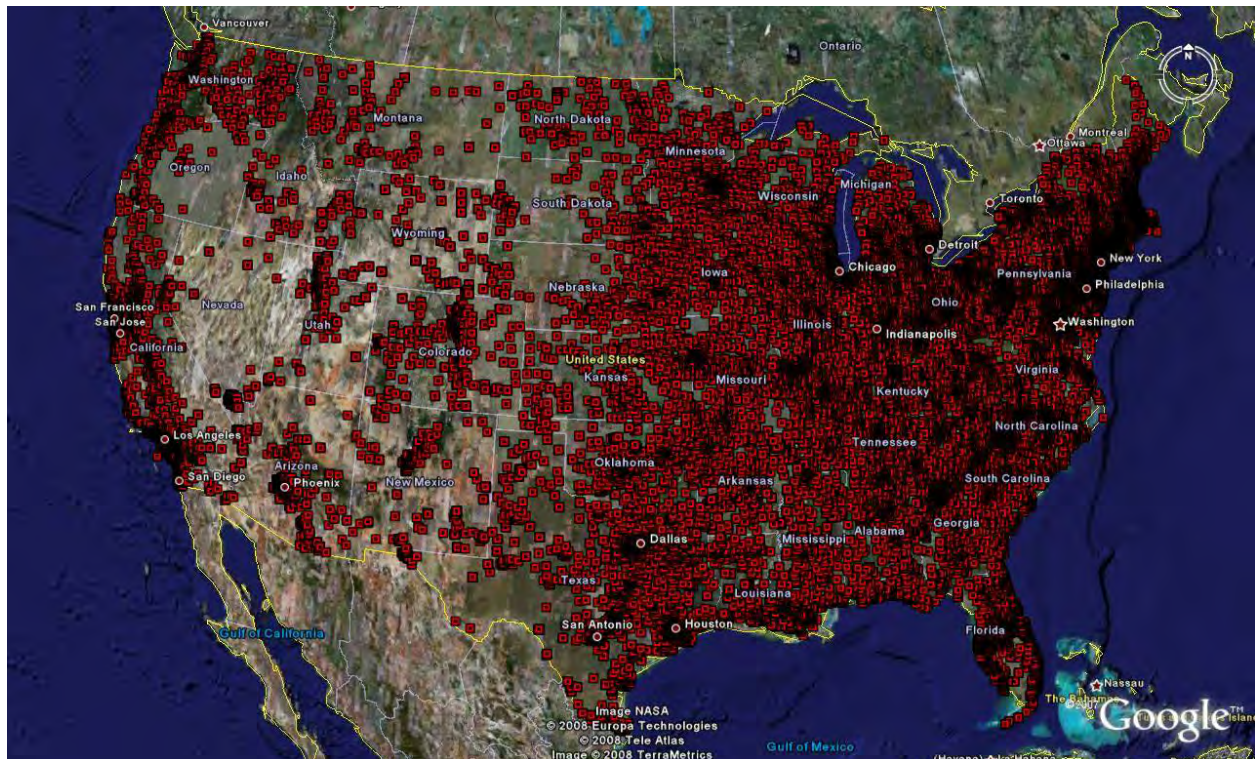
1. As Tim said, we need a bigger rescue team. We need dedicated, specially trained victim identification analysts. And we need hundreds of them.
2. We need to invest in their training, and we need to give them the best tools available to rescue these children.
3. We need to modernize the ICSE database so that they can manage the volume of images that pour in.

A lot of people told me not to come up here and ask for your help because it's a Presidential year, it's too partisan, and we won't be able to get anything done. But I've been up here with you before during a Presidential year. We've done great things together during Presidential years. You passed the Protect Our Children Act in a Presidential year.

So, we would ask that you put your partisan differences aside in pursuit of saving children's lives.

These children need all of you fighting for them. One team. One mission. Let's go rescue these kids.

APPENDIX A (2008)

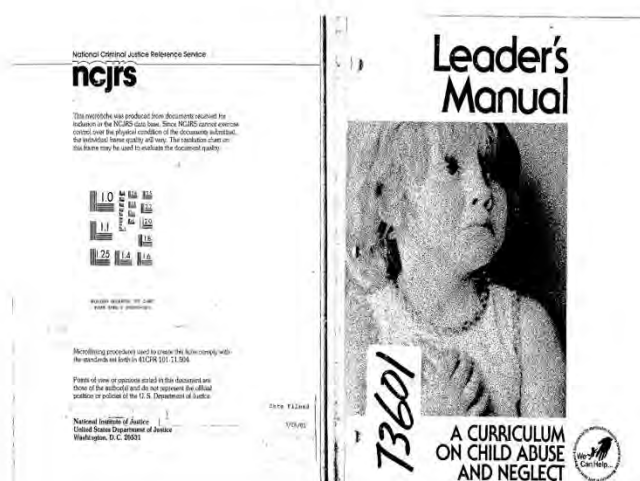


Source: 500,000 unique computers seen trading child sexual abuse images. Operation Fairplay/
Department of Justice

APPENDIX B (1979)

“Physically violent sexual abuse within the family, such as rape and sadism, is rare.”

- The family dynamics that contribute to sexual abuse of a child are complex. The underlying characteristics may include:
 - A father or stepfather who is ineffectual, has low self-esteem, and is unable to relate adequately to other adults. He may be an autocratic ruler of the family.
 - An unhealthy marital relationship, in which the adult sexual relationship is either strained or nonexistent.
 - Prolonged absence or loss of one parent.
 - Severe overcrowding.
 - Lack of social and emotional contacts outside the family. • Geographical isolation.
 - Alcoholism
 - Precipitating crisis in adult's life with a resulting loss of self-esteem.
 - Presence of an extremely passive parent.
 - Cultural attitudes and multigenerational patterns of incest.



Source: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/73601NCJRS.pdf>

APPENDIX C (2022)

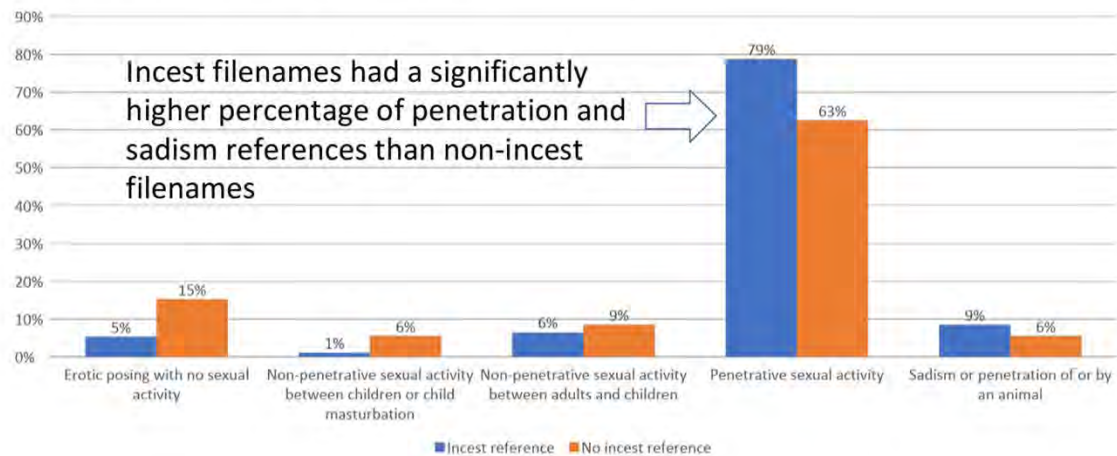
Unique Images and Videos Reviewed by CVIP Disaggregated by Relationship Between Suspected Offender and Child Victim						
Relationship Type	CY 2020		CY 2021		CY 2022	
	Total Images/Videos	Unique Images/Videos (based on MD5 hash)	Total Images/Videos	Unique Images/Videos (based on MD5 hash)	Total Images/Videos	Unique Images/Videos (based on MD5 hash)
Aunt	1,795	1,076	3,851	2,068	3,193	1,905
Babysitter, Mentor, Coach, Teacher	112,491	74,510	234,392	127,942	119,752	69,638
Boyfriend	2,563	2,046	14,141	8,488	10,385	8,124
Brother	13,401	6,303	23,532	9,611	22,710	9,543
Brother-in-Law	4,191	3,093	4,432	2,299	4,011	2,819
Cousin	6,949	4,987	10,733	5,266	12,346	6,612
Father	585,798	299,486	934,759	399,480	692,628	376,633
Foster Sibling	138	75	546	241	826	468
Girlfriend	0	0	335	335	8	7
Grandfather	11,466	7,331	17,250	8,881	16,906	9,289
Grandmother	24	23	34	24	36	26
Guardian's Partner	137,844	71,700	273,499	116,525	148,983	77,413
Half Sibling	1,152	655	2,495	1,160	2,539	1,250
Legal Guardian	42,504	21,481	45,810	21,974	40,745	20,354
Mother	62,470	35,090	131,777	50,956	80,981	49,396
Neighbor/Family friend	271,531	140,555	444,422	209,373	338,145	172,858
Online Enticement/Self & Offender Produced	92,316	68,626	233,177	90,386	178,465	115,319
Other Relative	13,048	7,450	21,525	12,031	33,076	26,190
Photographer	130,975	75,572	175,440	77,247	92,228	53,904
Trafficking	36,125	17,509	48,478	20,423	37,472	17,547
Sister	4,692	3,012	9,909	4,024	7,163	4,199
Step-Father	142,242	59,419	191,915	80,080	166,067	100,676
Step-Grandparent	10,986	5,507	24,032	9,312	14,808	7,830
Step-Mother	2,937	1,357	4,813	2,122	3,379	1,607
Stranger	6,558	4,185	10,578	4,630	8,513	5,592
Uncle	160,023	85,313	276,524	119,621	187,597	99,164

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Source: https://www.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/OJJDP-NCMEC-Transparency_2022-Calendar-Year.pdf

APPENDIX D (2023)

The majority of incest-related file names referenced penetration and/or sadism



T. Cross, L. Cross, C. Cooper, S. Turkheimer, D. Pellegrino, G. Pounder

Source: Analyzing the Predatory Marketplace: Technology, Research and Policy to Protect Children and Bring Producers and Consumers of Online Child Sexual Abuse Material to Justice

