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# IMPROVING THE RESPONSE TO Victims of Child Pornography

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## Section 3: Parent and Child Telephone Interviews



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# Interview Methods

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## Purpose

The purpose of the telephone interviews with parents and children was to identify the needs of victims of child pornography (CP) production and their families, collect details about the services they received and learn about barriers they may have experienced following their victimization. We also hoped to compare the responses of parents whose children were depicted in child pornography to those of parents whose children suffered contact child sexual abuse but were not photographed. However, we were not able to recruit enough participants to fulfill this goal.

## Method

We conducted telephone interviews with parents 1) whose children had forensic interviews at two child advocacy centers (CACs) because of child sexual abuse or 2) were members of a parent support group that agreed to recruit members to participate in the survey. Parents included both those whose children had been depicted in child pornography and those whose children had suffered contact sexual abuse but had not been photographed. In addition, we asked parents of child victims who were ages 13 to 17 for consent to interview their children. We conducted telephone interviews with children whose parents consented and who agreed to participate. All procedures and instruments were approved by the University of New Hampshire's Institutional Review Board and by administrators at participating agencies. Interviews were conducted by one researcher at the Crimes Against Children Research Center with extensive experience conducting telephone interviews about sensitive topics, including child sexual abuse. The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes for the parents and 10 to 15 minutes for the children. Responses were recorded using computer-assisted telephone interviewing software. Interviews were conducted from November 2012 to August 2013.

## Sample

The sample of parents (n = 46), includes parents who reported their children were victims of child sexual abuse that included child pornography production (n=13) and parents whose children were sexually abused but not photographed (n = 33). Based on parent reports, the sample of child victims (n = 11) included three teens who had been photographed. However we did not distinguish the teens that were depicted in child pornography because the sample size was too small to make meaningful comparisons and to avoid publishing possibly identifying information. Parents who participated received \$40 gift cards as incentives and teen participants received \$20 gift cards.

## *Procedures*

We recruited participants from a support group for parents of children who had suffered sexual abuse and from two child advocacy centers. We also solicited several other victim-serving agencies and federal agencies to contribute to the research, but these agencies either could not identify cases that included child pornography production and or they declined to participate for other reasons.

### **Recruitment from parent support group**

We recruited parents from a support group for parents of children who had been sexually abused, which included several members with children who had been photographed in child pornography. The administrator of the group distributed an invitation to participate in the study by email to group members, including a summary of the study and a form consenting to contact by the CCRC researchers. Group members who were interested in participating returned the consent form and provided contact information (n = 11). The interviewer then contacted those parents to describe the study in more detail, obtain consent and schedule an interview. The interviewer explained that participation was voluntary, responses would be confidential, and participants would receive \$40 gift cards. All of the parents who returned consent forms completed interviews. Five reported that their children had been photographed in child pornography.

### **Recruitment from CACs**

To recruit parents from CACs, the National Children's Alliance (NCA) issued invitations to participate in the research to 30 urban CACs using emails, phone calls, and face-to-face recruitment efforts. The invitations asked if the CAC provided services to children who were victims of child pornography production and if they tracked such cases so they could be identified. If so, the centers were invited to participate in the study.

Six of the 30 CACs responded that they could identify cases that might qualify for the study. However, ultimately only two CACs participated. The others could not locate records of child pornography production cases, could not gain timely IRB approval or faced other barriers. The two participating CACs received financial subsidies from NCA to support their data collection efforts.

Slightly different sampling procedures were used at each of the two CAC recruitment sites because they had different organizational structures and record keeping practices. One CAC examined all records from 2012 and the other CAC examined records between March 2011 and March 2013. The two CACs identified a total of 143 parents whose children had cases involving child sexual abuse either with or without child pornography production. CAC staff members attempted to contact these parents to describe the research. They explained to parents that participating was voluntary and would not affect their child's status at the CAC in any way, that responses would be confidential, that CAC staff would have no access to responses, and that participants would receive \$40 gift cards. CAC staff then asked if parents would consent to being contacted by CCRC researchers about the study. When parents said yes, CAC staff forwarded consent forms with contact information to CCRC researchers.

Of the 143 cases identified by CACs, 53 parents consented to be contacted by the researchers. At both CACs, many parents could not be reached because there was no answer, no response to messages, or disconnected or wrong numbers. We do not have detailed counts of cases in which parents could not be reached. Also, there were inconsistencies in recruitment efforts between the two CACs and between efforts to recruit parents in cases flagged as including child pornography production versus cases of child sexual abuse alone. These inconsistencies make it difficult to compare participation rates. Further, in some instances there were discrepancies between cases flagged in CAC records as including child pornography and parent reports. We relied on parent reports to classify cases. Seventy-four percent (n = 46) of the parents who returned forms consenting to contact by the researchers completed telephone interviews and 28% of those cases (n = 13) involved child pornography production. Table 3-1 provides the dispositions for the parent interviews.

**Table 3-1. Dispositions, Parent Interviews**

	<b>% (n)</b>
CAC parents identified as eligible to participate	(143)
CAC parents consenting to researcher contact	(53)
Support group parents consenting to researcher contact	(11)
Total parents consenting to researcher contact	100% (64)
Could not be reached by researchers	27% (17)
Refused	1% (1)
Completed parent interviews	72% (46)
Case involved child pornography production	28% (13)
Case involved child sexual abuse only	72% (33)

Of the parents who completed telephone interviews, 48% (n = 22) had children ages 13 to 17 who were eligible for a child interview; 50% of eligible teens (n = 11) completed telephone interviews. This included 3 children whose parents indicated they had been photographed in CP. Five parents declined to consent to a child interview and five parents consented, but the child could not be reached. One child refused to consent to an interview after a parent gave consent. (See Table 3-2)

**Table 3-2. Dispositions, Child Interviews**

	<b>% (n)</b>
Completed interviews of parents with children ages 13 to 17	100% (22)
Parent refused to consent to child interview	23% (5)
Parent consented, but child could not be reached	23% (5)
Child refused	5% (1)
Completed child interviews	50% (11)

## *Data Collection*

Parent telephone interviews lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and child interviews lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

At the beginning of both the parent and child interviews, the interviewer read an introductory script. Respondents were encouraged to go to a private place where they could talk freely. They were informed that participation was completely voluntary and that they could skip any questions or stop the interview at any time. They were also informed that their responses would be kept confidential and would not be shared with other persons, including CAC staff members. They were informed that there could be a small risk that they could feel upset when answering the questions. Children were told in addition that no questions would directly ask about what happened to them or about current abuse, and that researchers would have to report any disclosures of abuse to authorities. Once parents and children confirmed that they understood this information and gave consent to participate, the interview began.

At the conclusion of the interview, the interviewer asked parents if they would be interested in participating in future research on similar topics. If so, the interviewer made a paper record of their email address. (One CAC opted out of this portion of the interview.) The interviewer asked both parents and children for mailing addresses to send them \$40 gift cards to thank them for their participation; addresses were recorded on paper separate from any interview responses. Both parent and child respondents were also given the phone number for a national child abuse hotline and, if associated with a CAC, the name and phone number of a CAC support person.

## *Eligibility*

Parents recruited through a child advocacy center were eligible to participate if they had a child who had a forensic interview at one of the participating CACs because of child sexual abuse, the child was in their custody, and English was the parent's primary language. All parents recruited through the parent support group were eligible because they all had children who had suffered child sexual abuse, with or without child pornography production. Children of parent respondents were eligible if they were ages 13 to 17, victims of child sexual abuse with or without child pornography production and a parent consented to a child interview.

## *Instrument Design*

The interview was designed after a review of the literature about the impact of child pornography production and by suggestions and revisions from the study Advisory Board. We piloted the protocol by conducting mock interviews with four members of the study Advisory Board, who role-played parents and children based on their professional experience with this population, and we modified the interview procedures and instruments as needed based on their feedback. The interviewer used a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system (WinCATI) to record interview responses.

The parent interview was divided into the following sections:

- **Preliminary Section:** We asked parents to confirm that they had a child who had suffered child sexual abuse. Questions also gathered information about the age and gender of the child, the length of time that had passed since the initial visit to the CAC (if any), and whether or not the sexual abuse involved CP production.
- **Impact of Incident Section:** We asked parents about problems or changes in their child's behavior since the abuse, such as problems at school or changes in social behavior.
- **Child Services and Needs Section:** This section assessed the child's use of services, such as mental health counseling, and asked parents to comment on the quality of these services. If children did not receive certain services, we asked parents to describe reasons, including barriers to obtaining services. We also asked parents to specify additional services they would have liked for their children.
- **Parent Services and Needs Section:** This section asked about parents' use of services for themselves, including what they did and did not like about services, any barriers to obtaining services, and any additional services they would have liked.
- **Symptoms of Distress:** This section included the Impact of Events Scale, a standardized assessment of the parents' posttraumatic symptoms. Parents reported the frequency of symptoms within the last week, such as how often they thought about what happened when they did not mean to. We also asked parents about their children's symptoms using the UCLA PTSD Index – Parent Version. However, there was too much missing data to calculate results.
- **Characteristics of Abuse Section:** We asked parents general questions about the crimes that happened to their children. These included age at the time of the abuse, how long the abuse went on, and what was most upsetting or hardest to handle about what happened. If there was CP production, we asked questions about the images. These included questions about parents' and children's reactions and concerns, how CAC staff or other professionals dealt with or talked about images and whether a counselor addressed the impact of images in treatment.
- **Interactions with Court Section:** We asked parents if criminal charges had been filed against the abuser and about experiences with court professionals, such as victim advocates.
- **Legal Remedies Section:** This section asked parents if they were aware of legal options, including restitution, victim compensation, and access to civil attorneys and victims' rights attorneys. If so, we asked whether they were able to use any of these options, any problems they encountered obtaining them, and suggestions for improving such options. If the cases involved CP production, parents were also asked about their awareness and experiences with the victim notification system.
- **Privacy Section:** This section asked parents whether the case had been reported in the media and, if so, what impact this had on the family.
- **Advice Section:** We asked parents for additional feedback about any part of the investigation, prosecution, or treatment process for themselves or their children and for advice for other families going through similar situations.



- **Personal Characteristics Section:** This section asked parents for basic demographic information, such as age, race/ethnicity, marital status, and level of education.
- **Parent Reactions Section:** In this final section, we asked parents for their reactions to the interview, including whether they were upset by any questions.

The child interview was much shorter than the parent interview and was not divided into distinct sections. We asked children about supportive people they encountered in the time after people found out what happened, anything they liked or did not like about various services and professionals they came in contact with (e.g., counselors, police, medical practitioners), and any advice they had for other children going through similar situations. The child interview also included a self-esteem and mastery scale used in a previous CCRC survey (DVS; Turner, Finkelhor & Ormrod 2010). This scale was based on items drawn from two different scales, one regarding self-esteem (Rosenberg 1965) and one regarding mastery (Pearlin & Schooler 1978), and was modified to use more child-friendly language and simpler responses options. The scale consisted of 11 statements (e.g., “You are happy with yourself,” “You often feel helpless in dealing with problems”) and respondents rated each item on a 3-point scale: “*very true*,” “*a little true*,” and “*not true*.” Both this scale and the original scales it was based on have been found to have sound psychometric properties and have been used with other samples of children who have been sexually abused (Turner et al, 2010).

### *Data Cleaning and Coding*

Data were transferred directly from the WinCATI system to a SPSS data set for cleaning, coding, and analysis. CCRC researchers cleaned the data and, where needed, coded open-ended responses.

### *Participants*

Demographic information was collected for parent participants (see Table 3-3 below). Parent participants were primarily female (91%), age 30 or older (96%), White, Non-Hispanic (61%), currently or previously married (85%), had at least some college education (74%), and had two or more children currently living in the home (74%).

**Table 3-3. Parent Demographics**

<b>Demographic Characteristics of Parent Participants</b>	<b>n = 46 % (n)</b>
<u>Age</u>	
Under 30	4 (2)
30 to 39	35 (16)
40 to 49	41 (19)
50 to 59	15 (7)
60 or older	2 (1)
Refused	2 (1)

<u>Sex</u>	
Male	9 (4)
Female	91 (42)
<u>Marital status</u>	
Married	41 (19)
Separated, divorced, widowed	43 (20)
Never married	13 (6)
Refused	2 (1)
<u>Number of children currently in household</u>	
None	13 (6)
One	13 (6)
Two	41 (19)
Three or more	30 (14)
Refused	2 (1)
<u>Highest level of education</u>	
Some high school, no degree	13 (6)
High school degree or GED	13 (6)
Some college or technical school	33 (15)
College grad	30 (14)
Graduate degree	9 (4)
Refused	2 (1)
<u>Race</u>	
White, Non-Hispanic	61 (28)
White, Hispanic	13 (6)
Black or African-American	13 (6)
American Indian or Alaska native	9 (4)
Other	2 (1)
Refused	2 (1)

The child interview collected demographic information only on age and gender of participants. The children were all female and were evenly distributed by age (see Table 3-4 below). Using data from the parent interviews, some additional information is available about the characteristics and backgrounds of the children. The parents of child interview participants were all 30 or older, mostly female (82%), and had at least a high school degree (82%). Most of the child participants had parents who were divorced or never married and most of their parents reported two or more children living in the household.

**Table 3-4. Child Interview Participant Demographics**

<b>Demographic Characteristics of Child Participants</b>	<b>n = 11 % (n)</b>
<u>Age</u>	
13	27 (3)
14	18 (2)
15	9 (1)

16	18 (2)
17	27 (3)
<u>Gender</u>	
Male	0 (0)
Female	100 (1)
<u>Parent's Age</u>	
Under 30	0 (0)
30 to 39	36 (4)
40 to 49	46 (5)
50 to 59	18 (2)
60 or older	0 (0)
<u>Parent's Sex</u>	
Male	18 (2)
Female	82 (9)
<u>Parent's Marital Status</u>	
Married	27 (3)
Divorced	46 (5)
Never married	27 (3)
<u>Number of children currently in household</u>	
One	9 (1)
Two	64 (7)
Three or more	27 (3)
<u>Parent's Highest Level of Education</u>	
Some high school, no degree	18 (2)
High school degree or GED	27 (3)
Some college or technical school	18 (2)
College grad	27 (3)
Graduate degree	9 (1)

# Findings from Parent Telephone Survey

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## Executive Summary

- Most parents whose children were depicted in child pornography (CPP parents) did not refer to the images when asked what was hardest to handle about their child's victimization. Most mentioned other aspects of the crime such as a trusted person being the perpetrator, frustration with the criminal justice system, and feelings that they failed to protect their child. Also, most parents did not feel their children were very worried about the images, for a variety of reasons.
- The majority of CPP parents reported changes in their child's social behavior after the abuse. A small number of parents reported their child suffered from problems related to the abuse either sometimes or often in the past month. This included problems with fighting and aggression, inappropriate sexual behavior, and eating problems.
- All CPP parents said their children received counseling and most parents thought the counseling was helpful. Most had suggestions to improve counseling, for example counseling that addressed issues in addition to sexual abuse (e.g., substance abuse) and more accessible, affordable and longer-term options for counseling.
- Most CPP parents went to counseling themselves and all who went found it helpful for learning coping skills and being in an environment where they did not feel judged. However, many parents wanted financial assistance for their counseling and more convenient scheduling and locations.
- CPP parents expressed problems with the criminal justice system that included lack of compensation when parents had to take time off from work, need for help to deal with children's fears about testifying, more explanation of terms used in the court system and more sensitivity to mental health issues and developmental delays among child victims.
- Nearly all CPP parents were comfortable with how police, social workers, and others talked about and handled images. Still, about half saw problems. These included images not stored securely, lack of sensitivity by law enforcement during interactions with children and parents about images, children being required to identify themselves in images and parent distress when seeing images that included other victims.
- About three-quarters of parents described positive experiences with staff at a child advocacy center.
- Criminal charges were filed in most cases and most families had victim advocates who parents described as helpful and supportive.
- Most CPP parents had heard of restitution, about half had received awards with fewer actually collecting awarded money. About half had received victim compensation funds. One parent had retained an attorney for a civil suit. About one-third of families had made decisions regarding

victim notification laws and all opted to be notified if their children’s images were found in cases of child pornography possession or distribution.

- Nearly all respondents said that it was very important to participate in research like this and that, knowing the questions, they would still agree to participate.

## Overview

We recruited parents from two child advocacy centers and a parent support group to participate in interviews to gather information from parents of children who were depicted in sexually explicit photographs or videos (i.e., child pornography production, which we abbreviate as CPP). We asked parents about the impacts of the victimization, experiences with counseling, interactions with court, legal remedies (e.g. victim compensation, victim notification, restitution), professional and media responses, and advice to other parents. We also asked questions about images, such as whether the images were distributed and reactions to the images.

For comparison purposes, we also interviewed parents of children who experienced contact sexual abuse but were not photographed for child pornography. However, the sample size was too small to analyze whether statistically significant differences existed between parents whose children were depicted in child pornography (n=13) and those whose children were not (n=33). We focus on the responses of the CPP group of parents in the text portions of this report. However, for the information of readers we include data from the non-CPP parents in the tables. Due to the small sample size, these data should be considered exploratory. That being said, no survey we are aware of has asked parents of child pornography production victims these types of questions.

## Sample Characteristics

### *Personal Characteristics*

Most of the CPP parents were female and most were age 40 or older (see Table 3-5). About half were currently married and most were college graduates. The majority was non-Hispanic and White. Most had children in their household.

**Table 3-5. Characteristics of Respondents**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n=33 % (n)</b>
<u>Respondent gender</u>		
Male	15 (2)	6 (2)
Female	85 (11)	94 (31)
<u>Respondent (parent) age</u>		

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n=33 % (n)</b>
Under 30	0 (0)	6 (2)
30 to 39	8 (1)	45 (15)
40 to 49	61 (8)	33 (11)
50 to 59	15 (2)	15 (5)
60 or older	8 (1)	0 (0)
Refused <sup>a</sup>	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Marital status</u>		
Married	54 (7)	36 (12)
Separated, divorced, widowed	39 (5)	45 (15)
Never married	0 (0)	18 (6)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Highest level of education</u>		
High school grad or less	23 (3)	27 (9)
Some college or tech school	15 (2)	39 (13)
College grad	31 (4)	30 (10)
Graduate degree	23 (3)	3 (1)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Hispanic or Latino</u>		
No	85 (11)	85 (28)
Yes	8 (1)	15 (5)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Race</u>		
White	85 (11)	70 (23)
Black or African- American	0 (0)	18 (6)
American Indian or Alaska native	8 (1)	9 (3)
Something else	0 (0)	3 (1)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Number of children currently in household</u>		
None	23 (3)	9 (3)
One or two	46 (6)	58 (19)
Three or more	23 (3)	33 (11)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)

<sup>a</sup> Parents could refuse to answer any question

CPP = Child pornography production.

### *Characteristics of the Crime*

We asked very few questions about the specifics of the crime; instead we asked general questions, such as the ages of children at the start of the abuse, how long the abuse lasted, and when the abuse was reported (see Table 3-6). Most of the victims were female, especially child pornography production victims. At the start of the abuse, most of them were teens, between the ages of 13 and 17. There was a wide range in how long the abuse lasted, with 15% of parents in the CPP group reporting the abuse lasted more than one year. All of the parents in the CPP group reported it lasting more than one day.

When we conducted the telephone interviews, most CPP parents reported that it had been more than one year since their first visit to the CAC. At the time of the interview, all of the children who were depicted in child pornography were older than 12.

**Table 3-6. Characteristics of the Crime**

	CPP n = 13 % (n)	No CPP n=33 % (n)
<u>Child gender</u>		
Male	8 (1)	27 (9)
Female	92 (12)	73 (24)
<u>Ages of child at start of abuse</u>		
5 or younger	15 (2)	27 (9)
6 to 12	15 (2)	51 (17)
13 to 17	69 (9)	21 (7)
<u>How long abuse to child went on</u>		
1 day or less	0 (0)	27 (9)
More than 1 day to 1 week	8 (1)	6 (2)
More than 1 week to 1 month	23 (3)	3 (1)
More than 1 month to 6 months	15 (2)	24 (8)
More than 6 months to 1 year	23 (3)	12 (4)
More than 1 year	15 (2)	24 (8)
Don't know	15 (2)	3 (1)
<u>How long since first CAC visit</u>		
6 months or less	8 (1)	12 (4)
More than 6 months to 1 year	8 (1)	27 (9)
More than 1 year	85 (11)	61 (20)
<u>Child's age at time of interview</u>		
12 or younger	0 (0)	51 (17)
13 to 17	77 (10)	36 (12)
18 or older	23 (3)	12 (4)

CPP = Child pornography production, CAC = child advocacy center

## Impact of Incident

Parents answered a number of questions about how the abuse affected their child in the past month (see Table 3-7). Few CPP parents reported problems. The list below shows the percentage of CPP parents who said the abuse affected their child in the following ways *sometimes or often in the past month*:

- Problems with fighting and aggression (31%)
- Inappropriate sexual behavior (15%)
- Eating problems (15%)
- Physical problems with no known cause (15%)

- Suicidal thoughts (8%)
- Problems with drugs or alcohol (8%)
- Problems in school (8%)
- Hurting themselves (0)

Nearly all CPP parents (92%) said they noticed changes in their child’s social behavior, either with peers or other adults, since learning of the abuse. We asked them to describe the types of changes they have noticed. The most common response was that their children became less social. Some children went from being outgoing to noticeably shy, while others were already shy and the abuse appeared to exacerbate this. Some parents said their children had improved over time, while others said that shyness continued to be a problem.

- “She was very outgoing and friendly, but since it was revealed, she has been more reserved and less social.”<sup>15</sup>
- “She had always been very shy, but afterwards it was almost impossible for about 6 months to do anything ...She ... believed everyone thought badly of her.”
- “[I] did not notice changes immediately; she was always shy at that age and wouldn’t talk to strangers or teachers... That shyness continued for a year after this happened, but [now she is] comfortable, very outgoing.”
- One parent said that her daughter, “actually interacts better because therapy taught her how to express herself.”

Some parents said their children had changed who they socialized with.

- “She’s changed her social interactions with anyone who is using drugs, cuts those people out of her life to stay away from drugs herself.”

Other parents said their children had become more anxious or cautious about particular people or situations.

- “[My child] shows a lot of fear about kids and their dads.”

We asked parents what they thought had been most upsetting or hardest to handle for their child. Parents had the following responses.

- Letting parents down, dealing with reactions and pain of parent, impact on family
- Loss of relationship (either romantic or familial) with the perpetrator, betrayal of trust
- Fear, feeling like they couldn’t tell anyone or feeling responsible for what happened

<sup>15</sup> Throughout, some quotations are slightly paraphrased to correct grammar and remove possibly identifying information.



- Feelings of injustice when the perpetrator was never punished or the victim was treated like a perpetrator

**Table 3-7. Impact of Incident – Parents’ Reports of Children’s Reactions**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n=33 % (n)</b>
<u>Problems in school</u>		
Never	69 (9)	33 (11)
Rarely	0 (0)	30 (10)
Sometimes	0 (0)	15 (5)
Often	8 (1)	9 (3)
Don’t know	15 (2)	3 (1)
Refused	8 (1)	9 (3)
<u>Physical problems with no known cause</u>		
Never	61 (8)	79 (26)
Rarely	8 (1)	0 (0)
Sometimes	15 (2)	12 (4)
Often	0 (0)	6 (2)
Don’t know	15 (2)	3 (1)
<u>Inappropriate sexual behavior</u>		
Never	77 (10)	70 (23)
Rarely	0 (0)	12 (3)
Sometimes	8 (1)	9 (3)
Often	8 (1)	9 (3)
Don’t know	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Fighting, aggression</u>		
Never	54 (7)	33 (11)
Rarely	15 (2)	27 (9)
Sometimes	15 (2)	27 (9)
Often	15 (2)	12 (4)
<u>Eating problems</u>		
Never	85 (11)	70 (23)
Rarely	0 (0)	6 (2)
Sometimes	0 (0)	18 (6)
Often	15 (2)	3 (1)
Don’t know	0 (0)	3 (1)
<u>Hurting self</u>		
Never	92 (12)	82 (27)
Rarely	8 (1)	12 (4)
Sometimes	0 (0)	6 (2)
Often	0 (0)	0 (0)
<u>Suicidal thoughts or attempts</u>		
Never	77 (10)	64 (21)
Rarely	15 (2)	21 (7)
Sometimes	8 (1)	9 (3)
Often	0 (0)	3 (1)
Don’t know	0 (0)	3 (1)
<u>Problems with drugs or alcohol</u>		

Never	77 (10)	94 (31)
Rarely	8 (1)	0 (0)
Sometimes	0 (0)	3 (1)
Often	8 (1)	3 (1)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Changes in child's social behavior with peers or adults</u>		
No	8 (1)	15 (5)
Yes	92 (12)	85 (28)

## Impact on Parents

Using the Impact of Event Scale (IES), parents answered questions about their own posttraumatic symptoms related to the abuse. Parents answered 15 questions about the impact on them of what happened to their child during the past 7 days. One in five parents (21%) was classified as having moderate to severe impact from the abuse (see Table 3-8; for all responses, see Table 3-21).

**Table 3-8. Parent Posttraumatic Symptoms**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Parent posttraumatic symptoms related to abuse</u>		
Mild or subclinical	80 (8)	78 (25)
Moderate or severe	20 (2)	21 (7)
Missing	23 (3)	3 (1)

CPP = Child pornography production; 3 cases missing because score could not be calculated due to missing data; See Table 17 for all responses to individual items.

Symptoms that were endorsed by a relatively high percentage of CPP parents are listed below. About half of CCP parents reported feeling the following ways often or sometimes in the past seven days:

- Thought about what happened when they didn't mean to (46%)
- Other things kept making you think about it (46%)
- Any reminders brought back feelings about it (46%)

We asked CPP parents, "Thinking about the sexual abuse, what upset you the most or has been hardest to handle?" Two parents specifically mentioned the pictures as the hardest aspect to handle. One parent said the fact that her daughter was sexually abused is horrible, but the fact that the perpetrator took pictures and shared them, and thinking they're still out there and are viewed, will always be a reality. Another mentioned shock of finding out about the images and that she was furious that a sex offenders

had harmed her daughter. Other CPP parents gave responses that did not mention the images. They said that the hardest aspect was:

- The perpetrator was a family member
- The perpetrator was not prosecuted
- The overall shock and frustration that someone did this to their child
- Feeling that they failed to protect their child.

## Experiences with Counseling

All CPP parents said their child received counseling (see Table 3-9). About half said the counseling was very or more than a little helpful. Most parents really appreciated something the counselor did, with one parent saying that their child “is alive today because of it.” Things parents appreciated included helping their child open up and talk more and appreciating the rapport and connection the counselor developed with their child.

Despite the positive remarks about counseling, most CPP parents had suggestions for what the counselor could have done better. None of the suggestions had to do with how the images were handled during counseling. Suggestions had to do with:

- Doing more to help child recognize that he or she was not to blame
- Helping to address other issues, such as drug and alcohol problems
- Wanting more tangible help, additional services
- Wanting more scheduling options or the option to come back to counseling at a later point, since the child was not ready for counseling at that time

**Table 3-9. Experiences with Counseling for Child**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Child received mental health counseling</u>		
No	0 (0)	15 (5)
Yes	100 (13)	85 (28)
<u>How helpful was counseling to child</u>		
Not at all or a little helpful	39 (5)	18 (6)
More than a little or very helpful	54 (7)	67 (22)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
Not applicable (Child did not receive counseling)	0 (0)	15 (5)
<u>Anything parent really appreciated about child's counseling</u>		
No	15 (2)	6 (2)
Yes	77 (10)	79 (26)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
Not applicable (Child did not receive counseling)	0 (0)	15 (5)
<u>Anything child's counselor could have done better or did that bothered child</u>		
No	31 (4)	51 (17)
Yes	61 (8)	33 (11)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
Not applicable (Child did not receive counseling)	0 (0)	15 (5)
<u>Child was prescribed medication for symptoms related to abuse</u>		
No	39 (5)	58 (19)
Yes	61 (8)	42 (14)
<u>Wanted any help for child that they did not receive</u>		
No	46 (6)	64 (21)
Yes	46 (6)	36 (12)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)

CPP = Child pornography production

About 60% of CPP parents said that their child received medication to treat symptoms related to the abuse, with most taking an anti-depressant. Only two CPP parents mentioned that the medications had positive effects for their child. Generally parents mentioned concerning effects, such as gaining weight, numbing that kept their child from recovering, and reporting that their children didn't like the way they felt or that they didn't think the medication was producing any benefits.

About half of the CPP parents wanted help for their child that they did not receive. None of the help that was wanted had to do specifically with the child pornography production. Two parents mentioned group therapy; they believed it might have been good for their child to be able to talk to other kids in similar situations. Other needs included help with the legal side of things, alcohol and drug treatment, and that they wanted more counseling but their child wasn't interested.

## Parent Counseling

Approximately two-thirds of CPP parents had talked with a counselor about what happened to their child and all thought it was helpful (see Table 3-10). Parents specifically appreciated:

- Learning coping skills
- Thinking about things in a different way
- Not feeling judged or treated like what happened was their fault
- Group therapy, meeting other parents in similar circumstances
- Having a minority cultural perspective understood

Despite the positive responses about counseling, some CPP parents thought the counselor could have done something better to help them. Parents wanted more convenient locations and times for counseling, counseling less focused on sexual abuse and more on other problems, and more immediate counseling. Three CCP parents had referrals to counseling but did not go because they were too busy or thought they didn't need it.

Several parents wanted additional help for themselves but did not get it. Parents mentioned that they would have liked to talk to other parents in similar situations, financial assistance to help pay for therapy, efforts to address the perpetrator and family counseling. Many mentioned how difficult the situation was and that they were considering parenting classes or therapy "when things settle down" or that they just needed more resources and support in general.

**Table 3-10. Experiences with Counseling for Parent**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Parent has talked to counselor about what happened to child</u>		
No	31 (4)	42 (14)
Yes	69 (9)	58 (19)
<u>How helpful was counseling in helping parent understand and deal with</u>		
Not at all or a little helpful	0 (0)	6 (2)
More than a little or very helpful	69 (9)	52(17)
Not applicable (Parent did not receive counseling)	31 (4)	42 (14)
<u>Anything parent really appreciated about counseling for parent</u>		
No	0 (0)	9 (3)
Yes	69 (9)	48 (16)
Not applicable (Parent did not receive counseling)	31 (4)	42 (14)
<u>Anything parent's counselor could have done better</u>		
No	39 (5)	27 (9)
Yes	31 (4)	30 (10)
Not applicable (Parent did not receive counseling)	31 (4)	42 (14)
<u>Received counseling referral for parent but did not go</u>		
No	0 (0)	12 (4)
Yes	23 (3)	30 (10)
Not applicable (Parent received counseling)	69 (9)	58 (19)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Wanted help for self that you did not get</u>		
No	54 (7)	49 (16)
Yes	39 (5)	49 (16)
Don't know	8 (1)	3 (1)

CPP = Child pornography production

## Images Addressed at Counseling

We asked CPP parents whether images were addressed at counseling. Five parents said their counselor talked to them specifically about the images (see Table 3-11). Four parents said the counselor did something very helpful regarding the images. These included:

- Explaining the images, but not dwelling on them
- Helping parents to:
  - Understand the behavior of sex offenders
  - Understand a child’s choices regarding how to handle the case
  - Handle anger about what happened
  - See that there was some good from the images because finding them led to rescue of the victim.

Only one parent mentioned something that the counselor could have done better to help them cope the images. This parent was concerned that many parents in these situations had resulting problems in their sex lives and wished that was more openly addressed.

Only four parents knew that their child’s counselor had specifically talked to child about the images, but parents did not know specifics about what was discussed.

**Table 3-11. Images Addressed at Counseling**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>
<u>Did counselor specifically talk to parent about the images</u>	
No	8 (1)
Yes	39 (5)
Don’t know	15 (2)
Refused	8 (1)
Not applicable (Parent did not receive counseling)	31 (4)
<u>Was anything counselor did particularly helpful to help parent cope with images</u>	
No	8 (1)
Yes	31 (4)
Not applicable (Counselor did not talk to parent about images)	61 (8)
<u>Anything counselor could have done better to help parent cope with images</u>	
No	31 (4)
Yes	8 (1)
Not applicable (Counselor did not talk to parent about images)	61 (8)
<u>Did counselor specifically talk to child about the images</u>	
No	39 (5)
Yes	31 (4)
Don’t know	23 (3)
Refused	8 (1)

<u>Rate counselor in helping child cope with images</u>	
Not at all or a little helpful	0 (0)
More than a little or very helpful	8 (1)
Don't know	23 (3)
Not applicable (Counselor did not talk to child about images)	69 (9)
<u>Anything counselor could have done better to help child in regards to images</u>	
No	8 (1)
Yes	0 (0)
Don't know	23 (3)
Not applicable (Counselor did not talk to child about images)	69 (9)

CPP = Child pornography production

## Professional and Media Response

Three-quarters of CPP parents rated the child advocacy center that served them as very helpful (see Table 3-12). We asked parents to describe their first visit, including how they were treated, how their children were treated, and the overall environment. The majority of parents commented that they were pleased with how they were treated; many said they were treated in an exemplary manner, and treated respectfully, professionally and fairly. A few parents noted some concerns, however. They mentioned being asked not to speak with a child about what was going on, having to be ruled out as a perpetrator, and being in shock that was not relieved by the visit.

Most victims had a medical exam.

Nearly half of the CPP parents said there were media reports about their child's case. We asked parents to "describe how this publicity has affected you, your child and your family." Parents said that media often portrayed victims as at fault and included identifying details so that child victims were robbed of privacy and subjected to blame by their peers and the public. Some parents moved or took children out of school as a result.

**Table 3-12. Professional and Media Response**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>How helpful were CAC staff members</u>		
Not at all helpful	8 (1)	3 (1)
A little helpful	15 (2)	12 (4)
More than a little helpful	0 (0)	3 (1)
Very helpful	69 (9)	76 (25)
Don't know	0 (0)	6 (2)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Did child have medical exam</u>		

No	8 (1)	21 (7)
Yes	85 (11)	79 (26)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Media stories about child's case</u>		
No	54 (7)	79 (26)
Yes	46 (6)	18 (6)
Don't know	0 (0)	3 (1)

CPP = Child pornography production; CAC = child advocacy center

## Interactions with Court

Most cases of child pornography production involved criminal charges against the abuser (see Table 3-13). Two-thirds of criminal cases involved victim advocates or support persons. Parents said most of advocates were very helpful and described them as reachable, understanding, responsive to questions, supportive and providing families with concrete services. However, one parent said the advocate was not at all helpful, gave little information to the family beyond the court date, and left the parent with a lot of confusing, time-consuming paperwork. Another parent wished the advocate had done more to protect them from the media. None of the CPP cases involved a guardian ad litem (GAL). Parents had these comments about improving the court system:

- Some wanted compensation to parents who have to take time off work.
- Others wanted help dealing with fears and uncertainty about having to testify.
- The language of courts was hard for some parents to understand; they wanted more explanation of terms.
- One mother felt that her daughter's mental health issues and developmental delays were not taken into account in how she was treated.

However, a couple of parents were grateful that their children did not have to testify and were shielded from court proceedings.

**Table 3-13. Interactions with Court**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Have criminal charges been filed against abuser</u>		
No	15 (2)	27 (9)
Yes	85 (11)	67 (22)
Don't know	0 (0)	6 (2)
<u>Did child have a victim advocate during criminal proceedings</u>		
No	23 (3)	9 (3)
Yes	61 (8)	45 (15)
No criminal proceedings yet	0 (0)	6 (2)
Don't know	0 (0)	6 (2)



Not applicable (No criminal proceedings)	15 (2)	33 (11)
<u>How helpful was the advocate</u>		
Not at all or a little helpful	8 (1)	12 (4)
More than a little or very helpful	54 (7)	30 (10)
Don't know	0 (0)	3 (1)
Not applicable (No victim advocate or support person)	39 (5)	55 (18)
<u>Anything really appreciated about how advocate helped child</u>		
No	23 (3)	4 (4)
Yes	39 (5)	33 (11)
Not applicable (No victim advocate or support person)	39 (5)	55 (18)
<u>Anything advocate could have done better</u>		
No	39 (5)	27 (9)
Yes	15 (2)	18 (6)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
Not applicable (No victim advocate or support person)	39 (5)	55 (18)
<u>Was a GAL appointed for child during criminal proceedings</u>		
No	69 (9)	39 (13)
Yes	0 (0)	12 (4)
No criminal proceedings yet	0 (0)	6 (2)
Don't know	8 (1)	9 (3)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)
Not applicable (No GAL was appointed)	15 (2)	33 (11)
<u>How helpful was the GAL</u>		
Not at all or a little helpful	0 (0)	6 (2)
More than a little or very helpful	0 (0)	6 (2)
Not applicable (No GAL was appointed)	100 (13)	88 (29)
<u>Anything really appreciated about how GAL helped child</u>		
No	0 (0)	6 (2)
Yes	0 (0)	6 (2)
Not applicable (No GAL was appointed)	100 (13)	88 (29)
<u>Anything GAL could have done better</u>		
No	0 (0)	6 (2)
Yes	0 (0)	6 (2)
Not applicable (No GAL was appointed)	100 (13)	88 (29)

CPP = Child pornography production; GAL = Guardian ad litem

## Disclosure, Distribution, and Knowledge of Images

We asked CPP parents additional questions about disclosure, dissemination, and knowledge of images. Most of their children had disclosed abuse at the same time the pictures were discovered, but some had disclosed before the pictures were found and some after (see Table 3-14). All of the parents we talked to said that their children knew the images existed and most children had seen the images. About 40% of parents (n=5) said that the images were distributed on the internet; about one-third (n=4) said they were not distributed online; and the remainder did not know.

Parents found out about the images in a variety of ways, including from the police, a family member, their child's school, finding the images themselves, and their child telling them. About 60% of CPP parents had not seen the images, with some parents saying that they never wanted to see them.

## Professional Response to Images

About three-quarters of CPP parents were mostly or very comfortable with how the police, social workers and others talked about or showed images (see Table 3-14). However, about half of parents said there was something they would change, including:

- An unauthorized court system employee viewed images.
- A police officer was rude and lacked in social skills to deal with children and families in crisis.
- People did not talk sensitively about images; treated them as "just evidence."
- Children had to identify themselves in images during forensic interviews.
- A parent was shown images of other children who also were photographed.
- A counselor told a child to "just not think about it."

## Reactions to Images

We asked parents, "Can you tell me about some of the reactions your child has had to the images, starting with her/his first reactions?" Parents reported a wide range of reactions, including:

- Several parents did not know; children had not talked about it and parents had not it brought up.
- Several said their children were upset, shocked and ashamed, and did not want their families to see them as they were portrayed in the images.
- Several said their child did not view what happened as criminal. They were in love with the perpetrators and more upset that relationships had ended.
- One parent said the focus has been more on the contact sexual abuse that occurred and the fact that the perpetrator was a family member.

We also asked CPP parents, "How have your child's feelings changed?" Again, several parents did not know, since they had not specifically discussed this with their children. Others parents said their children had developed more understanding about what happened, how they were exploited, and why police were involved.

We asked parents, “Is there anything about these images that your child worries about?” Some parents said their children were not very worried about images. In some cases, parents were sure the images were destroyed or would never be distributed. In some cases parents said their children did not understand that images could be permanent. However, most said they did not know if their child worried. Similarly, some parents said they, themselves, did not worry about the images; they were sure the images were destroyed or understood the possibility of distribution was very slight or that it was not likely the child would be recognized if this happened. However, some parents were quite worried; one parent got upset just thinking about it and another worries where the images could end up. One parent worries they could be held against her daughter down the road.

**Table 3-14. Distribution of Images**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>
<u>Perpetrator(s) shared images</u>	
No	23 (3)
Yes	39 (5)
Don't know	39 (5)
<u>Images distributed on the internet</u>	
No	31 (4)
Yes	39 (5)
Don't know	31 (4)
<u>Child knows images exist</u>	
No	0 (0)
Yes	100 (13)
<u>Child has seen images</u>	
No	8 (1)
Yes	85 (11)
Don't know	8 (1)
<u>How parents found out about the images</u>	
Notified by police	46 (6)
Some other way	54 (7)
<u>Parent has seen images</u>	
No	61 (8)
Yes	39 (5)
<u>Parent would change how CAC talked about or handled images</u>	
No	46 (6)
Yes	46 (6)
Don't know	8 (1)
<u>How comfortable was the parent with how police, etc., talked about or showed images?</u>	
Very uncomfortable	8 (1)
Mostly uncomfortable	8 (1)

Mostly comfortable	8 (1)
Very comfortable	69 (9)
Don't know	8 (1)

## Legal Remedies

We asked CCP parents about legal remedies they may have been able to access, including restitution, victim compensation, civil suits, victim rights and notification laws.

### Restitution

Most CPP parents (10 out of 13) had heard of restitution and restitution had been ordered in 6 of these 10 cases (see Table 3-15). Of those, half of the parents (1 in 4 parents overall) had received some money. Some parents noted there was often no money available in these cases because the perpetrator would be in jail for many years, the perpetrator's assets were jointly owned and protected by law, or the perpetrator's family and friends dissipated assets before restitution could be ordered. Parents had these suggestions for improving the process for obtaining restitution:

- Including college educational needs
- Having ways to preserve the perpetrator's assets so that awards can be paid
- More explanation of the award process
- Easier access to information about how to obtain restitution
- Requiring perpetrators to pay for all expenses, not just what insurance does not cover

**Table 3-15. Restitution**

	CPP n = 13 % (n)	No CPP n = 33 % (n)
<u>Aware of restitution</u>		
No	23 (3)	55 (18)
Yes	77 (10)	18 (6)
Don't know	0 (0)	21 (7)
Missing	0 (0)	6 (2)
<u>Has abuser in child's case been convicted</u>		
No	23 (3)	33 (11)
Yes	61 (8)	33 (11)
Not applicable (No criminal proceedings)	15 (2)	33 (11)
<u>Did court order restitution</u>		
No	15 (2)	24 (8)
Yes	46 (6)	9 (3)
Not applicable (Abuser not convicted)	39 (5)	67 (22)

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Have you been able to collect any restitution</u>		
No	23 (3)	6 (2)
Yes	23 (3)	3 (1)
Not applicable (Court did not order restitution)	54 (7)	91 (30)
<u>Do you have suggestions for improving restitution process</u>		
No	8 (1)	18 (6)
Yes	39 (5)	15 (5)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)
Refused	8 (1)	0 (0)
Not applicable (Abuser not convicted)	39 (5)	67 (22)

CPP = Child pornography production

### *Victim Compensation*

Most parents knew about victim compensation funds and half had received compensation (see Table 3-16). When asked for suggestions for improving the compensation process, parents commented:

- It should be easier to understand how to obtain compensation
- Parents need more assistance to apply for compensation because they may be too overwhelmed by the criminal justice process to handle this on their own
- Victim pain and suffering should be automatically part of victim compensation
- Compensation should cover costs fully
- Victim compensation should pay for parent and family counseling as well as victim counseling

**Table 3-16. Victim Compensation**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Heard about state victim compensation funds</u>		
No	8 (1)	30 (10)
Yes	85 (11)	64 (21)
Don't know	8 (1)	6 (2)
<u>Able to apply for victim compensation</u>		
No	23 (3)	27 (9)
Yes	61 (8)	36 (12)
Not applicable (Has not heard of victim compensation)	15 (2)	36 (12)
<u>Received any victim compensation</u>		
No	8 (1)	12 (4)
Yes	54 (7)	24 (8)
Not applicable (Did not apply for victim compensation)	39 (5)	64 (21)
<u>Do you have suggestions for improving the compensation</u>		

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>process</u>		
No	31 (4)	12 (4)
Yes	54 (7)	51 (17)
Not applicable (Has not heard of victim compensation)	15 (2)	36(12)

CPP = Child pornography production

### *Civil Suits*

Nearly half of CPP parents knew abusers can be sued in civil court, but only one parent had retained an attorney for such a suit and that suit had not been filed yet (see Table 3-17). Parents who did not retain attorneys for civil suits described reasons for not doing so such as exhaustion after criminal proceedings, inability to think long-term during that time, and not wanting to put the victim through that process.

**Table 3-17. Civil Suits**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Aware that sexual abusers can be sued in civil court</u>		
No	54 (7)	67 (22)
Yes	46 (6)	18 (6)
Don't know	0 (0)	9 (3)
Refused	0 (0)	6 (2)
<u>Retained a civil attorney to sue abuser</u>		
No	39 (5)	15 (5)
Yes	8 (1)	3 (1)
Not applicable (Not aware of civil court options)	54 (7)	82 (27)
<u>Has suggestions for improving process for suing in civil court</u>		
No	8 (1)	0 (0)
Yes	23 (3)	12 (4)
Missing / Not applicable (Not aware of civil court options)	69 (9)	88 (29)

CPP = Child pornography production

### *Victims' Rights and Notification Laws*

Three families had retained victims' rights attorneys (see Table 3-18) and five were aware of victim notification laws (see Table 3-19). One-third of parents had signed notification forms and all opted to be notified. These parents wanted to know if and how often images were being traded as a way of feeling like they had some degree of control over the situation. One parent described wanting to compensate for not knowing what was happening to her child when the crime was being committed. Another parent felt like it is her job to be notified so she could give this information to her child when she turns 18.

Another parent thought that she couldn't control images being out there, but could know if they showed up at least.

Two parents had received notifications and had participated in prosecutions. Neither of these parents had cases where courts had ordered a CP possessor to pay restitution nor had either retained an attorney to sue a CP possessor who had their child's image.

**Table 3-18. Victims' Rights Attorney**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>Retained a victims' rights attorney</u>		
No	77 (10)	85 (28)
Yes	23 (3)	0 (0)
Don't know	0 (0)	12 (4)
Refused	0 (0)	3 (1)

Note: CPP = Child pornography production

**Table 3-19. Notification Laws**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>
<u>Parent/victim aware of victim notification laws</u>	
No	31 (4)
Yes	39 (5)
Don't know	31 (4)
<u>Signed notification form</u>	
No	8 (1)
Yes	31 (4)
Not Applicable (unaware of victim notification)	61 (8)
<u>Decided to be notified or not</u>	
Not notified	0 (0)
Notified	31 (4)
Not Applicable (did not receive/sign notification form)	69 (9)
<u>Notified of any prosecutions</u>	
No	15 (2)
Yes	15 (2)
Not Applicable (did not choose to be notified)	69 (9)
<u>Parent or child participated in any prosecutions</u>	
No	0 (0)
Yes	15 (2)
Not Applicable (not notified of any prosecutions)	85 (11)

<u>Court ordered an offender to pay restitution to child</u>	
No	15 (2)
Yes	0 (0)
Not Applicable (not involved in any prosecutions)	85 (11)
<u>Retained civil attorney to sue someone who possessed images of child</u>	
No	15 (2)
Yes	0 (0)
Not Applicable (did not participate in any prosecutions)	85 (11)

## Advice We Heard from Parents

We asked parents, “Is there anything else you would like us to know about how your child’s case could have been handled better?” The responses described needs for more training for the police, more involvement by the district attorney, more information about what was happening with the case and more services for families, especially when the perpetrator is family member.

We asked parents, “If you could give a piece of advice to families going through a similar situation, what would it be?” Nearly all parents mentioned the importance of being proactive and reaching out, getting help, and taking steps to take care for themselves, as illustrated in the following examples:

- “It is a difficult and distressing thing to get through, but [you] can get through it and help [your]child get through it. Evidence shows that a strong, supportive parent is one of the number one things that helps a child.”
- “Take care of yourself in order to be there for your kid, talk about it, find resources for your child, you and your family. Get help for everybody because it affects the whole family in different ways.”
- “Be patient. It’s like pieces of a puzzle. Most parents want all the answers right away, but you have to give it time and these pieces of the puzzle will make sense.”
- “Hold on tight to each other and try to stay together as a family. Keep lines of communication open.”

## Experience Participating in Research

We asked parents a few questions at the end of the interview about what it was like to participate in this research study (see Table 3-20). All parents said it was very or more than a little important to participate in research like this to help other families who have experienced these kinds of problems. We asked parents, “Knowing now what was in the survey, would you still have agreed to do it?” All but one respondent, who did not have time to finish the interview, said yes. We also asked parents, “How upsetting were the questions in the survey,” and the majority said the questions were not at all or only a



little upsetting. Numerous parents also made spontaneous remarks that they appreciated having the chance to participate and were glad that someone was making the effort to research this issue.

**Table 3-20. Experiences Participating in Research**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>
<u>How important to participate in research</u>		
Not at all important	0 (0)	0 (0)
A little important	0 (0)	0 (0)
More than a little important	8 (1)	6 (2)
Very important	85 (11)	94 (31)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>Knowing the questions, would still agree to participate</u>		
No	0 (0)	0 (0)
Yes	92 (12)	100 (33)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)
<u>How upsetting were questions in survey</u>		
Not at all upsetting	69 (9)	85 (28)
A little upsetting	15 (2)	12 (4)
More than a little upsetting	8 (1)	3 (1)
Very upsetting	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)

## Limitations

The findings of the Parent Telephone Survey are limited for several reasons. First, the sample was generated from cases at two child advocacy centers (CACs) and a parent support group. The sample, therefore, is not a representative sample of all parents of child pornography production victims. Further, we do not know how frequent cases are that would be missed by our sampling method because the families are not involved either with a child advocacy center or a parent support group. When we were in the process of recruiting CACs to participate in this project, we learned that most did not code cases involving children depicted in child pornography in a consistent manner and therefore most CACs could not identify a sample of CPP cases. This limited the pool of CACs who could participate in the study and the two that participated may not represent the full population of CACs. Second, the sample size that is quite small. Therefore, we were unable to conduct tests of statistical significance and could not explore whether the CPP and non-CPP parents were significantly different from each other. Due to the small sample size, these data should be considered exploratory.

**Table 3-21. Parent Posttraumatic Symptoms Related to Abuse (Impact of Events Scale)**

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>	<b>All n = 46 % (n)</b>
<u>Parent posttraumatic symptoms related to abuse</u>			
Mild or subclinical	80 (8)	78 (25)	71 (33)
Moderate or severe	20 (2)	21 (7)	19 (9)
Missing	23 (3)	3 (1)	9 (4)
<u>Impact on Parent (past 7 days):</u>			
<u>You thought about what happened when didn't mean to</u>			
Not at all	23 (3)	18 (6)	20 (9)
Rarely	23 (3)	27 (9)	26 (12)
Sometimes	15 (2)	18 (6)	17 (8)
Often	31 (4)	36 (12)	35 (16)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You avoided getting upset when you thought about it</u>			
Not at all	46 (6)	36 (12)	39 (18)
Rarely	23 (3)	15 (5)	17 (8)
Sometimes	8 (1)	27 (9)	22 (10)
Often	15 (2)	18 (6)	17 (8)
Don't know	0 (0)	3 (1)	2 (1)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You tried to remove it from memory</u>			
Not at all	85 (11)	82 (27)	83 (38)
Rarely	8 (1)	9 (3)	9 (4)
Sometimes	0 (0)	9 (3)	7 (3)
Often	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You had trouble falling or staying asleep because of it</u>			
Not at all	77 (10)	67 (22)	70 (32)
Rarely	0 (0)	12 (4)	9 (4)
Sometimes	0 (0)	6 (2)	4 (2)
Often	8 (1)	15 (5)	13 (6)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You had waves of strong feelings about it</u>			
Not at all	39 (5)	39 (13)	39 (18)
Rarely	23 (3)	30 (10)	28 (13)
Sometimes	23 (3)	15 (5)	17 (8)

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>	<b>All n = 46 % (n)</b>
Often	8 (1)	15 (5)	13 (6)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You had dreams about it</u>			
Not at all	69 (9)	82 (27)	78 (36)
Rarely	15 (2)	3 (1)	7 (3)
Sometimes	0 (0)	9 (3)	7 (3)
Often	0 (0)	6 (2)	4 (2)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You stayed away from reminders about it</u>			
Not at all	61 (8)	61 (20)	61 (28)
Rarely	0 (0)	18 (6)	13 (6)
Sometimes	15 (2)	12 (4)	13 (6)
Often	8 (1)	9 (3)	9 (4)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You felt as if it hadn't happened or wasn't real</u>			
Not at all	92 (12)	79 (26)	83 (38)
Rarely	0 (0)	18 (6)	13 (6)
Sometimes	0 (0)	3 (1)	2 (1)
Often	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You tried not to talk about it</u>			
Not at all	54 (7)	67 (22)	63 (29)
Rarely	15 (2)	3 (1)	7 (3)
Sometimes	23 (3)	15 (5)	17 (8)
Often	0 (0)	15 (5)	11 (5)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>Pictures about it popped into your head</u>			
Not at all	54 (7)	61 (20)	59 (27)
Rarely	31 (4)	21 (7)	24 (11)
Sometimes	0 (0)	15 (5)	11 (5)
Often	8 (1)	3 (1)	4 (2)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>Other things kept making you think about it</u>			

	<b>CPP n = 13 % (n)</b>	<b>No CPP n = 33 % (n)</b>	<b>All n = 46 % (n)</b>
Not at all	23 (3)	36 (12)	33 (15)
Rarely	23 (3)	24 (8)	24 (11)
Sometimes	31 (4)	33 (11)	33 (15)
Often	15 (2)	6 (2)	9 (4)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You were aware of a lot of feelings, but you did not deal with them</u>			
Not at all	61 (8)	79 (26)	74 (34)
Rarely	15 (2)	3 (1)	7 (3)
Sometimes	15 (2)	6 (2)	9 (4)
Often	0 (0)	12 (4)	9 (4)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>You tried not to think about it</u>			
Not at all	46 (6)	39 (13)	41 (19)
Rarely	31 (4)	27 (9)	28 (13)
Sometimes	15 (2)	18 (6)	17 (8)
Often	0 (0)	15 (5)	11 (5)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>Any reminders brought back feelings about it</u>			
Not at all	8 (1)	27 (9)	22 (10)
Rarely	31 (4)	21 (7)	24 (11)
Sometimes	31 (4)	36 (12)	35 (16)
Often	15 (2)	15 (5)	15 (7)
Don't know	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)
<u>Your feelings about it were kind of numb</u>			
Not at all	85 (11)	73 (24)	76 (35)
Rarely	8 (1)	9 (3)	9 (4)
Sometimes	0 (0)	12 (4)	9 (4)
Often	0 (0)	6 (2)	4 (2)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	8 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)

# Findings from Child Telephone Interviews

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## Executive Summary of Findings

- Teens particularly valued help from supportive friends and family. They appreciated encouragement to disclose the crime, warm gestures (e.g., hugs, comforting statements), support at court hearings, being listened to, and positive distractions that helped them feel “normal.” Religious youth appreciated prayers.
- Most teens found counseling helpful. In particular they appreciated not feeling judged. Most could cite specific responses taught to them by counselors to relieve anxiety, for example journaling, breathing exercises.
- Some teens felt counseling did not help them. They were uncomfortable answering questions about the crime, worried about confidentiality, or still felt considerable distress despite the counseling sessions.
- Most teens said they had made changes to help themselves, including becoming more active at school and finding new friends.
- Several teens said their cases were the subject of media reports and all of them described distressing experiences with the media coverage.
- Teens described mixed experiences with forensic interviewers. Some described interviewers at law enforcement agencies as understanding and supportive, but several said forensic interviews were distressing because they had to describe crimes in great detail, were interviewed on multiple occasions, were videotaped, or were treated rudely. Teens wanted to be treated more gently, given more time, be questioned by someone they felt they could trust, not feel forced.
- Most teens had undergone medical exams and, while noting these were uncomfortable, most did not have complaints about how they were treated by medical practitioners.
- Teens wanted parents to believe them, be comforting, avoid anger or over-reaction, respect their privacy, and refrain from pressuring them to talk about what happened.
- When asked to advise other kids how to help teens in situations like theirs, the respondents emphasized how important it was for friends to advocate for disclosure and honesty. They also advised friends not to ask a lot of questions, but to offer comfort, cheer and distraction.
- All of the teens said it was very or more than a little important to “participate in research like this to help other kids with these kinds of problems.” They all answered yes when we asked, “Knowing now what was in the survey would you still have agreed to do it?” and they all said no when we asked if answering the questions in the survey was upsetting.

## Overview

We conducted telephone interviews with 11 young people who had experienced sexual abuse, including three who were photographed in child pornography (CP), to get their opinions about helpful and unhelpful ways that professionals (e.g., counselors, law enforcement, medical practitioners), parents and friends responded to them after the abuse was disclosed. We collected information from teen respondents about age and gender, but not about other personal characteristics or the characteristics of the crimes they endured. According to parents, who we interviewed prior to the youth interviews, three of the teen respondents had been depicted in sexual images. However, we do not provide separate information about those teens to avoid disclosing possibly identifying information, and because the number is too small to result in meaningful comparisons. None of the teens we spoke with brought up specifics about the crime committed against them during the interviews and the researchers could not discern any differences in responses between the teens who were photographed and those who were not.

These teens comprise a convenience sample, as with other components of the surveys we conducted. Thus, the findings reported here are not generalizable to the larger group of teen survivors of child sexual abuse, but portray the experiences of this specific group.

## Sample Characteristics

The young people were all teens, ages 13 to 17, and all girls (see Table 3-22).

**Table 3-22. Characteristics of Child Participants**

	<b>n = 11</b> <b>% (n)</b>
<u>Age</u>	
13	27 (3)
14	18 (2)
15	9 (1)
16	18 (2)
17	27 (3)
<u>Gender</u>	
Male	0
Female	100 (11)
<u>Depicted in sexual images</u>	
Yes	27 (3)
No	73 (8)

## Persons Who Most Helped the Teens

We started the teen interview by asking, “I have some questions about people and things that have helped you. Could you think back to when people first found out about what happened to you? Was there a person who really helped you to get through that time?” All of the teens said yes to this question. When we asked who that person was, teen identified:

- Their mothers (45%, n=5)
- A friend (27%, n=3)
- Siblings (18%, n=2)
- School staff (18%, n=2)

When we asked, “What did they do that really helped?” teens said:

- Encouragement to disclose the abuse
  - A friend who went with the teen when she told her parents
  - A mother who believed her daughter and helped her go to the police
- Comfort
  - Friends “just comforted me and they let me know they were there for me and I wasn’t going through everything alone”<sup>16</sup>
  - A mother who “said things that helped like, ‘It will be okay’”
- Positive distractions
  - “...everyone wanted to ask questions about it but I just wanted to feel normal. My sister just talked to me about normal things so I didn’t feel so weird.”

Support from adults at school, including staff that came in on a day off after finding out what had happened and staff who checked in frequently with a respondent to see how she was doing.

## Experiences with Counseling

We asked a series of questions about respondents’ experiences with counseling. First we asked, “Did you talk to a counselor after people found out about what happened? (I mean someone you visited, probably in an office, who talked to you about your feelings about what happened.)” All but one respondent said yes (see Table 3-23). Most teens had seen a counselor for more than three sessions and most found the sessions helpful.

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<sup>16</sup> Throughout, some quotations are slightly paraphrased to correct grammar and remove possibly identifying information.

Most teens provided more details about their access to counseling.

- Three respondents saw both private and school counselors.
- Three noted difficulties with access, for example difficulties finding a counselor and getting to counseling.
- Two did not want to talk to counselors. One of these did not attend counseling, but the other did.

Most respondents said the counselor helped them “feel better about what happened.”

- Three respondents emphasized how important it was to speak with someone who did not judge, blame or question them about their actions. For example, one teen described how the counselor reminded her that it wasn’t her fault, but without asking questions about why she did or did not do certain things, while other people would say the same thing, but then ask her why she didn’t do something about it. Another appreciated, “...having someone to talk to, who doesn’t judge... lets you know your opinions are okay.”
- One respondent found seeing a counselor “comforting.” Another found it helpful that the counselor talked to her about “what it could’ve been like [if the crime had not been disclosed].”
- Two teens said that, while counseling helped, they were “still trying to get through it” as one teen stated.
- Two teens did not find counseling helpful. One had only been able to attend one session and wanted to talk more to someone but had not been able to. The other said the counselor, “only brought up the negative.”

We asked the ten teens who attended counseling if they could, “tell about something the counselor taught you that helped when you felt anxious, upset or unhappy.” Three teens could not think of anything. But the others mentioned specific coping mechanisms that counselors taught them, including

- Keeping a journal to write down thoughts and feelings instead of dwelling on what happened
- Breathing exercises
- Specific activities to relieve anxiety
- Reviewing a list of positive statements
- Religious activities
- Further counseling, if needed

We asked teens if there were other ways counselors helped them. Several respondents mentioned additional helpful responses.

- “... went through all the details of what happened in the situation”



- Talked about other things that were bothering the respondent, not just the abuse. Helped her to understand why “other people do certain things, like why they react in certain ways”
- Gave respondent something to squeeze when she got mad instead of clenching her fists
- Took respondent for walks
- Artwork

We also asked how or why a counselor did not help. Two teens described feeling uncomfortable when counselors asked about details of the crime. One worried about confidentiality because the counselor wrote down what the teen was saying. One teen said, “Just didn’t help all the way. It wasn’t anything in particular that the counselor did or did not do.” Also, while four teens appeared to have positive feelings from the beginning about attending counseling, others expressed ambivalence. For example,

- One respondent, when she had to go the first time really did not want to. She thought she hated counselors, but her experience was positive.
- Another said she wasn’t against it at the beginning, but was not looking forward to it either. Once she started, she realized “it wasn’t the way they make therapy look on TV.” She became comfortable and liked going.
- A third noted she had to be in the right mood to go to counseling and “I have to go if it’s already planned.” But she “doesn’t mind going, usually.”
- Two teens said they just did not like counselors. One said, “Whenever I’m in a good mood, I don’t want to sit there and talk about it.” She felt that counselors focus “on the negative, dwell on the past,” when she just wants to move on. The other respondent said she preferred to talk to family and friends.

**Table 3-23. Experiences with Counseling**

	<b>n = 11</b> <b>% (n)</b>
<u>Talked to a counselor after incident</u>	
Yes	91 (10)
No	9 (1)
<u>Number of times saw counselor</u>	
1 time	9 (1)
More than 3 times	82 (9)
Did not see counselor	9 (1)
<u>Did the counselor help you feel better about what happened?</u>	
Yes	73 (8)
No	18 (2)
Not applicable (Did not see counselor)	9 (1)

## Other Helpful People and Self-Help

We asked about other helpful people, “Thinking about the people who knew what happened to you, is there anyone else who really helped you?” When the teen said yes, we asked them to specify “who the other helpful person was and what they did.”

Most teens (82%, n=9) said there was someone else who really helped (see Table 3-24). Almost all described supportive family members and friends who “were there” for respondents.

- One told of a sibling who urged the respondent to tell her mother and helped her to see that if she didn’t tell, the perpetrator “would probably do it again.”
- Two respondents described small gestures by family members– being hugged, comforting phone calls.
- One said that family and friends supported her at court hearings, check to see if she was okay and invite her to do things to get her mind off of what had happened.
- Another teen said her mother was helped her by learning to listen without asking questions.
- One teen found comfort in people from her religion who prayed and read scriptures with her.

Almost all of the teens (91%, n=10) said yes when asked the following, “Sometimes when bad things happen, people make changes in their lives or do things for themselves that help. Is there anything you did on your own or changed that really helped you?”

- Four respondents said they became more active, for example, joining clubs at school to keep busy, playing sports, drawing, painting, writing
- Two said they changed the people they hung out with; another said she made an effort to “behave better at school”
- One moved and changed schools
- One said she helped herself “by trying to forget what happened, not thinking about it”
- Others said they were planning to go on medication or use techniques to calm themselves

**Table 3-24. Other Helpful People and Self-Help**

	<b>n = 11 % (n)</b>
<u>Is there someone else who really helped?</u>	
Yes	82 (9)
No	18 (2)
<u>Is there anything you did on your own that really helped?</u>	
Yes	91 (10)
No	9 (1)

## Media Stories

Four respondents answered yes when we asked, “Sometimes when young people are in this situation, there are stories about it in newspapers or on TV or on the radio. Did this happen to you?” All four described distressing experiences.

- One said the story was on television and even though they did not give her name, everyone at her school knew she was the victim.
- Another said, “On the news, all over the internet. It was really embarrassing. It still comes up and it’s still embarrassing.”
- A third said, “It hurt a lot.” She tells herself that only she knows the true story and believes “the truth will come to light.”
- The fourth respondent who had to cope with media stories said she tries not to let it bother her because there is nothing she can do about it.

## Police Interviews and Medical Examinations

All of the teen respondents had been interviewed by the police about what happened (see Table 3-25). We asked teens to comment on these interviews. Three gave relatively neutral comments, stating simply that they talked to police as part of what happened.

- Two respondents volunteered that the interviewers “were nice, can’t think of anything they could have done better” and “they were understanding, listened”
- The remaining teens described upsetting experiences, for example
  - “It was scary to be interviewed by police because [I] had to tell them all that happened, show them, explain how he did it.”
  - Another was interviewed “by so many people... by police twice [with tape recorders], then again in some little room with video cameras... Not cool!” The respondent said she was nervous and rambling during the interviews.
  - One teen was interviewed at a child advocacy center by a woman who made her feel “really uncomfortable.” The respondent understood police needed to know a lot of details but said the interviewer was not nice about it.
  - Another said the interview “didn’t go well. I wouldn’t want to remember it at all – just the way [the interviewer] looked at me... she was rude.”

We asked the respondents, “What might make it easier for kids who have to answer questions in these situations?” Some teens did not have suggestions or said “it was uncomfortable because of the situation” and “they just have to ask questions that need to be asked.” Other respondents suggested:

- “It would help to have a one-on-one person that kids can really trust.”

- “Don’t ask so many questions at once, give [kids] space to breathe.”
- “Don’t make kids feel like they did something wrong.”
- “Not asking so roughly; be a bit nicer. They were very loud and rude.” This respondent said she “thought it would go away quicker” if she didn’t tell, so she did not want to say anything at first. She felt police forced her to talk. She acknowledged “it’s their job, but they weren’t too nice about it.”
- Another respondent wished the police interviewer had made her feel better about the situation and comforted her when she cried. “Instead, she just sat there and looked... when [I] was crying and handed [me] some tissues.”

In addition to being interviewed by police, most respondents (82%, n=9) had also seen a doctor “because of what happened.” Several said the medical exam was awkward and uncomfortable because of, as one explained, “some of the places they looked.” However, most did not have complaints about how they were treated. One respondent said the medical exam was better than the police interview because the doctor did not make her feel like she had done something wrong. Another appreciated that she was allowed to have her mother with her.

We asked teens, “What would you say to doctors about how they can make it easier for kids who have to see them in these situations?” Two teens suggested:

- “Be sure not to make kids feel like they did anything wrong.”
- “They rushed into it and went straight into asking questions, which made it more awkward. It would have been better to have a few minutes to get to know them before having to answer those types of questions.”

**Table 3-25. Other Helpful People and Self-Help**

	<b>n = 11</b> <b>% (n)</b>
<u>Were you interviewed by police about what happened</u>	
Yes	100 (11)
No	0
<u>Did you see a doctor because of what happened</u>	
Yes	82 (9)
No	18 (2)

## Reactions from Parents and Friends

We asked respondents an open-ended question about parents. “Parents can be really helpful, but sometimes they make things harder for kids. What would you say to parents about how they can help when kids are in this situation?” Teens gave a variety of responses.

- “Talk to [kids] one-on-one without arguing. Don’t yell or get mad, don’t over-react.”
- “Parents need to be understanding of decisions kids make afterwards, such as being accepting of who they want to be in a relationship with.”
- “Believe everything your kid says, just believe it.”
- “Believe in your child because some parents don’t believe that their child was in danger.”
- “Be very supportive. Even when it’s hurtful to [parents], too, they should be sensitive about how the [child] feels.”
- Two respondents felt parents were too focused on what happened. One wished her parent would keep it more private. The other said, “Parents shouldn’t bring it up all the time, but even when they don’t bring it up they are upset and the kids know why so it doesn’t help. Try to focus on something else and not just on that problem.”
- Another urged parents to wait until kids are ready to talk. “...whenever something like this happens you need to give [kids] their space because it’s a really touchy subject.”
- Two teens urged parents to “comfort your kids, be there for them.”

We also asked, “What would you tell other kids about how they can help when things like this happen?”

- The most common response was to advise friends to step forward when they know teens that are in abusive situations and to press teens to disclose and be honest. Respondents said,
  - “Help them to know they should stay away from that person [the offender] and tell [an adult] they trust. Tell that person right away.”
  - “If [kids] are in serious trouble, then tell their parents.”
  - “Remind them that anyone finding out now, like their parents, is better than finding out later on...”
  - “Tell someone, even if the friend [who’s in trouble] says not to.”
  - “For the kids it happens to, just tell the truth the first time. For other kids [like kids in school], don’t say anything.” This respondent thought it best not to talk about it with kids at school even though there will always be kids who “go crazy” and say things [about what happened], “but nobody likes them anyway. Most kids will be understanding.”
  - “Tell their friend to be honest, don’t lie.”
- Teens had other suggestions

- Listen. For example, one teen said “Be very supportive. Some teens may not be open with parents, but could be more open with friends.” Another said, “Listen to what they have to say, be there for them.”
- Take their mind off of what happened. One respondent said it helped that her friends were supportive but they did not ask her a lot of questions about what happened.
- “Support them and remind them of all the good things they have.”
- “Hang out with them. Do whatever you can to cheer them up.”
- “Just comfort them. Let them know that it will pass. It may never fully pass, but it will pass enough, in time.”

Finally, we asked teens, “Is there anything else you would like to tell us about?”

- Some teens reiterated advice to other kids who might be abused.
  - “Be calm and tell someone right away. Don’t be scared.”
  - “Tell the people who you think you can trust. Just tell someone what happened and how you feel and maybe you’ll get the help that you need.”
  - “Avoid hanging out with the wrong crew of people and getting yourself in trouble.”
- One had advice for counselors. She said, “Understand that sometimes kids want to be there and sometimes they do not. [Counselors] need to approach kids differently depending on how they feel about being there.”
- Two had praise for the child advocacy centers they went to. One said the people at her center “are really awesome. They were there for me, like friends that I needed.” The other said, “Without programs like this there would be a lot more hurt kids.”
- One teen wished she could gather everybody [she knows] in front of her and explain to them what happened. She wanted people to know that she is “a lot better than those things they call [me].”

### *Reactions to Participating in Research*

All of teens we interviewed said it more than a little important or very important to “participate in research like this to help other kids with these kinds of problems.” They all answered yes when we asked, “Knowing now what was in the survey would you still have agreed to do it?” and they all said no when we asked if answering the questions in the survey was upsetting.

### **Limitations**

The findings of the Child Telephone Survey are limited for several reasons. First, this was a convenience sample of teens whose parents were recruited for interviews and gave permission for us to interview their children. The sample size is quite small, and only three children were photographed for child pornography. Therefore, we could not explore fully specific effects of being depicted in child

pornography nor whether the CPP and non-CPP groups of children were significantly different from each other. Due to the small sample size, these data should be considered exploratory.