



# Hooked, Looped, Convicted

## *The Fallout of a New Generation of CSEM Offenders*

### Glossary of terms used:

**CSAM** - Child Sex Abuse Material

**CSEM** - Child Sex Exploitation Material

**IIOC** - Indecent Images of Children

**SEM** - Sexually Explicit Material

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *The Silent War*

Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM) is not just a hidden crime, it is also a silent war. A war fought behind screens, funded by tycoons, enabled by unchecked technology, and measured in the shattered lives of children and families. This is no fringe issue. It is a global battleground where profit is prioritised over people, and the casualties are mounting.

While governments rally to draft young men into conventional wars, another generation is being conscripted into darkness through addiction, coercion, and digital entrapment. Behind every image is a wound. Behind every low-level offender is often a deeper story of emotional collapse or moral confusion. But at the top of the chain? War profiteers. Hidden hands. Silent weapons.

This brochure aims to expose some of the victims in this complex system. A global economy of harm, enabled by denial, secrecy, and technological complicity. The most dangerous people at the top want to silence us. They take advantage of regular people at the bottom of the hierarchy. Those who are easy to detect and apprehend.

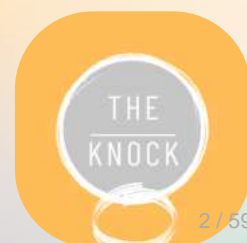
Those at the bottom are not innocent either, they take the bait. Our most vulnerable people who enter this corrupt system via mainstream pornographic or social media websites feed their sexual desires that escalate addictions to dark SEM that keeps them trapped. They are easily apprehended and these low-risk offenders' families are left floundering with no signposting nor knowledge of what they were dealing with.

When 'the knock' comes to your house, nothing can prepare you for the shock and the onslaught that follows. These innocent family members of offenders are slowly dying of shame and trauma without getting the help they need. They are taking the brunt for anger about the whole system because the other more dangerous players are invisible.

The Knock Club website has produced this report to give a voice to one of the most marginalised groups in modern society ~ families of CSEM offenders. Even though you won't find the demonisation of these low-risk offenders in this booklet, it does not mean we condone any CSEM for any reason. Yet it must be acknowledged by society that "normal" non-paedophilic pathways to CSEM exist. We believe that all offenders can be rehabilitated and the offenders in our families are the easiest sub-group of CSEM offenders to rehabilitate, with very low reoffending rates (between 2-6%) (Bryce 2017).

We need a multi-system approach to end this war. To stop our children being used as sexual objects and to stop our sons (and daughters) from taking the bait. The criminal justice system, international police, academic disciplines, governments, schools, social services, media, parents, platform providers, and international regulatory bodies need to work collectively to put an end to the CSEM pandemic.

The Knock



# FOREWORD

*“They barge into your home and drop their bomb,  
Have a root through your cupboards, whilst you feel numb”...*

Rainbowgirl “Knock” Survivor (excerpt from poem in Appendix 1)

Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) offences devastate entire families – not just the children depicted in the images, but also the partners, parents, children, siblings and other relatives of offenders who had no part in the crime.

For these secondary victims, “the knock” at the door is the beginning of a trauma that can include shattered trust, social exile, financial ruin, and deep mental anguish. Importantly, much of this harm is not an unavoidable consequence of justice; rather, it is amplified by misunderstanding and a lack of support.

This report is an in-depth briefing intended for a general and professional audience. By shedding light and busting myths we aim to foster understanding and empathy for these families. We draw on research findings and personal testimonies to illustrate the psychological toll, social isolation, and systemic challenges they face.

We also highlight calls for change, as some jurisdictions now recognise families of offenders as victims in their own right. By understanding what these families go through – and why empathy and support are crucial – professionals and the public can help reduce further harm and address the hidden human cost of online child sex exploitation offences.

Professionals, consider this guiding principle: **treat these families with the same empathy and care as you would with any other direct victim of a crime.** Their lives too have been torn apart. A shift from suspicion to support can make a significant difference in outcomes.

***It is time for society and its institutions to extend a hand to these overlooked victims, guiding them from the shadows of stigma toward a place of healing and hope.***

Families who feel supported are more likely to trust authorities, cooperate with safety plans, and rebuild their lives in a positive way. No one should have to pay for someone else’s crimes with their own well-being.

# THE KNOCK - FAMILY FIRST

This brochure was created by theknock.club, a UK-based community founded in 2020 by families who have lived through this experience. Though UK-based, our community reaches people around the world.

We have deep empathy for the primary victims (the children exploited in CSAM) as well as for the secondary victims (family members blindsided by the arrest of a family member). Our mission is to support these secondary victims, who often do not receive the care and attention they need. We believe that strong, supported families are healing for society, can assist rehabilitation, and help prevent further offending in the next generation.

## Why It Matters

When families affected by “the knock” are met with misunderstanding, judgment, or misinformation, even from the very professionals tasked with helping - it deepens their trauma and isolates them further. Some family members experience severe mental health consequences, with PTSD symptoms and, tragically, even suicide..

*The National Police Chiefs’ Council should commission research to understand the gaps in emotional support for families affected by the arrest of an online CSA suspect. This should provide the basis for greater support for these family members (The Police Foundation: ‘Turning the Tide’ 2022).*

## Dispelling Myths

There is a persistent myth that everyone who views CSEM is a “monster” – an irredeemable paedophile certain to commit hands-on abuse. This is not true. People arrive at offending behaviour for many reasons, including addiction, trauma, loneliness, unmet intimacy needs, and distorted online content pathways. Many do not fit the clinical profile of a paedophile, and most will never commit a contact offence. Addressing these complex issues honestly is crucial for prevention and rehabilitation.

There is another myth that secondary victims (families of offenders) lack empathy for the children harmed in the material. In reality, family members often feel deep empathy and moral anguish for the abused children; however, they are simultaneously overwhelmed by their own shock and trauma. The intense pressure to “hold it all together” can flood a person’s nervous system with fear hormones. Without appropriate support, a traumatised spouse or parent may react in panicked ways that is misinterpreted as coldness or complicity.

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Share this report

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Be compassionate

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Facts not myths

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Victims not suspects



# CSEM TRENDS - Global Pandemic & Public Health Crisis

**WE URGENTLY NEED FUNDING FOR A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH, INTEGRATING INSIGHTS AND GAINING A BROAD PERSPECTIVE TO TRULY GRASP AND ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF THIS SCALE. AFTER ALL, "WE CANNOT ARREST OUR WAY OUT OF THIS" (UK POLICE).**

## Internet and CSEM Explosion

The prevalence of online child sexual abuse material has exploded in the past decade. High-profile monitoring organisations report staggering numbers of sexually illicit media circulated globally, with exponential increases year over year. Crucially, the nature of CSEM is shifting. In the past, much content was produced by hands-on abusers or commercial exploiters.

Today, a large and growing proportion of CSEM is voluntarily “self-generated” by minors. According to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), in 2021 approximately 72% of the illegal content they took action on was initially created by children on their own in their bedrooms.

This trend indicates a **new generation of offenders** because of new technologies that take advantage of children’s ubiquitous internet access and social media use.

## Changing Profiles

A 2012 IWF analysis found that in earlier years of the internet, the majority of CSAM involved children abused by someone in their family or community (recorded and shared by the perpetrator). Despite the majority of material now “self-generated” by minors, there are serious cases where children are groomed or pressured into self-producing this online material.

In other words, many offenders are now remote, exploiting children via screens rather than direct contact. This has forced a rethinking of prevention: protecting children online (through education, parental oversight, platform policies, and swift removal of content). This is as critical as traditional child-protection against physical sexual abusers.

See **Appendix 2** for latest IWF statistics.

Addressing online child abuse requires **more than punitive measures**; it demands understanding why these offences occur in order to mobilise **preventative strategies**. **Strong advocates are sensibly calling for an integrated approach to solving this problem.** Prof. Anthony Beech, Professor (Emeritus) in Criminological Psychology, states that:

*“we are facing a global **pandemic and a public health crisis**. If we are to stand any hope of combatting the threat, it is going to **require a whole system response**. Whilst a victim focus is imperative, and one that should never be forgotten, one element of the response has to **focus on working with offenders**.” (Hudson-Allez 2025)*

# OFFENDER TYPES

## Clustering Behaviours

Offenders engaging with CSAM form a diverse spectrum, ranging from relatively low risk, non-contact “consumers” of illegal content to highly dangerous individuals who physically or coercively sexually abuse children and even produce or distribute material for profit. Researchers have identified distinct clusters of offender types which helps in understanding risk and tailoring interventions. **These categories can overlap or an individual may move between them over time.** ‘One size does not fit all’ and offenders operate alone and/or interchangeably flock to like-minded communities.

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### “Closet” or Solo ‘Collectors’

These are people who download CSEM for private use and typically do not seek to contact minors. They often operate in isolation. Many in this group are first-time offenders with otherwise clean records, and a significant number do not escalate to any direct abuse. They may have poor technical savvy (easily caught by basic police operations), experience CSEM cognitive dissonance, and display compulsiveness. While any CSAM offending is serious, this subgroup tends to have lower recidivism rates and can respond well to early intervention, since they have not crossed certain boundaries (e.g. distribution, community seeking, production, coercive or contact offences).

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### ‘Isolated’ Networking Offenders

These offenders actively share illegal material in online communities or sometimes dark-web forums. They might not commit hands-on abuse themselves, but by trading images and videos they both contribute to demand and further normalise the behaviour among peer networks. They often have more technical skills, using anonymous networks or encryption. Some may engage in online grooming of minors to procure new material (even if they don’t meet victims physically). This group represents a higher level of criminal involvement and can reinforce one other’s behaviour, increasing the risk of escalation for some.

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### “Contact-Driven” or Dual Offenders

These are individuals who both consume CSAM and sexually abuse children in person (or actively seek opportunities to do so). They might start with one behaviour and progress to the other. This group is of greatest concern for obvious reasons: they directly physically harm children. They often exhibit more deviant sexual interests or antisocial traits. Fortunately, studies indicate this is a minority of all CSAM offenders – but they are high risk offenders. They operate more on encrypted dark web networks. They join like-minded genuine paedophilic communities to strengthen behaviour and gain social ties.

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### Commercial Exploiters and Producers

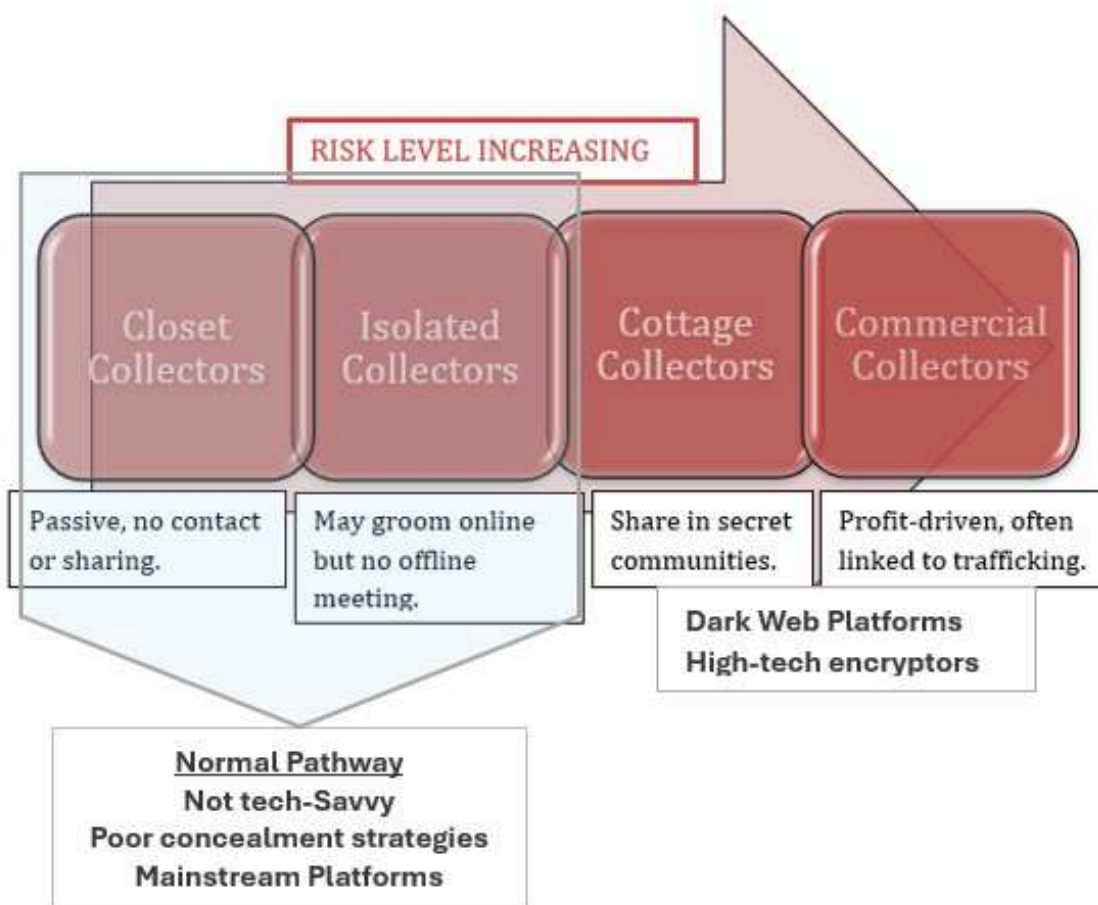
A subset of offenders is motivated primarily by financial gain or organised crime. They produce or facilitate CSAM as part of networks (e.g. trafficking rings or for-profit websites). These individuals (or groups) treat abuse material as a commodity. They often display high technical sophistication and deliberate planning. They are difficult to detect and have a large impact due to the volume of material they create and distribute. International law enforcement collaboration is key to tackling this category.

# DANGEROUS DIGITAL DESIRES

Wortley et al. (2024) describe people in the **normal pathway** as not being very technologically skilled. These offenders typically use mainstream platforms and have poor concealment strategies (e.g. only technically able to delete browser history with poor encryption skills etc.).

## Distinct Clusters

**Diagram 1:** Clusters of CSEM Offenders with Risk Level



"Normal" Pathway becoming more common.

SEM (sexually explicit material) has become more available, graphic, violent and illegal over the years. Seto et al. (2001) stated that some people are predisposed to sexually offend and they are the most likely to show the strongest effects of SEM exposure. "Escalation" may be an exacerbating factor in some men who are already predisposed to this.



# Why Do They Do It?

People think I am a 'paedo', but I know I'm not. I feel so ashamed. This is all too much. I can't see a way out so I'm gonna end it.

How did I end up here?

I've messed up.

I'm actually relieved I got caught. The policeman said it is common these days. Maybe there is hope?

## Quiz: Why Did You Do It?

Low self-esteem

It helped me calm down

I've a secret attraction to children

My porn addiction got out of control

I wanted to make money

I'm just looking, there's no harm

A combination of the above


Other

**Guilt or no guilt?**

**Striking statistics** from a report in 2018. Those involved in CSEM offences account for almost 30% of suicides for all offending types and almost 80% of suicides for those arrested for a sexual offence. (Fenwick 2024)



# FROM TOP SHELF TO ROCK BOTTOM



*The myth of the 'paedophile stereotype' for all CSEM offenders no longer fits. Offending behaviour trends now reflect a diversity of new internal and external drivers, not a single profile.*

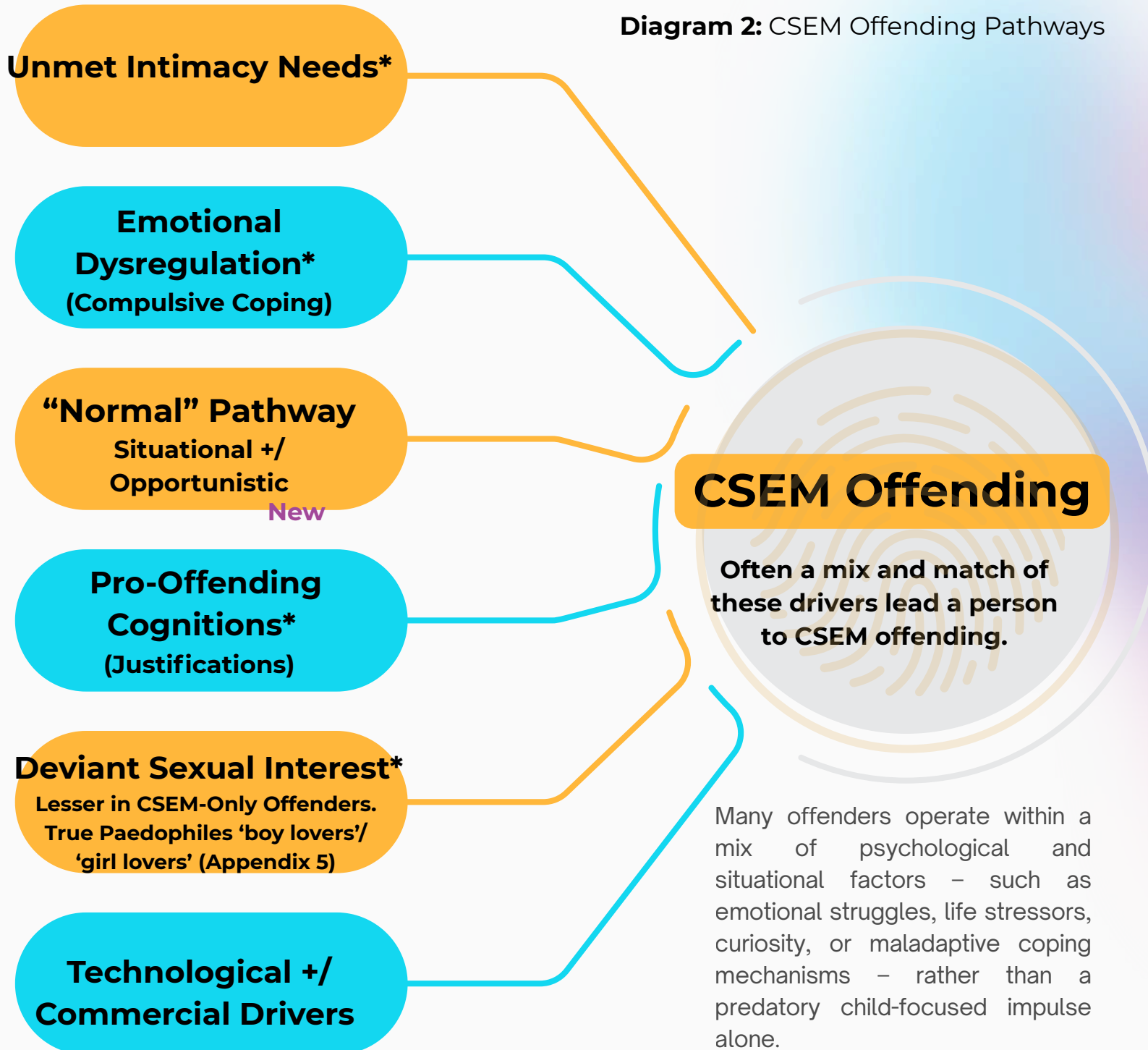
- Some seek connection.
- Others spiral from curiosity into compulsion.
- Some rationalise harm through distorted beliefs.
- Others numb pain, boredom, or shame.
- A few are organised, but many are lonely, chaotic, and disorganised.
- A less common pathway to CSEM is sexual deviance.

In a recent study of imprisoned sex offenders, compulsive sexual behaviour (e.g. addiction to CSEM) and paedophilic interest **are not inherently linked**. This underscores the need for new **nuanced, individualised treatment** approaches that move away from assuming automatic paedophilic interest and align instead with the diversity of pathways that lead to sexual offending (Sexual Medicine Journal 2025).

Whether or not an offender can **return home** or not depends upon an **expert risk assessment** being carried out. You can see comparisons of different offenders and risk level with likelihood of returning home in Appendix 5. We represent families who have low-risk levels who are easily rehabilitated.

# REASONS & PATHWAYS

**Diagram 2:** CSEM Offending Pathways



\*Rhodes 2023 highlights these factors only were originally designed and historically applicable to contact offenders only. Now we have a new ‘normal’ IIOC-only offenders’ pathway. Risk assessments accounting for new pathways and stages of offending would be very successful for commonly apprehended low-risk offenders.

See Appendix 5 for comparison of offender types, motivation pathways and risk levels.

# PATHWAY DESCRIPTIONS

## “Normal” Pathway

More common in CSEM-only low-risk groups

Researchers have identified an increasing trend with the “normal” pathway or **opportunistic access** where some individuals stumble into offending almost by **accident or curiosity**. With the vast sea of SEM online, a person might start with legal adult material and, over time, **seek** more novel or extreme content as they become **desensitised**. In some of cases, this progression leads them to click something illegal (perhaps not even fully intending to find CSAM, at least at first).

E.g. one might encounter pop-up ads or links implying underage content and, in a moment of poor judgment, look out of curiosity. Once that line is crossed, some get pulled deeper. This pathway does not require abnormal psychology or a pre-existing attraction to children, just a series of unwise choices enabled by easy access.

**Key features:** little to no prior deviant interest, no significant antisocial traits, often immediate shame once caught, and typically minimal technical effort to hide the behaviour. Early intervention (like a wake-up call when they are caught) often suffices to stop these individuals from ever reoffending, since they were not strongly driven by deviance in the first place.

## Technological & Commercial

Less common in CSEM-only low-risk groups

The very nature of the internet and modern digital platforms plays a role in enabling CSEM offending. Some offenders are swept up by the **accessibility, anonymity and availability** of online networks, e.g. the existence of **dark web** forums, peer-to-peer networks, and encrypted messaging makes it easier to find illegal material with reduced fear of immediate consequences. **Algorithms** on mainstream sites can also unintentionally suggest increasingly borderline content.

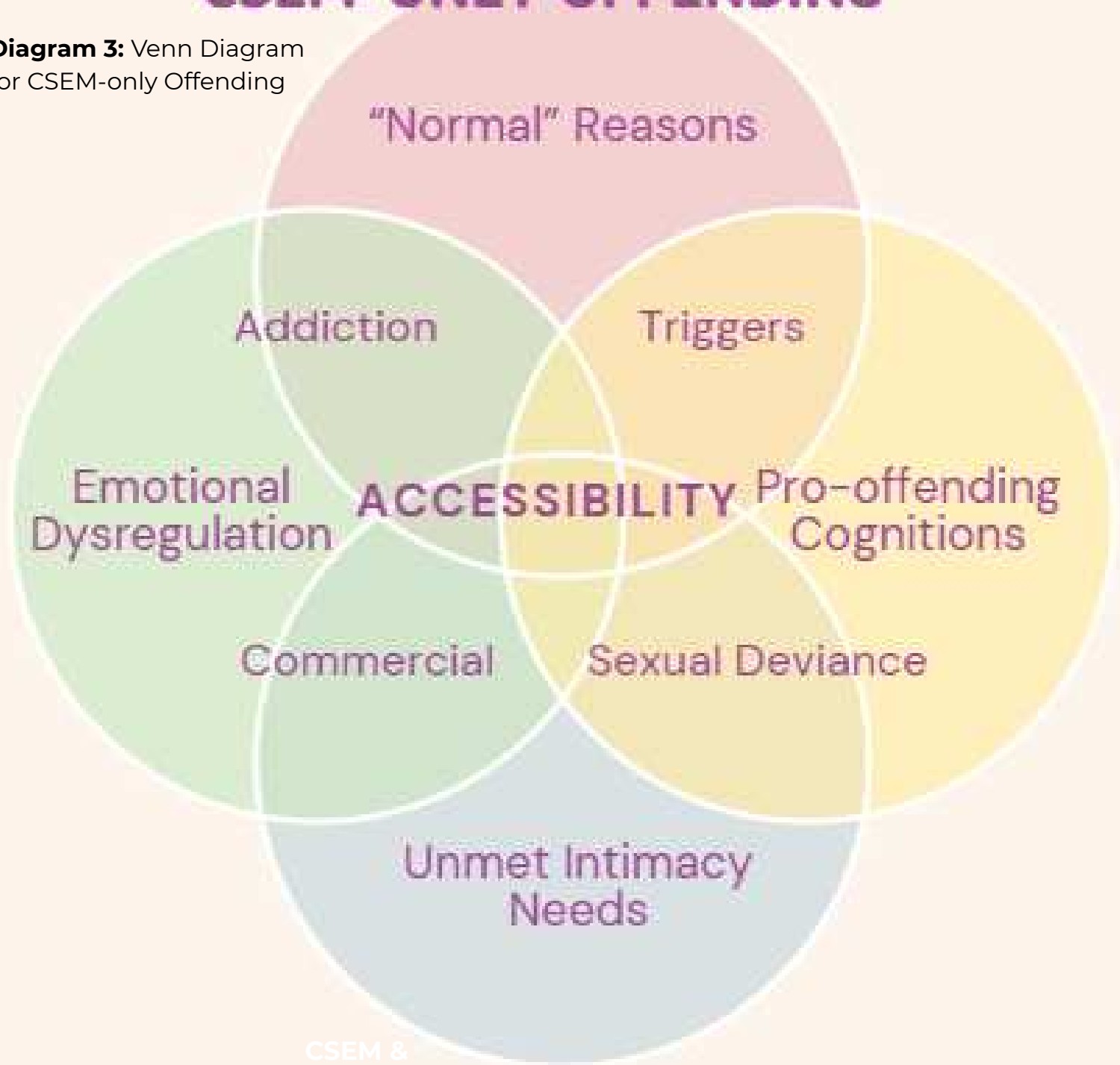
In rare cases, offenders are **coerced** or enticed by others (e.g. being **blackmailed** into sharing illegal material or lured by the promise of payment). The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children notes that financial incentives have driven some offenders to produce or sell CSAM. While this “financial/coercion” pathway is not common, it underscores that some people commit these crimes not due to intrinsic sexual interest but due to external pressure or greed.

Any comprehensive solution must therefore address **technological factors** (like stronger platform moderation, better detection tools) and cut off the commercial aspects (payment systems for illegal content, etc.), in addition to addressing individual psychology.

# PATHWAY DESCRIPTIONS

## OVERLAPPING REASONS FOR CSEM-ONLY OFFENDING

**Diagram 3:** Venn Diagram for CSEM-only Offending



For each person, identify the unique drivers then deliver the tailored treatment.



# PATHWAY DESCRIPTIONS

## Unmet Intimacy Needs

A traditional major pathway to contacting offending is unmet intimacy needs. This pathway has also been applied to online offenders who may struggle with loneliness, social anxiety, or lack of meaningful adult relationships. Feelings of sexual frustration or emotional isolation can lead to internet and **SEM escapism**. CSEM use is a self-defeating **coping mechanism**. Research suggests that 30–50% of CSEM-only offenders exhibit significant intimacy deficits. They have trouble forming age-appropriate relationships and use the internet as a substitute for real intimacy. These individuals do not usually feel any “love” or genuine attraction toward children in the CSEM, rather they are **seeking a sense of connection or validation in an anonymous, low-rejection environment**.

**Key features:** low self-esteem, fear of rejection, and often no intent to approach a child in physical life. Strengthening an offender’s healthy social bonds and self-worth is protective against this pathway.

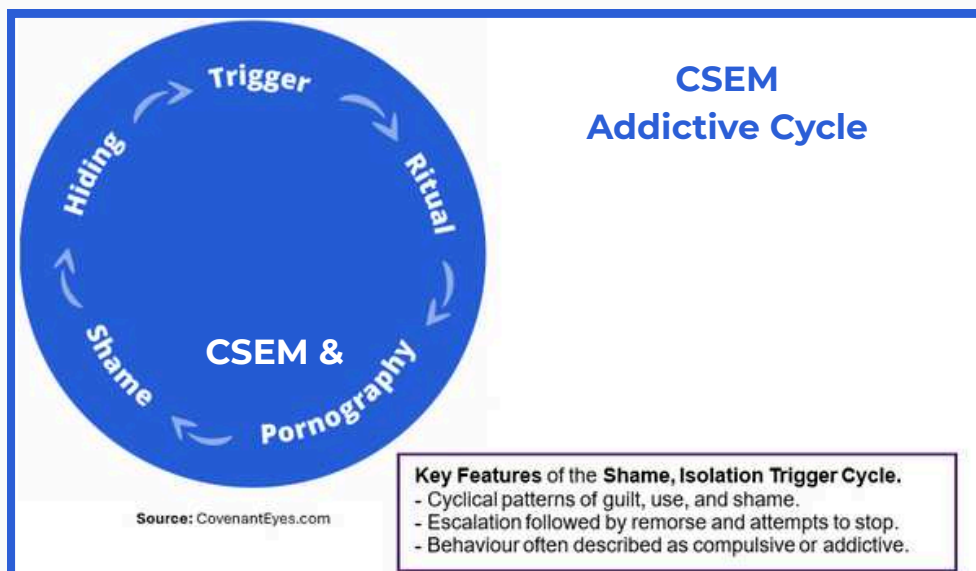
## Emotional Dysregulation

Middleton et al., (2006) found that emotional regulation issues were a major factor in a large subset of CSAM offenders. Many offenders report using CSEM compulsively to **self-soothe and regulate negative emotions**. An **addictive compulsive cycle** escalates when individuals experience stress, depression, or trauma and they turn to online sexual content for temporary relief. Afterwards they **feel shame and guilt**, which eventually leads back to using more CSEM to numb those feelings. Over time, they may need more extreme material to achieve the same effect. See diagram 4 below.

**Key features:** cyclical binges and crashes, usage triggered by life crises (divorce, job loss, etc.), and descriptions of feeling “out of control” or “addicted” to the behaviour.

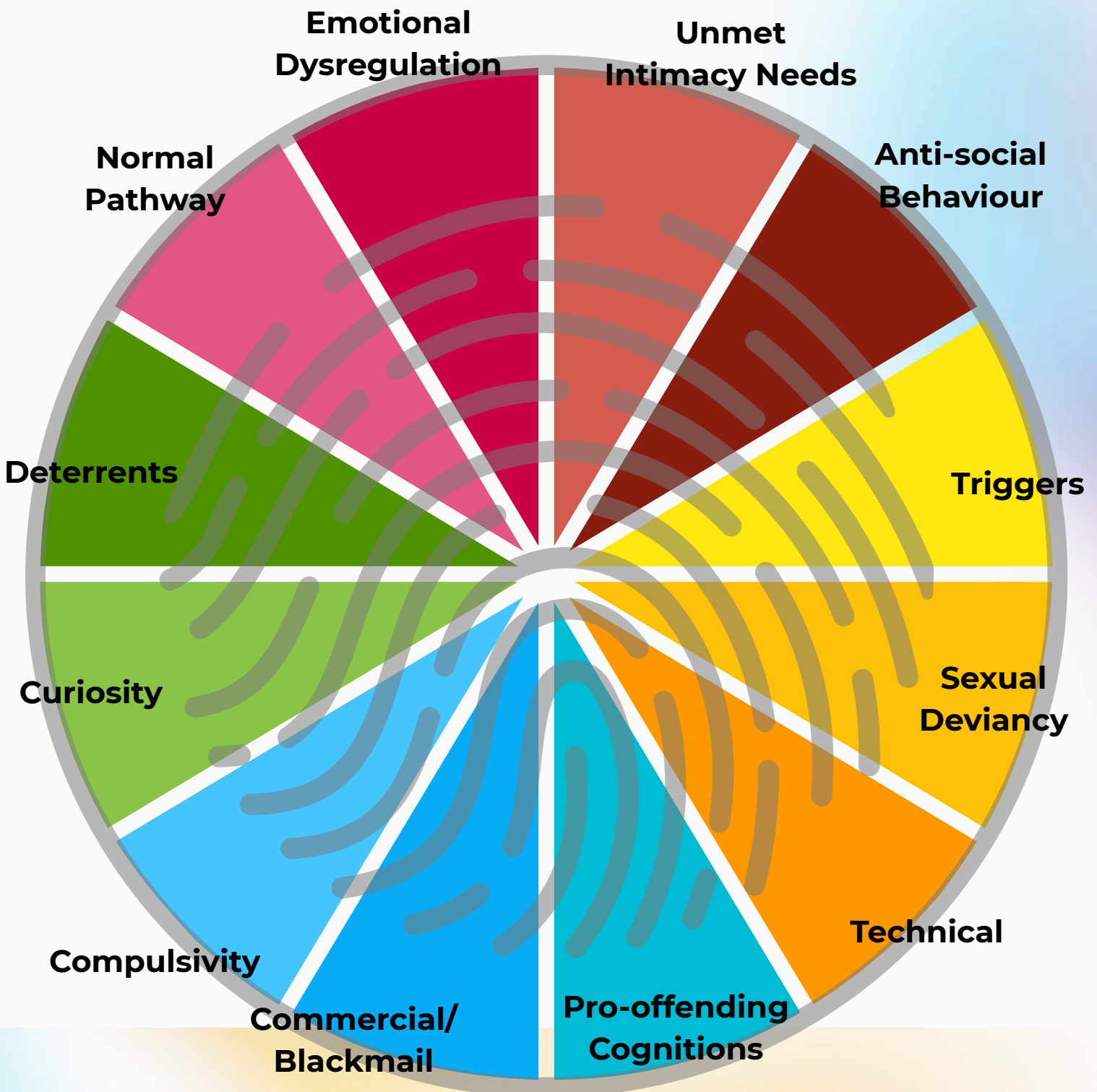
With appropriate mental health support, these people can be taught healthier coping skills, to treat underlying depression/PTSD, etc. This breaks the addictive cycle.

**Diagram 4:** CSEM & SEM Addictive Escalation Cycle.



# BEHAVIOUR RISKS

**Diagram 5:** Spectrum of Behaviour Risks



Many offenders operate within a mix of psychological and situational factors; e.g. emotional struggles, life stressors, curiosity, or maladaptive coping mechanisms, rather than a predatory child-focused impulse alone.

# PATHWAY DESCRIPTIONS

## Pro-Offending Cognitions

Many offenders justify their CSEM use, regardless of their primary motive, and harbour **cognitive distortions** that allow them to continue offending. Common rationalisations include: “I’m just looking, so I’m not hurting anyone;” “These images aren’t real abuse, they’re just pictures”. These **thinking errors** lower an offender’s internal inhibitions by minimising the perceived harm. In reality, every image involves the real abuse of a child, and viewing/sharing perpetuates demand. An offender’s ability to dissociate from that fact can be a driving factor in maintaining their behaviour. Studies (e.g. Babchishin et al., 2011) confirm that endorsement of **moral neutralisations and cognitive errors such as** (“fantasy-only,” “victimless crime”) is prevalent among online CSEM-only offenders.

**Key features:** downplaying the seriousness of the act, comparing themselves favourably (“at least I didn’t physically hurt anyone”), and sometimes a lack of immediate empathy with the unseen victim. Treatment and education can challenge these beliefs – for example, programmes that include victim impact awareness and empathy training help to erode the “just a harmless fantasy” excuse. Victims of CSAM and contact offences can both suffer severe mental health problems (Woodhams et al. 2021).

## Sexual Deviance

A smaller subset of offenders do have a preferential primary sexual attraction to minors (paedophilia or hebephilia). For them, viewing CSAM is the main pathway to **deviant fantasies or sexual gratification** from child imagery. However, it’s crucial to note that even among this group, **not all will commit contact abuse**, especially if they have strong moral compasses or fear of consequences. Some offenders with **paedophilic** interests actually experience significant **distress** about their condition and actively avoid hurting children physically (these individuals would be diagnosed with paedophilic **disorder** rather than paedophilia). Still, the presence of a deviant sexual preference does heighten risk, particularly if combined with cognitive distortions or opportunity.

**Key features:** preferential arousal to children or teens, possibly a history of childhood sexual trauma (in some cases), and greater risk of escalation if unaddressed. Specialised therapeutic approaches (including cognitive-behavioural therapy targeting deviant arousal, and/or medication) are used to manage this pathway. It is important to **differentiate this group for risk assessment**—though they are actually a **minority** of CSEM offenders, they often receive the **most public attention**.

*While some undetected offending might go undisclosed, **“it does not appear that most or all” online offenders have committed contact abuse**. This contradicts the earlier notion that virtually every consumer of illegal fantasies is a lurking molester. The reality is that some offenders are indeed exclusively online in their deviance, whereas others (“mixed” offenders) have a dual history of both online and contact offences. **Distinguishing** these types is crucial when **assessing risk** (Seto et al 2011).*



# The 'P' Word

## True Paedophilic Offenders

Alongside the rise in frequency, the content depicted in CSEM material has become increasingly more extreme and violent. Especially since 2020. Most CSEM offenders studied in research are those arrested and more easily caught using the surface web. We have limited knowledge around and understanding of the behaviour of CSEM offenders who make use of platforms on the Dark Web. Whilst we cannot assume that behaviour displayed by users on the Dark Web is the same as behaviour displayed by users on the Surface Web, we do know the following;

- Dark web has bulletin boards for very young children (<5 years) and sadism.
- Offenders who use the dark web have more deviant sexual interests.
- These activities are sought out, not 'stumbled' upon accidentally.
- Offenders are highly motivated.
- They must offend to be accepted into groups.
- They are more violent and sadistic in nature.
- Higher level of technical expertise and must demonstrate a willingness to share.

True paedophiles insist that children are sexually active, they deny harm to the child and sometimes claim that it can benefit the child or it is deserved. Discussions on the dark web are characterised by a lack of empathy to the suffering victim, lack of remorse and possess a level of entitlement. So far, studies of offenders arrested on the surface web are more likely to describing guilt, fear and shame about their offending. This sets types of offenders apart. Most offenders on these communities on dark web platforms have no qualms about CSEM or physical sexual abuse of children.

**Source:** Woodhams et al. (2021).

Dark Web	Surface Web
Sadism/torture/incest <5 years old children	No
Lack of remorse/empathy for CSEM or physically sexually abused victims.	More empathy/remorse for CSEM victims
Denial of harm that physical sexual abuse and CSEM can cause.	Acceptance physical abuse is harmful but minimisation of online sexual offences (which can be just as harmful for mental health for victim)
Higher motivated and technical expertise. Specialised forums with tolerate sadism and torture and sometime killing	Less so
Discussions on real life abuse involvement	Less so
Polymorphic	Less so
Sexual Pre-occupation. Children are sexual beings. Can be in loving sexual relationships.	Less so
Employment	More likely
Overcoming External Barriers e.g.giving grooming advice	Less so
Younger age groups <5 condoned, including babies and toddlers	Typically pre- pubescent+



# PUBLIC PERCEPTION

## Stigma, Misconceptions, and the Cost of Silence

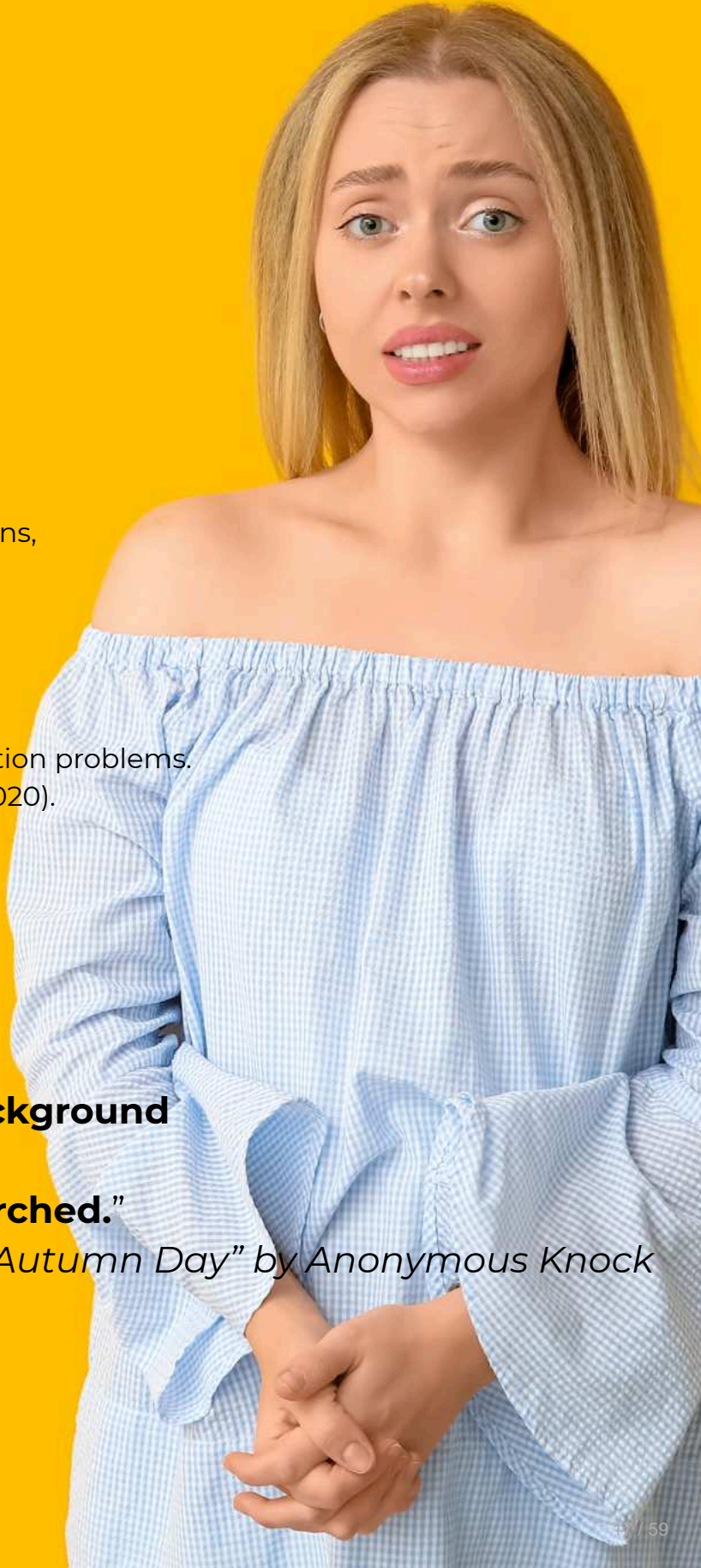
### Families of CSEM Offenders Experience:

- Exclusion,
- Stigmatising practices,
- Lost friendships,
- Financial stress,
- Direct abuse and attacks,
- Moral injury,
- Existential crisis,
- Disrupted attachments,
- Reduced life chances,
- Disrupted education,
- Disrupted employment,
- Disrupted housing,
- PTSD,
- Ontological shock,
- Trauma-induced reality collapse
- Suicidal ideation, attempts and completions,
- Long-term health problems,
- Immune disorders,
- Premature deaths (due to poor health),
- Separation,
- Divorce,
- Increased risk of mental health and addiction problems.

Condry & Minson (2020); Duncan et al (2020).

**“I was in the eye of the storm,  
there was just the sound of  
low voices in the other rooms,  
strangers murmuring in the background  
as my home was searched,  
every inch of my home was searched.”**

*Appendix 1 for full poem of “One Autumn Day” by Anonymous Knock Survivor*



# PUBLIC PERCEPTION

## Court Reporter Guy

Another one – that's twelve this week,  
(and those are the cases I have seen).  
Something's wrong, we keep seeing more,  
- broken men walking through the door.

It's not my job  
to understand 'why'  
I'm just the court reporter guy.

I don't like to use the 'paedophile' term,  
But it gets attention,  
makes readers squirm.

It's not really my job  
to care about 'why'  
I'm just the court reporter guy.

"We need more sales. Make people mad!  
People don't click on liberal takes—  
They want the gore ;give them the bait!"

It's not really my job  
to care about 'why'  
I'm just the court reporter guy.

Excerpt of poem by Annie Hope. Author & Knock  
Survivor (Appendix 1).



## Myths & Fear for Sale

The link between viewing CSAM and having a true paedophilic disorder or committing contact abuse is not one-to-one. Most people who view CSAM do not have an exclusive sexual attraction to prepubescent children (many are curious or consumed by other issues), and research has shown that a large proportion never go on to hands-on offences. Some teenagers knowingly talk to older guys. This does not excuse the behaviour of these offenders taking advantage of their naivety. Yet the public often hears only the horror stories, not the full context or the data. Sensational reporting drives the notion that every offender is a high risk paedophile, which is not the case.

## RESPONSIBLE MEDIA REPORTING

The result of these narratives is a public that is often misinformed and seek confirmation biases e.g. a wife "must have known" or that a child in the home must have been abused as well. It creates an atmosphere where families feel demonised along with the offender.

Moreover, fear-based generalisations can actually make children less safe in the long run – if we imagine every offender as a shadowy predator and not as a potentially redeemable individual shaped by complex factors, we might reject policies (like prevention helplines or treatment programmes) that could stop the next offence before it happens.

Balanced media reporting is rare, but it's needed to shift the conversation from pure retribution to prevention and support. Some journalists and outlets are beginning to take that approach, focusing on rehabilitation stories or the plight of offenders' families, but these are still the exception.



# The Misunderstood Offender

## “Not All the Same” — But Treated As If They Are

Despite vast differences in motivation, risk, and behaviour, all CSEM offenders are often painted with the same brush — assumed to be dangerous, contact-driven, and beyond hope. This shapes public policy, treatment access, and the suffering of families.

**To find solutions we first need to know what the nature of the problems are.**

**“Punishment without understanding only deepens harm.”**

**Public fear is understandable, but oversimplification is dangerous.**

### Common Misconceptions

All CSEM offenders are contact offenders ✗

Offenders can't change ✗

Their families knew or should have known ✗

Treatment is a “soft option” ✗

Children are always safer if the family is broken up ✗

A large subgroup of online-exclusive offenders “pose relatively little risk” of contact abusing a child. Typically, these individuals have no prior violent or sexual crimes, lead otherwise stable lives (jobs, families), and who show genuine remorse and willingness to engage in treatment after being caught. They often have internal moral barriers that kept them from crossing into contact abuse (see Finklehor Appendix 3), and being arrested serves as a further shock that reinforces those barriers (many describe feeling a twisted relief at being caught, as it forces them to confront the behaviour and prevents further descent).

*See Appendix 3 for Finklehor's Barriers.*

# ‘MODERN’ GROOMING

While this brochure focuses on online content offences (viewing/sharing CSEM) and their impact, it is important to also address the related but distinct phenomenon of online sexual grooming of children. Online grooming refers to an offender actively befriending and manipulating a minor via the internet with the goal of sexual exploitation (which may remain online or lead to a real-world meeting). This is a growing threat in the digital era, and it differs in some ways from both traditional face-to-face grooming and from non-contact CSAM consumption.

## A New Era

Perpetrators now leverage social media, chat apps, online games, and other platforms to gain access to minors with relative anonymity and ease. Researchers note that the classic definition of grooming – a slow, trust-building process often carried out by someone close to the child – is being upended in cyberspace. Some offenders still engage in “slow-burn” grooming over weeks or months, cultivating a pseudo-relationship with the child (possibly posing as a peer or as a benevolent adult) before initiating sexual content. But many cases show rapid escalation – an offender might make sexual requests within days or even hours of first contact, especially if targeting older children or teens. The internet allows offenders to cast a wide net; if one child resists or blocks them, they simply move on to find another, which can incentivise a more direct approach.

## Education

From a prevention standpoint, educating children and teens about online safety is crucial. They should learn that an online “friend” who flatters them and introduces sexual talk is not truly their friend. Schools and parents can teach kids to recognise grooming signs, and encourage a culture where youth feel safe reporting uncomfortable online encounters without fear of blame.

## Typologies

Some groomers are **“relationship seekers”** – they will flatter and feign romance, targeting perhaps a lonely teenager, and try to convince the child that they are in love or a special couple (all the while sexualising the interaction).

Others are **“affectionate contact-driven”** – they build trust with the clear aim to meet the child for physical sex, often grooming both the child and sometimes the family if possible.

Another type is **“hyper-sexualised direct”** – these offenders dispense with niceties and quickly bombard a child with sexual messages or requests figuring that among many targets, a few will engage. There are also **“bait and trap”** groomers – those who coerce or extort children after obtaining some compromising images (e.g. an offender convinces a teen to send a nude, or produces a ‘deep-fake’, then threatens to share it unless the teen sends more or meets them). These tactics show that online grooming is not monolithic; different offenders use different strategies, from emotional manipulation to straightforward coercion.

## Support for Victims

Teens who were groomed may need a somewhat different therapeutic approach than younger (<11 years) abuse victims. Because they might feel complicit or “in love,” therapy has to gently help them reframe what happened as abuse and overcome any self-blame. It’s also important to address the tech aspect, sometimes images/videos of the teen may be circulating online as a result of the grooming (a huge source of anxiety and trauma). Contact the [CEOP](#) for help to remove the media.



# THE HIDDEN VICTIMS

## Excerpts from 'The Knock' Survivors' Poems in Appendix 1

At first, hope shone like morning light,  
Promising warmth, chasing the night.  
Yet time rolled on, the hours slipped away,  
And solitude crept in, where hope used to sway.

*"Hope became my best friend"*

*by Dee Sirable Knock Survivor*

High above the oceans and seas,  
stretched out weary wings have flown.  
Down to the lowest depth of those waters  
my heart has surely plummeted  
to that vast unknown.

*"A Wildest Journey Shared" By Knock Survivor*

*So please, take the time to ask*

*How I am doing, it's not too much to ask.*

*Treat me with respect, treat me with grace,*

*And help me find my rightful place.*

*"Dear Social Worker" by Dee Sirable Knock Survivor*

Items bagged and tagged and then they left.  
The storm hit again when they left,  
voices in my head roaring and screaming,  
how could I have not seen  
what was happening in my own home.

*"One Autumn Day" By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

But daddy was stupid

He made a mistake

The future we planned

We have to forsake.

*"2 to Tango" By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

Anger will travel much faster than calm,  
we monetise outrage, capture the storm.

It's not really my job to care about 'why'

I'm just the court reporter guy.

*"Court Reporter Guy " by Annie Hope Knock Survivor*

*There are whole days*

*I want to leap into a sandstorm.*

*Call it wound. Call it beginning.*

*Call it ugly blossoms of grief.*

*"The Knock" Anonymous Knock Survivor*

**LISTEN TO ME,**

**THESE THINGS AREN'T BLACK AND WHITE.**

**PLEASE, PLEASE CAN YOU JUST SEE,**

**I'M FALLING FROM A GREAT HEIGHT.**

*"I thought I could trust you" Anonymous Knock Survivor*

Two little boys cannot take part

-their dad won't be there at all,

They will sit and observe as classmates and friends  
chat and eat with their dads in the hall.

*"Father's Day (at School)" by Annie Hope Knock Survivor*

Gasping for breath, as each wave breaks.

Eagle-eyed on the light that hints,

My new life unveiled; it's not what it seemed

My innocence lost, can it be redeemed?

**"THE ROCKS" By Keren Davidson Knock Survivor**

One day, you'll be together again,

Sharing your love, like a gentle rain.

Living as a family, full of light,

With each other, everything feels right..

**"Feelings from the Knock" By Dee Sirable Knock Survivor**

*A part of me wants to scream,*

*A part of me wants to cry,*

*Please, someone tell me it will be alright,*

*Deep down I feel the future isn't bright.*

*"A Part of Me" By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

Only those who've been through this can relate,  
Cos the reasons behind this are not black and white.

Keeping sane, a day at a time,

is the only way to survive this horrendous crime!

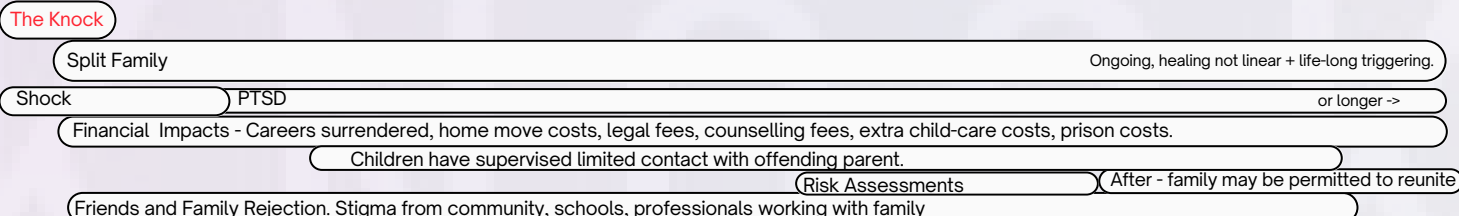
*"The Knock" By Rainbowgirl Knock Survivor*

# SHOCK AND TRAUMA

## Catastrophic and Life Shattering

Approximate Timeline of 'The Knock' Impacts on Innocent Families

DAY 1 DAY 3 DAY 7 DAY 30 2 MONTHS 6 MONTHS 1 YEAR 2 YEARS 3 YEARS 5 YEARS 10 YEARS 20 YEARS



Not exhaustive list - see Appendix 4

## Support not Stigma

## "Let them Grieve"

When a person is arrested for a CSAM offence, the shockwaves extend well beyond the individual and the primary child victims in the images. The offender's family partner suffer a profound trauma that society has barely began to recognise. These family members are the **secondary victims of the crime**. Their world collapses in an instant at "the knock," and they face a complex emotional and social ordeal in the aftermath. Unfortunately, instead of receiving help, they frequently encounter judgment or indifference. This section explores what these families experience and why it is vital to support them.

For long-term partners and mothers and fathers, the revelation of a loved one's CSEM offence is deeply devastating – a mix of betrayal trauma, grief, anger, and confusion. Many describe it as a **kind of living bereavement**: the person they thought they knew seems to have "died" the moment the police arrived, replaced by someone unrecognisable.

One spouse described the emotional toll as like **"grieving someone who's still alive."** She mourned the husband she loved as if he had died, yet unlike a widow, she received no sympathy or communal support – instead, only shame and secrecy.

### Psychologists call this disenfranchised grief:

A profound loss that isn't openly acknowledged or mourned in society. The spouse or mother/father of the offender grapples with loving someone and hating their actions at the same time, an internal conflict that can be torturous. There is also "ambiguous loss": the loved one is physically present (perhaps out on bail or eventually living separately) but so fundamentally changed in the partner's eyes that it feels as if that person is gone.

It is surprising to know that a lot of couples do work through all of this and stay together or are supportive in co-parenting. Also, mothers and fathers more than often maintain relationships with their son or daughter who offended. It does take time to restore and even improve the relationship and takes genuine remorse, psychoeducation, therapy, communicating with one another and time to rebuild trust.


**Thank you to all the researchers who work tirelessly in this area.  
See bottom of bibliography for list.**



# STIGMA AND SUSPICION



"It felt like we were erased overnight."



"Everyone thinks I knew about it but I **HAD NO IDEA!**"

"You must have known something was off?"

"How can you call yourself a 'protective' parent if you keep him in your life?"

"He was such a promising young man. He was on his way to uni and now this has happened".

"He was the one arrested. But we were the ones left to pick up the pieces."

Most people wrongly believe that all CSEM offenders are paedophiles and likely to be secret contact offenders. This is understandable given the inaccurate media portrayals and lack of public education. Friends, neighbours, even some family often distance themselves.

This is not surprising due to public anger fuelled by misinformation. UK Safeguarding Minister Jess Phillips said when commenting on teachers given new guidance in dealing with AI-generated child sexual abuse material...

*...“we know that sick predators' activities online often lead to them carrying out the most horrific abuse in person”.*

(MSN news online 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025).

This misinformation leads to scapegoating for low-level offenders and their families.

*The partner may be treated as guilty by association or 'contagion', or simply avoided because others don't know what to say. In some cases, families have been harassed or threatened by vigilante members of the community who lump the whole family together as "paedophiles."*

Even professionals can inadvertently stigmatise. A social worker or police officer, influenced by myths, might ask insinuating questions like "Didn't you really know something was off?" or convey doubt about the family's innocence or parenting ability. Such attitudes compound trauma, victimisation and vilification.



# CHILDREN IN THE BLAST ZONE

Children usually lose a parent overnight with no warning, home instability, schooling, and mental wellbeing is all affected. Many are neuro-diverse or have additional needs. Yet support for them is almost non-existent. In addition, (and ironically), the intensive and extensive intervention of child protective services often causes more harm. The constant checking for non-existent abuse, the way innocent families are treated with suspicion. The state needs to urgently review its intervention methods for these families. It almost appears it is anti-climatic for social services to not find anything. They must remember their promise “first do no harm” and review the iatrogenic effects of its intervention with families experiencing ‘the knock’ (Harris et al. 2024).

Diagram 6: **The intensive, extensive intrusive ‘anti-climatic’ cycle of social service interventions for families with children during ‘the knock’.**



“Social workers are typically empathic, but it can be challenging to offer compassionate care to those who harmed others and, by extension, to the people who love them”, (Kavanagh et al. 2022).



# Children in the Chaos Ego-Centrism



"I don't want to stress mum out even more so I pretend I am ok, but I cry at night in bed".



"I wonder if it's my fault?"

"Our lives are ruined".

"I'm worried about dad"

"I failed, I want to leave this family forever"



"I miss dad!"

Children often get angry when families are suddenly torn apart and aren't allowed to see one another. Social workers repeatedly changing or repeatedly turning up for announced visits to 'chat' and do bedroom inspections are frustrating for families. They feel as if they are being monitored and that they have done something wrong.

"My friends have no idea what's going on with me. I am too ashamed to say anything"



"I've looked at porn too, does this mean I will end up like my dad?"

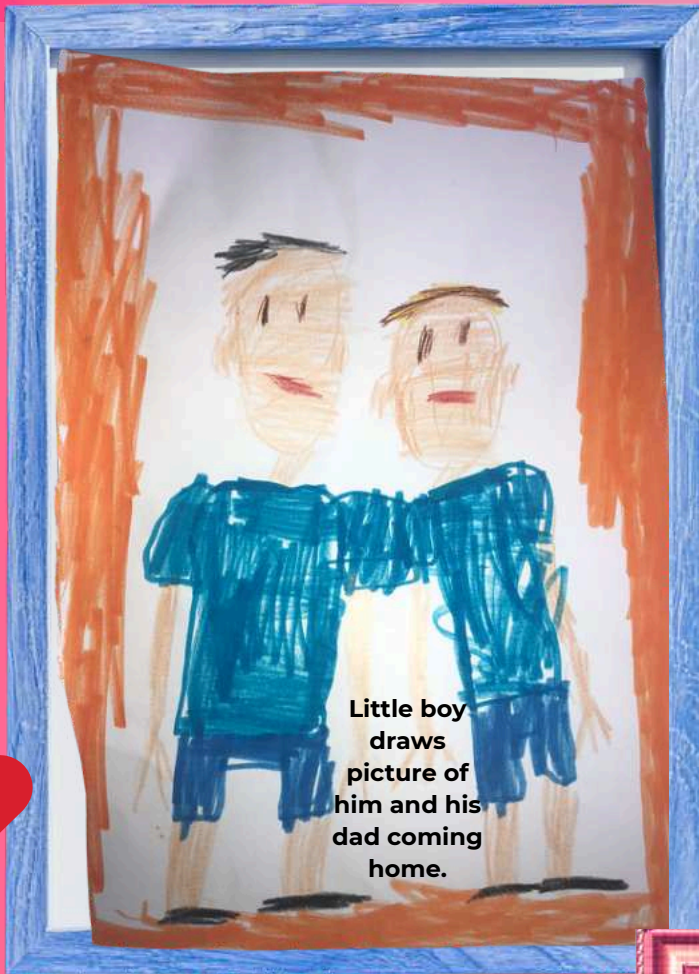


Children and teenagers know on some level that something shameful has happened in their family. They find it difficult to manage those feelings whilst still trying to be supportive at home and cope with their missing parent, and others who cut them off.

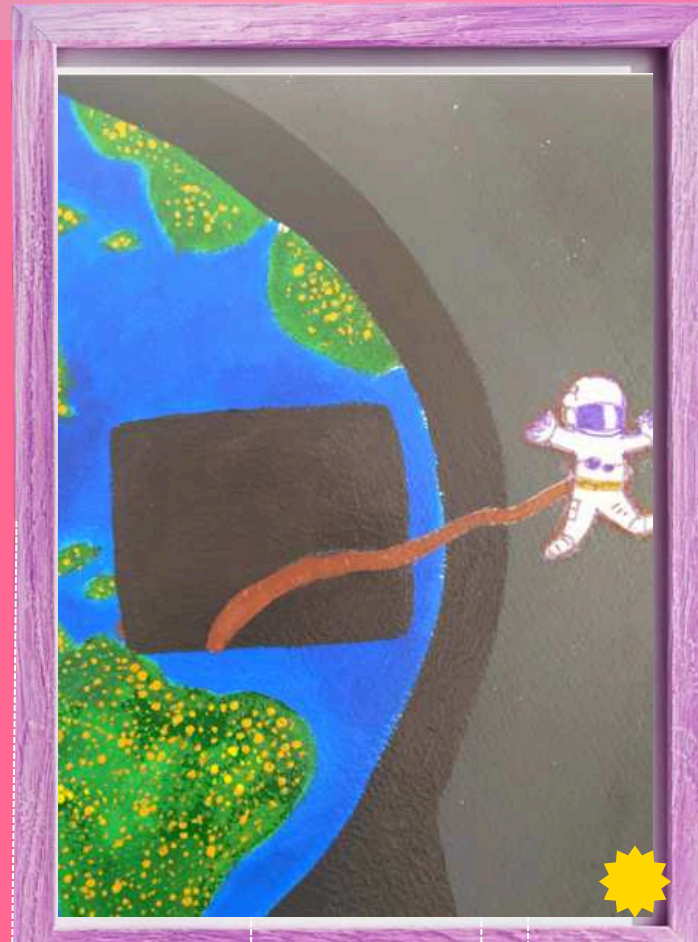
The anticipation of dad coming home after many years or being able to have unsupervised contact again with the offending parent is typically a positive life-changing event. Next we will see some art reflecting the emotions of younger children anticipating this event.



# Art from the Heart of the Knock



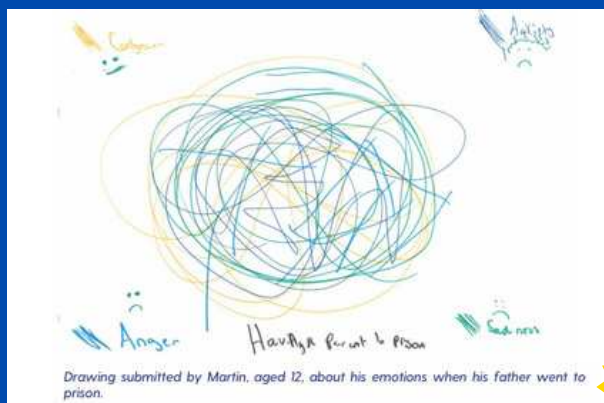
Little boy  
draws  
picture of  
him and his  
dad coming  
home.



Little girl draws picture of  
Social Worker by a tree with  
flowers when she was helping  
her get to see her dad again.



With thanks to  
Hextall 2022 CHAS  
Report



Drawing submitted by Martin, aged 12, about his emotions when his father went to prison.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## For Policy and Practice

To truly address the complexities of online CSEM offending – and to support all victims (primary and secondary) – a coordinated effort across policy, practice, and public education is needed. Drawing on recent research and advocacy, here are some key recommendations.

### Secondary Victim Status

**Official Recognition of Secondary Victims:** Policymakers should acknowledge non-offending family members as victims in relevant policies and legislation. This could involve granting partners and children and parents of offenders an official “secondary victim” status, making them eligible for victim support services. (Notably, some jurisdictions in the US and Canada have begun doing this, allowing families access to counselling and other assistance.) Formal recognition sends a message: “We see your pain, and you deserve help.” It also obliges agencies to include these families in their scope of care. In the UK, some Members of Parliament and charities have pushed for this change; although it was initially rejected in 2022, advocacy continues.



*Front-line professionals: police officers; social workers; therapists, and educators etc should receive specialised training on the trauma caused to families by CSEM offences.*

### Trauma-Informed & Neurodiversity Training

This training would encourage treating the innocent parent as an ally in safeguarding children, rather than automatically as a suspect. It would emphasise empathy: e.g., using a compassionate tone, avoiding judgmental assumptions like “she must have known,” and being aware that a perceived ‘over’ or ‘under’ reaction from a spouse is likely trauma and/or neurodiversity and not indifference, defensiveness or incriminating. Practical protocols can be included: conduct necessary child protection steps as discreetly and respectfully as possible (for instance, if arresting a parent, try to do it when the kids are not home, or quickly move children to another room with a supportive adult before the arrest scene). Small changes in procedure and communication can dramatically reduce unnecessary trauma for the family and set the stage for better cooperation and trust.

### Public Awareness & Stigma Reduction

Society needs education to combat knee-jerk assumptions about the families of offenders. We recommend public awareness campaigns or inclusion of this topic in existing child protection education. The messaging should stress that spouses and children of offenders often had no knowledge and bear no fault, and that piling stigma on them only creates more victims. Media and community leaders can help by highlighting stories that humanise these families.

Professionals speak out and stop group-think, “I’ve seen how these families suffer; we should support them” (Police Officer). The myth that “the family must have known or is somehow guilty too” must be actively countered. By reducing this stigma, we not only ease the burden on innocent families, we also encourage those in crisis to reach out for help instead of hiding in shame. In the long run, that makes communities safer, because a supported family is more likely to remain intact and capable of safeguarding the children in it.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Clear Support Pathways

Provide **Clear Support Pathways** for Families: Develop and publicise dedicated support services for secondary victims. This could include a national helpline for families; specialised counselling for families; information pack/leaflets given by police during the arrest, ‘the knock’ trauma training for professionals.

### RSE Curriculum

*Teenagers urgently need to be informed about the dangers of uploading intimate media, and the compulsive use of SEM leading to an arrest.*

### Signposting

*Signposting for families at the time of the knock is critical to save lives. This will greatly increase understanding of these crimes and reduce fear.*

### Families with Autism

*There is an over-representation of autistic offenders (and families) for CSEM offences, even though they have no more propensity than others to commit this crime. They are prejudicially treated harsher and misconstrued as obstructive or suspicious. Advocates call for mandatory neurodiversity training for all officers – so that an autistic person rocking or lack of eye-contact isn’t misinterpreted as suspicious (Legal Lens 2025).*

## We Need;

- ID CSEM-only low-risk offenders with families quicker.
- Shorter waiting times for expert risk assessments and parental training.
- Essential CPD trauma-informed and neurodiversity for public professionals at university including media students.
- Clear support pathways for families.

Expanding offender typology frameworks in policy can also include typically overlooked groups, such as female offenders or offenders on the autism spectrum, ensuring interventions fit their profiles.

Treatment providers should incorporate insights from neuroscience, SEM, addiction and dopamine cycles – to help offenders break out of compulsive patterns. Likewise, training for justice professionals on issues like neurodiversity can improve how they interpret an offender’s behaviour (some neuro-divergent offenders might come off as “cold” or not showing empathy simply due to communication differences, not actual lack of remorse/empathy, and this should be factored into evaluations).



# BRIDGING THE GAP



## Speedier Restorative Approaches

One of the most punishing aspects for families is the long duration of investigations and court proceedings in CSAM cases. It's not uncommon for it to take 1–5 years (or more) from arrest to sentencing due to backlogs in forensic analysis of devices, etc. During this limbo, families live in constant anxiety and social suspension. Social services often have to apply and wait for funding for risk assessments and parental training.

Speeding up the forensic and legal process would also greatly alleviate harm – e.g., investing in more digital forensics capacity so that cases are processed faster, and encouraging judicial systems to prioritise cases where family stability is at stake.

Additionally, exploring restorative justice options in appropriate circumstances could be beneficial. Low-risk first time CSEM-only offenders offered cautions and tailored treatments. This can help validate the family's suffering and give them a sense of closure or agency in the justice process. These can sometimes achieve better outcomes for both the offender and family without compromising safety.

## Sting Operations and Prevention Strategies

Encourage an ethical debate on digital sting operations (law enforcement posing as minors online to catch offenders). Such tactics can be effective in capturing groomers early, but they also raise concerns if not well-regulated – for example, entrapment or scenarios where an offender who might not have initiated contact on their own is lured in.

The public and policymakers should discuss the limits and best practices for these operations to ensure they serve the goal of prevention without unintended injustice.

Any approach we use to catch offenders must balance public safety with fairness, and should always be coupled with pathways for those caught to get help if they are low-risk first-time offenders.

In general, prevention strategies like providing anonymous help hotlines or warning pop-ups on SEM sites that redirect those seeking illegal content, may stop some offences before they happen, and deserve investment.

# CONCLUSION

## From Darkness to Light

### A Complex Trend

Online child sexual abuse is a complex, evolving challenge of our times. It creates multiple circles of harm – from the abused children whose images are shared, to the society that grapples with how to respond, to the families of offenders who live with the fallout.

This brochure has aimed to illuminate one of the least understood aspects: the plight of those families and the importance of a compassionate, informed approach toward them. In doing so, we also examined who the offenders are, why they offend, and how our systems can better prevent these crimes and mitigate collateral damage.

### Facts not Myths

The key message is one of balance and humanity. We can be unequivocal in condemning the sexual exploitation of children, while also understanding that effective solutions lie in science, empathy, and differentiation – not in myth, fear, or collective punishment.

By recognising the diverse pathways into offending, we can tailor interventions that actually work, and thus protect children, by seeing the human beings behind the label “offender’s family,” we can extend trauma support and break cycles of shame and isolation.

By educating professionals and the public, we can replace the reflexive stigma that families face with constructive action.

### A Ray of Light

For the families living this nightmare, simply knowing that others are working to understand and help can bring a ray of light. One survivor of “the knock” described the journey as “a grief that never fades...a wound that never fully heals.” Yet, as her poem continues, she also found resilience:

"And though the knock may have brought me low,  
I rose again, ready to face the next blow.  
For in every challenge, there's a chance to grow,  
And find the courage to face the unknown."

*(excerpt from Feelings from the Knock poem by Dee Sirable; full poem Appendix 1)*

### A Collaborative Systems Approach

The criminal justice system, the police, the academic disciplines, the government, schools, social services, the media, parents, platform providers, regulatory bodies must urgently work collectively and internationally to stop CSEM before every family has an offender.

### Final Note

With the right support, families can indeed rise again – finding strength in themselves and from compassionate allies. Let us, as a community of families, professionals and informed citizens, be those allies.

Together, by turning knowledge into action, we can reduce the hidden harm of online CSAM offending and help all victims find hope and healing.



# CONTACT

***This booklet is dedicated to the families that have lost loved-ones due to this war.***

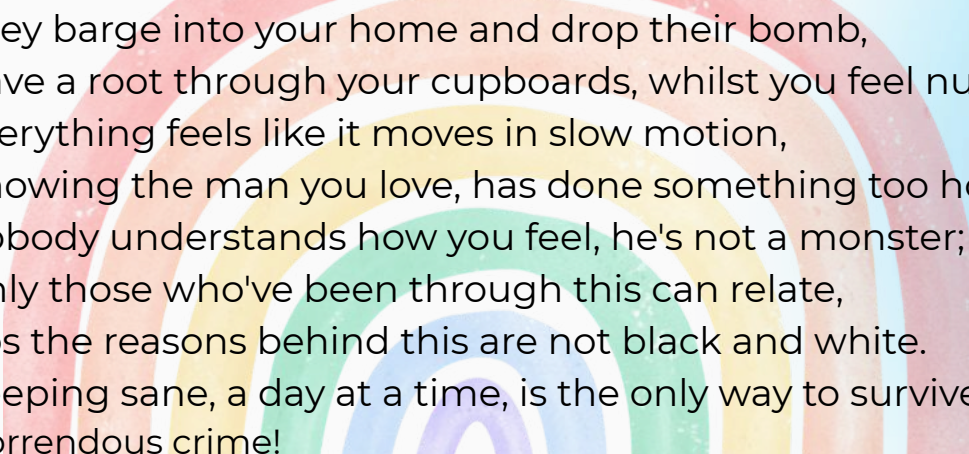
**You can reach out to us to discuss any aspect.**

 [info@theknock.club](mailto:info@theknock.club)

 [theknock.club](https://theknock.club)

## THE K.N.O.C.K

*By Rainbowgirl Knock Survivor*



They barge into your home and drop their bomb,  
Have a root through your cupboards, whilst you feel numb.  
Everything feels like it moves in slow motion,  
Knowing the man you love, has done something too horrid to mention,  
Nobody understands how you feel, he's not a monster; this can't be real!  
Only those who've been through this can relate,  
Cos the reasons behind this are not black and white.  
Keeping sane, a day at a time, is the only way to survive this  
horrendous crime!

**"It took two to tango  
One egg and one sperm  
A baby created  
So much to learn**

**"2 to Tango"  
By Knock Anonymous  
Survivor**

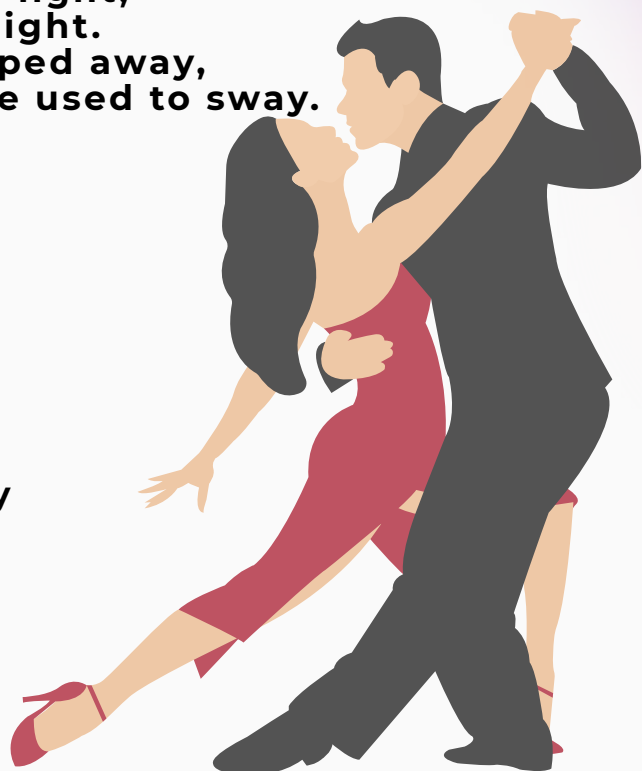
**At first, hope shone like morning light,  
Promising warmth, chasing the night.  
Yet time rolled on, the hours slipped away,  
And solitude crept in, where hope used to sway.**

**He made a mistake  
The future we planned  
We have to forsake**

**This isn't forever  
They can't stop the clocks  
Daddy will be home one day  
When they unlock the locks**

**We have learnt from this journey  
What family means  
That trust, love and loyalty  
Make better teams**

**Our family complete  
Yey, daddy is home  
And that's where is staying  
Coz mums hid his phone"**





# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## A Part of Me

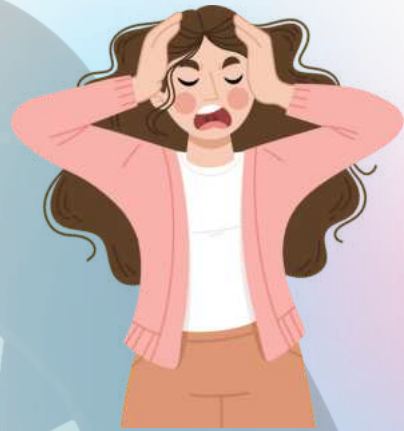
*By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

A part of me wants to hate you,  
A part of me wants to not care,  
Even though it sends me into despair,  
I know I'll always be there.

A part of me wants to scream,  
A part of me wants to cry,  
Please, someone tell me it will be  
alright,  
Deep down I feel the future isn't  
bright.

A part of me is still in disbelief,  
A part of me feels it's always been  
like this,  
I know we can get through it,  
Just keep fighting bit by bit,  
Even though it sends me into despair,  
I know I'll always be there.

A part of me wants to run,  
They say all these things about you,  
I know it's not the truth,  
Every time I hear a comment,  
I just want to scream through the  
roof,  
He's not the devil, he's a good guy  
inside,  
A part of me feels like I'll never be  
heard,  
What's the point even explaining?  
A part of me doesn't even want to try.



# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## The Rocks

*By Keren Davidson Knock Survivor*



Row, row, row your boat,  
gently down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
life is but a dream.

But someone forgot to tell me,  
that the stream can get real wild  
Suddenly now, it's the rapids,  
and I don't know if I'll survive.

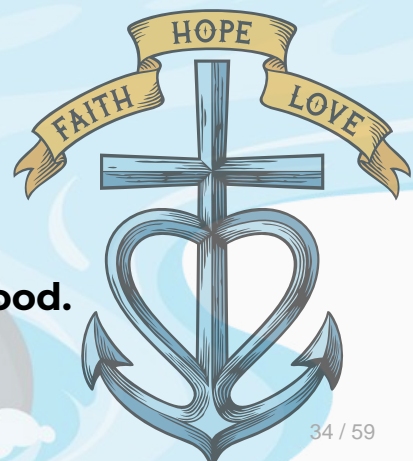
Gasping for breath,  
as each wave breaks.

Eagle-eyed on the light that hints,  
My new life unveiled it's not what it seemed  
Innocence lost, can it be redeemed?

Confusion shadows delusion,  
and I am blinded by the sun!  
Yet the truth keeps sprouting forth,  
like mushrooms erupting on a dewy morn.

Life's jagged rocks carving, even  
crushing and cutting my soul.  
Do I not bleed? Do I not have needs?  
My guttural cries receive no kind ear.  
My heart yearns for season to change.

The horizon fading in and out,  
I am still in this moment.  
Holding my breath again,  
Daring to believe that this pain is for my good.





# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## One Autumn Day

*By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

The storm hit the house like a hurricane,  
it felt like I let it in,  
I opened the door and  
the storm came rushing  
through our home with  
such force I was left  
breathless.

I was in the eye of the storm,  
there was just the sound of  
low voices in the other rooms,  
strangers murmuring  
in the background  
as my home was searched,  
every inch of my home was searched.

Items bagged and tagged and then they  
left.

The storm hit again when they left,  
voices in my head roaring and screaming,  
how could I have not seen  
what was happening in my own home.

The storm raged on for years,  
at times I was overcome  
with sadness and exhaustion  
but you have to keep going,  
keep fighting just about functioning.

Sometimes, shards of light broke through  
the oppressive clouds and with that came  
reminders of a previous life before the  
storm hit again when they left,  
voices in my head roaring and screaming,  
how could I have not seen  
what was happening in my own home.

The storm raged on for years,  
at times I was overcome  
with sadness and exhaustion  
but you have to keep going,  
keep fighting just about functioning.

Sometimes, shards of light broke through  
the oppressive clouds and with that came  
reminders of a previous life before the storm hit  
Just recently I've noticed that the storm  
is no longer outside,  
it's not been there for a while,  
but I have allowed the storm to continue  
inside my head,  
it's taken up headspace  
that should have been reserved for  
my own thoughts and feelings about me  
and not the constant thoughts and feelings  
about us  
that I had when the storm arrived.

It was like going outside for the first time,  
surveying the damage of the storm  
and realising that in the wake of the storm new  
stronger, roots had taken hold and there was  
new growth everywhere,  
I was a stronger and better person

There will be times when I will be hit by a storm  
But I know it will pass.  
It will never be like the storm  
that hit me those years before,  
leaving me knocked from my feet,  
shattered and breathless  
clinging on to the life  
I had before.



# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## Court Reporter Guy

*By Annie Hope Knock Survivor*

**BREAKING  
NEWS**

Another one – that's twelve this week,  
(and those are the cases I have seen).  
Something's wrong, we keep seeing more,  
- broken men walking through the door.

But it's not my job to understand why,  
I'm just the court reporter guy.

The boss wants copy, a headline that grabs;  
"We need more sales. Make people mad!  
People don't click on liberal takes.  
They want the gore, give them the bait!"

I don't like to use the 'paedophile' term,  
But it gets attention,  
makes readers squirm.

We know that these articles  
will generate cash,  
sometimes make front page splash.  
Anger will travel much faster  
than calm,  
we monetise outrage,  
capture the storm.

It's not really my job  
to care about 'why'  
I'm just the court reporter guy.

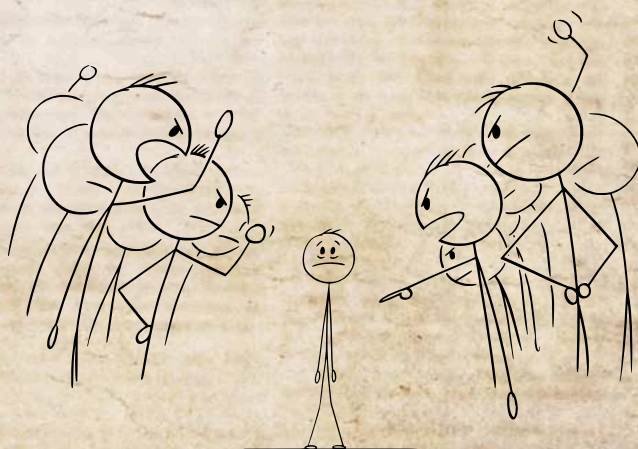
These men have families,  
(they usually do),  
sometimes they come to the  
courtroom too.

As time goes on,  
I notice them more;  
their awkward stance,  
eyes to the floor.

Someone's dad stopped me  
on the steps into court  
- offered me money not to  
report!

The bottom line is,  
it's a job I need,  
- mortgage to pay,  
kids to feed.

Look, it's not my fault,  
I'm just doing my job,  
And as the profits show,  
it's what the public wants.





# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## Dear Social Worker

*By Dee Sirable Knock Survivor*

Dear Social Worker, hear my plea  
And treat me as a human being  
I am a mother, a working pro  
Taking care of my son, solo

Life has been tough, a traumatic time  
But I am strong, I know how to climb  
The highest mountains, the steepest slope  
I have the courage, the will, the hope

Please don't judge me, I've done no wrong  
I take pride in my work, I am headstrong  
But I need help, a hand to hold  
Someone to listen, someone to unfold

The challenges I face, they are real  
But I know that I can learn to heal  
With empathy, kindness, and care  
And the support of those who are there

So please, take the time to ask  
How I am doing, it's not too much to task  
Treat me with respect, treat me with grace  
And help me find my rightful place

Consistency is what I seek  
A social worker who is not meek  
Who understands the ups and downs  
And the importance of safe, loving grounds

Dear Social Worker, hear my plea  
And know that I am just like thee  
A human being, with hopes and dreams  
And the strength to face life's stream.

Our son is happy, that's plain to see  
He is loved and cared for, by you and me  
We provide for him, day and night  
And make sure his future is always bright

But still, they dig and probe and pry  
For something that's not there, they wonder  
why  
Can't they see, can't they understand  
That we are doing everything we can

To raise our son in a safe, loving home  
To teach him right from wrong, to never roam  
To give him the tools he needs to thrive  
And the strength to always stay alive

So let us ask them, with all due respect  
To trust us, to have some common sense  
Our son is happy, he is doing well  
And we are here for him, no need to dwell

On things that are not there, on doubts and  
fears  
Let us focus on the good, and dry up the tears  
For we are a family, strong and united  
And together we will always be ignited

With the flame of love, burning bright  
Guiding us through the darkest night  
Our son is happy, that's all that matters  
And we will always be his loving caretakers.

**Winner of 'The Knock' Club  
Poetry Competition 2025**

# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## ***I Thought I Could Trust You***

*By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

I thought that I could trust you,  
That you would give me the time,  
But that was something you couldn't do,  
And now I can't get your comments off my mind.

I thought you would understand me,  
That you would really listen and think,  
Realise I'm trying to protect my family,  
My mind and thoughts together sink sink sink.

"My husband wouldn't do that,  
Only monsters do" they cry,  
"You can't have him in your life you prat,  
Unless you want others to hang you out to dry".\*

"He must be evil, a monster, vile,  
He must pay for his crimes,  
I thought you hadn't been yourself for a while",  
What daunting and scary times.

The above shows that people don't have a clue,  
Unless it happens in their lives,  
You can say it until you turn blue,  
But even then their friendship dies.

It's too hard for them to process,  
Easier to just shut it out,  
A complete and utter mess,  
One that makes you want to scream and shout,

LISTEN TO ME,  
THESE THINGS AREN'T BLACK AND WHITE.  
PLEASE, PLEASE CAN YOU JUST SEE,  
I'M FALLING FROM A GREAT HEIGHT.

I need my friends to trust,  
I'm not an easily fooled, gullible wife,  
Being open minded is a must,  
For me to want you in my life.

This is the journey given to me,  
It's definitely not one I would choose,  
Don't judge my decisions, leave me be,  
I already have enough to lose.





# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## ***The Knock***

*By Anonymous Knock Survivor*

**There is a side walk that still bears  
the slight weight of your fall.**

**I imagine pulling the moon from your brow:  
a kind of silence when a black body floats above a blacktop.**

**Today's summer sky shines with emptiness.**

**Sometimes a poem can begin with a lie.**

**More than you, I am mourning the memories  
of what shouldn't have happened.**

**There are whole days  
I want to leap into a sandstorm.  
Call it wound. Call it beginning.  
Call it ugly blossoms of grief.**

**The students in an open square  
spit the bullets from their bodies  
and resumed their protest.**



# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS



## Feelings From the Knock

By Dee Sirable Knock Survivor

After the knock, my heart skipped a beat,  
Fear and anguish rising from my feet.  
My mind raced with thoughts of dread,  
Worry and panic filling my head.

Anger and frustration soon set in,  
Why was this happening, where to begin?  
Upset and confused, I tried to cope,  
Hoping and praying for a glimmer of hope.

Anxiety gripped me like a vice,  
A never-ending cycle, like rolling the dice.  
But through it all, I found my strength,  
Pushing through the pain and going the length.

And though the knock may have brought me low,  
I rose again, ready to face the next blow.  
For in every challenge, there's a chance to grow,  
And find the courage to face the unknown.

It's like a grief that never fades,  
A wound that bleeds and never shades.  
The pain of losing a soulmate dear,  
Is a heavy burden that's hard to bear.

The memories that once brought joy,  
Are now a source of pain and ploy.  
The laughter and love now feel like ghosts,  
Haunting my heart, like a lonely host.

I try to move on, to heal and grow,  
But the pain lingers, a constant flow.  
The future looks bleak and without light,  
A never-ending tunnel, without sight.

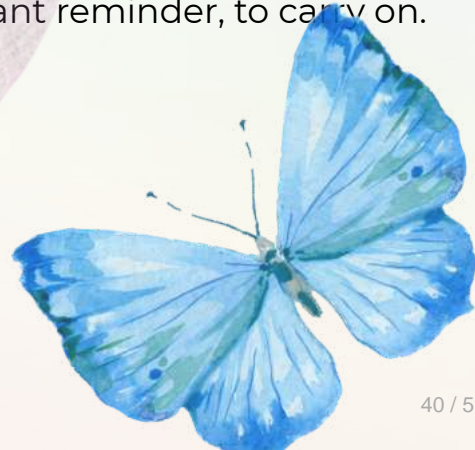
But in the darkness, there is still hope,  
A chance to find a way to cope.  
To honor the love that once was real,  
And find the strength to fully heal.

Though my soulmate was far away,  
His love still shines, day by day.  
Though he wasn't by my side,  
His presence and spirit still reside.

You fight on, with strength and grace,  
Holding onto hope, with a steady pace.  
The love that once was, still endures,  
A bond that nothing can obscure.

One day, you'll be together again,  
Sharing your love, like a gentle rain.  
Living as a family, full of light,  
With each other, everything feels right.

Until then, keep fighting on,  
With love and hope, you'll never be alone.  
For in my heart, my soulmate's love,  
Is a constant reminder, to carry on.





# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS



## A Wildest Journey Shared

By Anonymous Knock Survivor

Today in my garden I see the first swallow  
Oh what a journey to behold! I sit below and  
wallow

Fraught with trauma no doubt and unseen  
might

Gaining distance, moving forward each day  
on your long haul flight

But daddy was stupid

He made a mistake

The future we planned

We have to forsake

stretched out weary wings have flown  
Down to the lowest depth of those waters  
my heart has surely plummeted  
to that vast unknown

30 days for you and 3 months for me  
since we both began an uncertain path  
Much further now from the source,  
navigating its tainted aftermath

A burdened journey we both have shared  
With a beckoning loud call one morning  
declared

Yet here we are survivors resting  
in this Spring day's sunshine  
With a sip of Latte for me making  
this moment seem "all Fine"

And a shake down of your  
feathers above  
with that distinctive clicking  
sound upon the chimney  
breast

Let's pause in time for a well-  
deserved rest

Now we look out across the  
horizon

of nature's newly colourful  
grown hope

A future summer chapter to  
begin

together we have come this far  
"We will cope"





# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## Hope Became my Best Friend

By Dee Sirable Knock Survivor

Hope made me stronger, a steadfast  
guide,  
A gentle voice that never denied.  
It held no judgments, just open arms,  
Wrapping me in its quiet charms.

I hoped for solace, I hoped for peace,  
That life's heavy burdens would find  
release.  
Yet fears loomed near, like stormy skies,  
And in the silence, desperation lies.

I leaned on hope, my unwavering shield,  
In times of darkness, it helped me healed.  
I dreamed of days when we'd be whole,  
When laughter would echo, and love  
would console.

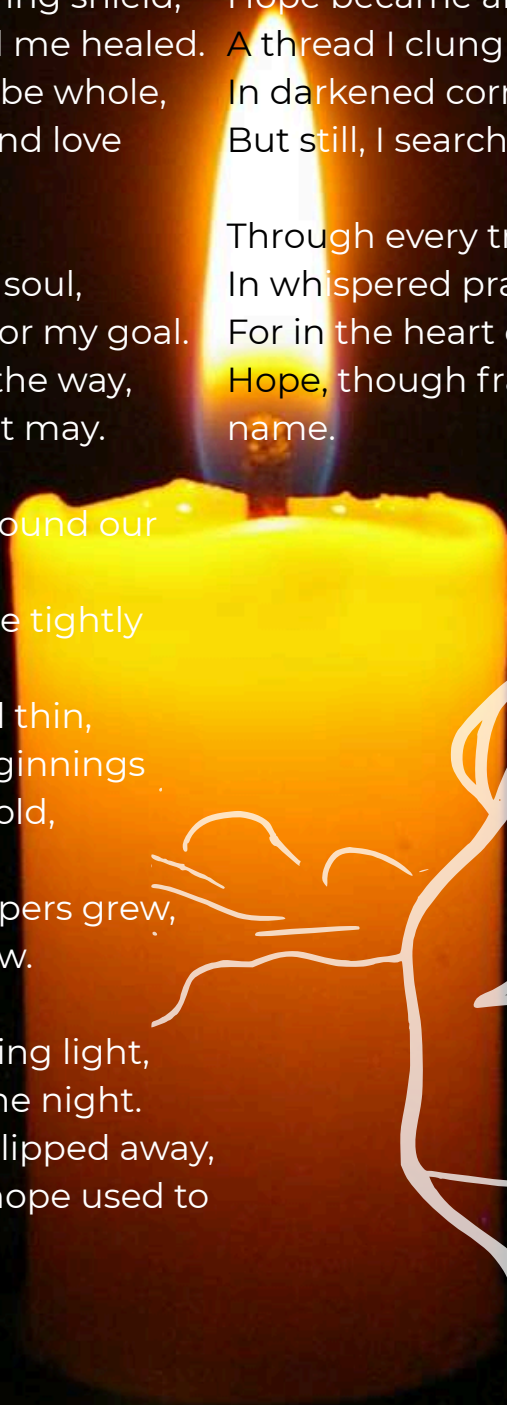
Hope became an elusive friend,  
A thread I clung to, unable to bend.  
In darkened corners, it flickered low,  
But still, I searched, for the light to grow.

Hope kept the fire alive in my soul,  
Igniting the passion to strive for my goal.  
Through four long years, it lit the way,  
Uniting our hearts, come what may.

Through every trial, in moments bleak,  
In whispered prayers, I dared to speak.  
For in the heart of despair's cruel game,  
Hope, though fragile, still called my  
name.

With hope as my anchor, we found our  
ground,  
In the tapestry of love, we were tightly  
bound.  
By my side, through thick and thin,  
Hope remains, where new beginnings  
begin. Hope was all I had to hold,  
Yet at times, I felt it cold,  
As shadows lengthened, whispers grew,  
In my heart, doubt slowly strew.

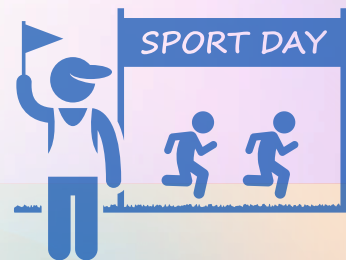
At first, hope shone like morning light,  
Promising warmth, chasing the night.  
Yet time rolled on, the hours slipped away,  
And solitude crept in, where hope used to  
sway.



# APPENDIX 1 ~ POEMS

## Father's Day

By Annie Hope Knock Survivor



"Bring your dad to Father's Day  
Tea,  
It's at school on Tuesday 9th  
-a chance to show some love for  
your dad,  
and to spend some precious  
time."

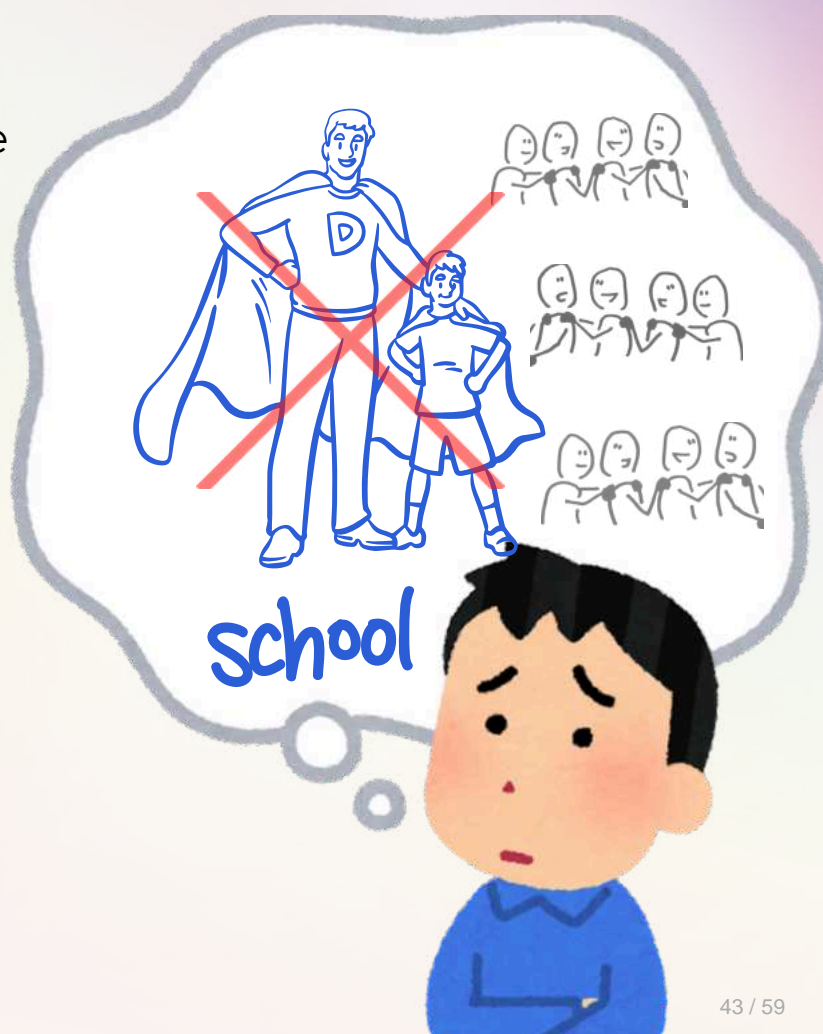
Two little boys cannot take part  
-their dad won't be there at all,  
They will sit and observe as  
classmates and friends  
chat and eat with their dads in  
the hall.

The boys' dad is banned from the  
school, you see,  
(he can't set foot in the grounds),  
They can only imagine what it  
would be like  
to have their dad come around.

Sports day, parents' eves,  
assemblies, plays  
-no way for him ever to attend.  
So the little boys simply look on  
and see  
all the dads who came for their  
friends.

Nobody thinks of the impact or  
stress,  
(it's considered to just be tough  
luck)  
It's a problem that nobody wants  
to address -  
the system does not give a  
...thought

to the harms that are caused  
to these two young men,  
who did not ask for any of this.



# APPENDIX 2 ~ IWF

## IWF produce yearly statistics.

### IWF 2021 (latest)

People report to us at [iwf.org.uk](https://iwf.org.uk), or through one of the 49 [Reporting Portals](#) around the world, in multiple languages. All reports are assessed at our headquarters in the UK. We also actively search the internet for child sexual abuse imagery. We call this, 'proactive searching'.

- 361,062 reports were assessed by IWF (20% increase from 2020):
  - 360,834 were reports of webpages and
  - 228 were reports of newsgroups.
- 252,194 URLs (webpages) were confirmed as containing child sexual abuse imagery having links to the imagery or advertising it (64% increase from 2020).
- Additionally, 5 newsgroup reports were confirmed as containing child sexual abuse imagery.
- No reports were confirmed as UK-hosted non-photographic child sexual abuse imagery. You can read more about UK-hosted and globally-hosted child sexual abuse material.

Dark Web Hidden services are websites hosted within proxy networks – sometimes also called the dark web. These websites are challenging as the location of the hosting server cannot be traced using normal methods.

In 2021 we identified 931 new hidden services, up from 734 in 2020. This is an increase of 27%.

What is Top-level domain hopping?

"Top-level domain hopping" is when a site (e.g. 'badsite.ru') keeps its second-level domain name ('badsite') but changes its top-level domain ('.ru'), creating a whole new website with different hosting details but retaining its 'name brand'. So from 'badsite.ru', the additional sites 'badsite.ga', 'badsite.ml' or 'badsite.tk' could be created. This allows instances of a website to persist online after the original has been taken down while keeping the website recognisable and easy to find.

- 219 dedicated commercial second-level domains were identified to have hopped domain at least once in 2021.
- A total of 63 unique TLDs were identified as being abused in domain hopping in 2021.
- 202 second-level domains were found to have hopped once.
- 13 hopped twice.
- Two hopped three times.
- Two hopped four times in a bid to remain online and active in the 12-month monitoring period.

We first work with partners to ensure that the site is removed from the internet. Every subsequent hop, however, then requires a new action by our analysts to re-enforce the previous take down(s) by actioning the site again on the new TLD.

- 22 countries were identified as hosting domain hopping sites.

When tracking hosting country, we noted that some sites often changed TLD but remained hosted in the original host country; other sites showed a preference to change hosting country after each TLD domain change, sometimes returning to the originally identified hosting country after a period of hosting elsewhere under a different TLD.



Non-photographic child sexual abuse imagery is criminal in the UK.  
What can we do about this?

The UK is one of the few countries in the world where non-photographic child sexual abuse imagery is criminal. If we find this content hosted in the UK, we issue a notice to the hosting provider who removes it. This hasn't happened in the UK since 2016.

However, this type of content does exist online and if UK-hosted, would fail UK laws.

Technology companies want the flexibility of being able to block and filter it to prevent their customers from stumbling across it.

Therefore, we created ~~the NPI List, which contains~~ cartoons, drawings, computer-generated imagery (CGI) and other non-photographic representations of child sexual abuse which is hosted outside of the UK.

The URLs provided in the NPI List are those deemed at the time of assessment to breach UK legislation, specifically Sections 62 to 69 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. Several international technology companies use this list to protect their services for their customers.

## **In 2021...Trends and Data**

We assessed 361,062 reports and 7 in 10 (252,194 reports) of those led us to finding imagery online of children being sexually abused.

We were able to find 64% more of this criminal material in 2021 due to some significant improvements we made within our Hotline – to our working practices and procedures, the technology that we're using and not to mention making best use of our hugely skilled and experienced Analyst team we have.

2021 was the year that we saw sexual abuse imagery of girls being shared more widely than any previous year. Girls were seen in 97% of the imagery we helped to remove

That's not to say we didn't see imagery of boys; we did. And for the first time this year we took a more detailed look at what this imagery can tell us.

Almost 7 in 10 instances of child sexual abuse involved 11-13 year olds. And when we see imagery of babies, toddlers and young children aged 6 and under, they are more likely to be suffering Category A child sexual abuse over Category B, or Category C.

"Self-generated" child sexual abuse, where someone captures a recording via a phone or computer camera of children who are often alone in their bedrooms, is now the predominant type of child sexual abuse imagery we're finding online – just over 7 in 10 reports include this type of content.

6 in 10 actioned reports specifically show the sexual abuse of an 11-13 year old girl who has been groomed, coerced or encouraged into sexual activities via a webcam. Sadly, we've seen instances of children aged 3-6 being contacted and abused in this way.

For the first time we've looked at the prevalence of female offenders in the imagery that we see. We've seen how this imagery most often involves children aged 7-10 years old, and that boys are most often seen being abused by a female offender.

We've published a deeper analysis into the abuse of domains in relation to child sexual abuse, as we believe a greater focus in this area could have a significant and positive impact on thwarting the distribution of child sexual abuse material on the internet.

We now have more than one million unique image hashes of child sexual abuse. And around a third of those include detailed metadata on the type of sexual activity seen. We've published this breakdown which puts into real words the crimes being inflicted upon children.

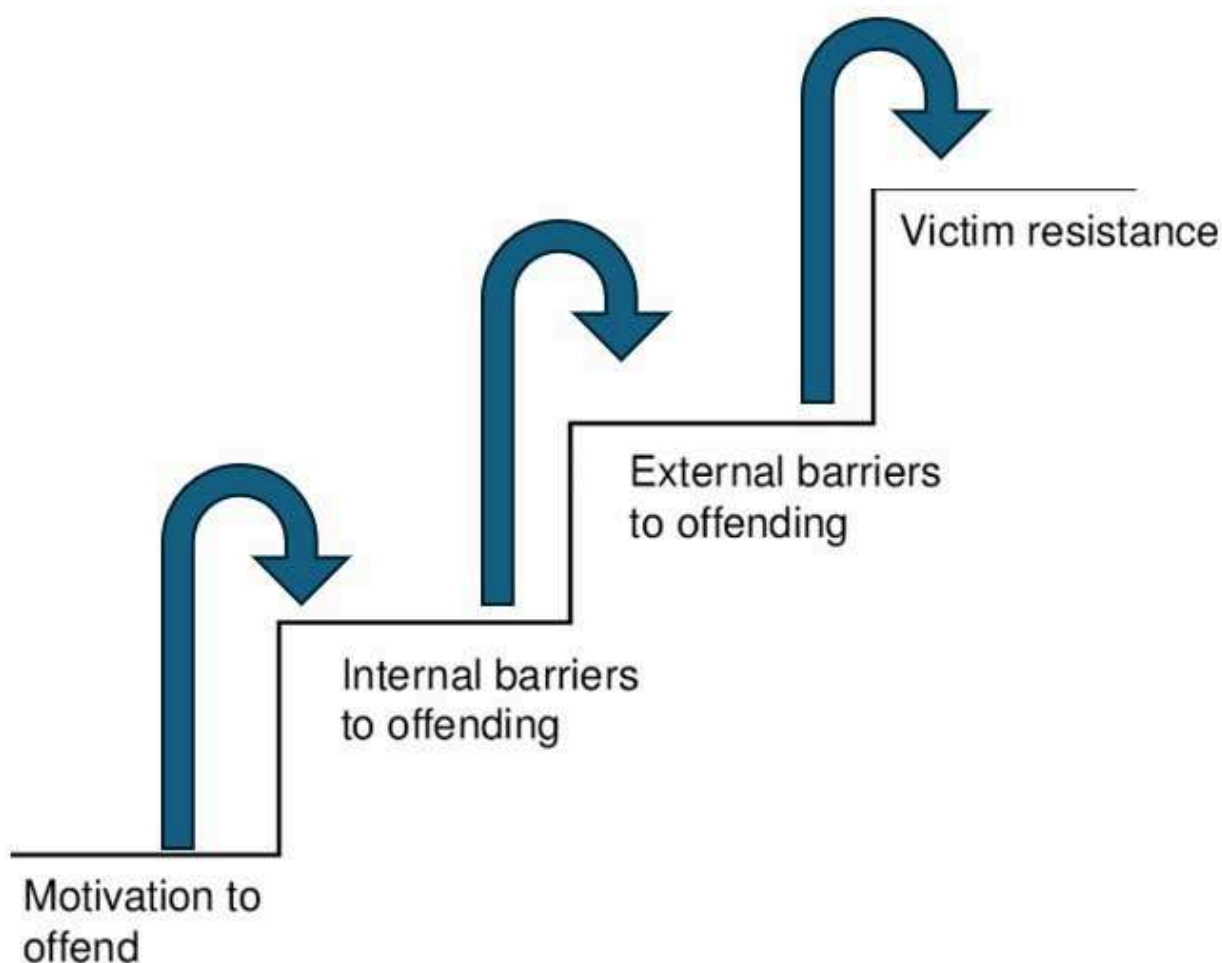
We encourage you to use our data and information to inform your own work and understanding of the prevalence, distribution and fight to eliminate online images and videos of child sexual abuse.

# Appendix 3 ~ Steps Barriers to Offending

Page 1 of 6

## FINKELHOR'S PRECONDITION MODEL OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: A CRITIQUE

**Diagram 1:** describes Finklehor's pre-conditions needed to sexually offend. This model was specifically developed in 1984 to include all sex offences (including contact offences). The offender must overcome each step in turn that eventually leads to offending. These include the initial motivation such as unmet intimacy need, emotional dysregulation etc; then internal barriers such as personal values and beliefs, followed by external barriers such as having the technology or private time. Lastly when it comes to a contact offence or online communication offence, they need to overcome victim resistance with grooming or coercion etc.



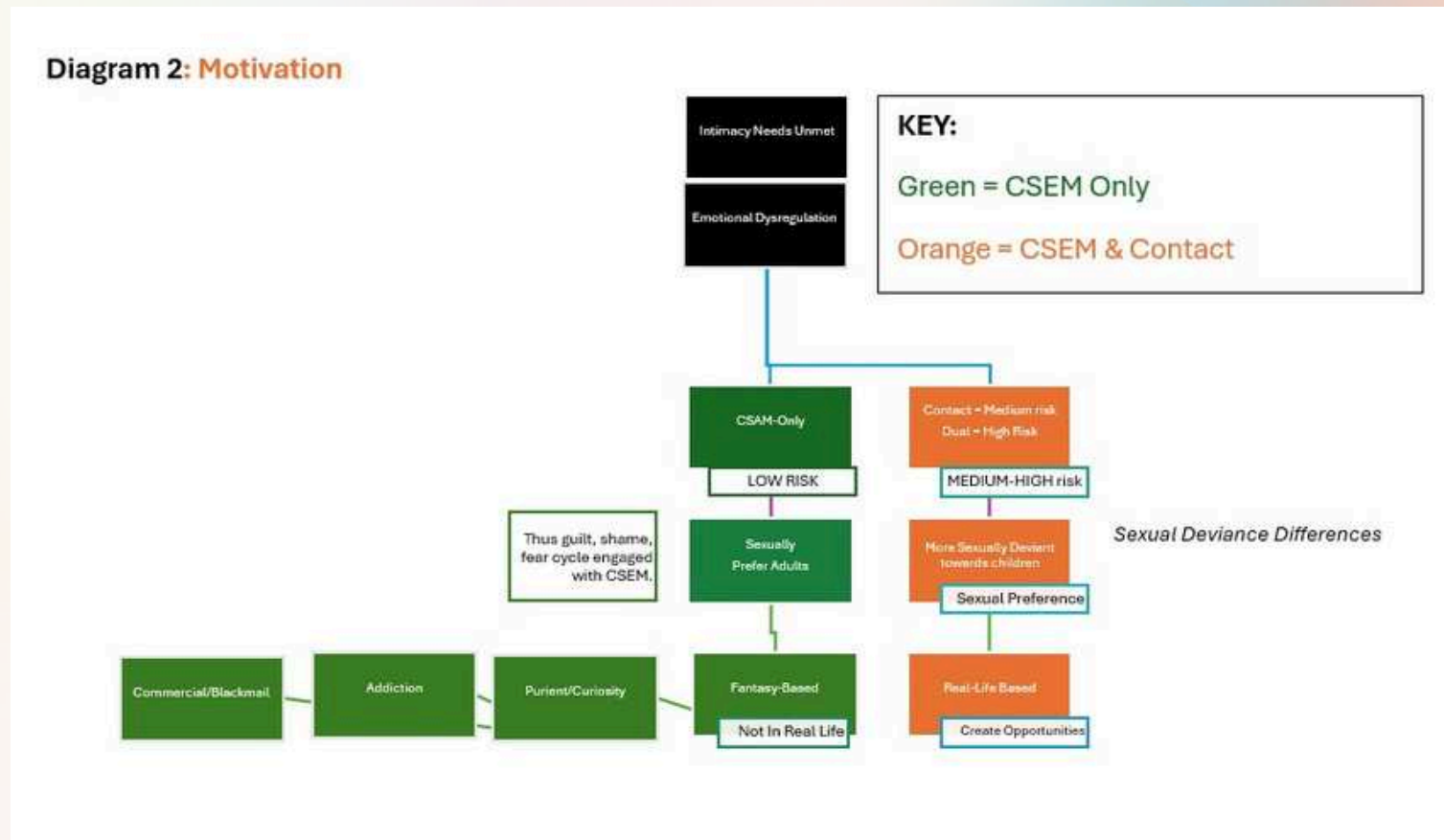


# Appendix 3 ~ Motivating Barriers to Offending

Page 2 of 6

## FINKELHOR'S PRECONDITION MODEL OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: A CRITIQUE

Diagram 2:



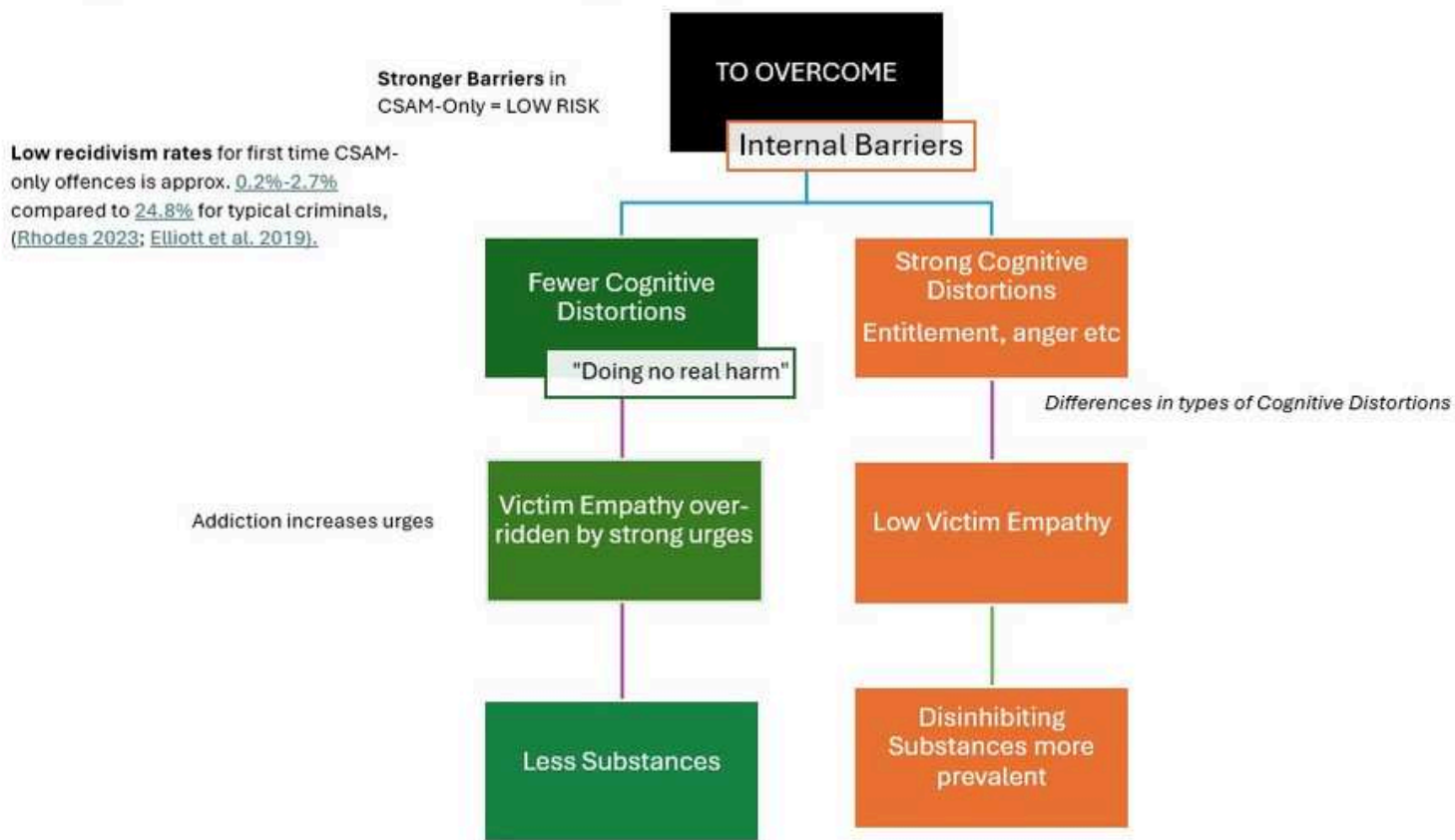
# Appendix 3 ~ Internal Barriers to Offending

Page 3 of 6

## FINKELHOR'S PRECONDITION MODEL OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: A CRITIQUE

Diagram 3: Internal Barriers to Overcome

Diagram 3: **INTERNAL Barriers** Preventing Offending



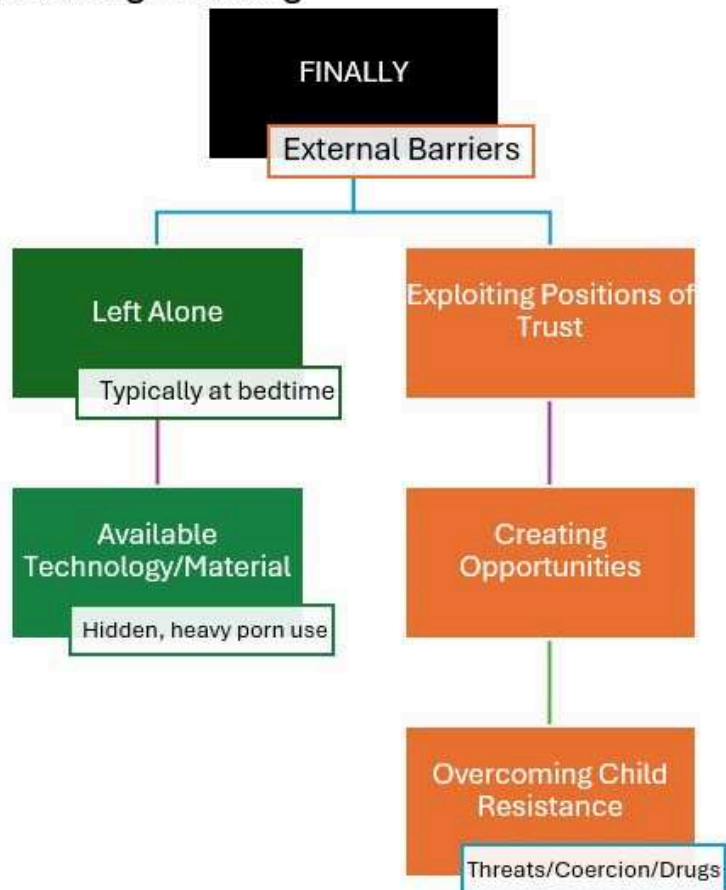
# Appendix 3 ~ External Barriers to Offending

Page 4 of 6

## FINKELHOR'S PRECONDITION MODEL OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: A CRITIQUE

### Diagram 4: External Barriers to Overcome

Diagram 4: **EXTERNAL Barriers** Preventing Offending





# Appendix 3 ~ Barriers to Offending Discussion

Page 5 of 6

## FINKELHOR'S PRECONDITION MODEL OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: A CRITIQUE

### DISCUSSION

The orange boxes represent the traditional model based on all types of sex offences. However, it is not appropriate for non-contact CSAM-only offences and ineffectual for treatment purposes, ([Milligan 2014](#)). A newer model would also be better for socio-economic purposes when assessing initial risk, ([The Police Foundation 2022](#)).

While some of these 'orange' factors may be relevant to non-contact (NC) CSAM-only offences, there are discrete and distinct new variables to integrate into the causes for CSAM-only offending. Some have been labelled in green in this document (such as feeling/being 'alone' and internet addiction).

New models for assessing risk for rehabilitative purposes should consider these new variables such as CSAM-addiction, context, 'fantasy-based' (nevertheless it is still abuse), motivation for profit, viewing time, mitigating factors, types of platforms used (dark web vs mainstream websites), cluster-types of 'collectors', to properly assess and treat risk adequately, ([Pizzoli et al. 2021](#)).

Other players must also be considered and how they fit into the equation for solution e.g. the SEM industry, relevant government departments, the IWF and the media. To date, causes of CSAM-only offending have not been differentiated properly, ([Tenberger et al. 2015](#)). This is highlighted with the lack of cohesiveness between disciplines, with each approaching the problem from their own school of thought. Thus, more cross-cultural interdisciplinary research is urgently needed, such as neurobiology, criminology, forensics, policing, sociology and psychology to agree on causes and capture all static and dynamic risk factors.

Motivations and triggers for offending for non-contact offences are on a heterogenic spectrum and often differ from other sexual offences, ([Wortley 2024](#)). Whilst NC's and contact offenders share emotional dysregulation and unmet intimacy needs, they differ within these pathways and differ in sexual deviance and cognitive distortions, ([The Police Foundation 2022](#); [Milligan 2014](#)). This is underscored by the cognitive dissonance CSAM-only users experience in the shame, fear, guilt cycle.

Research shows that there is an over-estimation of risk for CSAM-offenders within the police, public and the media, ([Giles and Alison 2023](#)). Low recidivism rates for first time CSAM-only offences is approx. 0.2%-2.7% compared to 24.8% for typical criminals, ([Rhodes 2023](#); [Elliott et al. 2019](#)).

# Appendix 3 ~ Barriers to Offending Discussion

Page 6 of 6

## FINKELHOR'S PRECONDITION MODEL OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: A CRITIQUE

An over-estimation of risk and misconceptions contribute to perpetuate the problem. In one study, the public felt that the NC CSAM-only crimes warranted a more severe imprisonment compared to child contact-offences. This is despite highly significant differences in risk classification between contact offenders and CSAM-only offenders. It is clear misconceptions are at play here.

In the early years (2012), offenders were sharing CSAM they made in real life from real victims they knew. This is compared to 2025, where most of the CSAM material removed by IWF was 'self-generated' material (92%) and uploaded by the children themselves, ([IWF 2023](#)). This is a worrying growing trend, and greater psychoeducation is needed to prevent our children uploading this material and other children and adults consuming it.

Recent research shows that there are more differences between CSAM-only and contact/dual offenders than similarities, ([Rhodes et al. 2023](#)). We need better models for better resource allocation and appropriate treatments, ([Milligan 2014](#)).

Hopefully this will lead to the better treatment of secondary victims within families of offenders from the police, Social Services, the media, schools, the community and the public. Currently, secondary victims within families experience tremendous victimisation and silencing. "Social workers are typically empathic, but it can be challenging to offer compassionate care to those who harmed others and, by extension, to the people who love them", ([Kavanagh et al. 2022](#)). This is compounded by a lack of training and the misconceptions that exist.

# Appendix 4 ~ IMPACTS TO FAMILY MEMBERS

Page 1 of 2

## EXAMPLES OF MORE IMPACTS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OF CSEM OFFENDERS

The vast array of disastrous impacts that family members face are often extremely traumatising. The impacts on their mental and physical health alone have led to suicide. Instead of sympathy and support, they get shamed and shunned. It is important to treat family members with kindness and compassion. For further information you can read the;

- [Blogs](#)
- [Research Papers](#)
- [BBC Radio Oxford & BBC Woman's Hour Interviews with Survivors](#)

Impacts from 'the knock' (with thanks to Sexual Offences, Crime and Misconduct Research Unit, Department of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, Nottingham Trent University and Applied Criminology and Policing Centre, University of Huddersfield, for some of this research.)

- Police bursting into your home, rifling through your possessions, arresting and taking away your family member and property, children likely present.
- Extreme feelings of shock and disbelief, bewilderment, confusion, nausea, terror, betrayal, disgust and shame. Followed by continual retraumatising after-effects, have led many family members to have severe PTSD to such high levels that it impacts their immune system functioning.
- Neighbours watching the removal of devices and the arrest of family member.
- Further trauma from dealing with Social Services if you have children. Partners especially are often treated with suspicion especially when they choose to stay in the relationship.
- Ostracisation from the wider family network. Family members assuming the arrested partner is a paedophile and refuse to accept other explanations such as porn addiction.
- The family member arrested can be falsely accused of child abuse of their own children. Peoples' initial 'fear' reactions can cause a myriad of problems. The innocent family members can be falsely accused of "knowing" and being involved.



# Appendix 4 ~ IMPACTS TO FAMILY MEMBERS

Page 2 of 2

## EXAMPLES OF MORE IMPACTS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OF CSEM OFFENDERS

- The sudden removal of the father unable to return home to their children is devastating to (children. The offender must move out and is often banned from seeing their children without any evidence. “If in doubt, chuck him out” approach from the state. Leaving children suddenly separated from one parent and not getting to see them even in a public supervised setting. Other families have to sit in cars in McDonald’s car park for their weekly supervised visit to see their kids or be outside during the cold winter months.
- Many family members have to leave their employment.
- Lack of help with child-care .
- Overwhelming levels of stress and trauma.
- Many families have to move due to stigma-baiting. Causing further stress and trauma. This is often made worse by media reports, with the family address being released to the public, even when children are living in the house. Research suggests that the frequency of violent vigilantism against sexual offenders (or their families) is significantly more common than is broadly understood by the public (Hextall 2022).
- On-going cases of vigilantism or community hate and abuse.
- The family suffer colossal financial losses. Unemployment or loss of business.
- Extra rent for the offending parent to live elsewhere
- House moves, legal costs, therapy costs, extra child-care costs as the wider family network withdraws support.
- Breakdown or severe stress of most relationships.
- Lack of support further retraumatizes.
- Innocent family members face life-long friends distancing themselves due to the stigma involved.
- Partners are especially treated as ‘guilty by association’, especially if they stay in the relationship.
- The time to sentencing can take a long time (up to 4-5 years in some cases). Family members are continuously retraumatized by the uncertainty of the legal process,
- Continuous changing regimes from social services, lack of information and a lack of overall closure.

# Appendix 5 ~ Offender Typology Comparisons

CSEM Offender Typology Comparison Table

Offender Type	Key Traits / Motivation	Typical Behaviours	Risk of Contact Offending	Relevant Sources
<b>True Paedophile / "Boy/Girl Lover"</b>	Persistent sexual attraction to prepubescent children. May rationalize or advocate abuse.	May collect, categorize, and share CSEM; some engage in grooming.	<b>High</b> (esp. if antisocial traits present)	Seto (2012); Martijn & van den Akker (2017); Bailey et al. (2016)
<b>Fantasy-Driven</b>	Seeks sexual gratification via fantasy, may use CSEM as outlet for paedophilic urges.	Downloads, may interact in forums, but often avoids contact.	<b>Moderate-High</b> depending on inhibition factors	Seto (2013); Briggs et al. (2011)
<b>Compulsive / Impulsive User</b>	Escalates from legal porn to illegal content; poor impulse control, not necessarily paedophilic.	Binge downloading, chaotic file storage, late-night activity.	<b>Low-Moderate</b> depending on psychological comorbidities	Middleton et al. (2009); Krone (2004); <u>Martellozzo et al. (2017)</u>
<b>Curiosity-Driven / Experimental</b>	Curiosity, thrill-seeking, often young adults; may access CSEM without entrenched attraction.	Accidental or exploratory use; often one-off or limited exposure.	<b>Low</b> if no deviant preference present	Briggs et al. (2011); <u>Martellozzo et al. (2017)</u>
<b>Moral Disengager / Normalizer</b>	Uses cognitive distortions to downplay harm; may be influenced by pro-paedophile ideology.	May justify behaviour in forums or personal beliefs.	<b>Moderate-High</b> if ideology entrenched	Martijn & van den Akker (2017); Jahnke et al. (2015); Krone (2004)
<b>Situational / Stress-Triggered</b>	Acting out due to life stressors, emotional turmoil, or addiction; not typically paedophilic.	Often minimal CSEM history, may show remorse, rapid disengagement.	<b>Low-Moderate</b> , often responsive to treatment	Seto (2013); Middleton et al. (2009); Briggs et al. (2011)

## Implications for Risk Assessment

- True paedophiles may pose an ongoing risk even after intervention; ideologically entrenched offenders require careful monitoring.
- Non-paedophilic users (curious, impulsive, situational) often benefit from CBT, psychoeducation, and are more likely to respond to treatment.
- Differentiating sexual interest from opportunity, compulsion, or trauma response is key in forming proportionate safeguarding plans.

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## **Key contributors to the field of secondary victims:**

Include Laura Absalom, Byrne (G), Katie Cassidy, Laura Kabbash, and Scott T. Ronis, as well as Condry and Minson. Duncan, Wakeham, Winder, Armitage, Roberts, and Blagden have also provided significant insights, alongside Elliott, Mandeville-Norden, Rakestrow-Dickens, and Beech. Important contributions have come from Juliet Grayson, Hextall (R), and Hudson-Allez. Kavanagh and Levenson, as well as Levenson and Tewksbury, offer valuable perspectives. Joe Purshouse, Ryan Shields, Danielle Arlanda Harris, Michael Sheath, Taylor-Smith (J.S.), and Underwood, Farnham, Key, and Hawton have each enriched the discourse through their respective work. If your name is not here, please let us know [info@theknock.club](mailto:info@theknock.club)