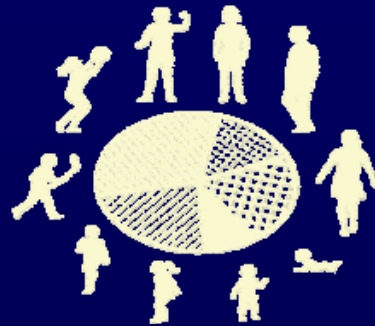


Internet Safety Technical Task Force

April 30, 2008



Crimes against Children Research Center

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Youth & Law Enforcement Surveys

by the Crimes against Children Research Center

Two Youth Internet Safety Surveys

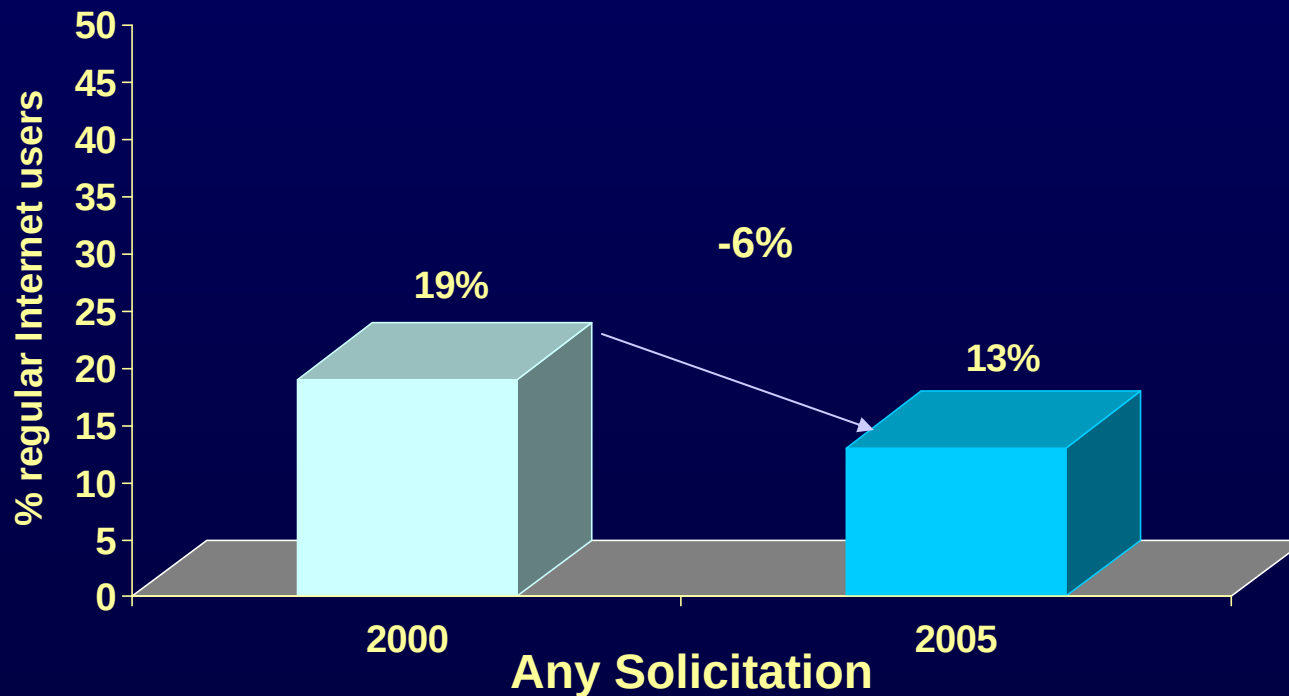
- Telephone surveys of US national samples of 1,500 youth Internet users, ages 10 - 17
- YISS-1 interviews: 2000
- YISS-2 interviews: 2005

Two National Juvenile Online Victimization Studies

- N-JOV₁ : Over 600 interviews with investigators in a national sample of law enforcement agencies
 - About Internet-related sex crimes that ended in *arrests* between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2001
- N-JOV₂ : Over 750 interviews completed, arrests in 2006, data collection still in progress

Unwanted online sexual solicitations

- 1 in 7 youth Internet users (13%) in 2005
 - 1 in 5 (19%) in 2000



Unwanted online sexual solicitations

Why the decrease? Fewer youth were

- Talking to unknown people (those they met online but did not know in person)
- Forming close online relationships with unknown people
 - People they could talk to about “things that were real important to them”
- Going to chatrooms

Unwanted online sexual solicitations

Most recipients

- Did not view solicitations as threatening
- Ended the situations easily and effectively

Unwanted contacts

- Did not necessarily come from adults
- Were not necessarily devious or intended to lure

Unwanted online sexual solicitations

More serious incidents

- Aggressive solicitations (attempted or actual offline contact): 4% of youth Internet users in 2005
 - 3% in 2000
- Solicitations for sexual pictures: 4% in 2005
 - Not asked in 2000
- Distressing solicitations: 4% in 2005
 - 5% in 2000

Sexual Assaults

- In 2005, 2 girls (ages 15 & 16) were sexually molested by men they met online
 - No molestations reported in 2000

Wanted online contacts with adults

- Close online relationships with adults
 - 4% of youth in 2005
 - Most relationships were benign and did not have sexual aspects
- 0.5% -- relationships with sexual aspects
- 4 youth (0.3%) had face-to-face sexual contact with an adult they met online
 - These did not appear to be crimes. The youth were all 17 and the adults were in their early 20s

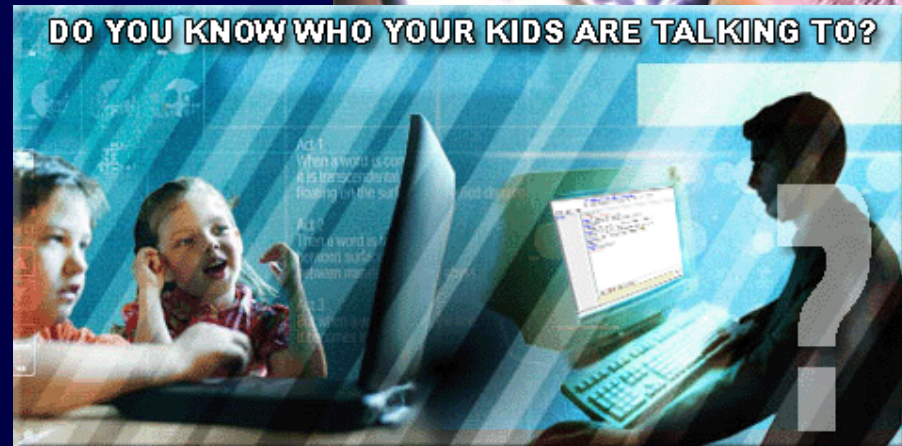
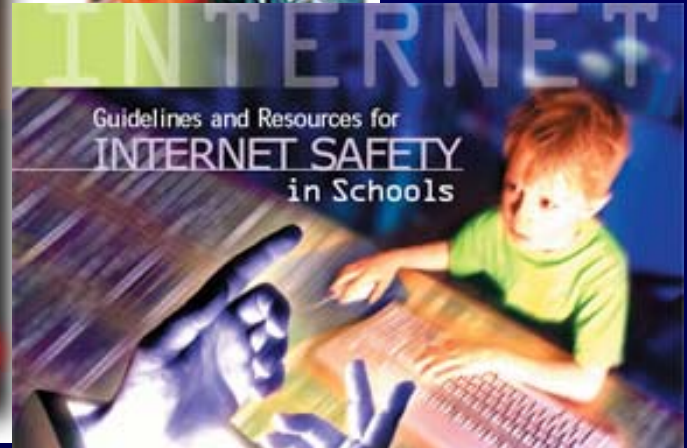
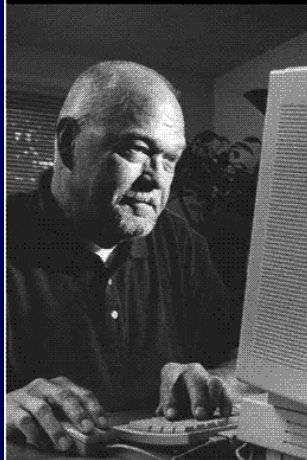
Wanted online sexual contacts

- Talked online about sex with unknown person
 - 5% (n=77) of youth in 2005
 - 7% in 2000
- Of these
 - 55% were girls
 - 88% were high school age (14-17)
 - 44% were with other kids

Online Meeting Crimes: Myth & Reality

**MEET 10-YEAR-OLD
BECKY'S 12-YEAR-OLD
INTERNET FRIEND.**

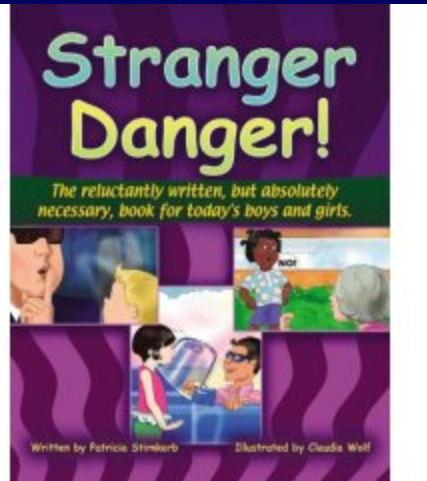
**Your children are
in danger! Do you**





Stranger

DANGER



children
never
go with
a stranger



Online Meeting Crimes

► MYTH

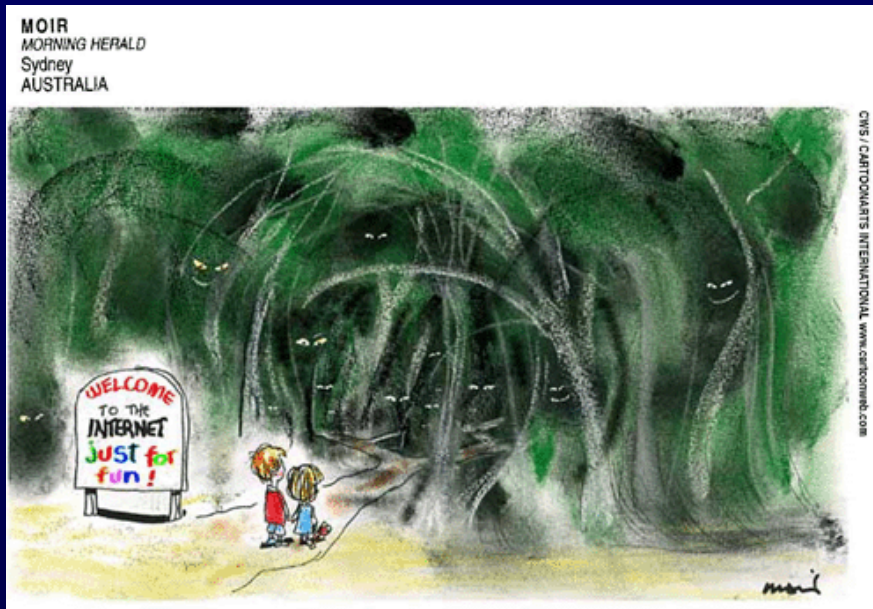
Internet predators

- Are pedophiles who target young children
- Lie about their ages & motives
- Trick children into divulging personal information or use info they have naively posted online
- Stalk, abduct and forcibly assault victims



Online Meeting Crimes

► MYTH



► REALITY

- Victims are teens, not young children
- Few offenders lie about being youth
- Most are open about their sexual intentions
- Violence is rare
- Meetings and sex most often are voluntary

These crimes are not a new form of sexual abuse.

About one-quarter of reports of sex crimes against minors in the US involve statutory rape (Troup-Leasure & Snyder, 2005)

- Non-forcible sex crimes
- Majority of victims ages 13 – 15
 - Underage – too young to consent to sexual activity



Statutory Rape

- Participation of youth is voluntary – but voluntary in varying degrees
- Young adolescents have
 - Little experience with romance & intimacy
 - Less ability to negotiate with partners about sexual activity
 - Higher rates of coerced intercourse

Online Victims

► MYTH

Youth are vulnerable
because they are naive
and inexperienced

- About the Internet
- About sex



Online Victims

► *REALITY*

- Teenagers
- Sophisticated Internet users
- Interested in sex
 - Some sexually active
 - Some quite aggressive



Online Victims

► REALITY

Risky online behavior

- Interacting online with unknown people indiscriminately
- Visiting chat rooms
- Talking about sex with people met online



Online Victims

► REALITY

- Boys who are gay or questioning their sexual orientation



Online Victims

► REALITY

- Troubled teens looking for sympathetic adults
 - Lonely
 - In conflict with parents
- Youth with histories of sexual or physical abuse



Online Victims

- A 40-year-old man met a girl, 15, at a BDSM website. They met twice, for sex, where she worked – a gym in a mall.
- A man, 23, met a girl, 14, via a SNS. After they talked online for several weeks, the girl skipped school. The man picked her up; they spent the day at his place watching TV and having sex.

Online Victims

- Police investigating vandalism in a park came upon a car with steamed up windows. Inside were two girls, ages 14 & 15, and two men, ages 20 & 22. The 15-year-old had met one of the men online.



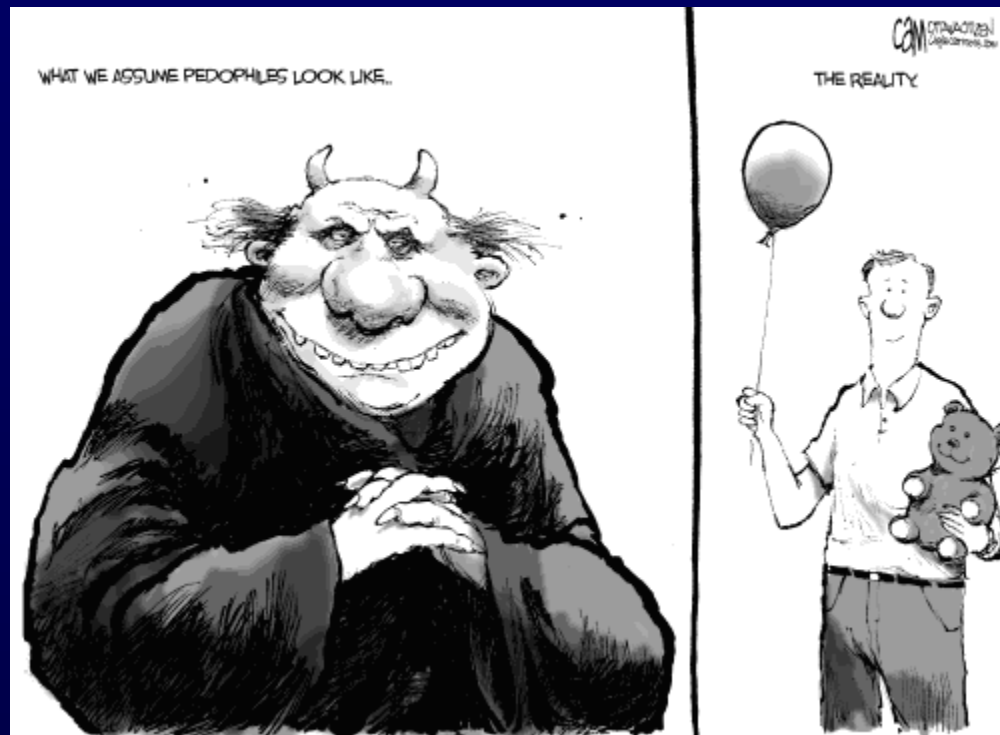
*Online child molesters:
Are they different from other
sex offenders?*

Sex offenders in general are diverse.

- Strangers to victims
 - Rare
- Family members or caretakers
- Acquaintances (coaches, priests, neighbors, etc.)
 - *Online offenders are most like this group*
 - *Use grooming & seduction*
- Other youth



Online molesters are not pedophiles.



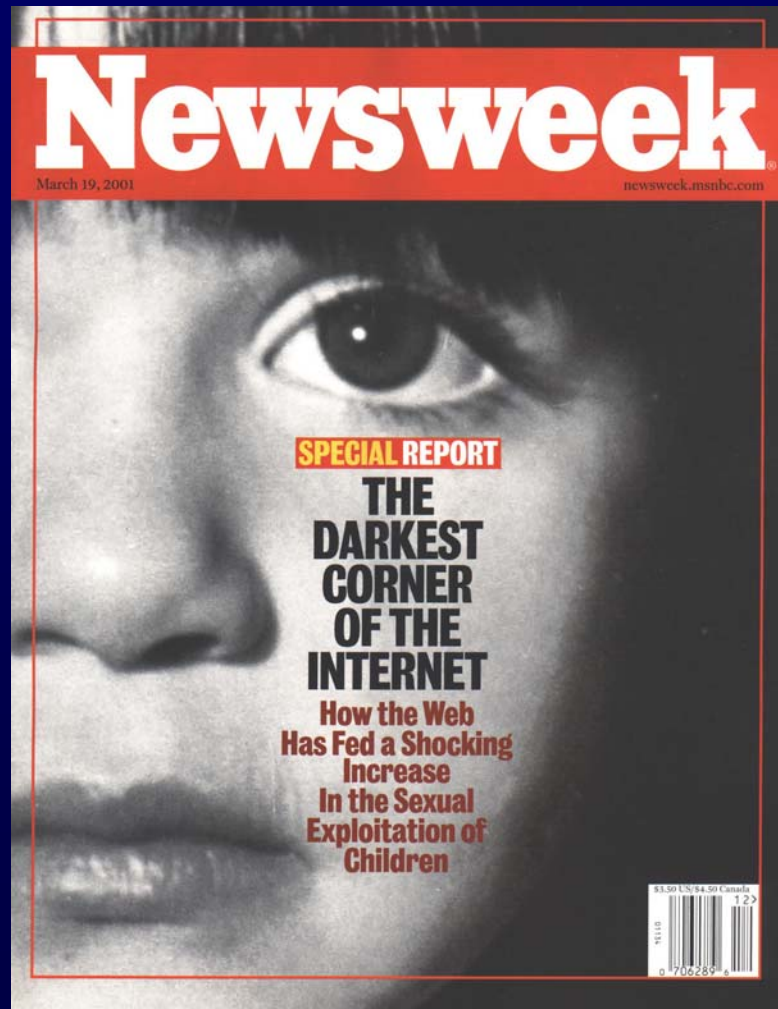
Online molesters are rarely violent.

- Violence in 5% of online meeting cases
 - Forcible rape and attempted rape
 - Sadistic sex
- Abductions – very rare
 - Although many cases start with runaway or missing persons reports
- Stalkers – very rare

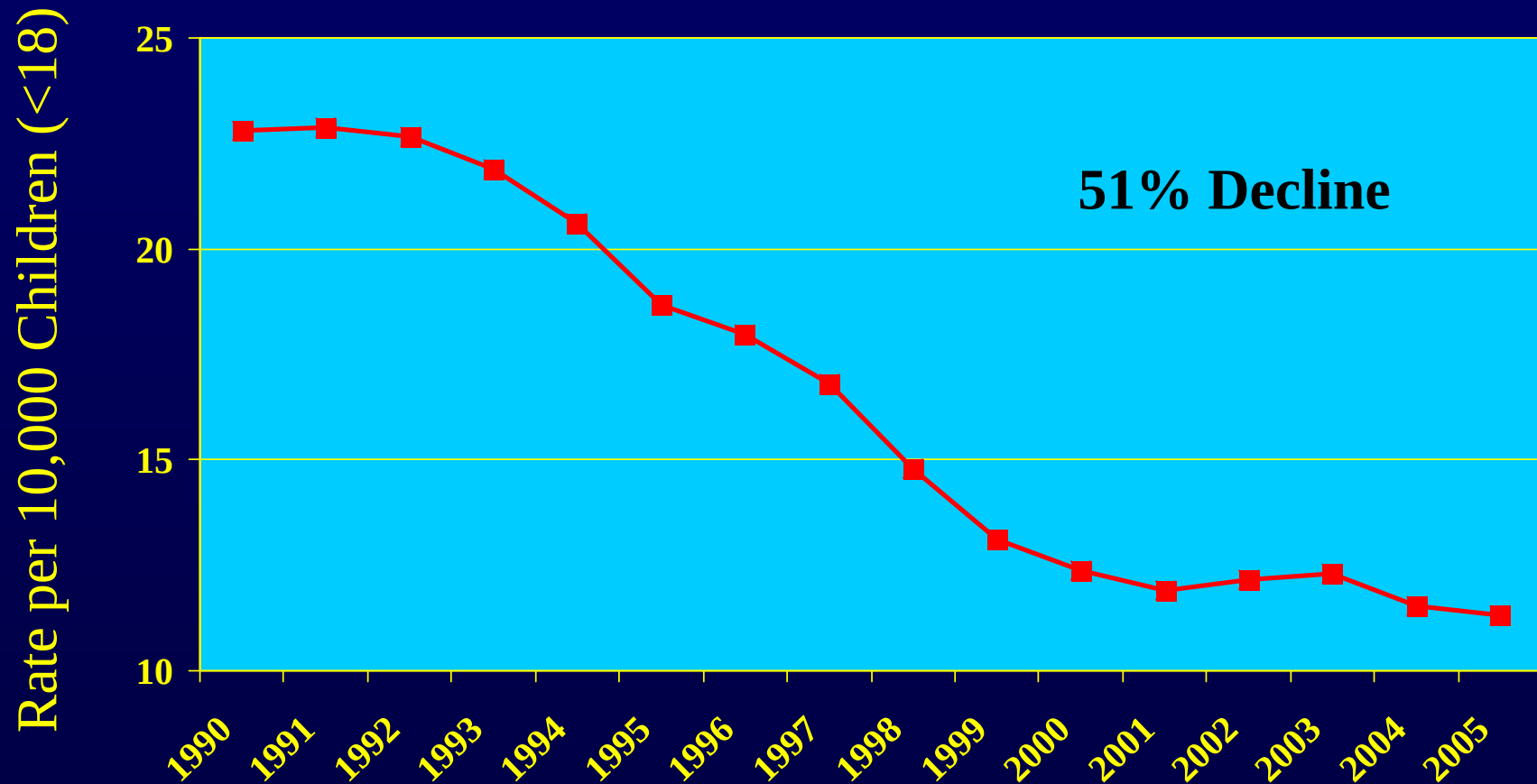
Internet "predators"?

- A 17-year-old girl contacted a local man, age 23, thru his SNS page. She invited him to party with her & her sister, 14, while their parents were away.
- A 15-year old boy was discovered having sex with a man, 23. The boy had contacted the man online. He had done this before. The police investigator described the 15-year-old victim as "unfazed."
- A man, 23, met a 13-year-old girl, who was posing as a 16-year-old in a chat room designed for adults to "hook up" for quick sex.

*Have sex crimes against
children & teens increased?*



Sexual Abuse Substantiations 1990-2005*: Extrapolated to U. S. Child Population



*Source: NCANDS

The number of sex crimes has not increased.

- In the US, rates of child sexual abuse have decreased substantially in recent years, as have other related problems
- Fewer
 - Teen pregnancies
 - Runaways
 - Sex crimes as reported by teens in other surveys
 - Youth Risk Behavior Survey
 - National Crime Victimization Survey

Online sex crimes make up a small proportion of sex crimes.

About 68,000 arrests in 2000 for sex crimes with child victims

- About 1,000 arrests involved Internet-related sex crimes
 - About 500 – online meeting cases
 - About 500 – perpetrators that victims knew
 - Family members & acquaintances

Statutory Rape

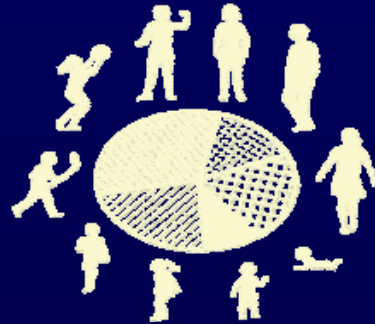
How much are Internet-initiated sex crimes contributing to statutory rape?

- Statutory rape arrests in 2000
 - About 6,600
- Arrests for Internet-initiated sex crimes
 - About 500
- About 7% of cases

Online dangers in perspective.

- Teens are sexually solicited frequently, in many different places.
- High rates of sexual harassment and sexual abuse among teenagers
 - By adults they know face-to-face
 - By other teens
- Teach avoidance & coping skills
- Educate about crimes
- Give resources for reporting and counseling

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