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**JOINING FORCES AGAINST CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION:
MODELS FOR A MULTIJURISDICTIONAL TEAM APPROACH**

By

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Child sexual exploitation is a category of offenses that most people find appalling and repulsive. It takes a special kind of person to dedicate much of his or her professional career to investigating and prosecuting individuals who take advantage of children for their own sexual gratification and, in some cases, commercial gain. It also takes a special kind of person to work with the young victims of these crimes—to locate the services they need, shepherd them through the criminal justice process, and help them recover their childhoods.

In researching this report, we had the distinct privilege to work with many special people. They are the members of multijurisdictional teams now operating in Southern California, Massachusetts, Chicago, South Florida, and Vancouver, British Columbia—all sharing a commitment to protecting children from sexual exploitation. In addition to their heavy workloads, these individuals gave freely of their time to meet with us during visits to their offices, describe how their teams work and explain how they have overcome challenges. Several traveled to Huntsville, Alabama, to present in a day-long conference on child sexual exploitation for teams of federal, state, and local prosecutors, investigators, and victim service providers from around the nation. Some of these people are named as contacts in the Appendix to this report, but our thanks extend to everyone in each of these teams for their unique contributions.

We are also grateful to our project officers—Susan R. Shriner, Senior Program Specialist, Federal Crime Victims Division, Office for Victims of Crime; and Ronald C. Laney, Director of the Missing and Exploited Children's Program, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Their ongoing commitment to this project is a testament to its importance, not only for them but for the constituencies their agencies represent: young victims of sexual exploitation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Police discovered a computer bulletin board in which the operator gave away merchandise in return for sexual favors. A 17-year-old boy disclosed the case through a therapist and continued in therapy throughout the investigation. The perpetrator was arrested on numerous charges of sodomy, child molestation, solicitation of prostitution, and sending pornography to a minor.

Child sexual exploitation is a category of crimes which have, as a common element, an incident in which an adult derives sexual gratification from taking advantage of a child. A behavioral definition of child sexual exploitation might include *all* forms of child sexual abuse and molestation. For purposes of this document, however, child sexual exploitation is defined to include

- child prostitution
- child pornography
- computer production and/or distribution of child pornography
- computer solicitation of children for sexual purposes

In the United States, legal and academic interest in the various forms of child sexual exploitation has waxed and waned over the years. With regard to child prostitution, the federal Mann Act, 18 USC § 2423, has since 1910 prohibited the transportation of a minor in interstate or foreign commerce with the intent that the minor engage in prostitution or any sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a crime. In 1994, it became a federal crime to travel across state or national borders for the purpose of engaging in a sexual act with a juvenile (i.e., "sex tourism"). All states prohibit various forms of advancing, promoting, or inducing prostitution of juveniles under the jurisdictionally-defined age of consent.

An adult male befriended teenage girls on their way to and from school, recruited them as prostitutes, and took them to another state. At least ten girls were involved in this case. The offender was arrested for promoting prostitution, interstate transportation, and endangering the welfare of a child. The girls were sent home.

Research on juvenile prostitution in the United States has been relatively sparse. Several observational studies attempted to document the phenomenon of runaway or street youth, many of whom are thought to engage in sexual behaviors with adults in exchange for meals, shelter, drugs, or money. This form of prostitution is often

referred to as “survival sex.” While there are published reports describing these youth and their activities,¹ there have been few efforts to document the characteristics of adults who exploit them as pimps or customers (or “johns”).

In the landmark case *New York v. Ferber*, 458 US 747 (1982), the Supreme Court held that child pornography is *not* protected under the First Amendment. The Court found that child pornography is the documentation of a crime (child sexual abuse) in progress. The Court clearly recognized that child pornography is physically and psychologically damaging to the children depicted, and with this reasoning laid the groundwork for federal and state laws prohibiting possession, production, and distribution of child pornography. Since 1984, the US Postal Inspection Service has investigated more than 2,800 violations of 18 USC § 2252, the federal statute that prohibits distribution, receipt, and possession of child pornography, resulting in about 2,450 convictions.² As of December 1995, however, 9 states still did not prohibit possession of child pornography.³

Today, with a little imagination and not a great deal of technical sophistication, pornographic images of children can be created “from whole cloth” or by “morphing” them from pre-existing, nonpornographic images. The Child Pornography Prevention Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-208, HR 3610, Sec. 121), among other things, amends the language of 18 USC § 2256 by adding the following paragraphs:

- (8) ‘child pornography’ means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where--
 - (A) the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
 - (B) such visual depiction is, or appears to be, of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
 - (C) such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or
 - (D) such visual depiction is advertised, promoted, presented, described, or distributed in such a manner that conveys the impression that the material is or contains a visual depiction of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; . . .

¹ See, for example, Weisberg, D. (1985). *Children of the Night*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books; Janus, M., McCormack, A., and Hartman, C. (1987). *Adolescent Runaways: Causes and Consequences*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

² US Postal Service, Fraud & Prohibited Mailings Branch, April 29, 1997

³ National Law Center for Children and Families, Fairfax, VA, April 1997

The new statute now considers the motives of the producers and the intended audience as justification for prohibiting these forms of pornography, in addition to the presumed harm to the victim child.

Unlike the research on child prostitution, the available literature on child pornography tends to focus on the *offenders*. Possession of child pornography has been linked to pedophilia,⁴ and various typologies have been suggested to classify the apparent motives, styles, and sexual behaviors of people who collect child pornography.⁵ There are no published studies describing the children who are depicted in pornography or how they came to be involved in these activities.

Someone was overheard asking for young children on a sex phone line. The man gave a telephone number in another state and claimed to have child pornography. He was reported to police in the city where he lived, who eventually contacted him and made an undercover purchase of pornographic videos before returning with a search warrant. The movies, which depicted countless boys between the ages of 6 and 15, dated to the 1960s.

Unique Features of Child Sexual Exploitation Cases

Several features of child sexual exploitation cases set them apart from other types of sex offenses and raise special challenges for the criminal justice system. For example:

- *Child prostitution and pornography are often erroneously perceived as victimless crimes.* Historically, the providers of sexual services are more likely to be arrested for prostitution offenses than the procurers, pimps, or customers—even when the providers are clearly juveniles below the age of consent. Once arrested, these children are treated as juvenile offenders and seldom offered services to treat the physical or emotional sequelae of their sexual victimization. And child pornography is often mistakenly thought to be “victimless” because the child victims cannot always be identified.
- *Child prostitution and pornography are often invisible crimes.* Perpetrators do not commit these offenses in public. In urban areas where street violence is amply reported in the daily news, it can be difficult to muster public support or resources for special initiatives to combat a type of crime that no one sees.

⁴ Lanning, K.V. (1992). *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis*. Arlington, VA: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

⁵ Lanning, K. (1984). “Collectors.” In *Child Pornography and Sex Rings*. A. Burgess and M. Clark (eds.). New York: Macmillan/Lexington.

- *Victims can be noncompliant and uncooperative*, unwilling to utilize services or to participate in efforts to investigate or prosecute adults who exploit them. Adolescents who are involved in prostitution, in particular, tend to be streetwise and resistant to adult interventions. They may have extensive histories with child protection agencies, out-of-home placements, treatment programs, or the juvenile justice system. They may be drug-involved or emotionally disturbed. As a result, they are sometimes perceived as unsympathetic victims who would make a poor impression on a jury.
- *Successful investigations tend to be labor-intensive and time-consuming.* Computer-related cases and efforts to apprehend the pimps and customers of children involved in prostitution, for example, typically require proactive, undercover work.
- *There is a relatively small but growing base of expertise* in investigating and prosecuting child sexual exploitation cases, particularly those that involve computer technology. Because perpetrators tend to keep up with the latest technology, the law and those who enforce it must do the same.

Due to technological advances and the relative ease and low cost of travel, child sexual exploitation has truly become an international phenomenon. Pornographic images of children are distributed instantaneously and anonymously to millions of viewers around the world. Well-heeled tourists prey upon disadvantaged children in developing countries. Enterprising pimps seduce vulnerable youngsters, introduce them to the sex trade, and move them to cities where the climate is more hospitable, whether literally (in terms of the weather) or figuratively (in terms of the legal or political context).⁶

In August 1996, nearly 2,000 representatives of 122 countries convened in Stockholm, Sweden, to voice their concerns about the sexual trafficking of children and to adopt a declaration for action to combat this crime. The unprecedented *World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children* focused international attention on the plight of these children and the responsibility of nations to protect them and bring adult predators to justice. While the United States has taken a strong position in passing laws to forbid the various forms of child sexual exploitation, both domestically and internationally, there is considerable room for improvement in the areas of enforcement and prosecution, and perhaps most importantly, in the provision of services for young victims.

⁶ See, for example, Joe Bartolotta, "Lowell pimp, cohort are convicted of forcing teens into prostitution," *The (Lowell, MA) Sun*, July 27, 1995; and Rod Ohira, "Feds bust Hawaii prostitution ring," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, April 18, 1995.

Benefits of a Team Approach

Another important feature of many child sexual exploitation cases is the likelihood that both state and federal laws have been violated. Consider the following examples:

The US Postal Inspection Service caught a man mailing pornographic videos of his 12-year-old daughter, whom he had been abusing for several years. This individual was convicted in state court for the rape of his daughter and in federal court for the interstate transmission of child pornography.

In a sting operation on a computer chat line, a man responded to a mother's plea for assistance with curious children. After several e-mail conversations with the mother, who was an undercover police officer, the man traveled to another state to carry out his plans for "educating" the children. With him, he brought several photographs of himself engaged in sex with other children.. This individual was charged federally for traveling across state lines with the intent of having sex with a minor. He was also prosecuted by the state for his attempt to molest the children he planned to meet, and police in his home state brought numerous rape charges against him after identifying several of the victims depicted in the photographs.

Perhaps the most compelling benefit of a team approach is the opportunity to investigate all aspects of the criminal activity, which frequently involves violations of both federal and state laws. As a result, the team approach can maximize the potential sentence that an offender will receive. A team approach to child sexual exploitation involves criminal justice personnel from federal, state, and local agencies, as well as victim service providers from the public and private sectors. With such broad representation in a joint response, a team approach addresses several of the challenges inherent in child sexual exploitation cases more successfully than a unilateral approach. For example:

- *More victims are identified and assisted.* As an integral component of a team approach, experienced victim assistance specialists can assess victims' needs, advocate for their rights to services and information, and provide the help they need. These experts can also educate other team members, agency authorities, and the public about sexual exploitation and its damaging effects on young victims. As a result, child sexual exploitation cases are no longer dismissed as "victimless" crimes.
- *Victims are also more likely to cooperate with the criminal justice system* when they have the support of knowledgeable victim advocates and service providers. Safe placements, intensive counseling, substance abuse treat-

ment, and other resources can address the victims' most critical needs while strengthening their resolve and ability to assist in the investigation and prosecution of pimps or johns.

- *Agency resources can be maximized* by combining manpower, equipment, and specialized expertise from multiple agencies into one team.
- *The “invisible” nature of child sexual exploitation offenses will erode* as law enforcement agencies are better able to investigate these cases proactively and vigorously, in turn generating positive media coverage and raising public awareness.

Guide to This Report

This compendium of “best practices” is a natural sequel to the *Blueprint for Action* that was published in 1995 by the Office for Victims of Crime and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. That document provides a general overview of the many reasons to work collaboratively—across jurisdictional boundaries and disciplinary interests—to improve the criminal justice and victim service response to child sexual exploitation. Extrapolating from the experience of the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network, the *Blueprint for Action* offers guidelines for considering the circumstances in which it is appropriate to contact investigators, prosecutors, or victim service professionals in efforts to build stronger cases and to assist children and youth. The *Blueprint* identifies and describes three models to support multijurisdictional, interdisciplinary teams with a shared focus on child sexual exploitation.

This report examines several types of multijurisdictional teams that actively target child sexual exploitation and delineates a number of important issues that deserve consideration by authorities seeking to replicate the team approach in their own jurisdictions. We identified the teams described in this report through personal contacts with numerous specialists with knowledge of innovative criminal justice practices in this area. We spoke with experts from the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (US Department of Justice, Criminal Division), US Postal Inspection Service, FBI, US Customs Service, prosecutors, police trainers for OJJDP, and others they recommended. Overall, very few teams met our selection criteria, which were the following:

1. a specific focus on child sexual exploitation;
2. direct involvement of personnel from federal, state, and/or local criminal justice agencies; and
3. links to victim service providers in the community.

This report documents the work of five teams that were chosen for in-depth study. With the exception of the Massachusetts Network, which we had intensively studied to develop the *Blueprint for Action*, we visited each team for two or three days. Each visit included the following activities: attending a team meeting (if possible and appropriate), individual interviews with several team members, and gathering of available documentation about the team and its work.

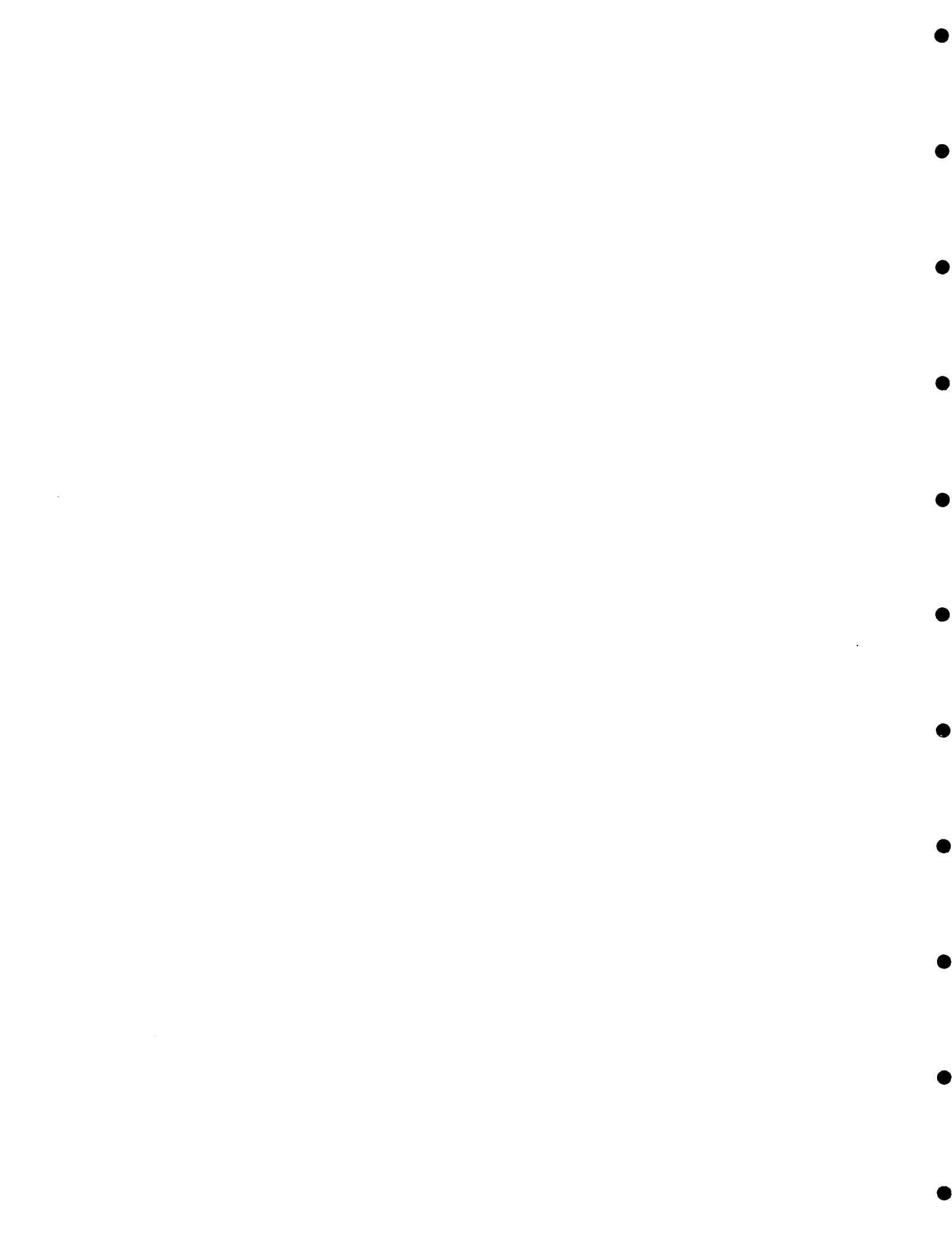
Chapter 2 describes key features of the Sexual Assault and Exploitation Felony Enforcement (SAFE) Team in the Central District of California, perhaps the most structured and advanced multijurisdictional team currently in operation.

Chapter 3 briefly describes multijurisdictional teams in three additional jurisdictions: the Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force in Chicago, the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network, and the Law Enforcement Effort Against Child Harm (LEACH) Task Force in South Florida.

Chapter 4 uses the SAFE Team as an exemplar to assist replication. It identifies several major issues, discusses how the SAFE Team has handled them, and offers variations from the experiences of other teams across the country.

Chapter 5 describes the work of the Provincial Prostitution Unit in British Columbia, Canada. While there are certain differences in the statutory framework pertaining to juvenile prostitution, the challenges for investigation and prosecution remain. This chapter highlights interesting aspects of the Canadian approach to law enforcement and community involvement, many of which have direct applicability to combating the problem of child prostitution in the US.

Chapter 6 concludes the report with a general summary.



CHAPTER 2

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND EXPLOITATION FELONY ENFORCEMENT (SAFE) TEAM

CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

The Southern California Regional Sexual Assault and Exploitation Felony Enforcement (SAFE) Team is a standing task force of federal, state, and local investigators and prosecutors who are detailed to the team—whether full-time or part-time—and physically located in the Federal Building in Westwood.

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The concept of a dedicated team grew out of the Southern California Child Exploitation and Pornography Task Force, a group of 150 investigators and prosecutors across the region who demonstrated a successful approach to multi-agency collaboration on a strictly ad hoc basis. This group had been loosely organized under the auspices of the US Attorney's Office for seven years prior to the establishment of the SAFE Team.

The SAFE Team was launched in March 1995 with a federal grant to the US Attorney's Office in the Central District of California, under an initiative to establish multi-agency task forces to fight violent crime. The Team purchased computer equipment with the grant funds, and the FBI provided office space, equipment, an administrative assistant, furniture, and supplies.

The SAFE Team's jurisdiction encompasses the seven counties that comprise the Central District of California: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Ventura, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo. Geographically, this constitutes an area of approximately 40,000 square miles and a population of approximately 16 million people. By population, it is the largest federal district in the country.

The SAFE Team articulates three fundamental principles in its philosophy and general policy statement:

1. That criminal justice agencies must overcome turf issues and work together as a true multijurisdictional task force.
2. That criminal justice agencies and victim service providers must recognize and attend to the needs of sexually exploited children and youth.

3. That effective intervention requires proactive identification of suspects and vulnerable children and youth.

These three guiding principles are evident in the Team's management structure, daily operations, and the genuine commitment of Team members.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE TEAM

The Southern California SAFE Team adopted elements of two successful models of multi-agency collaboration: (1) the multidisciplinary teams that were created to respond to intrafamilial child sexual abuse cases, and (2) federal task forces on gangs and narcotics. Together, these models offer a powerful combination of expertise in child abuse investigations, sex offender dynamics, and law enforcement strategies and tactics with a special emphasis on cases that are unusually sensitive and complex.

Multijurisdictional Representation

The SAFE Team consists of multiple agencies at the federal, state, and local levels:

- US Attorney's Office
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Naval Criminal Investigative Service
- US Customs Service
- US Postal Inspection Service
- California Department of Justice
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office
- California Department of Corrections (Parole and Community Service Division)
- Huntington Beach Police Department (Orange County)

At this writing, there are 16 active members, most of whom are physically located in the SAFE Team's office in the Federal Building.

Each participating agency contributes important resources to the work of the Team. Prosecutors from the US Attorney's Office review all federal search warrants and are available to discuss investigative strategies. The Los Angeles County Assistant District Attorney assigned to the Team provides similar assistance in cases involving state law violations.

The federal investigative agencies contribute investigative expertise and sophisticated technology to the Team, along with national and global networks and data bases that are increasingly critical as cases transcend geographic boundaries. The special agent from the California Department of Justice is also a member of the statewide Sexual Predator Apprehension Team (SPAT), created by the legislature to maximize law enforcement attention to "chronic repeat violent sex offenders." Among other activities, SPAT and parole officers monitor selected offenders on the state's sex offender registry in efforts to prevent recidivism. The California Department of Justice representative on the SAFE Team also has access to the Department's Sexual Habitual Offender Program (SHOP). SHOP manages a data base and a DNA lab devoted to the state's population of sex offenders. Finally, Police and Sheriff's Department representatives on the SAFE Team bring many years of experience investigating child abuse and exploitation cases and important links with victim service providers across the Team's seven-county jurisdiction.

In practice, agency affiliations of Team members are far less important than their strong shared commitment to the Team's mission. Team members can be involved in federal or state cases. To support the Team's work, members from state and local agencies are specially deputized as US Marshals to enable them to serve federal warrants, among other activities.

Management Structure

Policy and oversight for the SAFE Team are provided by the **Executive Committee**, which consists of a high-ranking official from each participating agency. The Executive Committee meets quarterly to review the work of the SAFE Team and discuss the Team's accomplishments, goals, and immediate plans.

The **SAFE Team Coordinator** is an Assistant US Attorney who is responsible for disbursing the original grant funds and answers directly to the Executive Committee. A supervisory special agent from the FBI oversees general management of the Team as **Program Manager**. Day-to-day leadership of the Team's operations and activities is assigned to the **Team Supervisor**, a sergeant with the LA County Sheriff's Department.

Each member agency is expected to provide an investigator experienced in child sexual exploitation cases. Recruitment of experienced personnel is vital to the Team's success.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Biweekly Meetings

The SAFE Team meets biweekly. These meetings are co-chaired by the Team Coordinator and the Team Supervisor. During each meeting, members present new and ongoing cases and elicit suggestions regarding leads, additional information, or investigative strategies. In addition to generating new ideas for pursuing cases, these meetings help to solidify Team membership.

Documentation

The work of the SAFE Team is documented in several ways:

- A *Memorandum of Understanding*, signed by representatives of each participating agency, defines the goals and structure of the Team.
- *Monthly summaries* provide updates of all cases under investigation by the SAFE Team and all activities undertaken during the preceding month, such as attendance at training seminars. These summaries are especially valuable in reporting to the Executive Committee and justifying the manpower and resources allocated to the Team.
- *Policies and procedures*, in the form of an internal statement of philosophy and guidelines, delineate the Team's overall mission and expectations for case management.
- Several *administrative forms* help to structure the Team's day-to-day workload: referral forms, contact logs, time sheets, and operations plans. The operations plan is essential to record information necessary to execute search and arrest warrants and other Team activities. The plan identifies personnel assigned to the activity; provides details regarding the alleged suspect and location (e.g., the presence of dogs, alarms, weapons); lists needed equipment; and identifies the closest hospitals, fire departments, and victim service providers. Prior to each event, participating Team members meet to review the operations plan.
- *Statistics* on the numbers of investigations, clearances, and outcomes, which are important to demonstrate the level of activity and achievements in terms that are compatible with traditional criminal justice interests.

Types of Investigations

The Southern California SAFE Team utilizes a number of investigative techniques in its mission to combat child sexual exploitation. The Team conducts both proactive and reactive investigations.

Proactive street work and *reverse stings* are the primary means of investigating child prostitution. Community policing techniques lend themselves well to building rapport with the population of runaway, homeless, or street youth who are particularly vulnerable to adult predators.

Targeted surveillance is used for paroled sex offenders who are considered to be at especially high risk for recidivism. (There are more than 17,000 registered sex offenders in Los Angeles County alone.) It may be possible to arrest a high-risk offender for an offense other than child sexual abuse or exploitation (for example, drugs or failure to register as a sex offender). Under certain circumstances, these convictions may constitute subsequent “strikes” under California’s three-strikes law (following the original sex offense), thereby exposing such offenders to lengthy incarceration, even potentially to life sentences.

Undercover investigations are used to locate, identify, and apprehend perpetrators. Several Team members are especially proficient in the skills needed to navigate the Internet and to communicate effectively with suspects.

The SAFE Team is also available for investigations of large-scale day care cases or allegations involving law enforcement officers, upon request by member agencies.

Victim Services

Although no victim service providers participate directly on the SAFE Team, they are involved on a case-by-case basis. The Team benefits from the personal contacts that local law enforcement members have developed over their many years of experience investigating child abuse cases in the greater Los Angeles area. Building on these relationships, the Team works closely with child protection agencies, children’s advocacy centers, and youth shelters within the Team’s seven-county jurisdiction. In all cases involving identifiable victims, referrals are made to these agencies for forensically-sound and child-friendly interviews, emergency placement, crisis intervention, medical attention, and other needed services. Two victim/witness coordinators in the US Attorney’s Office are also available to assist victims.

The SAFE Team has also taken steps to inform service provider agencies of the Team’s work and to involve them whenever children are identified and located. For example, the Team recently hosted a two-hour “Victim Summit,” which brought together 40

victim service agencies to share information about their respective programs and discuss ways in which they can work cooperatively to help child victims. Service providers have also provided training to the Team to help them better understand children's strengths, limitations, and perspectives as potential witnesses.

The SAFE Team recognizes that victim assistance is a critical component of its mission. Whenever child victims are required to testify in court, the Team works closely with the US Attorney's victim/witness coordinators and local victim service providers to support these children throughout the court process.

Other Activities

As noted above, training is a large component of the SAFE Team's activities. The Team Supervisor and other members are active in several law enforcement training organizations and involve other Team members at every opportunity. Through this training outreach, the Team has generated leads from other police departments and citizens as well as contacts to support collaboration and coordination in investigations. The Team also attends other specialized training, e.g., in computer investigations, victim interviewing techniques, recent advances in medical research pertaining to child sexual abuse, and other pertinent topics.

The SAFE Team balances public interest in its work with the confidential and sensitive nature of its investigations. The Team's MOU includes policy guidance for working with the media.

CHAPTER 3

OTHER MODELS OF MULTIJURISDICTIONAL TEAMS

The SAFE Team in the Central District of California represents a very structured and well-supported model for multijurisdictional collaboration in investigating child sexual exploitation cases over a large geographic area. It may be perceived somewhat as an ideal toward which other agencies should strive in their efforts to improve the response to these cases. This chapter turns the focus toward three other multijurisdictional teams representing alternative structures and resources. Their experiences may be instructive to readers whose teams are in varying levels of development or are operating in environments with varying levels of support.

The Chicago Federal Exploitation Strike Force offers a unique historical perspective on changing priorities within law enforcement and the community. The Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network illustrates an approach that operates on a shoestring, yet has raised awareness of child sexual exploitation among law enforcement personnel and victim service professionals while assembling a core of highly experienced team members who actively pursue relevant cases. Similarly, the South Florida LEACH Team (Law Enforcement Effort Against Child Harm) lacks dedicated resources for its efforts, but has identified several very motivated and skilled investigators to tackle these difficult cases. Each of these teams is briefly described below.

FEDERAL CHILD EXPLOITATION STRIKE FORCE, CHICAGO

The Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force has been operating out of the US Postal Inspector's Office in Chicago for about ten years. It originated when several law enforcement officers from different agencies realized that they were independently investigating many of the same cases, and that such duplication of effort was both costly and counterproductive. In the early years of the Strike Force, there were seven investigators detailed from several law enforcement agencies around the Chicago/Cook County area, including the Cook County Sheriff's Police, Chicago Police Department, and Illinois State Police (in addition to the US Postal Inspector).

Today, the Strike Force consists of only two full-time investigators: the US Postal Inspector and a detective with the Cook County Sheriff's Office. However, strong links remain with the Chicago Police Department, Illinois State Police, other surrounding police departments, and the FBI. These agencies are called upon when needed, depending on the nature of the investigation. The Strike Force estimates that 85-90 percent of its cases are self-generated.

At its inception, the Strike Force specialized in proactive, undercover investigations of juvenile prostitution which, at the time, was readily visible in certain sections of Chicago. The Strike Force devoted considerable effort to identifying and arresting pimps. Working with Maryville Academy, a large child-serving organization sponsored by the Catholic Church, a witness protection program was established whereby youth involved in prostitution were housed in group facilities located in a remote area in Wisconsin. Intensive counseling and court advocacy services were provided to help young victims in their resolve to testify against their pimps.

In recent years, juvenile prostitution has been driven underground in Chicago. Maryville Academy no longer maintains special group homes for youth involved in prostitution, and the Strike Force long ago discontinued its street operations.

Since the beginning, child pornography has also been a primary focus of the Strike Force. Through covert mail correspondence and the use of controlled deliveries, the Strike Force apprehends individuals who seek to send or receive child pornography through the mail. Members of the Strike Force will also arrange face-to-face meetings with offenders who are seeking to obtain children to manufacture their own child pornography. Using both the video- and audiotapes of these meetings, these cases can be prosecuted both federally and within the state. State and local law enforcement officers detailed to the Strike Force have been deputized as US Marshals so they can make arrests on federal charges, operate outside their jurisdictional boundaries, and swear to federal warrants as needed.

Federal pornography cases involving first offenders and no identifiable victims usually result in pretrial diversion with special restrictions, such as participation in counseling, undergoing psychiatric examinations, and surrendering all their equipment. While this outcome does not result in a conviction, it does result in an arrest on the record, fingerprints in the FBI database, and evidence of prior similar crimes—all of which may be helpful to secure convictions if the perpetrator re-offends. When undercover pornography cases involve identifiable victims, the Strike Force relies on children's advocacy centers for interviews and other victim services when appropriate.

The Strike Force is also involved in other cases of child sexual exploitation, such as "rings" involving multiple perpetrators and/or multiple victims. Although these cases seldom involve federal charges, the investigators' expertise in the dynamics of child molesters and pedophiles can be invaluable. These cases are typically prosecuted by the Child Exploitation Unit in the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. This Unit's primary responsibility is handling investigations of sexual abuse occurring in custodial settings, although the written case acceptance policy includes all cases involving child prostitution and pornography, cases generated by the Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force, and cases involving allegations of ritual abuse or multiple victims.⁷

⁷ Office of the State's Attorney. (Undated). *Case Acceptance Policy*. Chicago.

MASSACHUSETTS CHILD EXPLOITATION NETWORK

A 44-year-old Medford man faces a 187-count federal indictment for sexual exploitation of minors. According to court papers, he enticed young boys to engage in sex acts in his home, where he photographed them. Then, using sophisticated imaging and computer technology, he allegedly transferred the images into a computer bulletin board, where subscribers from anywhere in the world could download them onto their own computers.

Boston Globe, December 17, 1993

This case was the impetus for establishing a statewide network of investigators and victim assistance professionals in Massachusetts, all sharing an interest in crimes against children and particularly, child sexual exploitation. The computer aspect of the case was investigated by a highly-skilled US Customs special agent who for the first time faced a situation involving known child victims. Through his working relationship with local law enforcement, he learned of the multidisciplinary response to child sexual abuse cases, which has been implemented in prosecutors' offices throughout Massachusetts and, indeed, nationwide. He observed the expert interviews conducted by a child interview specialist in the child-friendly atmosphere of a children's advocacy center. And he realized that he and his counterparts in other federal investigative agencies had been totally unaware of this extensive array of victim services that not only address victims' immediate needs for protection and counseling, but also support victims in their resolve to participate in the criminal justice process.

He then embarked on a mission to identify law enforcement professionals who specialize in child exploitation cases in federal, state, and local agencies across Massachusetts. Speaking to new officers in the police academy, to chiefs of police at statewide meetings, to regional and community-based associations of law enforcement officers and victim service providers, he began to build a list of interested and knowledgeable professionals. This list, which ultimately numbered 200, eventually became the membership of the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network.

Between 1985 and 1989, there had been a fairly active child pornography task force in Boston. In subsequent years, the group had lain dormant after its nominal leader, an Assistant US Attorney, was transferred to another city. But, with the stimulus of this groundbreaking computer case and the Customs agent's motivation, the dormant task force was resurrected in the form of a "steering committee" to guide the outreach and educational aims of the Network. The original group included representatives of the US Customs Service, US Postal Inspection Service, US Attorney's Office, State Police, FBI, Boston Police Department Sexual Assault Unit, another local police department, prosecutors from three counties, and a victim/witness assistant.

In addition to raising awareness and enhancing expertise among law enforcement and victim-serving professionals, the Network's steering committee also sought to improve the capacity for sharing information about incidents and suspects among investigators across the Commonwealth. Working with the State Police, several members of the steering committee identified key data elements to feed into a data base that could be accessed by selected law enforcement professionals assigned to child sexual exploitation investigations. The structure of the data base was modeled after a similar data base that had already been implemented to track gang activity in the state. The data base is now operational in four counties in the central/western part of Massachusetts and will be accessible to Network members in all eleven counties once licensing issues are resolved.

After three years of establishing the Network and solidifying its major goals, the Customs agent was promoted and transferred to work with the Customs Service's child pornography coordinator. At this writing, leadership of the steering committee has transferred to a federal prosecutor from the US Attorney's office in Springfield, who has expressed a commitment to maintaining and expanding the Network towards its mission to improve the response to sexual exploitation of children. Future plans for the Network also include a seven state inter-agency training aimed at instructing experienced sexual assault investigators in the area of sexual exploitation. In the upcoming months, the Network plans to address legislation to re-establish child pornography laws, and to schedule advanced computer crime classes for a group of investigators to improve their capacity to combat child pornography proactively. The Network will continue to work closely with child advocacy centers to promote interdisciplinary/interagency teamwork.

LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORT AGAINST CHILD HARM (LEACH) TASK FORCE, SOUTH FLORIDA

The Law Enforcement Effort Against Child Harm Task Force (LEACH) is a voluntary collaboration among law enforcement agencies in the South Florida area to address cases of child sexual exploitation. In 1989, South Florida had a Child Pornography Task Force which used proactive letter writing tactics to pursue pornography cases. The team was subsequently renamed the Child Abuse Intelligence Network, and it focused on making letter writing contacts which would eventually lead to search warrants and face-to-face meetings with perpetrators.

The current LEACH Task Force began in June 1995 when the Broward County Sheriff's Office drafted a memorandum of understanding to combine the missions of several law enforcement agencies in the South Florida region. Issues covered in the MOU included the following:

- purpose of the MOU
- mission of the Task Force:

[to] identify, apprehend, and assist in the prosecution of pedophiles, child abusers, child molesters, and child pornographers involved in computer-related child pornography activity, through covert operations conducted on computer bulletin board systems operating in the local, state, national, and international arenas.

- jurisdiction
- goals and objectives
- chain of command
- equipment
- records and reports
- procedures
- duration
- asset sharing
- communication with the press

The MOU encompasses the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), US Customs Service, US Postal Inspection Service, county sheriff's offices, and local law enforcement. LEACH team members are organizationally located in their separate law enforcement agencies and come together on a quarterly basis for full group meetings.

As articulated in the mission statement, it was clearly the heightened awareness of computer pornography cases which reinvigorated the Task Force and has been the team's primary focus since 1995. One member of the Broward County Sheriff's Office is designated to work these cases on a full-time basis. Because most local police departments lack the technology to proactively pursue computer pornography cases, the Broward County investigator is essentially the only full-time law enforcement officer in the South Florida region actively monitoring cyberspace for child sexual exploitation cases.

Of the cases which come to the group's attention, it is estimated that approximately 20 percent involve identifiable victims. In these cases, LEACH Task Force members generally rely on experienced child abuse investigators in FDLE (the state police) or local jurisdictions to conduct interviews and provide referrals for victim services. Florida is somewhat unusual among the states in requiring young victims to give depositions as part of the pretrial discovery process. To avoid this burden, the LEACH Task Force pursues federal action whenever possible. The relative lenience of state sanctions, compared to federal sanctions, for certain child sexual exploitation offenses provides another incentive to seek federal prosecution.

The LEACH Task Force also emphasizes the need for education within the community to reduce the risk of youth involvement in sexual exploitation. The Broward Sheriff's Office Child Pornography Investigator conducts public awareness presentations using a short video entitled, "*Pedophiles: Predators of the Young*." At the time of this writing, the Broward Sheriff's Office has over 200 of these videotapes in circulation nationally. Presentations have been made to parent-teacher associations, school teachers, homeowners' associations, city commissioners, law enforcement officers, probation divisions, and court officers (e.g., state attorneys). The topics covered in the presentation often include:

- the existence of the task force
- positive aspects of the information highway
- setting rules for children using computers
- identification of specific on-line strategies used by child molesters
- parental accountability and responsibility
- hand-outs from the Broward County Sheriff's Office and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

CHAPTER 4

ISSUES FOR REPLICATION

The Sexual Assault and Exploitation Felony Enforcement (SAFE) Team in Southern California is one model for organizing numerous agencies with varying resources to maximize the community's response to child sexual exploitation. However, the SAFE Team may be perceived as unusual, for several reasons:

- the availability of “seed money” from the federal government to launch the Team as a Violent Crime Task Force
- the ongoing commitment of all member agencies to provide personnel and resources
- the dedication of Assistant US Attorneys to the work of the Team

Although aspiring multijurisdictional teams elsewhere in the nation may not share these attributes, there are ways to enhance the investigation and prosecution of child sexual exploitation cases. This chapter identifies key features of the SAFE Team's approach and offers alternatives derived from the experiences of the other models that were briefly described in Chapter 3: the Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force in Chicago, the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network, and the Law Enforcement Effort Against Child Harm (LEACH) Task Force in South Florida.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MULTIJURISDICTIONAL TEAM

There are essentially three models of multi-agency teams in law enforcement:⁸

- task force
- strike force
- network

Each model has been applied to the special concerns of investigating and prosecuting child sexual exploitation cases.

⁸ *Child Sexual Exploitation: Improving Investigations and Protecting Victims. A Blueprint for Action* (1996). Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime.

The Task Force Model

The SAFE Team in Southern California is an example of a formal task force. Team members have been assigned to the Team by their respective agencies; most are detailed full-time, although a few are available on a part-time basis. Most Team members are located in shared space in the Federal building.

There are many advantages to the task force model. Perhaps the most obvious, and most important, is the *explicit dedication of manpower and resources* to the identified problem. Chief executives of all involved agencies agreed that child sexual exploitation is a significant problem in their jurisdiction, and furthermore, that a joint, coordinated response is the most effective way to combat this problem. These individuals recognized the benefits to be gained from sharing expertise and resources toward a common goal of protecting children.

In Southern California, much of the impetus for creating the SAFE Team came from the burgeoning caseload of crimes involving computer pornography, an emerging offense category that required special expertise, both technical and legal. No single agency possessed all the requisite skills, knowledge, and resources to successfully mount a concentrated campaign against this type of crime. Together, however, federal, state, and local agencies could marshal the necessary ingredients and pursue these cases with the level of attention and perseverance they demand.

Similarly, ten years ago in Chicago, investigators from several agencies realized that they were individually—yet simultaneously—working the same child sexual exploitation cases, unaware of each other's involvement because all were working undercover. This lack of knowledge caused the investigators to duplicate efforts in ways that were inefficient and sometimes counterproductive. Consequently, the Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force was created. Housed in the offices of the US Postal Inspector, this group actually functioned as a task force (as we have defined the term). As many as seven investigators were detailed from their respective agencies to concentrate their skills on cases involving child pornography (at that time, primarily transmission through the US mail) and prostitution. In one year, the Chicago Strike Force arrested 111 people and convicted all but one.⁹

Another important benefit of the task force approach is the esprit de corps that it fosters among team members. SAFE Team members celebrate their successes as a group and problem-solve their challenges as a group. Focusing daily on child sexual exploitation can take an emotional toll on investigators, and the SAFE Team places a premium on interpersonal support among its members. While each member must acknowledge individual responsibility for his or her contributions to the team, concerted efforts are

⁹ Pilant, L. (1990). Protecting the children. *State Peace Officers Journal*, pp. 82-86.

made to approach each case collectively and to recognize that all members benefit from the work of the group. Because not all people are comfortable working in a team of this sort, willingness to collaborate becomes a critical criterion for recruitment.

A standing task force, like the SAFE Team in Southern California or the Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force in Chicago, is perhaps most feasible in large jurisdictions where the caseload is large enough to warrant special attention, and where law enforcement agencies are sufficiently staffed and equipped to accommodate the dedication of personnel and resources exclusively to the work of the task force. Still, other jurisdictions have found ways to maximize the available manpower and resources when investigating cases of child sexual exploitation. These are described below.

The Strike Force Model

A strike force differs from a task force in that members are not dedicated exclusively to the work of the team. Rather, members may be assigned by their respective agencies, or they may self-identify, as designated representatives to pursue appropriate cases when they arise. Participating team members are likely to possess specific expertise or a special interest in child sexual exploitation cases.

An example of a functioning strike force is the LEACH Task Force in South Florida. The LEACH Task Force was originally created in response to the growing number of reports involving computer pornography and solicitation of young victims. Under the leadership of the Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale) Sheriff's Department, the LEACH Task Force sought to involve federal investigators (from the Customs and Postal Inspection Services) as well as the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), and sheriffs' offices in several smaller counties in their geographic area. Particularly active members of the LEACH Task Force include representatives of the Broward County Sheriff's Department, Manatee County Sheriff's Office, Broward City and State Attorney's Offices, FDLE, and US Customs Service. The investigator from the Broward Sheriff's Office is the only member assigned exclusively to child sexual exploitation cases. Task Force members are not housed together. Once a case is initiated, Task Force members are contacted for their availability to assist as appropriate. In addition, the Task Force periodically comes together as a group to discuss larger issues of policy or protocol.

The major benefit of the strike force model is the capacity to quickly identify and mobilize sources of expertise on an as-needed basis. One major drawback is the absence of financial support committed to the work of the team. Another disadvantage is the ongoing need for each team member to negotiate competing demands on his or her time. Depending on the nature of other cases, child sexual exploitation investigations may be accorded a lesser priority. As the child sexual exploitation caseload intensifies—whether in terms of increasing numbers or increasing visibility—it

may be advantageous to advocate for greater attention to the issue, perhaps in the form of a dedicated task force.

The Network Model

A network is the most loosely-configured form of team approach to joint investigation. This model is exemplified by the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network, which was documented in the prior publication, *Child Sexual Exploitation: Improving Investigations and Protecting Victims. A Blueprint for Action*.¹⁰

The Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network began as an attempt by a special agent of the US Customs Service, assigned to child pornography investigations, to link investigators with similar interests and skills. A great deal of energy has been devoted to training, educating, and raising awareness among Massachusetts law enforcement personnel and victim service providers about the unique character of child sexual exploitation cases and the need for collaboration. A steering committee guides the Network's outreach efforts; members have included a US Postal Inspector, Assistant US Attorney, several representatives of the State Police, district attorney's offices, local law enforcement agencies, and victim advocates. In practice, members of the steering committee come together as a virtual "strike force" when appropriate cases arise.

The most immediate benefit of the network model is its focus on raising awareness of the problem of child sexual exploitation and recruiting interested professionals to join the multijurisdictional effort to combat it. This function is particularly critical in areas where this offense category has not received much attention. Through its persistent and concerted outreach activities, the Massachusetts Network has identified more than 200 investigators and victim service providers with a special interest in these cases. These contacts become especially useful when emerging cases involve statewide implications.

The principal drawback of the network approach is the absence of resources to support ongoing communication and interaction among the members. The work of the steering committee—planning and carrying out workshops and training presentations—has proceeded on a voluntary basis, although it is certainly pertinent to the primary job functions of committee members (i.e., as prosecutors, victim advocates, or law enforcement personnel). In the absence of resources or official recognition of the network, it can be hard to sustain a concentrated initiative.

¹⁰ *Child Sexual Exploitation*, see note 8.

LEADERSHIP ISSUES

Among the most sensitive decisions in creating a multijurisdictional team is that of leadership. When federal, state, and local personnel are expected to collaborate, who is in charge?

Chapter 2 delineated a tiered structure for oversight that was adopted for the SAFE Team in Southern California. To recap briefly, general policy oversight is provided by an Executive Committee comprised of high-ranking officials from each participating agency. The FBI has responsibility for general management of the Team, and the day-to-day authority for case assignments and strategic decisions rests with the Team Supervisor, a sergeant from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Assigning leadership roles in a multijurisdictional team to one federal and one local law enforcement officer was a rational decision based on relevant qualifications of the available personnel. For the SAFE Team, *experience and management skills* were the dominant criteria for choosing the Team Supervisor. The selected individual brings many years of experience working child abuse cases and in management. His authority has been vital to maintaining team spirit, cohesion, and direction among professionals who are trained to work independently. The Team Manager brings the FBI's resources, expertise, and connections with FBI field offices nationwide. These contributions, too, are essential to the Team's success.

In other multijurisdictional teams, the leadership role may be filled by virtue of the team's organizational location within a host agency (e.g., the Postal Inspector's Office) or by virtue of an individual's personal commitment to the issue of child sexual exploitation, as in Massachusetts or South Florida, where a single investigator saw a need and created a multijurisdictional team to fill it. The challenge for teams that are energized by the personal dedication of a single individual is to maintain the momentum when that individual is transferred, retires, or otherwise leaves his or her position and can no longer lead the team. If the team has a solid base of collaborative experience, and someone else is sufficiently inspired, the transition to new leadership should be relatively smooth. Written protocols guiding a team's operations can also be helpful in these circumstances.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

An ongoing challenge for many multijurisdictional initiatives is securing and maintaining the support of chief executives from participating agencies. Especially in communities that are plagued by daily crises of violent crime, it may be hard to capture the attention of top management for a category of offense which is largely invisible to the public and may demand considerable allocation of manpower and resources for lengthy undercover investigations. Furthermore, the expectation of multijurisdictional

collaboration, with its corollary need to overlook interagency rivalries, may seem insurmountable to some executives. How do effective teams overcome this potential roadblock?

“Nothing succeeds like success.” Perhaps the most effective way to generate and maintain support for a team’s operations is by documenting and demonstrating its achievements. The SAFE Team keeps member agencies informed of the Team’s activities and accomplishments in several ways:

- The Team prepares monthly summaries of all cases and activities for its Executive Committee. These summaries include updates on every case that the Team investigates. They also help to underscore the unique characteristics of child sexual exploitation cases and the importance of bringing together a variety of expertise and resources, in the form of the SAFE Team.
- The SAFE Team meets quarterly with the Executive Committee to report on its achievements, discuss its plans, and answer any questions or concerns that Committee members may have about the Team.
- Although the Team accepts cases from law enforcement agencies throughout the Central District of California, priority is given to cases from member agencies whenever possible.
- The Team’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) resolves areas of possible disagreement among member agencies that could diminish the effectiveness of the task force or the ability of its members to work collaboratively. Topics covered in the MOU include the following:
 - purpose of the Team
 - composition of the Team
 - establishment of the Executive Committee
 - chain of command
 - assignment of investigative matters
 - maintenance of records and reports
 - policy that member agencies will not take actions that overlap with team investigations
 - deputation of local officers
 - procedures in critical incidents

- use of informants
- media policy
- duration of the Team

Also, both the SAFE Team and the Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force in Chicago frequently accept unusually complicated or sensitive child sexual abuse cases at the request of participating agencies. Such cases may involve multiple victims and multiple perpetrators, for example, or difficult investigations in a day care setting. While cases like these may not have multijurisdictional implications, the investigations benefit from the special expertise and resources available from the teams. The teams, in turn, benefit from the good will that is generated by their contributions to other agencies.

In a less-formal team like the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network or the South Florida LEACH Task Force, one of the most effective indicators of support is official recognition of the group's efforts, or even of an individual's efforts on behalf of the group. In the absence of an explicit allocation of resources for the team, a meaningful form of recognition might be an announcement or letter of appreciation from the US Attorney, Special Agent in Charge, Chief of Police, or county prosecutor—with copies to the executives of other participating agencies. Because the work of team members is largely voluntary, it is important to acknowledge contributions that exceed normal expectations of their jobs.

CASES TARGETED

The current rush of interest in child sexual exploitation reflects the public outcry against the relatively new phenomenon of child molesters and pedophiles who pursue their interests via computer technology. Consequently, the more recently established teams—including the SAFE Team, the South Florida LEACH Task Force, and the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network—were launched, in part, to mobilize law enforcement capacity against this widely-feared threat to the nation's children. All three teams have found that a singular focus will inevitably be broadened to include other exploitation offenses.

Most teams recognize that child sexual exploitation encompasses many different crimes. Thus, for example, the SAFE Team has investigated all aspects of child sexual exploitation, including child sexual abuse, prostitution, and pornography, since its inception. In contrast, the South Florida LEACH Task Force initially focused exclusively on computer cases, but later found itself investigating prostitution rings and other types of child sexual exploitation cases. Similarly, the Massachusetts Network began with cases of computer pornography and solicitation, but soon was investigating a prostitution case involving interstate transportation of young girls.

A focus on computer cases or any other single offense category may be an effective impetus for starting a new team, but limiting the scope of work in this way may threaten the team's longevity. Such a narrow focus could exclude agencies in the jurisdiction that lack the technology, skills, or caseload to join in these investigations, potentially fostering feelings of "elitism" and jealousy towards those agencies which have the necessary components. Lack of support among excluded agencies can erode institutional support for a team that depends heavily on contributions, whether tangible or in-kind, from multiple sources.

The Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force in Chicago offers an important lesson from history about shifting priorities in the area of child sexual exploitation. In the late 1980s, when the Strike Force was created, there was a great deal of concern about overt juvenile prostitution in certain areas of the city. Much of the work of the Strike Force was centered on eradicating this problem through various forms of sweeps and undercover operations. There was substantial media coverage of Strike Force detectives talking with young girls on the streets and arresting pimps. Today, child prostitution has largely moved to indoor venues such as escort services and massage parlors, and the Strike Force can no longer commit the time and personnel necessary to conduct proactive prostitution investigations. Had the Strike Force maintained a singular focus on street prostitution, it probably would have ceased to exist some time ago. However, the Strike Force has always pursued undercover correspondence focusing on child pornography, as well as investigations of complex cases involving sex rings or day care centers, and such cases continue to justify ongoing support for the team.

FEDERAL VS. STATE PROSECUTION

Among the most compelling reasons to create a multijurisdictional task force is the potential for pursuing offenders under federal law, state law, or both. Additional advantages of a multijurisdictional approach to child sexual exploitation cases include the following:¹¹

- the ability to determine whether state or federal law most adequately addresses the facts of a particular case
- depending upon the facts of a particular case, the potential to prosecute more than one crime arising out of the same series of events, thereby obtaining both federal and state convictions and consecutive sentences to ensure that the offender remains confined for an extended period

¹¹ *Child Sexual Exploitation*, note 8, pp. 5-6.

- the likelihood of lengthy federal prison sentences (where there is no parole system) for offenses involving child pornography or interstate transportation of minors for sexual purposes
- the availability of lengthy state prison sentences for child sexual abuse
- the ability to seek a federal indictment based on an investigator's summary testimony, thereby eliminating in some cases the need for young victims to appear before a grand jury
- the possibility of using the inducement of imprisonment in a federal, rather than a state institution, to resolve all charges without a trial, sparing the victims the additional trauma of testifying in court

In Southern California and Chicago, detectives from local law enforcement agencies have been deputized as US marshals so that they can operate outside of their traditional jurisdictional boundaries. In addition, the SAFE Team routinely involves as many Team members as are reasonably needed and available to serve warrants, regardless of whether they fall within federal or state jurisdiction, and both federal and state agents are typically involved. The prevailing philosophy is that *all Team members have a role to play in every case.*

Finally, participation in a multijurisdictional task force necessarily entails a learning process as federal and local personnel adapt to one another's standards and style of work. Through daily collaboration, task force members come to appreciate and incorporate the strengths of other agencies, with beneficial results for both the individual members and for the cases they investigate.

VICTIM SERVICES

Investigators frequently identify children who are depicted in homemade pornography, and child prostitution cases obviously involve identifiable victims. In such cases, it is absolutely vital for members of a multijurisdictional team to be familiar with state laws governing reports of child abuse and with community resources available to help the victims. In some jurisdictions, federal cases involving child victims are relatively rare, so that victim/witness coordinators in these US Attorney's Offices may have little experience or expertise to work directly with the children or locate the help they need.

Links to child protection agencies and other sources of victim services are important attributes that local police bring to multijurisdictional teams. Local police typically have substantial experience handling child physical and sexual abuse cases and are

therefore knowledgeable about the reporting requirements and the services available from child protection agencies, children's advocacy centers, multidisciplinary interviewing teams, runaway shelters, and other resources for young victims.

In Southern California, for example, the SAFE Team Supervisor and several other Team members were detailed to the Team after many years working in their agencies' specialized child abuse or sexual assault investigative units. As a result, the Team has direct contacts with victim service providers in each of the seven counties within the Central District of California. Organizations and individuals with special expertise in working with sexually abused children have provided training for SAFE Team personnel; conversely, the SAFE Team has trained staff at children's advocacy centers and other youth-serving agencies. Such opportunities have mutual benefits far beyond the intrinsic educational value of the training; they help to build strong working relationships that are crucial to effective intervention on behalf of child victims.

The Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force in Chicago and the Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network also have close ties with children's advocacy centers that are geographically convenient. These centers have offered their facilities and interviewing expertise even for cases that do not fall within their jurisdiction or catchment area, which is an especially important consideration when investigating federal cases. The Massachusetts Network has also involved victim advocates from several prosecutors' offices on its steering committee to facilitate outreach to service providers across the state. These working relationships also provide a convenient avenue for victim service professionals to contact the teams when they suspect a victim has been sexually exploited.

RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Because so much of today's emphasis in child sexual exploitation cases centers on the role of computers, it is important for investigative teams to have adequate hardware and software. Computer equipment is costly, however, and needs to be upgraded fairly often. Some may be obtained through asset forfeiture, but the process tends to be slow and dependent on how quickly a case proceeds through the courts. Apart from salaries, the acquisition of computer equipment is likely to be the largest "up-front" expenditure facing a new task force.

In addition to the manpower that each agency contributes to a multijurisdictional team, whether dedicated to a formal task force or designated as part of a strike force or less formal unit, the various federal and state agencies also contribute access to information or technologies that can significantly advance the work of the team. Specific investigative and information resources available to multijurisdictional teams include the following:

- FBI—forensic and behavioral analysis capabilities, virtually instantaneous links to regional offices nationwide
- US Postal Inspection Service—controlled deliveries, undercover mailboxes
- US Customs Service—computerized data bases containing information about investigations, arrests, and seizures, and specifically about prohibited pornographic materials which have been seized at the border
- State or local police—sex offender registries, child abuse registries, and missing children’s clearinghouses

Together, these agencies possess a formidable array of resources and expertise that can be brought to bear against sexual predators and others who exploit children.

MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Publicity surrounding the work of a multijurisdictional task force on child sexual exploitation can be a difficult issue to negotiate. There are at least three potential areas for concern: the extent to which the team wants publicity; control over the dissemination of information to the news media; and protection of undercover and other investigative techniques. These issues should be considered and resolved as early as possible in the team’s development; a lack of consensus can lead to divisiveness or distrust if the team is not prepared for media exposure.

Opinions are divided about the value of announcing to the public the establishment of a team dedicated to investigating and prosecuting child sexual exploitation cases. On the positive side, such an announcement can be good public relations—it shows that law enforcement is taking the initiative against a type of crime that is repulsive to most people. It may also have a deterrent effect against would-be offenders who otherwise might take the risk, for example, of participating in a chat-room or bulletin board with a focus on sex with children or child pornography. On the negative side, knowledge that a concerted effort is underway against child sexual exploitation might drive perpetrators further underground, making them even harder to apprehend. Among the teams included in this report, most appear to believe that it is important for the public to know that specially trained teams are actively handling child sexual exploitation cases, but that the nature of the teams’ activities must remain confidential.

Having agreed that public awareness of the team’s existence is acceptable to all participating agencies, the next step is managing the relationship between the team and the media. Who speaks for the team? How can all involved agencies be included in relevant media accounts? These are issues that should be clearly articulated in any

memorandum of understanding or letter of agreement that is drafted among the agencies represented. The South Florida LEACH Task Force offers an example:

It is agreed that no mention will be made to the press regarding the “LEACH Task Force” unless the participating agency heads agree that a press release should be made. Any agreed-upon press release will be coordinated through all participating agencies.

Clauses like these are important precautions against misunderstandings or recriminations that may ensue when breaking cases attract media attention.

Also, having agreed that public awareness of the team’s work is more beneficial than it is harmful, some teams may engage in proactive campaigns to alert their communities about the threat of sexual predators. Especially in South Florida, the Broward County Sheriff’s Department has undertaken an ongoing series of presentations to parent groups in schools and other civic settings, led by a detective assigned to the LEACH Task Force. Utilizing a videotape that was specially prepared for this purpose, the detective covers a great deal of potentially sensitive material without focusing specifically on the work of the Task Force. This is one way to educate the public about the subject matter of child sexual exploitation and the special attention and expertise available within law enforcement without exposing the nature of the Task Force or its precise activities.

MEASURING SUCCESS

How can a multijurisdictional task force focusing on child sexual exploitation cases measure and promote its success? The SAFE Team measures success in terms of successful prosecutions and victim identification.

For many jurisdictions, traditional measures of achievement in law enforcement—arrest, clearance, and conviction rates—may not be especially useful in the area of child sexual exploitation because the numbers may be relatively small. Furthermore, a case that is first identified in one jurisdiction may be resolved in another, for example, when a computer user locates child pornography that is being generated from another city, perhaps in another state or even in another country. When investigators from multiple agencies are working collaboratively, who gets the credit?

In many teams, the latter question is resolved from an equity perspective: everyone gets equal credit. But it appears that the numbers issue may, in fact, be related to the level of resources that are committed to these cases: Several task force investigators observed that the number of people using computers to transmit child pornography is

far greater than law enforcement's capacity to investigate. Arguably, then, the numbers would increase in proportion to the resources allocated to proactive investigation of computer cases.

Identifying and helping victims is the most compelling justification for supporting multijurisdictional task forces on child sexual exploitation. While no one knows the precise number of children who become involved in pornography, experts do know the following:

- While some pedophiles may be content to collect pornography and never act on their sexual attraction to children, many do actively molest young children.¹² The US Postal Inspection Service reports that approximately 30 percent of the offenders who are investigated for distributing child pornography through the mail have also molested children.¹³
- The numbers of children at risk of sexual victimization is quite large. One study of self-reported child molesters found that, on average, non-incestuous molesters commit one or two acts against each of an astonishingly large number of children: about 20 female victims or 150 male victims per offender.¹⁴
- Sexual exploitation can have devastating impacts on young victims. Children involved in prostitution are at high risk for rape and other violent crimes, addiction to alcohol and other drugs, and sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.¹⁵ Children involved in pornography may suffer all the consequences of sexual abuse—including low self-esteem, depression, attempts at suicide, sexually acting out, other sexual and psychological dysfunctions, and post-traumatic stress disorder¹⁶—exacerbated by the knowledge that their abuse has been permanently documented and perhaps shared with an audience of unknowable size.¹⁷

¹² Lanning, K.V. (1992). *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis*. Arlington, VA: National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

¹³ Smith, Ray, US Postal Inspection Service, Fraud and Prohibited Mailings Branch. Personal communication.

¹⁴ Abel, G.G., et al. (1987). "Self-reported sex crimes of non-incarcerated paraphiliacs," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 2, 3-25.

¹⁵ Fisher, B., Weisberg, D., and Marotta, T. (1982). *Report on adolescent male prostitution*. San Francisco, CA: URSA Institute; Janus, M., Scanlon, B., and Price, V. (1984). "Youth prostitution," in *Child pornography and sex rings*, Edited by A. Burgess with M. Clark. New York: Macmillan/Lexington.

¹⁶ Browne, A., and Finkelhor, D. (1986). "Initial and long-term effects: A review of the research." *A sourcebook on child sexual abuse*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

¹⁷ Attorney General's Commission on Pornography (1986). *Final report*. Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press.

In sum, the numbers of cases that come to the attention of law enforcement authorities almost certainly belie (1) the level of activity in promoting and perpetuating child pornography, (2) the number of children who are at risk of victimization, and (3) the human suffering that results from the sexual exploitation of children. Any law enforcement agency that investigates child sexual exploitation—particularly on the Internet—will likely be overwhelmed by a flood of new cases. Law enforcement must work together, preferably in multi-agency task forces, to combat these crimes effectively.

CHAPTER 5

JUVENILE PROSTITUTION: A CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE

"What she found on the streets of Vancouver wasn't freedom, merely a different set of rules. Though these were designed by drug dealers and pimps." — Quote from an article in the *Vancouver Sun* about the life of a young girl recruited into the sex trade.

*"We need to be able to gain some control over our children who are destroying themselves on the street."*¹⁸ — Diane Sowden, mother of a juvenile prostitute

HISTORY

The issue of juvenile prostitution gained the public's interest with the increased visibility of young sex trade workers in residential and business sectors of the Canadian province of British Columbia. On any given night, it is estimated that 30-40 youth can be observed working the streets of Vancouver,¹⁹ British Columbia's largest city.

"Kiddie strolls," or areas frequented by juvenile sex trade workers, were congested with traffic and hazardous waste (e.g., condoms and used needles). In addition, high profile families began to speak out about the recruitment of middle-class youth from schools and shopping malls in the suburbs. In 1992, British Columbia took the lead in suggesting the establishment of a Working Group on Prostitution. The Federal-Provincial-Territorial Deputy Ministers Responsible for Justice invited representatives from across Canada to review and make recommendations on legislation, policy, and practices pertaining to prostitution-related activities.²⁰

In an effort to better understand the scope of the problem, the Deputy Ministers asked the Working Group to conduct consultations with any parties connected to the sex trade industry. Consultations, which could also be described as interviews, were conducted in the Canadian provinces beginning in the spring of 1994 through the winter of 1995. People who were interviewed included police officers, prosecutors, representatives from women's advocacy groups, citizen groups, aboriginal groups, child welfare and health workers, current and former prostitutes, community service providers, educators, and municipal and provincial officials.²¹ Across the country, respondents

¹⁸ Bellett, G. "US law gives parents power," *Vancouver Sun*.

¹⁹ Community Consultation on Prostitution in British Columbia, Overview of Results, March, 1996.

²⁰ Results of the National Consultation on Prostitution in Selected Jurisdictions, Interim Report, October 1995.

²¹ Ibid.

generally supported social intervention options as opposed to more punitive responses by the criminal justice system.

The Interim Report of the Working Group on Prostitution listed the main priorities resulting from the national consultation as follows:

- the need for social intervention options to address youth involvement in prostitution
- the need to make it easier to obtain evidence that an adult was attempting to get sexual services from a person under 18
- concern in some jurisdictions about 14 being the current age of consent
- concern about the identification of persons charged with communicating for the purposes of sexual procurement
- concern over the inability to address juvenile prostitution in escort services
- the need for better training regarding the victimization and exploitation of prostitutes
- measures to make it easier for youths to testify against pimps
- training and rehabilitation programs for prostitutes, especially those wishing to leave the business

In British Columbia, a total of 350 people participated in the consultation, including separate meetings held with people representing aboriginal communities. Interviews were completed with sexually procured youth and adult prostitutes, former johns, and parents of sexually procured youth in nine different communities across the province. Results of the consultations²² indicated that most of the youth began living on the streets at 12 years old and entered the sex trade at 14. Although money was cited as the main reason for prostitution, some youth claimed that their involvement was an escape from family problems, financial support for a drug habit, initiated by family or a romantic relationship, or just "for fun." Many youth were recruited into the sex trade by pimps in local schools and shopping malls. Alternatively, pimps used their young prostitutes to recruit for them.

²²Community Consultation on Prostitution in British Columbia, Overview of Results, March, 1996.

I'd go in and show the girls money and the drugs and give them cigarettes laced with heroin and they'd get high. Some of them wanted to try prostitution 'cause I'd talked them into it and told them how great it was.

—14-year-old prostitute, quoted in the *Vancouver Sun*

In other cases, parents or other family members would act as the pimp and arrange for the sexual procurement of youth.

Once youth were lured into the sex trade, their pimps used violence to keep them in the business. Although violence was seldom reported to the police, consultations with juvenile prostitutes indicated that pimps inflicted physical abuse frequently, whereas abuse by johns was more dangerous but sporadic.

Recommendations put forth in interviews with sexually procured youth across the province included the need for:

- a more compassionate approach by police officers
- education on the realities of prostitution by peers in school, and on the streets by ex-prostitutes and outreach workers
- protection for youths testifying against pimps in court
- more support for youths through programs and services instead of arresting them

Young prostitutes also advocated for more outreach workers, affordable housing, job training, education, detoxification programs, and substance abuse treatment to help them leave the street life. They also indicated a need for more communication about available services and programs.

The consultations in British Columbia provided the impetus to create a province-wide response to prostitution, called the Provincial Action Plan on Prostitution. The Action Plan is authorized by the Ministry of Attorney General in British Columbia, and it supports initiatives focusing on the following:²³

1. tougher enforcement against pimps and johns;
2. resource and referral services to protect and support sexually exploited youth;

²³ Ministry of Attorney General, Provincial Action Plan on Prostitution and Sexual Exploitation of Youth—Overview

3. education for parents, teachers and service providers who may identify youth at risk for victimization;
4. creating greater community awareness about the victimization of youth involved in prostitution; and
5. supporting and consulting with neighborhood groups to develop community responses and strategies.

KEY ELEMENTS TO COMBAT JUVENILE PROSTITUTION

The Provincial Action Plan on Prostitution supported the development of several initiatives. The following program descriptions provide an overview of these key elements.

Provincial Prostitution Unit

The Provincial Prostitution Unit (PPU), which is organizationally located in the Ministry of Attorney General, is at the heart of the Provincial Action Plan on Prostitution. The full-time Unit includes two vice detectives from the Vancouver Police Department, a prosecutor (Crown Counsel), a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and a civilian community coordinator.²⁴ The mission of the PPU is to provide a coordinated justice response to issues of child sexual exploitation across the province.

The primary responsibilities of the PPU are to:

- provide coordinated training and support to provincial law enforcement and prosecutors
- assist in the development of local prevention strategies
- develop educational resources to support prevention and intervention programs across the province

²⁴ The Provincial Prostitution Unit differs from multijurisdictional task forces in the US because *all* criminal law in Canada is federal.

The three main areas of focus for the PPU are:

- targeting pimps and johns
- neighborhood nuisance and safety issues
- preventing youth from entering the sex trade and assisting those who are already in it to exit

Before the development of the PPU, law enforcement agencies across British Columbia were informally calling members of the Vancouver Police Department to tap their expertise on sexual exploitation cases. By explicitly designating vice investigators to the Provincial Prostitution Unit, they can consult in an official capacity to strengthen community enforcement efforts throughout the province. This should result in a greater sharing of responsibility for investigating these cases.

Since its inception in September 1996, the Provincial Prostitution Unit has traveled across the province to assist in the creation of Community Action Teams in nine different communities. Youth-serving agencies, law enforcement personnel, and community leaders consult with the Unit to develop prevention efforts to reduce youth recruitment into prostitution and address community responses to related neighborhood hazards. The diversity across the province (e.g., First Nation aboriginal communities, urban vs. rural areas) made it especially important to meet with representatives from each community to gain insight into their particular concerns regarding prostitution. Now that the Community Action Teams have been established, the Provincial Prostitution Unit provides support and technical assistance as needed on prostitution-related activities in the communities.

Community Action Teams are regarded as essential because they can greatly assist, in a coordinated fashion, sexually exploited youth from the time of arrest of a pimp or john throughout the duration of the court process. Traditionally, it has been very difficult to persuade victims to cooperate and testify in court. They are usually drug- and/or alcohol-addicted, have no place to live except with a pimp, and may have suffered other physical or emotional abuse. They usually need counseling and have little formal education or job skills. If they do not receive services for detoxification, counseling, and the other support they need, they will return to the sex trade in a very short period of time. Especially because provincial financial resources are extremely limited, it is important that service providers meet within the framework of the Community Action Teams to develop a coordinated approach to providing the necessary services for sexually exploited youth. In this way, the Unit hopes to increase the likelihood that a youth will obtain needed services, leave the sex trade, and testify in court to help convict the pimp or john.

The Unit also maintains a province-wide toll-free number which allows callers to obtain information, support, and referrals to community agencies. Callers can also receive a set of six posters which were developed to raise awareness about the dangers of becoming a sexually exploited youth.

The FACES Program

FACES (Fight Against Child Exploitation) is an investigation and intervention program developed by the Vancouver Police Vice Unit for missing or runaway children who may be at risk for involvement in prostitution. Service agencies, police departments, or families may register a child or adolescent in the program by filling out a Victim Profile Form, which includes a short questionnaire and a request for a recent facial photograph of that youth. Copies of the youth profiles are distributed to approximately 400 street police officers in Vancouver and any other police jurisdictions in Canada and the United States if the department can appoint someone as a contact or coordinator for the FACES program.

P.A.C.E.

P.A.C.E. (Prostitution Alternatives Counseling and Education), a program founded by former prostitutes, offers support and services for adult and juvenile prostitutes who want to get out of the business. Their primary mission is to be known by prostitutes as a highly visible and non-judgmental service on the streets of Vancouver. P.A.C.E. staff consists of three full-time employees who are supported through government funding and private grants.

On a daily basis, the staff works the streets, connecting with young prostitutes and handing out cards which invite them to call for assistance. By establishing a non-threatening presence in prostitution stroll areas, P.A.C.E. employees are seen as people who can assist prostitutes with daily needs such as housing, welfare, and child care. To monitor the impact of their work and their clients' service needs, records are kept on all of the young males and females who are in contact with the agency. P.A.C.E. workers document all of their interactions with young prostitutes and conduct a very thorough history and assessment interview during the initial meeting.

P.A.C.E. also supports a prevention component through which workers conduct community education programs for parents and youth and trainings in local hospitals and school settings.

TCO²

Taking Care of Ourselves—Taking Care of Others, or TCO², is a theatrical group of four youth who make educational presentations on the perils of child sexual exploitation and prostitution. Using monologues, dramatic skits, and audience participation, the group portrays the harsh realities of prostitution and life on the streets.

"It's Too Good To Be True" is the group's 50-minute workshop, which focuses on prevention by shattering myths about the "benefits" of prostitution and demonstrating typical recruitment tactics used to lure youth into the sex trade. The message that "selling or buying sex is not cool" is reiterated throughout the presentation through examples which destroy the glamorous illusions of street life.

In one skit, for example, the actors are speaking about a friend: "Can you believe she's 14 and he's 25? She says he really loves her. She's so lucky." At that point, one of them turns to the audience and says, "I want to tell you what it's like living on the street, because it's not cool." In a scene where the recruitment of a young girl is enacted, TCO² warns their audiences that young girls may be enticed by the fancy car, expensive gifts, and flattery, but they are quickly disillusioned. "I'll seduce you with promises I have no intention of fulfilling," says an actor playing the role of a pimp.

During its first year of operation, TCO² has given over 260 performances throughout British Columbia to school children, teachers, school board members, and service providers.²⁵ The TCO² presentation has been very well received and highly complimented after almost every performance. In many cases, students will approach the members of TCO² after a performance and disclose sexual abuse or exploitation to which they have been subjected.

REPLICATION ISSUES AND PARALLELS IN THE US

In contrast to the concentration of attention in the Canadian provinces, juvenile prostitution is not seen as a problem in most US cities. In a telephone survey conducted with police departments in the fifty largest US cities, only one-fourth of the responding departments reported more than five arrests for procuring or patronizing juvenile prostitutes in the previous year.²⁶ What accounts for such a marked difference in perception? Several possibilities may be hypothesized.

²⁵Children of the Street Annual Report, November 1996.

²⁶ Program to Increase Understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation Volume II Assessment Report, April 28, 1994, by Education Development Center, Inc. and the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law.

Prostitution is legal in Canada. Thus, it is perfectly legal for youth to frequent the stroll areas and to make themselves available for customers. However, the Canadian *Criminal Code* describes many prostitution-related activities which are illegal:

1. Keeping or being found in a common bawdy-house;
2. Procurement of a person to have illicit sexual intercourse with another person, to become a prostitute, or to enter or leave Canada for the purposes of prostitution;
3. Living off the avails of prostitution;
4. Exercising control, direction or influence over a prostitute; and
5. Communicating in public for the purposes of prostitution or for the purposes of obtaining the services of a prostitute.

The statutory age of consent is 14 in Canada, whereas in most states in the US, it is at least 16, and under federal law it is 18. It seems hardly coincidental that the average age of entry into prostitution in Canada is also 14 years old.

Some law enforcement officials theorize that, taken together, the illegal status of prostitution and the higher age of consent in the US have succeeded in driving juvenile prostitution underground. Youth in the sex trade are more likely to be closely guarded in quasi-legitimate businesses such as massage parlors or escort services. In Canada, too, children are prostituted in these indoor venues, but they seem to be much more visible in the streets than they are in most US communities.

Organization of the Team

The organization of the Provincial Prostitution Unit is much like US task forces in the assignment of expert investigators to work exclusively in the area of child sexual exploitation. Although prosecutors are commonly involved in cases in the US, it is unusual to have a prosecutor directly involved in the investigation stage of these cases in Canada. Unlike most US teams, the PPU does not assume responsibility for investigating prostitution-related cases in the province. Instead, they provide support and training to local law enforcement agencies in the communities where cases arise. This model may be less acceptable in the US, where local law enforcement agencies tend to be self-sufficient and less welcoming of external offers of assistance.

Services for Youth

Like their counterparts in the US, Canadian authorities struggle to provide services to youth involved in prostitution. To address the need for service provision to noncompliant clients, some parents of juvenile offenders have expressed their support for an “arrest and detain” policy which virtually coerces clients into treatment. “There have been times I’ve prayed for her to commit a crime so that she could be arrested and held in jail,” said one mother. Similar arguments have been raised in the United States, where the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act prohibits detention of youth unless they are arrested for offenses that would be crimes if committed by adults. In this country, youth who are involved in prostitution are more likely to be known to police as runaways, a status offense for which they cannot be detained.

Other parents and youth-serving professionals advocate for providing services only when youth are ready to make changes in their lives (e.g., P.A.C.E. lets young prostitutes know the streetworkers are available for support and assistance). Parent advocacy groups, such as Children of the Street, support the development of programs which can provide services in the youth’s hometown to allow for more distance from the street culture of city life.

The Victim Services Division of the British Columbia Ministry of Attorney General, Community Justice Branch, suggests approaching cases of child sexual exploitation in much the same manner as domestic violence cases. In both cases, victims are often reluctant witnesses and police investigators are advised to assume that the case will be tried without a witness as a “crime against the state.” Using this approach, the investigators must rely on third party collateral evidence, such as medical records and secondary interviews, to make a case. Victim Services suggests the need for law enforcement to become better investigators in order to effectively prosecute pimps without support from the victim.

Community Involvement

Another important component of the Canadian approach to juvenile prostitution is involvement of the local community. The coordinator position in the Provincial Prostitution Unit is primarily responsible for maintaining contact with community leaders and service providers. This function is considered critical in view of the very different nature of the nine areas that were targeted in the consultation process. Some are quite rural, others are suburban—these tend to be “supply” communities from which young people are recruited for the sex trade. Others—Vancouver and Victoria—are urban centers, destination communities that host the thriving sex trade. There are, however, children involved in the sex trade in every community visited by the PPU. The role of the community coordinator is to work with representatives of

each community to assist in developing interventions and services that meet each community's identified needs.

This community-centered model should be easily transferable to metropolitan areas across the US, especially those where community policing strategies are operational. Rather than imposing a "one size fits all" approach to prevention of juvenile prostitution and intervention on behalf of young victims, the British Columbia model allows diverse neighborhoods and communities to examine their own needs and strengths and to shape the most appropriate response.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Adults have sexually exploited children throughout history. Despite heightened awareness of the harm to children and efforts to ameliorate the problem through legislation, social service, and mental health interventions, it is likely that children are no more or less at risk today than they were centuries ago.

New technology and its criminal use to exploit children sexually have renewed public interest in this age-old problem. Children who are thought to be safely learning the use of computers (surely an educational opportunity) and innocently cruising the Internet may in fact be treated to graphic displays of sexual activities or tempted by offers of material goods or “meaningful” relationships with unscrupulous adults.

Although the mechanisms for seducing children may be different, the dynamics are the same. Investigators, prosecutors, and victim advocates have amassed a wealth of expertise in the dynamics of sex offenses against children. The new challenge is to apply this knowledge in the context of cyberspace.

While the advent of computers has certainly provoked intense interest in the threats to children from pornography and on-line seduction, the involvement of children in prostitution has received far less attention in this country. The phenomenon is thought largely to be linked to the population of runaway and homeless youth, yet there are documented cases of children who are trafficked for sexual purposes. There are no reliable statistics on the number of children who are involved in prostitution, whether in the form of entrepreneurial “survival sex” or in commercial, organized networks.

As with other sexual offenses against children, investigators, prosecutors, and victim advocates are knowledgeable about the dynamics and investigative techniques in prostitution cases. New and recurring challenges are to access “closed” venues (such as massage parlors and escort services), enforce laws prohibiting interstate and international trafficking, and encourage reluctant victims to testify against adult pimps and johns.

In addition to the challenges that arise when investigating and prosecuting cases of child sexual exploitation, there are larger issues that have an impact on the work of criminal justice professionals and victim service providers.

For example, there may be a need for new legislation in certain areas. Some states still do not criminalize possession of child pornography. In these jurisdictions, such cases can only be prosecuted federally unless there are other serious violations of state law.

While these cases may result in strong convictions with lengthy incarceration, the inability to charge for possession of child pornography tends to diminish the damage such materials can do to the victims. Similarly, in some states the age of consent for sexual activity is as young as 13. In these states, adults who prey upon young teens are likely to be prosecuted for statutory rape (if at all) rather than sexual assault on a minor—again diminishing the severity of the crime for these children. Other potential areas of concern may include the need to increase the severity of penalties for exploitation offenses or clarify definitions. Members of multijurisdictional teams have been active in drafting and supporting legislation in their respective states to enhance their ability to investigate and prosecute cases of child sexual exploitation.

Another challenge for multijurisdictional teams is prevention. Most criminal justice and victim assistance personnel are accustomed to speaking to various community groups about preventing crime in their neighborhoods. Some members of the teams represented in this report are involved in public awareness activities designed to alert parents, in particular, about the dangers to their children from sex offenders and especially those who frequent the Internet. These presentations are important to help parents and children understand the threats and implement some fundamental prevention techniques, such as locating the computer in a family room rather than a child's bedroom or installing parental control software. Public awareness activities also serve the valuable function of introducing youth officers and victim service providers to their local constituencies and paving the way for better communication.

In fact, effective criminal justice interventions in child sexual exploitation are congruent with community policing initiatives. Law enforcement officers who are familiar with, and known to, the children and families in their community are likely to recognize circumstances under which children may be vulnerable to sexual predators, and they can take action—e.g., alerting parents, involving children in after-school activities—to reduce the risk. Especially in areas with large populations of runaways and street youth, community policing offers a useful way to develop rapport and work with the children to identify and apprehend pimps, johns, and others who exploit homeless youth, whether sexually or otherwise.

The experiences of the five teams represented in this report demonstrate that the criminal justice system can do a better job in all types of child sexual exploitation cases by joining forces, not only with victim service providers, but with their own counterparts across traditional jurisdictional boundaries. In addition, such a combined initiative can strengthen a team's ability to extend beyond the daily functions of investigation and prosecution and into far-reaching areas of legislative change and prevention. Successful work in the area of child sexual exploitation requires a formidable array of resources, information, and expertise that can only be realized by tapping the capacity of numerous agencies. Perhaps most importantly, it requires a commitment among all involved agencies to collaborate, coordinate, and cooperate toward the shared goal of protecting children.

APPENDIX A

CONTACTS FOR MULTIJURISDICTIONAL TEAMS

Sexual Assault and Exploitation Felony Enforcement (SAFE) Team Central District of California

Sgt. Tom G. Sirkel
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
or
SSA Randy J. Aden
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Southern California Regional SAFE Team
Federal Bureau of Investigation
11000 Wilshire Blvd., 9th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90024
(310) 996-4027
(310) 996-3305

Massachusetts Child Exploitation Network

Ms. Ariane Vuono
Assistant US Attorney
US Attorney's Office
1550 Main Street, Room 310
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 785-0235

Sgt. Marian J. McGovern
Massachusetts State Police
19 Mid State Drive
Auburn, MA 01501
(508) 832-9124

Law Enforcement Effort Against Child Harm (LEACH) Task Force South Florida

Det. Bob DeYoung
Broward Co. Sheriff's Department
200 NW 27 Avenue
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312
(954) 321-4114

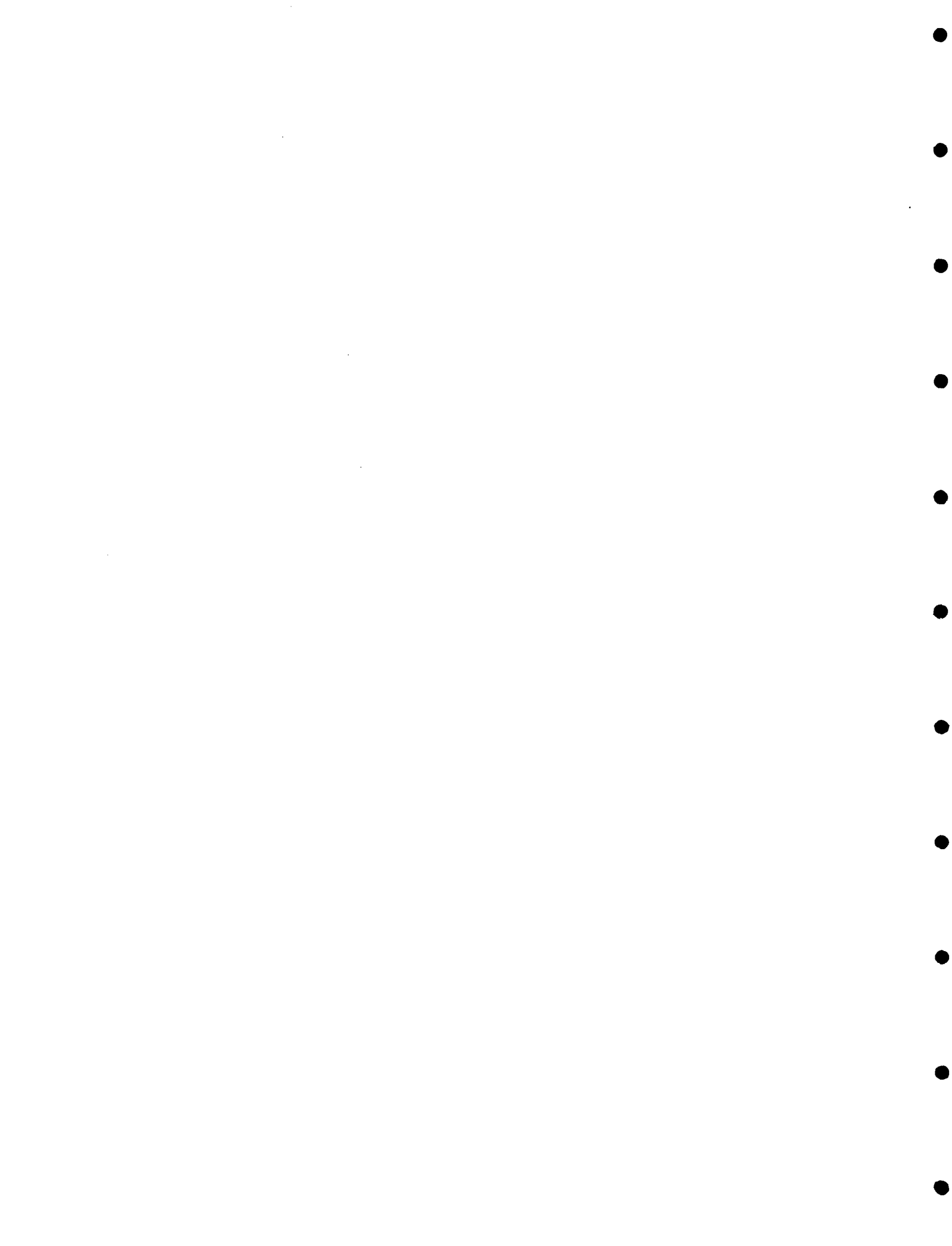
Special Agent Patricia J. Geyer
Florida Department of Law Enforcement
Broward Field Office
1475 NW 62nd St., Suite 203
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
(954) 958-5417

Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force, Chicago

Bob Williams
Postal Inspector
Federal Child Exploitation Strike Force
433 West Harrison St., 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60669-2231
(312) 983-6225

Provincial Prostitution Unit Vancouver, British Columbia

Ms. Sophie Mas
Community Coordinator
Provincial Prostitution Unit
815 Hornby St., Room 207
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2E6
(604) 775-2673



APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SOURCES OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section

U.S. Department of Justice
1331 F Street, NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20530
(202) 514-5780

The Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Department of Justice oversees the federal response to child sexual abuse and exploitation. Prosecutors who are experts in these areas are available to consult with federal, state, and local prosecutors and investigators on investigative techniques and strategies, litigation, and trial techniques and strategy. The Section also participates in training programs for federal prosecutors and investigators, which are often open to state and local officials. Section attorneys are authorized to conduct prosecutions throughout the United States and oversee all national investigative efforts. Section attorneys also review all federal search warrants involving the seizure of computers in child sexual abuse and exploitation cases.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Office on Crimes Against Children
935 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20535
(202) 324-3666

This office within the FBI's Violent Crimes and Major Offenders Section focuses attention exclusively on victimization of children. Operational since March 1997, the Office on Crimes Against Children consists of three supervisory special agents, one program analyst, and one program assistant. Among the crimes falling within the jurisdiction of the new Office are kidnapping, child abduction, child sexual exploitation, child abuse on government or Indian lands, and violations of the Child Support Recovery Act. Through the new Office, the FBI can better mobilize its resources in profiling, computer analysis, and other specialized functions toward the complex matters that arise in these cases. The Office is developing guidelines and investigative protocols that will be shared with law enforcement agencies around the country.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Child Abduction and Serial Killer Unit (CASKU)
Quantico, VA 22135
(540) 720-4700

CASKU is a rapid response element of the FBI's Critical Incident Response Group. The unit has primary responsibility for providing investigative support through violent crime analysis, technical

and forensic resource coordination, and application of the most current expertise available in matters involving the abduction or mysterious disappearance of children and serial and mass murder. Specialized CASKU staff provide operational assistance to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, responding immediately to requests and providing on site assistance as appropriate. CASKU services include crime analysis, investigative strategies, interview and interrogation strategies, analysis of the behavioral characteristics of unknown offenders, trial preparation and prosecutive strategy, expert testimony, and coordination of other FBI resources. CASKU maintains a close working relationship with NCMEC and can help to arrange the use of their resources, such as poster distribution and age enhancement of photographs.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Morgan P. Hardiman Task Force on Missing and Exploited Children
Quantico, VA 22135
(540) 720-4760

Created by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, this Task Force coordinates federal law enforcement resources to assist state and local authorities in investigating the most difficult cases of missing and exploited children. The Task Force is composed of at least two members from each of seven federal agencies: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; Drug Enforcement Administration; FBI; US Customs Service; US Marshals Service; US Postal Inspection Service; and US Secret Service.

US Customs Service

Office of Investigations
1301 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20229
(202) 927-1530

The US Customs Service aggressively targets importers, distributors, and purveyors of child pornography to prevent the sexual exploitation of children both in the US and abroad. The US Customs Service Child Pornography Enforcement Program works closely with the FBI, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, US Postal Inspection Service, and NCMEC. Reports received on NCMEC's child pornography Tipline are referred directly to the Child Pornography Enforcement Program for dissemination to the appropriate field offices. The US Customs Service also offers the following services: training for law enforcement officers who are involved in child pornography investigations, investigative support for child pornography investigations, and information dissemination to the public.

US Postal Inspection Service

Office of Criminal Investigations
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, SW, Room 3141
Washington, DC 20260-2166
(202) 268-4286

The US Postal Inspection Service is the law enforcement arm of the US Postal Service with responsibility for investigating crimes involving the US mail, including all child pornography and sexual exploitation offenses. Specially trained postal inspectors are assigned to each of the 30 field divisions nationwide. Services and investigative assistance provided by the Postal Inspection Service are available to any local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550

Arlington, VA 22210-3052

(703) 235-3900

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children serves as a clearinghouse of information; provides technical assistance to citizens and law enforcement agencies; offers training programs to law enforcement and social service professionals; distributes photographs and descriptions of missing children; coordinates child protection efforts with the private sector; and provides information on effective state legislation to ensure the protection of children. The Center maintains a Child Pornography Tipline in which workers are trained to receive and refer calls providing information that may assist a federal, state, or local investigation.

National Center for State and Local Law Enforcement Training

Fox Valley Technical College

Criminal Justice Department

PO Box 2277

Appleton, WI 54913-2277

(800) 648-4966

Through this contractor, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention offers six courses relevant to investigation of child sexual exploitation:

(1) Child Abuse and Exploitation Investigative Techniques

This course is designed to enhance the skills of experienced law enforcement and other justice system agencies including child protective services involved in the investigation of child abuse, sexual exploitation of children, child pornography, and missing children cases. The training provides valuable information in the areas of recognizing the signs of physical/sexual abuse, evidence collection and preservation, case preparation for prosecution, interviewing victims/offenders, liability issues, child prostitution, CPS perspective, and investigating techniques for abuse and missing children cases.

Target audiences: Law enforcement investigators, child protective services workers, and other juvenile justice system officials involved in the investigation of child abuse, exploitation, and missing children.

(2) Child Abuse and Exploitation Team Investigative Process

CAE-TIP is an intensive "team" program designed for a four member local team. The focus of this program is the development of an interagency process and protocols for the enhanced enforcement, prevention and intervention of child abuse cases. Hands-on, team activity involving investigations, case preparation and prosecution form the basis of this fact-paced offering. Teams are assisted in the development of their own interagency implementation plan for the improved management and investigation of these important and sensitive cases.

Target audience: Teams must include an executive or administrative representative from law enforcement, prosecution, social services, and the medical field. Individual enrollees will not be accepted; registration must be for a team no larger than six individuals.

(3) Child Sexual Exploitation Investigations

This course is designed to provide law enforcement professionals with the information necessary to properly understand, recognize, investigate, and resolve child sexual exploitation. Participants will learn how child predators solicit and accomplish their sexual satisfaction. They will learn how to obtain and execute search warrants. Topics covered include computer child exploitation, missing children, child prostitution, interviewing victims, interrogating suspects, prosecution, federal agencies' roles and resources, federal statutes, case enhancement/victim services, and managing the child exploitation problem.

Target audience: Law enforcement investigators, child protective service workers, and other juvenile justice system officials involved in the investigation of child sexual abuse, exploitation, and missing children.

(4) Missing and Exploited Children

This course is intended as a complement to the *Child Abuse and Exploitation* offering and presents more advanced concepts regarding the investigative process for the experienced investigator. Interagency development/process, advanced interviewing techniques, advanced techniques for missing children cases, and advanced techniques for child exploitation are covered in this course.

Target audience: Experienced law enforcement investigators and other juvenile justice system officials involved in the investigation of child abuse, exploitation and missing children.

(5) Responding to Missing and Abducted Children

The purpose of this program is to provide law enforcement and other professionals with the information necessary to properly understand, recognize, investigate, and resolve cases involving missing and abducted children. Topics covered include: investigation of nonfamily abductions, family abductions, and runaway/throwaway children; victim impact; reunification/recovery; media; case management; and case enhancement resources.

Target audience: Law enforcement investigators, child protective service workers, and other juvenile justice system officials involved in the investigation of missing and abducted children.

(6) Chief Executive Officer Seminar

The NCMEC, FBI, Fox Valley Technical College and OJJDP developed this new training course at the new Jimmy Ryce Law Enforcement Training Center. This seminar highlights the most current research and practices related to missing children issues. It focus on coordination and policy concerns, comprehensive response protocols, liability issues, federal resources available to assist law enforcement, the new National Crime Information Center {NCIC} flagging system and community strategies for handling missing children cases.

Target Audience: Chiefs' and sheriffs' involved in the investigation of missing and abducted children.

National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse

American Prosecutors Research Institute
99 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 510
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-0321

The National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse serves as a central resource for prosecutors and other child abuse professionals responsible for handling criminal child abuse cases. The NCPCA sponsors training conferences on investigating and trying child abuse cases, on abuse-related deaths, and on parental abductions. It publishes the manual *Investigation and Prosecution of Child Abuse* and *UPDATE*, a monthly newsletter; maintains an extensive library and automated legal database; and provides information to prosecutors and others seeking technical guidance in preparing cases for court.

Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS)

RISS is a federally-funded program to support law enforcement efforts to combat organized criminal activity, drug trafficking, and white collar crime. It can provide law enforcement agencies with a broad range of intelligence and investigative support service including a centralized data base, analysis of investigative data, specialized investigative equipment on loan, confidential funds, technical assistance, training, and access to a telecommunications system. There are six regional centers, as follows:

New England State Police Information Network
75 Second Avenue, Suite 100
Needham, MA 02194
(617) 449-5757
(ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI)

Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center
No. 4 Corporate Centre, Suite 205
Springfield, MO 65804
(417) 883-4383
(ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA, MO, WI, IL)

Western States Information Network
PO Box 903198
Sacramento, CA 94203-1980
(916) 263-1166
(AK, HI, WA, OR, CA)

Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime
Law Enforcement Network
850 Bear Tavern Rd., Suite 206
West Trenton, NJ 08628
(609) 530-0585
(MI, IN, OH, PA, NY, NJ, MD, DE)

Rocky Mountain Information Network
3802 North 53rd Ave., Suite 301
Phoenix, AZ 85031-3019
(602) 245-4180
(MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM)

Regional Organized Crime Information Center
545 Marriott Dr., Suite 850
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 871-0013
(OK, TX, AR, LA, KY, TN, MS, AL, WV,
VA, NC, SC, GA, FL)

The Office for Victims of Crime

U.S. Department of Justice
810 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531
(202) 307-5983

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) serves as the Justice Department's chief advocate for America's crime victims. OVC provides training and technical assistance through various grants and contracts and funds the OVC Resource Center. OVC's Trainer's Bureau makes speakers/trainers available to agencies needing high quality training or short term technical assistance. Special consideration is given to requests where the assistance would build inter-agency or multidisciplinary capacity to deliver services. OVC also provides District Specific Training funding to U.S. Attorney's offices who request training assistance for federal criminal justice personnel. OVC's homepage (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/>) provides comprehensive online resources on victims' rights, compensation, services, training and technical assistance, publications, and links to other victim assistance webpages.

National Organization for Victim Assistance

1757 Park Road, NW
Washington, DC 20010
(202) 232-6682

NOVA is a private, nonprofit organization of victim and witness assistance programs and practitioners, criminal justice and mental health professionals, researchers, former victims and survivors, and others committed to the recognition and implementation of victim rights. NOVA has an active membership of 3,500 agencies and individuals and provides victim assistance to over 10,000 victims each year. NOVA staff members have conducted hundreds of trainings and published numerous curricula, books, and articles related to young victims.

National Victim Center

2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 276-2880

The National Victim Center was founded in 1985 by the children of Sunny von Bulow, to honor their mother, to promote the rights and needs of violent crime victims, and to educate Americans about the devastating effect crime has on our society. In conjunction with the U.S. Department of Justice, the Center has developed extensive training programs to improve the justice system's response to victims through law enforcement, prosecution, the judiciary, community and institutional corrections, and civil remedies. Additional programs help improve rights and services for victims of child abuse, child abduction, sexual assault, domestic violence, elder abuse, hate violence, drunk driving, and survivors of homicide victims.

PUBLICATION SOURCES

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect

PO Box 1182
Washington DC 20013-1182
(800) 394-3366 or (703) 385-7565

National Clearinghouse on Runaway and Homeless Youth

PO Box 13505
Silver Spring, MD 20911-3505
(301) 608-8098

National Institute of Justice

National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850
(800) 851-3420

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse

1600 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850
(800) 638-8736

Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center

Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20050
(800) 627-6827

National Resource Center for Youth Services

The University of Oklahoma
202 West Eighth
Tulsa, OK 74119-1419
(918) 585-2986

National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment

Child Welfare Institute
1349 West Peachtree St., NE
Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 881-0707

American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law

740 15th St., NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 662-1720

American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children

407 S. Dearborn, Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 554-0166

The **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention** publishes 11 portable guides concerning a variety of law enforcement issues. The following titles cover issues related to this publication:

1. *Understanding and Investigating Child Sexual Exploitation*
2. *Criminal Investigation of Child Sexual Abuse*
3. *Interviewing Child Witnesses and Victims of Sexual Abuse*

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