



Making every child matter ... everywhere

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

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Stephen A Carter
Minister for Communications
Technology and Broadcasting

9 March 2009

Dear Mr Carter

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the interim Digital Britain report. On behalf of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, I have outlined a series of points which we would like to be considered for inclusion in the final report.

All these points in the attached document relate to the section in the report on Media Literacy. I have invited key personnel involved with the report to visit us here at the Centre, and am happy to discuss any of the matters raised here in more depth at your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Gamble', written over a light pink rectangular background.

Jim Gamble QPM
CEOP Chief Executive

Digital Britain – CEOP response to the interim report

- 1) In relation to safeguarding and child protection, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre would like to stress the limitations of the remit of the Byron Review and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).
- 2) The UKCCIS has no locus of control in terms of addressing images of intra-familial child abuse. This issue remains a subject to be addressed through existing law enforcement mechanisms.
- 3) The evidence base of the CEOP Centre indicates that a significant proportion of the children and young people who are victimised online may be categorised in terms of those children whose images of abuse have been circulated by child sex offenders in commercial, or more often, peer-to-peer exchanges.
- 4) The children who fall into this category are primarily victims of intra-familial network, contact abuse in the offline environment. This is supported by an analysis of victim typologies of those children and young people safeguarded through the investigative work of the CEOP Victim Identification Team
- 5) These are children and young people abused in the offline world whose trauma has been photographed and/or filmed, then circulated and perpetuated online as an offender commodity. In those instances, technology merely becomes the medium through which images of offline abuse are produced, distributed and exchanged.
- 6) As has been stated, whilst we are clear that the protection of the children in this category does not fall into the remit of the UKCCIS, it is of significant importance to share our understanding of victim profiling and child protection in the digital arena.
- 7) To this end, it should be noted that the Byron Report focus on blocking and removing **content** is just one element of safeguarding young internet users, and falls largely into the remit of the Internet Watch Foundation who are not a law enforcement agency. We argue that the prevalent issue is one of **contact** and **conduct** through the grooming of young people by predatory online 'friends', and the peer-to-peer file sharing of child abuse images.
- 8) In conclusion, we seek some acknowledge in sections 5.2 & 5.3, pp. 66-70 of the Digital Britain Report of the wider risks and threats to children and young people, and some reference to the need for effective joined up working between industry and law enforcement.