



C.A.T.S. Chats

CHILD ABUSE TRAINING SERVICES
PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION OF MI

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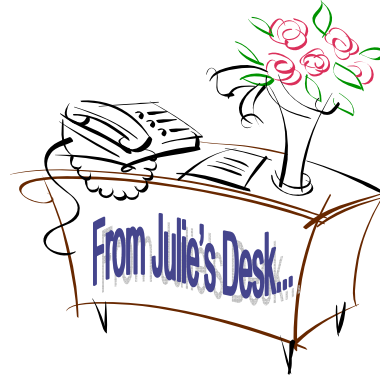
Together we can make a difference.

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Julie A. Welch, Editor

Do you wish you knew why the six year old you are talking to keeps looking at the wall and playing with his shoelaces? Why does the three year old tell you everything down to the color of the pajamas she wore last night when you only asked her name? We all know that children are “different”, but do you know why? Understanding the different stages of child development and what is considered “normal” will help you in your work with children. We shouldn’t expect kids to sit and communicate with us on our terms; we need to adjust our thinking and tailor our interviews around them. Understanding the different developmental stages is imperative in helping children get through tough times.



We ask a great deal of children who have been victims or witnesses to crime when we ask them to participate in the criminal justice system. It is a system designed for adults, not for children. We expect young children to take part in a process that many adults find confusing and overwhelming. We want children to answer detailed questions about terrifying events in the presence of strangers. Just as the criminal justice system makes accommodations for victims and witnesses who do not speak English or who have physical handicaps, it must also make accommodations for children. It is important that professionals that work with children adapt their practice to the child’s development or special needs. If children cannot participate effectively in the criminal justice system, it may be impossible to protect them from future victimization and to hold offenders accountable.

If you are interested in learning more about *Working with the Emotional Needs of Children*, please consider attending one of our trainings that will feature this segment. Or, attend our webinar on this topic, which will be held on June 1, 2007.

FORENSIC INTERVIEWING TRAINING

PAAM’s Child Abuse Training Department is contracted through the Department of Human Services. Part of our grant is to provide the *Forensic Interviewing Protocol* training to workers in Michigan that are required to interview children regarding abuse. This is part of the Michigan Child Protection Law and is required to be used in our state. Workers that are included in this are Department of Human Services child protection workers, law enforcement, prosecutors and child advocacy center workers.

We are governed by DHS and the Governor’s Task Force to provide this two day training. **It is the only approved training within the state by these two entities.** We have begun to see Forensic Interviewing classes being offered around the state by others. Please make sure your counties are aware of the approved training provided through PAAM. Our trainings will always have the PAAM logo on documents advertising the training. If you have a county website, please consider linking to www.micats.org. You can call us or visit our website to see if a training is an actual PAAM training.

There is no charge to attendees for registration fees or materials. All other expenses are the responsibility of the attendee or their agency. **DHS employees ONLY** can contact our office to see if funds are available to cover meals, mileage and overnight expenses. We train over 900 professionals each year on a variety of child abuse and neglect topics. Please continue to check our website for updates. We are happy to try and accommodate your needs as a county and if you are interested in having a PAAM Forensic Interviewing training brought to you, please contact Julie Welch, Child Abuse Training Coordinator at welchj@michigan.gov.

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APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH!!



STUDY: MORE KIDS EXPOSED TO ONLINE PORN

February 5, 2007

CHICAGO - More children and teens are being exposed to online pornography, mostly by accidentally viewing sexually explicit Web sites while surfing the Internet, researchers say.

Forty-two percent of Internet users aged 10 to 17 surveyed said they had seen online pornography in the past year. Of those, 66 percent said they did not want to view the images and had not sought them out, University of New Hampshire researchers found. Their conclusions appear in February's *Pediatrics*, due out Monday.

"It's beyond the wild West out there. You've really taken away the age of innocence," said Dr. Michael Wasserman, a pediatrician with the Ochsner Clinic in Metairie, La., who was not involved in the study.

42% of Internet users aged 10 to 17 surveyed said they had seen online pornography in the last year.

Online pornography was defined in the study as images of naked people or people having sex.

"It's so common now, who hasn't seen something like that?" said Emily Duhovny, 17.

The Marlboro, N.J., high school senior said X-rated images pop up all the time when she's online. Duhovny said the first time she saw one, it was shocking, but now, "more than anything, it's just annoying."

"It doesn't have to be a negative thing, but that shouldn't be how you learn about sex education," said Duhovny, an editor for Sexetc.org, a teen-written Web site on sexual health issues affiliated with Rutgers University.

In the survey, most kids who reported unwanted exposure were aged 13 to 17. Still, sizable numbers of 10- and 11-year-olds also had unwanted exposure — 17 percent of boys and 16 percent of girls that age.

More than one-third of 16- and 17-year-old boys surveyed said they had intentionally visited X-rated sites in the past year.

The results come from a telephone survey of 1,500 Internet users aged 10 to 17 conducted in 2005, with their parents' consent. Overall, 34 percent had unwanted exposure to online pornography, up from 25 percent in a similar survey conducted in 1999 and 2000.

The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

Online use that put kids at the highest risk for unwanted exposure to pornography was using file-sharing programs to download images. However, they also stumbled onto X-rated images through other "normal" Internet use, the researchers said, including talking online with friends, visiting chat rooms and playing games.

Filtering and blocking software helped prevent exposure, but was not 100 percent effective, the researchers said.

Better methods are needed "to restrict the use of aggressive and deceptive tactics to market pornography online" without also hampering access to legitimate sites, the researchers said.

University of Chicago psychiatrist Sharon Hirsch said exposure to online pornography could lead kids to become sexually active too soon, or could put them at risk for being victimized by sexual predators if they visit sites that prey on children.

"They're seeing things that they're really not emotionally prepared to see yet, which can cause trauma to them," Hirsch said.

Exposure also could skew their perceptions about what constitutes a healthy sexual relationship, said Janis Wolak, the study's lead author and a researcher at the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center.

Still, many survey participants said they were not disturbed by what they saw, and Wolak said research is needed to determine how exposure to online pornography affects kids.

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What YOU say:

Hi Julie,

As I drove home yesterday and continued to think about my class experience, I just wanted to share with you that the class (Forensic Interviewing) was an excellent class, further yet, perhaps you and Dana are not aware that your great acting skills (via the skit examples) bring home the message that I'm sure the book will say, but the class interaction breathed life into just the words. Thank you for providing a class to highlight areas for me to improve. Kudos and it was a pleasure meeting you. Look forward to seeing you next month.

-Sheryl Kelly, attendee at the March Forensic Interviewing seminar in Mt. Pleasant



Did you know....

Cost of Child Abuse & Neglect in U.S. estimated at \$258 MILLION per DAY

In 2001, Prevent Child Abuse America released a report estimating that the US spends \$258 million each day as a direct or indirect result of the abuse and neglect of our nation's children. The annual costs are equivalent to \$1,461.66 per US family! The data used to obtain the total cost to society was based on research from a variety of sources. Since conservative estimates were used, the actual annual cost of child maltreatment in the US could be higher than its estimate of \$94 billion per year.

Proposed Calif. law reignites battle over best way to deal with unruly tots

In California, one lawmaker says she's had enough. Democratic assemblywoman Sally Lieber has introduced a bill that would outlaw spanking children under age 4. If the bill becomes law, that parent in the parking lot spanking their child could be charged with a misdemeanor punishable by a year in jail or a fine of up to \$1,000, making California the first state with such a law. The use of physical punishment to discipline children is already illegal in Austria, Finland, Germany and Sweden.

ProtectMIchild.com

What you need to know about the Michigan Children's Protection Registry

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System reported an estimated **1,490 child fatalities** in 2004.

The Michigan Children's Protection Registry is a secure database of protected e-mail addresses and other electronic contact points such as: fax numbers, mobile phone numbers (SMS), and instant messenger IDs. It allows Michigan's parents and schools to register electronic contact points that children may access.

Children are forbidden from purchasing certain products and services under Michigan law. Once an e-mail address or electronic contact point has been registered, senders of messages that advertise or link to prohibited products or services are required to remove the contact point from their mailing lists within 30 days.

UPCOMING TRAININGS & WEBINARS PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION AND TRAINING PARTNERS

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CATS Webinars:</u></p> <p>April 27 Basic Signs of Child Abuse</p> <p>June 1 Working with the Emotional Needs of Children</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CATS Trainings:</u></p> <p>April 3 Medical Issues Lansing</p> <p>May 16-17 Forensic Interviewing Okemos</p> <p>July 18 Handling the Child Protection Case Lansing</p> <p>Please check our website for updates and announcements:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.micats.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Training partners & Other PAAM Grants:</u></p> <p><u>SCAO Family Services:</u></p> <p>Oct 22-23 U of M CA & Neglect Conference Plymouth</p> <p>Dec Testifying in Court (full day) or 1/2 day w/ Effective Petition Writing</p> <p>April '08 Addressing DV Issues in Child Welfare E.Lansing</p> <p><u>VAWA:</u></p> <p>April 17 DV Grad School 1: Strangulation Bay City</p> <p>May 15 DV Grad School 2: Batterers Chelsea</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.michiganprosecutor.org</p>
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Together we can make a difference.

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The CATS mission is to promote multi disciplinary expertise in the prevention and management of child abuse by providing professionals with up-to-date information about suspected or alleged sexual or physical abuse, neglect and the training of Forensic Interviewing.

Oakland County Gets Toll Free Number

The Michigan Department of Human Services in Oakland County has implemented a dedicated, toll-free telephone number to better handle reports of suspected adult or child abuse and neglect.

The number, **1-866-975-5010**, is intended for the exclusive use of reporting incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of adults and children in Oakland County. Other DHS Oakland County matters related to foster care, child placements, adoptions, adult services or assistance programs should be directed to the clients' regular contacts.

The new number was implemented to create faster response times, to address the growing number of abuse complaints and to assist mandated reporters and others who must promptly report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. This number is for the exclusive use of reporting abuse and neglect issues for Oakland County only. Reports of abuse and neglect outside of Oakland County should continue to use the telephone number listed in their community directories. As always, emergencies should be reported to 911 for immediate action.

For more information, go to www.michigan.gov/dhs

WHAT WAS SHE THINKING??

CLINTON, South Carolina (AP) -- A middle school teacher accused of having sex with at least five boys -- some of them students at her school -- was arrested, authorities said.

Police began investigating Allenna Williams Ward, 23, after school officials recovered a note containing inappropriate messages, said Clinton Public Safety Director John Thomas.

Ward, who is married, had sexual encounters with the 14- and 15-year-old boys at various locations, including in the school, at a motel, in a park and behind a restaurant, from December to this month, according to arrest warrants.

Some of the victims were students at Ward's school, Thomas said.

Ward was placed on administrative leave with pay last Thursday, acting district Superintendent Laura Koskela said. A message left for the school's principal was not immediately returned Wednesday.

Ward was charged with criminal sexual conduct with a minor and six counts of lewd acts on a minor, according to arrest warrants. She is being held in jail awaiting a bail hearing, police said.

A phone message left at Ward's home was not returned.

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County Specific Forensic Interviewing Training Available

If your county or agency has 25 or more individuals that need or would like Forensic Interviewing training, we can arrange to bring the training to you. Costs to the county or agency for these trainings are based on the number of trainers and number of attendees. Materials (Forensic Interviewing notebooks) are available for \$15.00 per notebook in conjunction with a training. If you would like to discuss the option of a county or agency specific Forensic Interviewing training, please contact Julie Welch, the CATS Training Coordinator at 517-334-6060 ext. 833 or at welchj@michigan.gov.

To view a copy of the Forensic Interviewing Protocol online, please go to:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DHS-Pub779_13054_7.pdf