

fully understand the dynamics of juvenile sexual exploitation risk losing critical information that could help convict perpetrators or identify additional victims. When appropriate, medical and psychological evaluations should be a part of law enforcement's response to cases involving child victims. In addition to ensuring that injuries or diseases related to the victimization are treated, forensic medical examinations provide crucial corroborative evidence.

The above factors almost routinely complicate the investigative process. Although no two cases raise identical issues of jurisdiction, evidence collection, and victim services, it is logical to presume that investigations characterized by a multijurisdictional, multidisciplinary approach will more likely result in successful prosecutions.

A variety of Federal activities are helping and can further help law enforcement respond to these offenses. For example, the Innocent Images National initiative, managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Cyber Division, Innocent Images Unit, works specifically on cases involving computer-facilitated child sexual exploitation. The U.S. Customs Service (USCS) and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) have successfully investigated hundreds of child pornography cases.

The Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) of the U.S. Department of Justice prosecutes Federal violations and offers advice and litigation support to Federal, State, and local prosecutors working on child pornography and sexual exploitation cases.

With support from OJJDP and private-sector funding, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) serves as the nation's primary resource center and clearinghouse for issues involving missing and exploited children. NCMEC's Training Division coordinates a comprehensive training and technical assistance program that includes prevention and awareness activities. Gathering information from citizens and Internet service providers, the CyberTipline (<http://www.missingkids.com>) collects online reports regarding the computer-facilitated sexual exploitation of children and rapidly forwards this information to the law enforcement agencies with investigative jurisdiction. Brought online in March 1998, the CyberTipline has provided law enforcement officers with information that has enabled them to arrest individuals seeking sex with underage victims and to safely recover and return

children enticed from home by sex offenders.

NCMEC's law enforcement training and technical assistance program was developed in partnership with OJJDP, the FBI, USCS, USPIS, and CEOS. NCMEC has also developed an education and awareness campaign that features the Kids and Company curriculum, the Know the Rules teen awareness program, and two pamphlets (*Child Safety on the Information Highway* and *Teen Safety on the Information Highway*) that provide information about safe Internet practices for children and youth. These programs and materials are offered free of charge, and OJJDP encourages communities working on child victimization issues to use them. Additional information about NCMEC's services for children, parents, educators, and law enforcement officers can be obtained by calling 800-THE-LOST or by accessing NCMEC's Web site at <http://www.missingkids.com>.

Since fiscal year 1998, OJJDP has awarded funds to 35 State and local law enforcement agencies to develop regional multijurisdictional and multiagency task forces to prevent, interdict, and investigate ICAC offenses. The following jurisdictions currently receive ICAC Regional Task Force Program funding: Alabama Department of Public Safety; Bedford County, Virginia, Sheriff's Department; Broward County, Florida, Sheriff's Department; Clark County, Nevada, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department; Colorado Springs, Colorado, Police Department; Connecticut State Police; Cuyahoga County, Ohio, District Attorney; Dallas, Texas, Police Department; Delaware County, Pennsylvania, District Attorney; Georgia Bureau of Investigation; Hawaii Office of the Attorney General; Illinois State Police; Indiana State Police; Kentucky State Police; Knoxville, Tennessee, Police Department; Louisiana Office of the Attorney General; Maryland State Police; Massachusetts Department of Public Safety; Michigan State Police; Nebraska State Patrol; New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services; North Carolina Division of Criminal Investigation; Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation; Phoenix, Arizona, Police Department; Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Police Department; Sacramento County, California, Sheriff's Office; Saint Paul, Minnesota, Police Department; San Diego, California, Police Department; San Jose, California, Police Department; Seattle, Washington, Police Department; Sedgewick County, Kansas, Sheriff's Office; South Carolina Office of the Attorney General; Utah Office of the Attorney General;

Wisconsin Department of Justice; and the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation. These agencies have become regional clusters of ICAC technical and investigative expertise, offering prevention and investigation services to children, parents, educators, law enforcement officers, and other individuals working on child sexual exploitation issues. Collectively, task force agencies have made more than 800 arrests, seized more than 900 computers, and provided forensic or investigative assistance in nearly 3,000 cases.

Despite these accomplishments, law enforcement agencies continue to be increasingly challenged by sex offenders who use computer technology to victimize children. To help meet this challenge, OJJDP is continuing the ICAC Regional Task Force Program, which will competitively award cooperative agreements to state and local law enforcement agencies seeking to improve their investigative responses to the computer-facilitated sexual exploitation of children.

Program Strategy

The ICAC Task Force Program seeks to enhance the nationwide response to child victimization by maintaining and expanding a State and local law enforcement network composed of regional task forces. The program encourages communities to develop multijurisdictional, multiagency responses and provides funding to State and local law enforcement agencies to help them acquire the knowledge, personnel, and specialized equipment needed to prevent, interdict, and investigate ICAC offenses. Although the ICAC Task Force Program emphasizes law enforcement investigations, OJJDP encourages jurisdictions to include intervention, prevention, and victim services activities as part of their comprehensive approach.

OJJDP Program Management

During the past four years of managing the ICAC Task Force Program, OJJDP has made the following observations:

1. The Internet challenges traditional thinking about law enforcement jurisdiction and renders city, county, and State boundaries virtually meaningless. Because of this jurisdictional ambiguity, offenders are often able to frustrate enforcement actions and conceal their criminal activities.

2. Nearly all ICAC investigations (95 percent) involve substantial communication and coordination efforts among Federal, State, and local law