National Childhood Crimes Expert Calls for Increased Evaluation of Protective Strategies Amid Recent Online Child Safety Senate Hearing

Friday, February 2, 2024

Tech giants must employ more experts and fund research and training

DURHAM, N.H.— According to a national study done by the Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) at the University of New Hampshire, nearly one in four girls and one in 12 boys has experienced online sexual abuse in their childhood. With five of the country's most prominent tech executives being called before the Senate Judiciary Committee to answer harsh questions related to the safety of children using their platforms, David Finkelhor, director of the CCRC and a professor of sociology, says not enough attention is given to prevent the problem by the tech companies as well as policymakers, education institutions and internet service providers.

"There is a huge gap in knowledge about the dynamics and varieties of harm," Finkelhor stated. "When individuals are not well-informed, it stands in the way of good policy and good prevention. At this time, there is little evaluation of protective strategies. In addition to fighting for change, we need funding for more research, training for child development experts on the digital environment and more experts on the staff of internet service providers to ensure they are sufficiently equipped to respond."

A nationally recognized expert who has published extensively in the field of child abuse treatment, prevention, and developmental victimology, Finkelhor has been studying online abuse since 1995 and the problems of child victimization, child maltreatment and family violence since 1977. He is well known for his conceptual and empirical work on the problem of child sexual abuse, reflected in publications such as Childhood Victimization, Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse and Nursery Crimes. He has also written about child homicide, missing and abducted children, children exposed to domestic and peer violence and other forms of family violence.

Created in 1998, the UNH Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) works to combat crimes against children by providing high-quality research and statistics to the public, policy makers, law enforcement personnel, and other child welfare practitioners. CCRC is concerned with research about the nature of crimes including child abduction, homicide, rape, assault, and physical and sexual abuse as well as their impact. Visit the center online
National Childhood Crimes Expert Calls for Increased Evaluation of Protective Strategies Amid Recent Online Child Safety Senate

The University of New Hampshire inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from 49 states and 82 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top-ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. A Carnegie Classification R1 institution, UNH partners with NASA, NOAA, NSF, and NIH, and received over $210 million in competitive external funding in FY23 to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Media Contact
Robbin Ray ’82 (unhtoday/contributor/robbin-ray-82) | Communications and Public Affairs | robbin.ray@unh.edu (mailto:robbin.ray@unh.edu) | 603-862-4864

LATEST NEWS

UNH Announces 2024 Commencement Speakers (unhtoday/news/release/2024/03/26/unh-announces-2024-commencement-speakers)
March 26, 2024

Media Availability: Expert Comments on Structural Collapse of Baltimore Bridge (unhtoday/news/release/2024/03/26/media-availability-expert-comments-structural-collapse-baltimore-bridge)
March 26, 2024

New Simpler and Cost-Effective Forensics Test Helps Identify Touch DNA (unhtoday/news/release/2024/03/14/new-simpler-and-cost-effective-forensics-test-helps-identify-touch-dna)
March 14, 2024

Expert Comment: Princess Kate’s Questionable Photo and Health Rumors Fracture Public Trust in British Monarchy (unhtoday/news/release/2024/03/12/expert-comment-princess-kates-questionable-photo-and-health-rumors-fracture)
March 12, 2024

March 11, 2024

SUBSCRIBE TO UNH TODAY (HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/MAIN/UNH-TODAY-SUBSCRIPTION)