



For Immediate Release
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Mission, B. C. – The tragedy of Holly Jones’ death has sparked news reports and commentary calling for legal reforms. More laws about child pornography will not however make a dent in the escalating nature of the publics’ exposure to explicit material depicting children unless also accompanied by more education and a realistic dialogue regarding the nature of sexual exploitation on the internet, the needs of victims, and the need to educate people who maybe experimenting with viewing child pornography online.

While interest by pundits and politicians is seemingly focusing on the need to amend Canadian child pornography laws, it is doubtful,” says Merlyn Horton, Executive Director of the Safe OnLine Outreach Society, “that changing the laws will improve or accelerate our efforts to protect children on the internet and on the streets.”

“Focusing on reforming laws will not help with the resource problem on the police/ investigation side. For example, following the Landslide bust in Texas in 1999 Canadian law enforcement official were provided with the names 2329 Canadians who had purchased child pornography with their credit cards. To date, 141 people of those 2329 have been arrested for child pornography. The vast majority of have not had the opportunity to claim ‘artist merit’ or argue the ‘public good’ nuances of the law because they have never been investigated or contacted by police,.” (reference <http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2003/01/17/childporno30117>)

We also need to approach these crimes from a human services perspective that addresses the social aspects of this issue. Comments in the media yesterday erroneously stated that viewing child pornography causes people to abuse children. As stated in a Department of Justice report from 2000,

"In summary, child and/or adult pornography is a feature in the lives of many pedophiles and other sexual offenders, just as it is a feature in the lives of some persons who do not commit sexual offences. Alternately, some sex offenders do not use pornography of any kind. There appears to be no strong and consistent evidence that sex offenders are more avid consumers of pornography than other males. A simple, direct causal link between pornography and sexual offending is not supported by the literature." <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/rs/rep/rroo-5.pdf>



“We need to respond to child pornography and child sexual abuse from an educational perspective if we are to reduce the number of pedophiles over the long term; educate the public about the dangers of viewing child pornography online, offer services to people before they offend, and educate all sectors of our communities about the risks and opportunities available on the internet.

Some ideas that will impact this issue include....

- Educate parents and youth about the danger of online sexual exploitation
- Update our professional practices to begin to identify and assist the children portrayed in child pornography
- Address the fact that the largest growing population of child porn viewers are adolescent males,
- Offer services or supports to those who may have experimented with viewing abusive images of children and offer them strategies and support to NOT act on their fantasies. Educate those with a latent sexual interest in children about the dangers of indulging in fantasies and accelerating their obsession by viewing child pornography online.
- Educate the public about this issue and the contributing factors of the early sexualization of children

The Safe OnLine Outreach Society (SOLOS) is a charitable non-profit society that is responding to the alarming issue of child pornography and online sexual exploitation by developing education and awareness initiatives aimed at youth serving professionals, parents and youth.

SOLOS receives financial support from the National Crime Prevention Centre, the Vancouver Foundation, the McCreary Foundation and the Province of British Columbia.

Ongoing efforts of the Society include the development of youth focused material about life online, organizational assessments to recognize technical risks and presentations to community groups, parents and the public.

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