

Why Didn't They Tell Us?



On Sexual Abuse in Child Pornography

**Carl Göran Svedin
and Christina Back**



Save the Children
Sweden

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ISBN 978-91-633-9048-7

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Printed by EVG Print, Tallinn, June 2011

1st edition

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PREFACE

Sexual abuse of children is a very old problem – presumably it has occurred from time immemorial. As a branch of knowledge it is relatively new – it was only at the end of the 1970s that we began to take notice in Sweden.

Silence and secretiveness surrounded sexual abuse of children. In Sweden, Save the Children has from the very beginning played a part in endeavouring to break that silence. This has been done through seminars and publications, via the media, by way of campaigns against sex tourism and against child pornography, through education and lectures, via our “Hotline” where we disrupt and expose paedophiles who distribute child pornography through the Internet. Save the Children’s own boy clinic, where sexually abused children as well as young perpetrators are offered help, is a Swedish pioneering work.

During the circa twenty-five years that the Swedish debate about sexually abused children has continued, our knowledge has vastly increased, but we are still in an initial phase concerning our understanding of the complicated dynamic between the perpetrator and the sexually abused victim.

That perpetrators will not talk about the sexual abuse that they have committed is understandable. They deny and diminish the abuse with the intention of avoiding both punishment under the criminal code and exposure as loathsome people to those around them. However, that even victims deny the abuse and react as if they were themselves the perpetrators has never before been presented as clearly as in this book. *Why Didn’t They Tell Us?* is a frightening but important milestone in the development of knowledge that is progressing within this area. This book will certainly have great significance for the social services as well as the judicial system in developing competence regarding interview techniques with children when suspicions exist about sexual abuse. It will, in addition, show itself to be of great value for professional therapists and pedagogues who work with vulnerable children. This book is also important for parents.

It is with great pride and pleasure that Save the Children Sweden now publishes this book. Our hope is that this addition to our knowledge is transformed into more effective and humane methods concerning interviews and conversations with children who have been harmed.

Börje Svensson

Head of Save the Children Sweden’s Centre for Children and Youth in Crisis.

INTRODUCTION

Under the aegis of Save the Children Sweden, the first reports about child pornography and child prostitution in Sweden appeared in 1991 and 1994 (55, 56). After the discovery of the Huddinge child pornography ring, there was an intensified debate about child pornography as related to the freedoms of publication and speech, a discussion that has been skilfully documented by the journalist Christina Hagner (36). There is, however, still no Swedish analysis that has studied the sexual abuse of children in child pornography or the consequences emanating out of this. There has likewise been no investigation that has compared what children have stated in interviews with what has been found substantiated in seized material. After the Huddinge ring was uncovered, co-operation was initiated between the police and the child- and adolescent psychiatric clinic at the University Hospital in Linköping. An agreement was reached whereby the police would inform the clinic when they were able to identify any child via the seized material. This gave unique possibilities for investigating how children are recruited, what children remember of their participation in relation to the actual course of events depicted in pictures/videos as well as shedding light upon the psychiatric health of children. Through these means, we had the opportunities to carry out the investigation that was presented in 1996 in the book *Barn som inte berättar (Children who don't speak out)* (Rädda Barnen – Save the Children Sweden, 1996). After 1996 we resumed our work – accordingly now with 30 children compared with the previous 10. This book, *Varför berättar de inte? (Why Didn't They Tell Us?)*, is the follow-up to our first book and was first published in Swedish in 2003.

THE PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL

Huddinge ring

In the so-called Huddinge child pornography ring, the police received a tip-off via Interpol from Germany in the summer of 1992. They searched the homes of two men, born in 1928 and 1954, and discovered a total of around 160 video- and cine-films containing child pornography. In addition to this, the police found comprehensive, expensive and advanced technological equipment for the production, editing and copying of video films. They also came across quantities of child pornographic magazines, correspondence, lists of orders, financial accounts

and lists of addresses. One of the men had tried to flush down the toilet a list of what had been bought by different customers. In the younger man's cooker, beneath baking trays in the oven, were three separate lists of addresses for customers in Sweden, the Nordic countries and elsewhere. In total, the police found 80 Swedish and 15 foreign addresses. Through an analysis of the material, it was established that the seized video films had functioned as a library from which customers, arising out of their own sexual preferences, could order sequences that were then spliced together to make a new video film. In addition to the purely commercial selling, films were also exchanged and lent out. In the younger man's home a private photographic album was found, which contained pictures of naked or scantily clad boys from his travels to Southeast Asia. Moreover, because of this a direct connection to sex tourism was established.

Both of the Huddinge men were remanded in custody on suspicion of sexual molestation respectively sexual abuse. There were good grounds for suspecting that sex crimes had been committed in connection with the photographing – including sexual content – young boys. Both men denied criminal acts and after two weeks were released from custody although in 1993 they were convicted of distributing child pornography. The older man was sentenced to six months and the younger man to four months in prison. During the investigation, however, the police again became interested in the younger man. In going through the material, the investigating officer succeeded in identifying the wallpaper in the man's flat. In this way, it was possible to identify three boys, and a further three boys were interviewed. Subsequently, the man was sentenced to four years in prison for sexual assault.

The seized material also contained a video where a middle-aged man from central Sweden sexually abused a 12 year-old boy. A police search of the man's home found video films and a photographic album with pornographic and other pictures of underage boys. The man was sentenced in 1992 to two years in prison.

Norrköping ring

One and a half years after the uncovering of the Huddinge ring and while its consequences continued to be investigated, the mail control unit of the National Police Board of Sweden by chance discovered a bunch of black and white child pornographic pictures in a parcel from Denmark. The pictures were addressed to a 25 year-old resident of Norrköping with the request to distribute them further. At a search of the man's home, 200 video films were found and an address list of 15

possible customers. The man was taken into custody, suspected of distributing child pornography; while, at the same time, there were house searches of 12 different addresses throughout the country. These police raids resulted in the finding of additional 1,200 confiscated films, and 13 persons were informed that they were suspected of child pornography crimes. The Norrköping investigation continued to try and identify the victims and perpetrators in those films that were presumed to be Swedish. Because of a signboard at a bathing place recorded on a film, it was possible to gradually identify a 43 years old artist who sexually abused two girls, aged three and ten years respectively. In 1994, a district court sentenced the man to three years in prison, a sentence that was later reduced by the Göta Court of Appeal to one and a half years. At a police interview in Skåne (Scania) in January of 1994, a perpetrator and a girl were identified on a photograph. This resulted in a 46 year old man from Stockholm and his former partner being convicted. The father was found guilty of the assault of his daughter and his son, as well as of his daughter's best friend. His former partner was convicted of having sexual relations with the boy on two occasions. The man was sentenced to secure psychiatric institutional care, and the woman to probation with the proviso to undergo psychiatric treatment.

To sum up, through intensive and time-consuming work the police succeeded in identifying four children connected to the Huddinge ring and five linked to the Norrköping ring.

Photographic dealers

As a consequence of the attention surrounding the distribution of child pornography, the Swedish National Police Board sent out a circular letter to all photographic dealers and asked them to contact the National Police Board if in their work they came across photos containing child pornographic material. In this way, between 1995 and 2000, we got to know of further six children. An additional three were reported in other ways: two when a neighbour saw pictures of children and reported the matter to the police, and one when a perpetrator himself told a therapist and consequently was reported.

Örebro paedophile

During the year 1998, the Swedish National Criminal Investigation Department (CID) received information via Interpol that a Swedish citizen was distributing child pornographic pictures through the Internet. The person made some "advertising" for his pictures on IRC, which is a system where anybody can log on, chat, and write messages to one

another. As it was possible to trace the Internet account and IP address via Tele2 (a Swedish telecommunications company), they located the suspect and took him away for questioning. The suspect was completely mystified by the allegations and it soon emerged that his own Internet subscription particulars had been stolen. After an extensive investigation by Tele2, they tracked down the exact telephone number that had connected to the Internet and in this manner the so-called Örebro paedophile was discovered. He was brought in for questioning, arrested and placed into custody on the suspicion of serious child pornographic crimes and unauthorized access to computer systems. A house search revealed a very disorganized and burglar alarmed flat, containing two children who appeared to have been locked in the apartment. Among other things in the flat, there was a video camera, 3 computers, 15 hard disk drives, 98 CD-ROM disks and quantities of video cassettes: all told it was estimated that there were around 47,000 pictures and about 800 video films containing child pornography. An analysis of the seized material could eventually identify 12 children. The perpetrator was sentenced to secure institutional psychiatric care with additional risk assessment discharge conditions, and to pay financial compensation totalling about SEK 1.5 million to the various children he had sexually abused. The perpetrator, like his partner, was found guilty of unlawful detention. The partner was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

In this way, our study¹ has come to include 30 children who have been identified in the confiscated pornographic material. The 30 children were divided between 11 court cases against 13 perpetrators: 11 men and two women. We have earlier written about 10 of the children in *Barn som inte berättar* ('Children who do not tell') (67).

QUESTIONS

Our intention has been to highlight the relationship between child and perpetrator, how the child is engaged, how is it that the sexual abuse continues, and if/when the child tells anyone. How the disclosure is experienced and not least how the child felt before and during the time of the sexual abuse, at the time of disclosure, and now at the time of the investigation, were the other salient questions.

¹ The Research Ethics Committee of the University Hospital in Linköping has approved the study, Dnr 95232.

Another aim has been to study the police interviews where children talk about things we already know have occurred, in other words what has been substantiated by picture. In which order do children talk, how do they react when confronted by the investigation's information and picture material? The situation differs markedly from most police interviews of children, where normally the investigator knows nothing more than what has become known through a report to the police on suspected sexual assault.

A further aspiration that has become more cogent during the years of the project has been our attempt to understand what it is that makes children not say anything about the sexual abuse to which they have been subjected. How can this be explained?

THE CHILDREN AND PERPETRATORS

THE CHILDREN

Of the 30 children, 11 were girls and 19 were boys. When they were subjected to sexual abuse, they were aged between 6 months to 14 years old. Fourteen were living with both their biological parents during the time of the sexual abuse. Sixteen lived together with one biological parent, alone or in combination with a stepparent. Five of these children lived under very deprived socio-economic conditions, of which two lived in extreme poverty. Of those 16 children who lived together with one parent, 11 also had contact with the other parent. The parents to 22 of the children were gainfully employed and often this was true of both parents. They worked, among others things, as computer technicians, engineers, assistant nurses, teachers, office clerks, cashiers, carpenters/joiners or were self-employed. Seven children had parents who did not work and the reason for this was either the shortage of work or physical and/or psychological ill health experienced by the parents. For one child we lack information concerning the parents' occupation. Most children originate from, at least from the outside, fairly ordinary home conditions. There have, however, been periods of stress within the family and parental neglect, as a consequence of divorce, death in the family, and overwork or burden of work. There has sometimes been a need for respite assistance and help with children, sometimes coupled with parental gullibility. In three cases there was notably a lack of supervision and care. In these cases an unknown perpetrator initiated contact with the children in the wider society.

THE PERPETRATORS

The perpetrators comprised of eleven men and two women. When they were found guilty, they were on average 39 years old, with an age variation of between 21 and 58 years. Six of the male perpetrators had worked with children, either during working hours or in their leisure time as children and youth leaders, or at day nurseries. It was evaluated that seven of the perpetrators suffered from mental difficulties, of which two had such serious symptoms that they consequently received foren-

sic psychiatric care. Five perpetrators regarded or defined themselves as paedophiles, and all of them had earlier worked with children and youth activities. Two of these, two men, had previously been found guilty of sexual crimes against children. These two also stated that they travelled to Southeast Asia in order to “socialize with children/boys”.

RELATIONSHIPS

Table 1 clarifies the relationship between the child and the perpetrator. Many of the perpetrators who assaulted several children had different relationships with the various children. For example, a perpetrator could be the father of one child while at the same time an acquaintance of, or a nursery staff worker for, another child. Only in 3 cases (9%) was the perpetrator someone who from the beginning was more-or-less unknown for the child or the child’s family. He took contact with children in public places or at a jumble sale. The perpetrator befriended children, later inviting them home to play computer games. More visits followed with further computer games, video films and snacks. For four of the children, the perpetrator was their own biological father. This sexual abuse continued for many years and the mothers had no knowledge of what was going on.

For a majority of the children, one can see a “cuckoo in the nest behaviour” by the perpetrator in connection with the family yielding to offers of support, babysitting, or adult friendship. Through becoming a trusted person, for example as a workmate, nursery staff or relative, and appreciated and liked by adults as well as children, consequently there was no one who was suspicious. Of their own accord the children made contact with the perpetrator, who engaged them, gave them attention and things to do, all of which they appreciated. In the majority of cases one can see that the perpetrator acted like a cuckoo in marginalizing the parents. For a time, the perpetrator became an important person or even the most important adult person for the child.

SEXUAL ABUSE

It is only the substantiated sexual abuse that can be proved. Only one child talked about an incident sexual abuse that was not substantiated, and none of the perpetrators said more than the seized material actually showed. There is good reason to think that significantly more sexual

abuse happened. For example, a girl placed in a foster home later talked about a serious case of repeated sexual abuse that was not substantiated. The number of substantiated instances of sexual abuse varied from a single occasion to the largest comprising of 74 substantiated occurrences. The period of sexual abuse is estimated either after what has originated in the summons, or if a child's and perpetrator's information unanimously specify another period. Thus even on this point there is great uncertainty regarding how long the sexual abuse continued, but taking the material in its entirety there is a range from 1 month to 100 months (8 years and four months!). On average, the sexual abuse continued for 22 months.

The acts that the children were subjected to varied greatly, but they generally covered all thinkable forms of sexual activities from sexual molestation in the form of perpetrators fiddling with children's genitals to full oral, genital and anal intercourse. Other children had been persuaded to engage in sexual activities with one another before the camera. The children had been photographed with a variety of objects, such as burning cigarettes in the rectum, pens or pennants in the vagina and anus. Some children have had to masturbate the perpetrator and others have had sperm sprayed onto their faces or their dummy/pacifier dipped in sperm. One child was forced to wet itself, and another to empty its bowels (compulsive purging).

The child's relationship to the perpetrator	Numbers of children
Biological father / adoptive father	4
Stepfather	2
Father's cohabite, stepfather's former cohabite	2
Relatives	9
Family acquaintances	8
Fathers of children's friends	1
Nursery staff	3
Unknown men	3
Total	32

TABLE 1. The child's relationship to the perpetrator

How the Perpetrator Initiated and How He Kept Contact

In cases where the perpetrator was a father or stepfather, the child was subjected to sexual abuse from an early age. One girl was still in nappies when it began and, above all, what she later remembered is that her father said that it was normal and that he instructed her about what she should do. He normalized everything, offered encouraged and promised fun activities afterwards. Besides, it was to be their secret and sometimes simple toys were given as bribes. To not make Daddy sad was a recurrent argument. The children trusted their fathers until they were big enough to learn through the mass media that it was not normal behaviour. There was a tacit agreement between the child and father that the child would not tell anyone. One son was given the explanation by his father that, "people do this to each other because they are fond of each other and because it is nice". When asked why he put up with it, he replied, "he was, of course, my father". At the interview, the boy described a certain fear of not doing as his father wanted. The son's sexual intercourse with his father's partner was justified by the argument that his son shall "have his sex debut with a mature women" – thus a type of sexual initiation. Another perpetrator described that for a girl it is important to understand how the body works and during questioning defended his behaviour with the justification that it was actually a matter of sexual instruction.

A girl said that it began more as playing together with several friends. The other children described how the perpetrator first became a "decent pal" long before the sexual abuse began. They were able to talk to the perpetrator and did various activities together. Sometimes the perpetrator even helped with everyday things such as homework. In some cases there was contact with the adult for a whole year before the sexual abuse began.

The perpetrator continued to be an emotionally important adult for the child and through normalization, sexual initiation, but also through bribes, presents and money, they encouraged and activated the child's own sexual urges. Suggestive and implicit threats were sometimes made and they played a part in keeping the child in contact with the perpetrator. Only in a few cases were direct threats expressed or force used. One girl was, however, repeatedly locked-in, and two boys felt themselves threatened and shut-in when the perpetrator locked the door.

It became apparent from the children that they were ashamed of what they have taken part in, and this shame also contributed to the continuation of the relationship with the perpetrator. They actively sought contact with an adult person; they had developed an emotionally sig-

nificant relationship which they had invested in. It was not so simple to break this and, instead, see themselves as abused and betrayed by that adult person.

Regarding the day care centre children in our study, the perpetrator was a known person who played with them and did enjoyable things with them. He combined play with sexual touching, which he also photographed. He manipulated children by simultaneously, for example, saying "Oh dear! We must take away this gravel from your willy", while masturbating the boy. In another case, the perpetrator placed a towel over the child's face when the child lay on the changing table, while simultaneously sucking the child's penis. In this way the perpetrator could keep the child in the situation while at the same time the child did not really understand what was happening.

THE INTERVIEWS

Interviewing of Children

A total of twenty-one children were interviewed about their experiences of sexual abuse. When the children were interviewed, their average age was 10 years and 8 months (between 4 years and 1 month, to 17 years and 8 months). The number of interviews with the children varied from one to three.

Different routines were used regarding substantiation. The majority of children were videoed while being interviewed, but some of the older children were just audio taped.

The interviews with the children were carried out in different ways. The majority of the children were interviewed without any of the seized material being shown to them. In several of the earlier interviews, seven instances with older children (>12 years old), the children were shown the seized pictures. More innocent pictures, such as portraits of the exposed upper part of the body, were first shown and as the interview progressed more indecent pictures were shown.

To sum up, one can say that of the interviewed children, only two of them began to talk spontaneously, and there were five others who eventually gave a fairly complete account without being shown the pictures or the investigator saying that he/she knew what had happened (from the seized material). Five children denied that anything had occurred. All the children's accounts were fragmentary, and the children showed great difficulty in talking about their contact with the suspected perpetrator. They often said that they did not remember what had

happened; we do not know whether this meant that they did not have any memory of the incidents or if it was too difficult to put it into words. Nevertheless, it became apparent that what the children least “wanted to remember”, were the most unpleasant or abusive activities, and these were probably the most shameful and guilt ridden. It was shown that the more interviews the children took part in, the more they talked. It is as if that they first needed to “sort out the memories which emerged” and only later could put into words what had happened.

The interview can be likened to an onion that is peeled – layer after layer peeled gently away.

The Interview with the Perpetrators

The thirteen perpetrators were interviewed between 1 and 13 times, on average four to five interviews were held. Below follows a short summary of every perpetrator’s response to the allegation made against them.

The first perpetrator admitted in the initial interview that, *on the child’s wish*, he photographed the child but denied distributing pornographic material, “someone must have nicked it”. He denied that he gave instructions but this was contradicted by the material. In the third interview he confessed that he had distributed films. Although admitting sexual abuse (oral and intercrural intercourse, i.e., sexual intercourse between the legs of the child), he argued that it happened *voluntarily* from the child’s perspective.

The second perpetrator (a woman) was shown a video film and admitted sexual intercourse with a boy on two occasions. According to this perpetrator, the initiative came, respectively, from the boy and her co-perpetrator. In the second interview, the perpetrator could no longer remember the second incident of sexual intercourse and she *denied responsibility* due to a blackout caused by an overdose of medicine and alcohol. In the first interview she did not mention this. Nonetheless, it was an extenuating circumstance in deciding her sentence.

Perpetrator number three was taken in for questioning together with the injured party and the interview was held very shortly after the latest incident of sexual abuse (three days). The perpetrator admitted sexual intercourse and filming of the injured party during a period of one year. Likewise, he confessed to exchanging photographs and films with others. At the second interview, he attempted to *minimize* his role and described the child as equally active as himself. He showed remorse

at the third interview and co-operativeness by writing down the names of 13 boys whom he had had contact with. The perpetrator realized that what he had done was wrong and felt a certain relief that he had been exposed.

Perpetrator number four had been previously sentenced for an incident of sexual crime against children. He was currently suspected of sexual relations with children and sexual molestation. He refused to be questioned without a solicitor and at the next interview the perpetrator denied force but admitted sexual relations in a legal sense. Later, he did not remember where he met the boys, on whose initiative the pictures were taken, or what the reasons were behind taking the photographs. For those pictures in which he himself had taken part, he considered that the children had invited him and he *laid the blame on the victims*. He only acknowledged the sexual activities that were in the photographs.

Perpetrator number five was shown photographs that an 'Expert shop' (a camera shop) had reported to the police. The perpetrator admitted that they were his photographs. He confessed to the sexual abuse of a minor but claimed that all had taken place with the girl's consent.

Perpetrator number six was asked and admitted that he had touched the injured party in some way but denied that he had touched their genitals. When he was shown the video film he conceded what was on the tape. "You know, of course, what is on the tape."

Perpetrator number seven was informed that the interview related to the content of the pictures and was requested to elaborate. He said immediately that the photographs were not taken against the girl's will. He wondered if the police were bound by professional confidentiality because he did not want the accusations to become public for the girl's sake. He further related that he was taking a shower when the girl came in to the room and began to talk. "What a funny willy you have", she said. "Then I said to her to undress so that I could show her how a pussy looked."

He then touched and showed her all of his own genitalia. He later suggested that he should take some pictures, so that she should be able to see things better. "She wanted to, was curious". Everything had only an *educational purpose*. He denied that he had touched her vagina. In the second interview he admitted that he had sexual relations but denied rape. He described a mutuality where the girl took the lead, was willing,

received pleasure and orgasm. At the time of the sexual abuse, the girl was seven years old.

Perpetrator number eight was called to an interview concerning photographs that the police received from a camera shop. The perpetrator confirmed that he was related to the children in the pictures, but otherwise he had no comments. In the second interview he was shown some of the photos, but in his opinion they were no pornographic. He denied that he had drugged the children. He declared that he had never touched the girls' genitals. He was shown photos of burning cigarettes put up a child's rectal opening. He did not remember this but did not deny it. He continued up to and including the tenth interview to either not remember or to deny the accusations.

The ninth perpetrator had twice earlier been found guilty of sexual crimes against children. He himself had gone to a clinic to speak about the sexual abuse he had committed. He was reported to the police but in the first and second interviews he did not mention anything about current sexual activities with children. At the third interview, he admitted that he masturbated by the child's head, a neighbouring child, which was recorded on tape. He denied everything else. That was an isolated case. At a later interview he confessed to having touched the boy's penis. In actual fact he had had regularly been the babysitter for the boy and repeatedly sexually abused him over a longer period, something that only later became apparent.

Perpetrator number ten admitted that he had taken a large amount of photos of his children but that this did not have any sexual significance for him.

Perpetrator number eleven knew nothing about some naked pictures that he had handed in for processing and which were to be collected by him. Possibly there was a photo of a boy swimming. Possibly there was a photo of the boy and his fiancée when they quarrelled. Then they were naked or scantily clad. When at the second interview he was confronted with other evidence, he confessed and began to talk. He meant that the boy had taken the initiative to having sex with his fiancée and that he had told him off the next day. In the following interview, new material was introduced which he eventually confirmed. In his account, however, he said that the boy had chiefly taken the initiative to the sexual activities such as oral sex.

Perpetrator number twelve (a woman) was shown pictures where she had sexual intercourse with a boy. She described this as, "suddenly he just came in and laid himself on me". As she was tired and drowsy she was not able to move him. At the second interview she confessed that a number of things had happened, such as group sex, but she had felt forced by her partner. The motive was that the boy should learn early about how sex works.

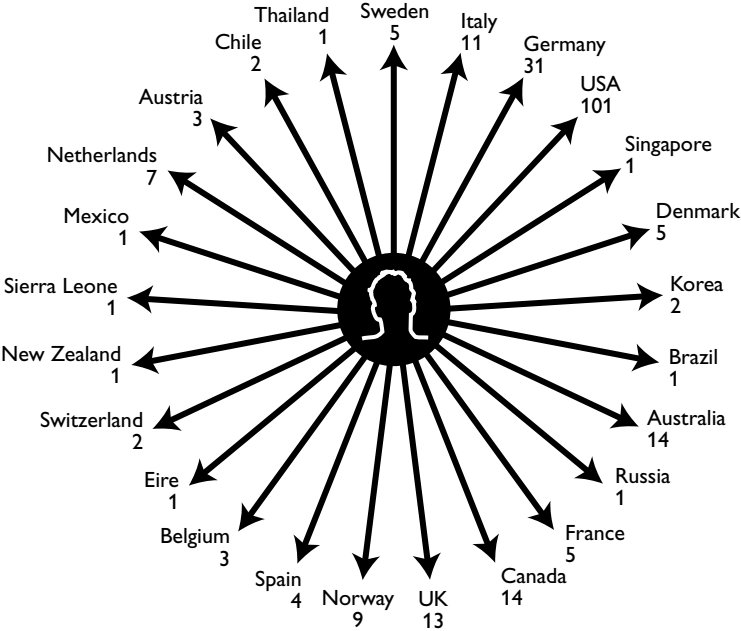
Perpetrator number thirteen denied committing any crime in the initial interview. He had collected information, addresses, taken home pictures and put everything onto his computer's hard disk, but had not himself sent any pictures (see Figure 1). He stated that he had photographed the family's children naked in the bathtub, when they had "bubble baths" He also declared that he had photographed the children while they slept but did not remember if they were undressed. At the second interview, he refused to comment without his solicitor, as the criminal charges had been changed to include unlawful deprivation of liberty, gross sexual abuse of a minor, etc.

In the following eleven interviews, the perpetrator admitted most of the charges concerning the 11 immediate children. He recounted that he felt love for boys, which later had changed into performing sexual acts towards at least five of them.

To sum up, these interviews can be compared with peeling an onion, but in addition the onion has become slippery. Not one gave a spontaneous account, and the perpetrators only yielded once the material had been displayed. Only then did the perpetrators acknowledge that was photographed or filmed, but not anything more. None of the perpetrators took upon themselves any blame for having hurt or harmed the children. Throughout, they had denied that they had caused the children any injury, and they felt that they had not done anything wrong. One perpetrator consistently denied that he had done any sexual abuse until the tenth interview when he admitted that which existed on the photographs. He was then filled with anguish over the actions that he had committed and understood that he had passed into forbidden and unlawful boundaries.

Throughout the interviews the perpetrators only very poorly remembered and they minimized their role in the sexual abuse. "It was the child himself/herself who wanted to do it", "the boys asked me to take photographs", "I have not done anything against their will", and "It was she who took the initiative". Likewise, concerning the two women, "I

FIGURE 1. The illustration shows the contacts that perpetrator number 13 had during a six-week period.



felt myself forced". Most of the perpetrators had what is called cognitive distortions or misrepresentations. In these cases, this happened through the distortion of reality, for example by reversing or inverting cause and effect, redefining power and strength circumstances, and the transposing of the divisions of roles.

CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Table 2 shows that of the thirteen perpetrators, two were sentenced to be placed in secure psychiatric units, according to the law on forensic psychiatric care (LRV). One women perpetrator received a conditional or suspended sentence. All the rest were sentenced to time in prison, varying in length of between one and four years and averaging about two years. The consequences or punishments are relatively low in international comparison but it should be remembered that the worst sexual abuse was carried out by the two perpetrators who, consequently, were sentenced to custodial psychiatric care.

A third perpetrator was also sentenced to custodial psychiatric care by a district court but had this changed to two years imprisonment by the court of appeal, while another had his sentence reduced from three years to eighteen months. A further perpetrator had his sentence increased from three years and four months to four years.

Financial compensation to each child varied from SEK 10,000 to SEK 375,000.

One perpetrator had previously (before the child had been identified) been sentenced to four months imprisonment for the crime of child pornography under the Freedom of the Press Act. The Örebro paedophile was also convicted of the crime of child pornography and crime of serious child pornography.

Child no./ Perpet- rator no.	Criminal classification	Punishment	Compensation
1/1	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	LRV	275,000
2/1	Gross sexual abuse of a minor		
2/2	Sexual relations with a child	Conditional sentence + treatment	165,000
3/1	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	Conditional sentence + treatment	275,000
4/3	Sexual relations with a child	2 years	55,000
5/4	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	2 years	100,000
6/5	Sexual force, sexual abuse of minor, sexual relations with a child	4 years	90,000
7/5	Sexual force, sexual abuse of minor, sexual relations with a child	4 years	150,000
8/5	Sexual molestation		27,000
9/6	Sexual abuse of minor	1.6 years	0
10/6	Sexual abuse of minor		0
11/7	Sexual relations with a child	3 years	70,000
12/8	Sexual molestation + gross ill treatment	2 years	50,000
13/8	Sexual molestation + gross ill treatment	2 years	50,000
14/8	Sexual molestation + gross ill treatment	2 years	50,000
15/9	Sexual molestation + gross ill treatment	1 year	60,000
16/10	Sexual molestation	1 year	60,000
17/10	Sexual molestation	1 year	5,000
18/11	Sexual abuse of a minor	2.6 years	
18/12	Sexual abuse of a minor	1.6 years	70,000
19/13	Gross rape, rape, gross sexual abuse of a minor, gross ill treatment, unlawful force, sexual molestation	LRV	375,000
20/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor, sexual molestation, unlawful deprivation of liberty	LRV	130,000
21/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	LRV	250,650
22/13	Sexual molestation	LRV	34,025
23/13	Sexual molestation	LRV	30,000
24/13	Sexual molestation	Dismissed	10,000
25/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	Dismissed	61,130
26/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor, sexual molestation	Dismissed	65,130
27/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	Dismissed	30,130
28/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	Dismissed	130,570
29/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor	Dismissed	130,570
30/13	Gross sexual abuse of a minor, sexual molestation	Dismissed	252,582

TABLE 2. Consequences etc

CHILDREN'S PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH

BEFORE DISCLOSURE

We have no detailed knowledge about how the children felt and functioned before the sexual abuse. Few children had symptoms or difficulties that their parents noticed. One child had various behaviour problems, another had truancy problems, while a further child was described as having fits of crying, conflict with other children, hypersexualized behaviour but nothing that occasioned, for example, the school to raise the alarm.

During the period of sexual abuse, parents described the majority of children as rather free of problems, and no child displayed symptoms that could be interpreted as indicating sexual abuse. Ten children exhibited signs that they did not feel well. One girl had various symptoms both before and during the period of sexual abuse, symptoms that later became more pronounced at the time of disclosure. A mother remembered that in the time before the disclosure of sexual abuse, her son was more quiet and introvert than otherwise. Another boy was described by his mother as withdrawn and unhappy, while his school thought that he seemed to be in a trance as well as mentally absent. During the night, he was very unsettled in his sleep. A mother only remembers that her daughter had problems taking care of her hygiene. The staff at a day nursery had felt concerned for two siblings and called the parents attention to their worries. Yet another girl was described by her mother as strained, obstinate, weepy, and cross, but the mother interpreted this as a reaction to the parent's divorce.

In addition to sexual abuse, the three children who experienced parental neglect displayed obvious symptoms and behaviour problems. In two cases this was detailed in child psychiatric investigations and the third in a statement of opinion, and this was all confirmed by teachers and school psychologists. It is however, more unclear to what extent parents understood that their children experienced problems. When the sexual abuse was being carried out, two of the boys had a noticeably increased rate of truancy from school. One of the boys started to misuse butane gas; and according the schools, all of them had evident problems. Restlessness, low-spiritedness, lack of food, tiredness, concentration difficulties, aggressiveness, bullying, running about, advanced

sexual behaviour in the form of interest, gestures and language, were symptoms that occurred. On one occasion, a boy arrived at school with a whole bag full of condoms.

During the period between the last instance of sexual abuse and the disclosure of this abuse, some children had problems. One paternal grandmother said that her granddaughter, then aged between ten and twelve years, did not at all feel well (the sexual abuse ceased when she was eleven years old). Later, during all through secondary school, the girl felt unwell. She was depressed, had difficulties to sleep and sometimes thought about suicide. Only a few days before the disclosure of sexual abuse, the girl had asked her mother to make an appointment with the child psychiatric clinic. One boy, on his own initiative and because of his addiction, was placed into a foster home during the time from the period of sexual abuse to its disclosure. He himself felt that his mother could not take care of him.

IN CONNECTION WITH DISCLOSURE

When the disclosure of sexual abuse happened as a result of the police taking contact, it was a shock for both the children and their parents. All described a period of worsened mental health, irrespective of how they had felt earlier. The children had hoped that their parents should never know anything. All the children interviewed described how shame and a sense of guilt predominated, while simultaneously an intense anger against the perpetrator began to stream forth. As a consequence of the turbulence in connection with the interviews, court cases, contacts with social services, child and youth psychiatric clinics, alternatively the criminal victims' support agency or Save the Children organization, the time after the sexual abuse was chaotic. All felt poorly and unwell. This demonstrates how essential it is to have a well thought-out and first-rate support to children during this period. None of the children criticized the interviewers, but they found it hard that they had to remember and speak about such very shameful sexual abuse and exploitation. One girl was critical towards being called for interview and having to talk about very difficult experiences, and thereafter, when her whole world was knocked for six, she was obliged to travel on public transport all on her own to reach her home. This girl was also upset that she could not herself decide the time of the interview. She had thought that her account of sexual abuse could wait until she was old enough to leave her family and could manage her own life independently.

Another girl recounted that she nearly fainted during the interview because it was such a horrible experience.

For the three boys who also had unsatisfactory family care and nurturing, the disclosure of sexual abuse was associated with great mental stress. One boy went to his school nurse and asked if there was anything wrong with him: "Everything is utter confusion inside me." Another of these boys had nightmares, screamed in his sleep, and was frightened that the perpetrator should try to seek revenge. All three boys were afraid of what might happen when the perpetrator had served his prison sentence and could return to the area where they lived. One of the boys declared during an interview that in spite of fear for the perpetrator, "it was a great relief to speak (about the sexual abuse) at the police questioning".

The children's reactions varied accordingly, from relief that everything about the sexual abuse was now fully disclosed, to a very strong denial and despair over the need to confront what had taken place. One boy spontaneously explained a relief after the disclosure and comforted his mother by saying "it is all over now".

One girl explained how she had decided to speak about her sexual abuse when she became an adult and had moved away from home. Now, when she was completely unprepared, she was shown pictures of the serious sexual abuse to which she was subjected, and she found this viewing very difficult. Another girl emphasized that she was relieved that everything was now in the open while, at the same time, during the interview her attitude seem to imply that she was also "proud" of what had happened and took responsibility upon herself and thus protect the perpetrator – at least initially.

It is difficult for children to drop the defences or justifications that they had employed during many years. When case is disclosed, defences such as repression, denial or isolation of feelings are no longer viable and, instead, the child is confronted with a storm of bewildering emotions. Many of them were very disgusted when they saw the pictures and felt shameful together with feelings of having been utterly deceived by the perpetrator. One boy reacted during most of the initial interview with intense anxiety and denial. He would not accept that it was he who was in the pictures that were shown to him. Three children also displayed great fear of the perpetrator at the time of disclosure.

In many cases, parents described how their children's earlier behaviour now became understandable: "She was so quiet and reserved during the last six months but after the disclosure of sexual abuse it was as if she 'ran out of steam' and she really seemed relieved." Another mother

said: "Before the disclosure my daughter drew lorries and always wrote on them 'WRONG'. Afterwards, she drew princesses with tears."

It was only when the legal proceedings were over that life slowly began to return to normal. Many of the children, however, took a break from their studies, as everything that happened in connection with the disclosure of sexual abuse had tangible consequences for their school-work. According to parents, it took up to one year before everything began to be sorted themselves out and things settled down. "It was as if a year was lost", as one parent put it. With parental support, the companionship of friends, through recreation activities and therapeutic contacts, many children nevertheless recovered surprisingly well.

Other children had great difficulties to work through their experiences. This was especially the case for the three boys who simultaneously experienced neglectful care, and for those children who were subjected to the gravest sexual abuse.

Sixteen of the twenty-one children who were interviewed also had contact with the criminal victims support organization, the Save the Children's boy centre in Stockholm, and also with child and adolescent psychiatric outpatient clinics. This has ranged from passing contact in crisis situations and brief investigative contact to longer therapeutic counselling of up to two years in duration.

AFTER DISCLOSURE

After seventeen months, on average, from the disclosure of sexual abuse, the children's mental health or ill-health was registered through interviews with parents and children. This was complemented by using the parental form CBCL (Child Behaviour Check List) and the children's own-answer form YSR (Youth Self Report). See Table 3, page 30.

The children were in various stages of recovery as, for example, one child was examined as early as one month after disclosure, while for another it took as long as forty-two months. At the time of the examination, the average age of the children was 11 years and 4 months (from 5 years to 19 years and 5 months). Twelve children scored that indicated a somewhat over the average mental ill-health (over the mean value of 14 points) according to the CBCL, of whom seven showed ill-health that was judged as serious and clinical (over 90th percentile = 30 points). According to the parents, the most usual symptoms exhibited by the children were the following (ranked by importance): obstinacy, sulki-ness, or irritability – 88%; opinionated, contrariness – 82%; preferring

to be alone – 76%; demanding lots of attention – 65%; swearing or using dirty words – 65%; making oneself out to be or playing the buffoon – 59%; daydreams, retreating into their own worlds – 53%; being slightly envious or jealous – 53%; and also teasing – 53%. Parents reported few such symptoms that are usually associated with sexual abuse, that is to say signs/symptoms as manifestations of post-traumatic stress syndrome (e.g., nightmares – 29%) or sexualized behaviour (e.g., playing with their genitals when others are looking 6%).

The ten children who filled in the YSR form were on average 15 years and 6 months old at the time of the investigation (from 9 years and 6 months to 19 years and 5 months). Five of the ten children reported mental ill-health that was higher than the average for boy respectively girls (38 points respectively 44) according to the YSR. The commonest symptoms that the children mentioned were: I am firm and contradict – 90%; I swear or use dirty words – 90%; I have difficulty to concentrate or to be attentive – 80%; I talk too much – 80%; I care too much about appearing clean and tidy – 80%; I show off or boast and want to impress – 70%; I daydream quite a lot – 70%; I am shy – 70%; I rather be alone than with others – 60%; I am secretive and keep very much to myself – 60%; I have a furious temper – 60%; and finally, I think too much about sex – 60%.

Altogether quite a few of the children, in fact sixteen of the twenty-two children whom we had satisfactory information about, showed signs of mental ill-health that exceeded what is average for Swedish children. In those cases where there is information from both parents and children, there was a pretty good concurrence of the accounts of what had happened. It is noticeable, however, that no parents noted that their children had an increased interest in sex, while six out of ten children were troubled by thinking too much about sex. Based on the classification of Burgess and colleagues (11), of the twenty-two children that we have information about from parents, children or other substantiation, we can see that four of the children had integrated the experiences of sexual abuse, three children essentially had an avoidance behaviour, while nine children showed a repetition of symptoms, that is to say they still had symptoms and behavioural difficulties as a consequence of what happened. Six children were difficult to classify because of insufficient information.

Child/sex	CBCL ²	YSR	Classification*
1/girl	12	22	Integration
2/boy	24	22	Avoidance
3/girl	5	3	Integration
4/boy	11	51	Integration
5/girl	43	89	Symptom repetition
6/boy	43	73	Symptom repetition
7/boy			Symptom repetition
8/boy		84	Symptom repetition
11/girl	27	26	Avoidance
15/boy	56	28	Symptom repetition
16/girl		65	Symptom repetition
18/boy	31		Integration?
19/boy	35		Symptom repetition
20/girl	72		Symptom repetition
21/boy			Avoidance
23/boy	42		?
24/boy	18		?
25/boy	22		?
26/boy	19		?
28/boy	14		?
29/boy	13		?
30/boy			Symptom repetition
Swedish average boys	14	38	
Swedish average girls	14	44	

TABLE 3. Psychic health at time of study

* According to Burgess et al (11)

The CBCL (Child Behavior Check List) is a form for parents of children between 4 and 16 years. The form consists of 113 questions which measures any occurrence and level of psychiatric symptoms and disturbance of behaviour in young people. The questions are coded as 0, 1 or 2, where 0 describes the absence of symptoms/behaviour while 1 or 2 describes the frequency of symptoms/behaviour. The questions in the CBCL are added up to make a total number of points and different factors of points. The higher the number of points, the more difficulties the child has. The question form is translated into Swedish and the normative data for Swedish youth are available (48.3).

The YSR (Youth Self Report) is a own-answer version of the CBCL for young people between the ages of 11 and 18 years old (2). The form comprises 112 questions. It is thoroughly tried out and it is widely used internationally in different types of investigations. It is translated to Swedish and now normative data is accessible (9).

² Of the twenty completed parental forms (CBCL), we made use of only seventeen, those where we considered that the child was conscious of what had happened.

PARENTAL REACTIONS

None of the parents had the slightest suspicion that their children were subject to sexual abuse and exploitation for child pornography purposes. The parents described that at first they could not believe that it was true, partly because it was their own child who was actually sexual abused, and partly that an adult whom they had trusted could assault their child. They were deeply shaken and described their initial emotions of unreality, utter confusion and panic. Subsequently, there were feelings of anger and a desire to avenge (fathers), and also emotions that were mingled with sentiments of pity for the perpetrator's tragic fate (mothers). The lingering problem has been anxiety that the child has been harmed along with feelings of guilt that they had not understood what had been happening. The mental stress was also greatly heightened by mass media pressure. The feelings that everybody knew who one was and what one had gone through were intense for both parents and children. Most parents have had drawn up crisis plans to go into hiding or to move home. It has been considered especially sensitive when many children and their families have been involved together, for example in the Örebro case. The possibility of remaining anonymous seems to have been correspondingly reduced as mass media interest increased; this attention grew in intensity in connection with large-scale cases of sexual abuse. What have remained have been continuing difficulties and feelings of embarrassment, and unwillingness in the family to talk about the sexual abuse. In many families there are still close relatives who do not know anything about what has happened.

CHILDREN'S ACCOUNTS³



ANNA

Anna's father described at his trial that she was still an infant when he began to sexually abuse her. Anna remembers from the time that she was 3-4 years old that she took a bath together with her father and that he then showed how she should suck on his "willy". This sexual abuse came to an end when she was 11-12 years old. During these years Anna had been subjected to sexual acts nearly every week, and sometimes many times a week, oral and intercrural intercourse. There are photographs that show complete intercourse with ejaculation when Anna was at the beginning of her puberty development. Anna also posed in sexy adult underwear and was told to push a felt-tip pen into her vagina. There are photographs that show when she has intercourse with another child. Many of these sexual acts were photographed or video filmed. Anna never told anyone about how she had been sexually abused by her father. She never liked what had happened but thought that this was something that all children experienced. When she became older she "knew" that it was wrong, but her father always told her "not to tell anybody". When Anna was 11 years old, she learned through BRIS (Barnens rätt i samhället – "Children's Rights in Society" – equivalent to the NSPCC in the UK) that this was not something that adults should do to children and that children need not accept this only because they are children.

The sexual abuse was discovered through the police finding films and photographs. Anna was 18 years old when she was called to a police interview. She knew that this enquiry concerned her father since he was in police custody.

At the interview Anna could confirm that her father had sexually abused her. Anna had distinct recollections of how she and her father took a bath together, and of him showing her how she should suck on his willy. Later, Anna had diffused or vague memories from the abuse; on many occasions during police questioning she said: "I know that much happened but all is so vague."

³ All names have been altered in order to protect the identities of the children.

Anna was interviewed on two occasions and often repeated: “I don’t remember”. When Anna later saw the photographs of the incidents occurrences, she could identify the people but could not remember the events. When she saw the pictures, Anna reacted by being sad and she felt despair.

After the interview, Anna left to travel home alone. She was shocked and upset over what she had seen. Later, she was invited to contact the victims of crime support centre and the children- and adolescent psychiatric clinic. She thought about telling her mother about the sexual abuse but decided to wait until she was older and not in the same way dependent on her parents

Anna is not afraid that someone who sees the pictures of her would recognize her today. However, she is afraid that through being filmed she may indirectly contribute to instilling in other children the idea that this is something normal.



BJÖRN

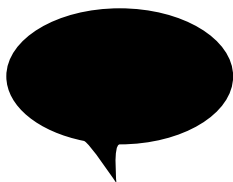
When Björn was 5 years old his father wanted him to “suck him off”. This was the first time and the father later continued to sexually abuse him until he was 11 years old. The father even tried to have anal intercourse with him. His father said that this is the way “you do when you like each other”. He also said, “this was their secret and nobody else should know anything”. Björn did not tell anybody. On two occasions the partner of Björn’s father had sexual intercourse with him. Many of these sexual events were video filmed and photographed. Björn also had to see many pornographic films together with his father.

The sexual abuse of Björn was uncovered because the police learnt about the films and photographs. Björn was then 15 years old. When the police called him for interview, he knew that it concerned his father and suspected that his father had subjected him to sexual abuse.

Björn spontaneously recounted how his father wanted Björn to “suck him off”. He remembered how old he was the first time and when the sexual abuse stopped. He stated that the sexual abuse ceased two years earlier than the substantiated material showed.

When Björn was asked if anything special have occurred between his father’s partner and himself, he answered no. He could not remem-

ber that something had happened; he had lived with his father for a time and known his father's partner well but nothing had taken place between them. When Björn later had to see a film that showed sexual intercourse between them, he became very disgusted and shocked but still remembered nothing. Björn was about 10 years old when he was subjected to this. When the interviewer gave Björn time to recover and to calm down, he then recalled the event. Moreover, he remembered that this had happened on an additional occasion and could also relate details from this incident.



CECILIA

When Cecilia was 6 years old, the father of a friend sexually abused her. Cecilia and her friend had to pose in front of the camera and perform various sexual acts together with other children. Her friend's father also put his penis in her mouth. Cecilia does not remember any of this, but from the material evidence it seems that various sexual acts occurred on at least 10 different occasions.

Cecilia told nobody anything while this continued, and when it was uncovered she was 18 years old. When Cecilia came for interview she was told that there were video recorded films and photographs in which she had been sexually abused of her friend's father.

Cecilia remembered that she and her friend took off their clothes and changed into other clothes so they could play theatre. She recalled that this happened when she was 6 years old. She had no memory that she touched the penis of the father of her friend. But she had a weak recollection that she and her friend had examined each other's bodies. When Cecilia was shown a photograph where she had a penis in her mouth, she burst out: "Oh! Was it so long ago?" She later remarked how long her hair was then. Cecilia said nothing more on what she had seen on the photo. When the police investigator questioned her, she replied that she had no memory of what had happened. Later, Cecilia began to feel sick but repeated that she remembered nothing.



DAVID

David was 12 years old when he began to be subjected to sexual abuse. By then he had for sometime been acquainted with a man who was a friend of his family. They had fished and played computer games together. At that time neither David nor his family knew that this man had paedophilic tendencies since many years earlier. The police had found amongst other things computer pictures of boys where their genitals were described, and the man had a large correspondence with other paedophiles. Over a period of two years, the man had mutual masturbation and anal intercourse with David. They met regularly two to three times a month. On many occasions the sexual acts were filmed and photographed. Furthermore, the man had made a peephole into the bathroom so that in stealth he could film the toilet stool and the bathtub. David did not tell anyone what he had been subject to. He dared not as he thought that he himself would be able "to stop this".

This sexual abuse was discovered when the police seized the material evidence. David and the man were taken together for interrogation since David was at the time visiting the man. They travelled to the police station in separate cars. David was informed that there were suspicions that the man had sexually abused David and this was the reason for that the police had come to the man's residence. When David was questioned, he described comprehensively the sexual acts the man had done with him. David showed that he was relieved over the disclosure. When he was asked what he thought about the man, he replied, "I think that he is a swine". David was questioned on two occasions. He was not shown any photographs or films. Nearly no time had past between the last sexual abuse and the police interview.



ERIKA

Erika was 11 years old when a good friend to her family suggested to her that she be photographed. This developed to him meeting her during some months and she had to pose naked. He got her to insert objects

into her vagina and he licked her in the vagina. She was also penetrated with fingers and a vibrator. Erika did not tell anybody anything and the incidents were discovered thanks to information given to the police from a photographic shop. There were merely a few weeks between the occurrence of sexual abuse and the police questioning.

When Erika arrived at the police interview she was not informed about the reason for the questioning. When she was told that it concerned pictures taken by the man, she immediately talked about the naked pictures. Erika also referred to the various objects she inserted into her vagina. When she was asked if the man had touched her body in some way, she denied this. The police investigator asked Erika a total of five times if the man had touched her and Erika answered no. Finally, she replied, "Not what I recall". She looked straight into the face of the investigator and he asked her, "Is this the whole truth?" She met his gaze and replied, "Yes". When the investigator stated that the man said that he had touched Erika, she responded, "That I can't remember". After a while she confirmed that the man had touched her in her vagina with his finger. When Erika was questioned why she was not willing to talk about this, she responded, "One is not exactly proud of this".

At Erika's second interview three days later, the investigator asked if the man did anything more. Erika answered no and when the investigator asked if the man had done anything with his tongue (this was substantiated on film), Erika looked at the investigator and replied that the man had moistened her vagina with it. Erika had wanted to tell her mother but she dared not. Regarding the police interview, Erika said, "It would have been easier to tell somebody who was not a police officer."



FREDRIK

When the police interviewed Fredrik, he was 14 years old. He had met the man who subjected him to sexual abuse together with other friends. This was a man who lived in the same housing area estate as Fredrik. The man offered them chocolate sweets and sandwiches and let the boy play computer games. With bribes and threats he forced the boys to perform oral intercourse on him and amongst themselves. This sexual abuse continued over a two-year period. The sexual acts were photographed and video filmed. Sometimes Fredrik talked with his friends

as to whether or not they should report him to the police. But they also received a certain care and attention from this man that they lacked from other adults.

Fredrik did not know why he was called for police questioning but thought it had to do with his earlier addiction. When the police investigator questioned him if he had at any time been photographed, he answered: "Yes, by the school photographer". After several questions he acknowledged that he had been photographed, "at the home of a pal". Fredrik did not say anything spontaneously about the sexual acts other than stuck to confirming that they had happened as he was shown in the photographs. Two months after the first questioning, Fredrik asked to return to the police as he had more to tell. Fredrik then spoke about an occurrence of anal intercourse that caused him much pain, but of which there was no substantiating evidence in the material the police had confiscated. This incident was later attested by affidavit. When Fredrik was asked why he had not mentioned this at the first interview, he answered: "No, everything comes back when one has recovered. I remember more and more".

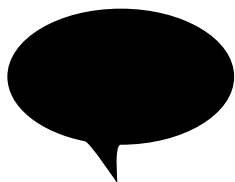


GUSTAV

When Gustav was 11 years old he was introduced to a man who was a friend of his family. Gustav met the man for a period of about two years. He met the man together with other friends. The children were offered chocolate and sandwiches, and got to play computer games. The man wanted to film and photograph the children while they gave sexual services to him, such as oral sex and masturbation. The children were also forced to perform sexual acts with one another, and these too were filmed. Gustav did not tell anybody but his behaviour changed greatly during the time he was subjected to this sexual abuse. Gustav had a high level of truancy from school; he was depressed, restless and withdrawn. Gustav also exhibited an advanced sexual behaviour that was not typical of his age.

When, three years later, Gustaf was called for questioning he did not know the reason for this. He was shown a photo of himself that was not photographed during any sexual activities, and he then denied that the photo portrayed him even though this was clearly evident. Gustav continued to deny that he been photographed together with other

children. When the investigator showed Gustav a photograph in which he appeared naked, Gustav repeated 24 times, “that cannot be me” and later continued, “Yes, but how the shit can that be me? I don’t touch gays! I am not like that!” The interview was suspended. Gustav needed to take a pause and to talk with his mother. When he had calmed down at his mother’s for a while, he then said that what was substantiated in the photographs was true. He was questioned on a further occasion after three months and then could tell how afraid he had been for the man during the time that the sexual abuse had continued, but especially for telling as the man had threatened to kill him if he told anyone. Gustav continued to have difficulty remembering the sexual abuse and does not want to speak about what happened as he then has bad nightmares.



HANS

When Hans was called for questioning he was 14 years old. He was then reminded that he had earlier been interviewed regarding the suspected man. When Hans was asked if he knew the man, he answered, “Yes, though I have forgotten him. He was actually rather decent”. Hans met the man at a second-hand market and afterwards went with him to the man’s home. During a year, he spent a lot of time with the man. He was often at the man’s home, sometimes invited to restaurants, and Hans received a present when the man returned from travelling. The man photographed Hans naked and the police had a photo of Hans amongst the confiscated material. Furthermore, there were photos and films that substantiated the sexual abuse that the man had done to other boys. When Hans was asked if the man had touched his body in any way, Hans replied, “No”. During the period that Hans had met the man, his school noticed that Hans had a highly sexualized behaviour in school. On one occasion, he took with him to school a large bag filled with condoms. Even though Hans insisted that he had only been photographed on one occasion at the man’s home, he thought that the man should receive imprisonment for life for what he had done.



INGELA

Ingela was three years old when a relative to her sexually abused her. She was asleep when this happened and was not conscious of what happened. The man masturbated and let the sperm run over her face. He dipped Ingela's dummy or pacifier in his sperm and then put it into her mouth. He penetrated her in the vagina and anus with a dildo and a thermometer. He also simulated intercourse movements against her bottom. He video filmed this. Ingela slept during the time the sexual abuse continued, and her parents think that she was not conscious of what the relative did to her. Ingela has therefore not been interviewed.



JESSICA

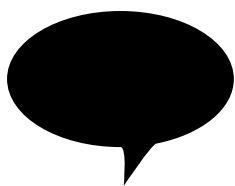
Jessica was eight years old when she was sexually abused by one of her relatives. While Jessica slept, he touched her genitals and masturbated close to her face so that sperm ran down her face. When she slept, he pulled down her underpants and filmed her genitals. He also secretly filmed her when she went to the toilet and used the bath on visits to his home. This continued during four years. Her parents do not think Jessica is conscious of these incidents, and thus she has not been interviewed.



KATRIN

When Karin was seven years old, she began to meet a man who was acquainted with her mother. During a two-month period, she met the man herself on a couple of occasions. The man had sexual intercourse with her on two occasions and he filmed her genitals. She was also induced to touch his penis under the pretext that she would be able to learn about sexuality. The man also showed her pornographic films.

When Katrin came to the first interview, she had not been informed about what it concerned. It was only a few days since she had met the man, and they had also decided on a new time when they should meet. She only confirmed that she knew the man and that she was in the photographs that the investigator showed her. Otherwise, she related nothing. Responding to the interviewer's questions, she mostly answered, "I don't remember that; that I can't recall". She became upset during the questioning and did not want to talk about the photographs; the interview ended. At the second interview, Katrin said that the man touched her vagina with his "willy". Katrin also said that she had promised the man not to tell anyone. "It felt bad, what he did, it feels bad to have this still in my heart." When Katrin had her third interview, a week after the first one, she said, "He did to me what was in the film, fucking. He had put in his 'willy' a little bit in the hole, but when I said ouch! he stopped." After this third interview, she was relieved that she had told somebody about what had happened and that she did not have to meet the man anymore.



LENA

A relative photographed Lena when she was eight years old. Sometimes even Lena's sisters Maj and Nora also visited this relative. Most often the girls visited one at a time. The relative photographed Lena's genitals, with among other things a burning cigarette sticking out of her anus. When she was photographed, Lena was probably drugged and deeply asleep. The police found a large quantity of sleeping tablets in the man's home. The relative also photographed Lena in various "seductive poses" when she was awake. This continued for a couple of months.

When Lena came for interview, she had no foreknowledge as to the reason why. She was then eight years old. The investigator wanted to know what she did when she visited the man and Lena mentioned various everyday activities but nothing about any sexual acts. The investigator showed some "ordinary" pictures and Lena affirmed that it was her in the photographs.

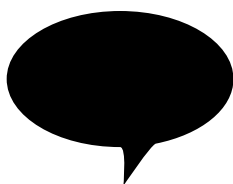


MAJ

Maj was six years old when she was photographed naked by the same relative as Lena. Most of all, he filmed her genitals. Like her sister Maj, she was drugged. The photography continued for some months. On one visit to this relative, she had a pain in her bottom and had difficulty to go to the toilet. Changes in the anal opening that could indicate that she was subjected to anal intercourse were found in the forensic investigation.

At the interview around one month later when Maj was six years old, she recollected that she had had pain while visiting the toilet. However, she did not mention to the investigator anything about her relative and her visit to his home. She was not shown any photographs.

The man sent photographs of the girls' genitals to his "pen friends".



NORA

Nora was five years old when she visited the same relative as the older sisters. Nora was also photographed naked. She was also probably drugged during the photography, which continued during a couple of months.

At the interview, Nora was not shown any photographs and she only talked about everyday events in relation to the visits to her relative



OLLE

Olle had known the man who subjected him to sexual abuse ever since he was little. He had only sporadic contact with his biological father and the man became like a "daddy" to him. The man was a neighbour of the family. Olle himself said, "I was very little when he began to do

it to me". When the sexual abuse was uncovered, Olle was 11 years old. He had been subjected to caressing, oral and anal intercourse. On some occasions, the sexual abuse was filmed. Olle met the man almost daily and was subjected to the sexual acts nearly every week. When Olle was about four years old he lost his hair in patches. His mother never received any explanation for this, and today she thinks that it was at this time that the sexual abuse began. Olle wanted to tell his mother about what the man did but he often gave him presents and he frequently said, "You can surely keep a 'secret', and a real pal can keep a 'secret'."

Before Olle came to the interview, he was 11 years old when his mother asked him if the man had done anything that was not good. Olle repeated many times, "He hasn't done anything". The mother then let Olle put his hand on her head, and this meant that only the truth must be said and nothing else. In the mother's own country this gesture signified that something serious could happen to his mother if Olle did not tell the truth in front of her. Olle did as he was told and said that the man stroked and touched his penis many times. During the interview Olle said, "I am so used to him fiddling down there that I blot it out. I never think when he does it". Olle did not talk about oral and anal intercourse to his mother or at the interview; it was only after receiving therapy that he first mentioned this.

Olle was also worried if his friends had also been sexual abused by the man. Olle knew that they had shared bed with the man. He had never asked them and also not told them what the man had done to him. "It maybe is not so obvious that they should tell me, I have never said anything about this filthiness to them." Sometimes Olle had thought about telling his mother but he dared not. During all these years he has been silent about this.



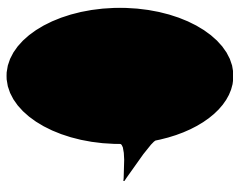
PETRA

When Petra was seven years old, her father began to photograph her naked. The father wanted her to be naked as much as possible, even when she was playing and doing everyday things. This was also the case with her younger brother Rolf. The father washed her genitals and rubbed her with lotion using the pretext that she had spots, which Petra today knows she did not have. Petra was photographed in various sexual poses. The naked photography and her father washing her

genitals continued until Petra was about 14 years old. A person who had regarded the photographs of the daughter as improper had then reported the father to the police. The father was placed in custody and later found guilty of sexual molestation.

When Petra was aged 10 years, there were suspicions that the father was sexually molesting her and this was reported to social services, who then notified the police. In connection with a police investigation and later contact with child psychiatric services, Petra could not bring herself to say if this was true. Instead, she defended her father, as she so much wanted him to be the same as the fathers of her friends. Petra exerted herself to defend her “dream picture” of her father and she denied, even to herself, that she had a hard time because of his behaviour. The police investigation was discontinued and the contact with the child psychiatric services was stopped. The sexual violation continued. Four years later, when Petra was aged 14 years, she felt very bad and realized that she was forced to tell so as to bring to an end her father’s behaviour. However, it was not Petra who took the initiative to expose her father, but a person outside of the family who had become suspicious due to photographs of Petra that he had seen. In a house search, the police found thousands of photographs and about 30 video films of Petra. Today, she is afraid that these pictures are on the Internet.

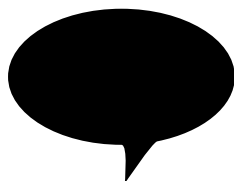
At the police interview when Petra was 14 years old, she talked about how her father photographed her and washed her genitals. She also handed over a diary for the time exactly before the disclosure, in which she describes strong emotions about the unpleasantness she felt for the sexual violations. In the diary, there were also expressions of fear of what her father did with her friends, who had also been photographed and washed.



ROLF

When Rolf was about three years old, his father began to photograph him naked in various sexual poses and wanted him to be without trousers when he did everyday things. The father photographed Rolf together with his older sister Petra. This continued until Rolf was about seven years old and ended when the father was reported to the police and taken into custody. Rolf found it unpleasant that the father so often wanted to photograph him naked, and that the siblings were always

ordered to look happy during the photography. Before the police interview he had told his mother about his father's actions. Rolf was probably not violated in the same way through sexual acts, as was Petra.

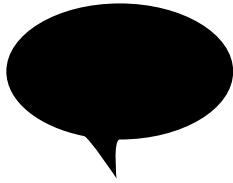


SVEN

When Sven was aged 11 years, he accompanied his mother's former fiancé and his new women on a month's holiday. During this month away, and on the initiative of the man, Sven had vaginal and oral intercourse with the woman. He also took part in sexual acts with both at the same time and there were many times when he saw the adults engage in sexual activities. On one occasion the man touched Sven's buttocks with his penis. Many of these sexual acts were photographed. It was a photographic shop that notified the police, whereupon Sven was called for questioning. Only a few days had past between the sexual acts and the police interview.

At the interview Sven felt, "It is my fault also, I should have said no, I should have left." "Later, so he said, do as I say, so I did as he said." "I did as one should." "No, I did right the whole time, he said what one should do and I did right the whole time." At the first interview, Sven had said that he had had intercourse, but when the investigator continued to ask about details and oral sex etc., which was substantiated through photographs, Sven asked with surprise, "How have the police got to know about this?" At the beginning of the interview, Sven stated that intercourse happened twice but during the interview he said that it had happened many times. Sven had been told that if he talked about this to anyone he would be sent to a foster-home and that the man and woman who subjected him to these sexual acts would end up in prison. After one week, the second interview took place and Sven then told about how the man put his penis between Sven's buttocks. He also said that he had been asked to pee on the woman, alternatively, that she should pee on him. Sven said no to this but instead was ordered to lick the woman's after she had peed.

Sven was very relieved after the interview. At the same time he was surprised that the police had so much information about what had happened. He then learnt that the police's information was based on photographs and also on what the man and women had said.



TORE

When Tore was 3 to 4 years old his mother moved in together with a man who had a compulsive behaviour disorder with a powerful sadistic streak when it concerned sexual acts. The stepfather lived together for about two years with Tore and his sister Ulla. The sexual acts that Tore was subject to were connected with strong physical pain for him. The stepfather was obsessed by Tore's genitals, and Tore was often subjected to anal and oral intercourse, in which he was also forced to take sperm into his mouth. Furthermore, Tore's stepfather insisted, on command, that he should urinate and empty his bowels. The stepfather did this also, at the same time as Tore had to watch. Tore had to stand completely quiet and still and just let it happen when the stepfather peed directly into his face. Tore experienced an enormous number of cruel excesses.

On one occasion when the stepfather had anal intercourse with him, Tore looked sad and confused. He was on his hands and knees on the floor and said:

What am I?

Am I a person, am I that?

Am I a person?

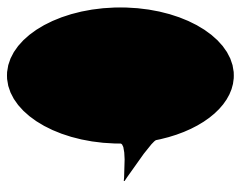
The police got to know about the sexual abuse that Tore was subjected to as a result of surveillance and suspicions about the possession and distribution of child pornography.

When Tore came for interview he was five years old, and not many days had past since the stepfather had last subjected him to abuse. It was a few days since the social services had placed Tore and his sister in a foster home.

At the interview, Tore described what he played with at home and what he saw on television. When the investigator asked Tore if he had been filmed by "Daddy", Tore answered yes, and when he was asked what he had then done, Tore replied, "I did as he said". Tore repeated this on many occasions as an answer to the investigator's questions. When the investigator enquired what Tore thought of his stepfather, he answered, "He is a good pretend-Daddy". When the investigator asked if "Daddy did anything with his willy", this was denied by Tore. On

many occasions Tore sidetracked the investigator and introduced new topics that “Daddy” did not have anything to do with.

Tore was interviewed on only one occasion. Then, he said that his “pretend-Daddy” was kind. In connection with the police learning about this sexual abuse, Tore was placed in a foster home.



ULLA

When Ulla was six years old, her mother moved together with a man who abused her and her brother Tore in serious sexual acts. Many of these acts were substantiated because the man video filmed the sexual abuse. However, when the police got to know of this, there were no more than two instances of crime involving Ulla that were substantiated. Later, when Ulla was placed in a foster home she told the foster mother that her stepfather had had both oral and anal intercourse with her. The siblings had also been instructed to perform sexual acts with each other. She said that this happened when their mother was not at home. At an interview, their mother had said that nearly every afternoon she visited a friend. Before returning home, she was forced to ring and give notice of her homecoming.

During a large part of the day Ulla was locked into her room, only let out when she went to school and when meals were served. Sometimes she could also see some child programme on television. There were video cameras erected in Ulla’s room so that they could see what she did.

When Ulla came for interview she was seven years old. The mother and stepfather were in custody and the siblings were placed, as an emergency, in a foster home. It was only few days since the police, in connection with a search of the house, had found Ulla locked into her room.

The investigator asked Ulla to explain what things were like at her home and Ulla replied with saying, “No, I will not talk about that.”

Will you not talk about this? Why will you not talk about this?

I will not.

Is there anyone who has said to you that you should not tell about it?

Mm.

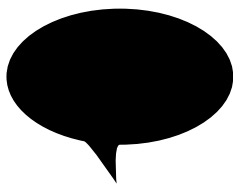
Who then?

Daddy

Daddy?

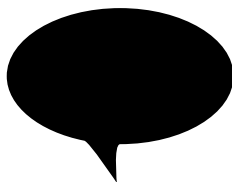
Ulla later said that she was up during the nights and made mischief, and this was why she was locked in, she was confined to her room. This mischief was that she occasionally took food and sweets.

The investigator did not question Ulla at all about any sexual acts and Ulla did not mention any such. When Ulla came to the foster home, she could not play and was very distant. She had a great interest for sexuality, and played sexual games compulsively and aggressively in a way that was not compatible with her age.



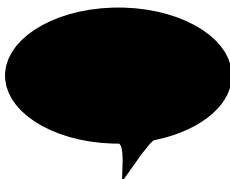
VIKTOR

When Viktor was 4–5 years of age, his older cousin who was then 13 years old had oral intercourse with him. The cousin had both anal and oral intercourse with Viktor from that time until he was about 11 years old. By that age, Viktor could then tell his cousin that he did not want to take part in these acts. When Viktor came for questioning, he was aged twelve and he knew what the interview was about. He repeated many times that he had tried to forget what his cousin had done and that he could not remember, but the investigator already knew through the substantiating material, so in the end Viktor talked about oral intercourse and how the cousin masturbated his penis. There was a pause in the interview when Viktor had nothing more to tell but the investigator continued with an additional interview later that same day. The investigator began with saying: “On the film that the cousin recorded, there is a little more that happened than you told me earlier today.” When the investigator described what was on the film, Viktor answered, “I remembered that later and had thought to talk about it”. “It is very difficult to recall all the times this happened, as I have tried to forget everything.” “Because I will not be reminded about all of this.” Later, Viktor talked about how his cousin had anal intercourse with him. Among other details, he recalled the colour of the jar containing lubricant and the position in which they had lain.



YNGVE

When Yngre was four, a relative sexually molested him. The man “fiddled” and touched Yngve’s penis and bottom at the same time as he filmed. Everything happened while the perpetrator and the child laughed and played together. Yngve probably understood this as play and not as sexual violation. The police learnt about this case when additional child pornographic material was discovered. The police have not interviewed Yngve.



ÅKE AND ÖRJAN

When Åke and Örjan were respectively five and three years old, a relative sexually abused them. The relative “fiddled” with and touched the boys’ genitals at the same time that he filmed this. When the boys came for interview, they had no idea why they had been called. They were then seven and five, respectively. The investigator asked about the relative but did not pose any questions connected to sexual acts. Åke and Örjan themselves did not mention any sexual acts. It was probably so that the boys did not understand the acts in any other way than as a game that was not at all traumatic for them.



ARVID

When Arvid was seven years of age, he was sexually abused by an acquaintance of his family. In the seized material, one can see how the perpetrator distracted while, at the same time, seducing. Alternatively tickling (distraction) and then masturbating the child’s penis (seduction, achieved erection), while simultaneously asking “Have you ever had a pain down there?” This “legitimated” his pulling down the child’s trousers and examining his willy. The child was also urged not to say anything to anyone. This particular case came to the police’s attention

because child pornographic material was found in the man's home. Arvid was eight years old when he came for interview and knew nothing as to the reason why he had been asked to see the police. When the investigator mentioned the name of the man, Arvid replied that the man had hit him but did not say anything about any sexual acts. Four days later, he attended a new interview and then mentioned that the man had "filmed my willy". "Mummy has said that I should talk about this." He also said that the man had "filmed little brother's willy also".



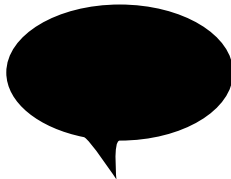
BENGT

Like his brother Arvid, Bengt was sexually molested when he was only three years of age. This was discovered in the same way as for his brother. At his first interview Bengt did not say anything about any sexual act, but some days later at his second interview he said that the man "grasped my willy". He also mentioned that the man had hit him on the cheek.



CHRISTIAN

Christian was only six months old when an acquaintance of his family masturbated him while at the same time video filming him. This is the one only incident that has been substantiated, and it was only discovered in connection with the finding of a large quantity of child pornographic material in the man's home. With consideration for his age, Christian has not been interviewed.



DENNIS

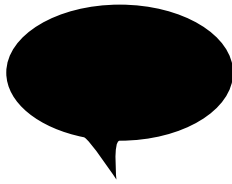
When Dennis was six year old, a member of staff working in the child-care system sexually abused him. The man masturbated the boy and had the boy's penis in his mouth. This was video filmed and the police only became aware of it when the video film was found together with

additional child pornographic material in the man's house. Dennis had not mentioned this abuse previously and also did not say anything about it at the interview. Dennis was seven when the interview took place; he said that he knew the man and mentioned various activities they had done together but said nothing about any sexual acts.



ERIK

Erik was also sexually abused by a member of staff working in the child-care system. He was then four years old and there are some occasions that have been video filmed. The man had masturbated Erik's penis and had had this in his mouth. Erik had not mentioned this to anyone earlier, and when he was interviewed at age five years he did not refer to any sexual acts. He only said that the man had filmed him.



FRANS

When Frans was aged five years, he was subject to sexual abuse by a staff member working in the child-care system. The man subjected him to masturbation, oral and anal intercourse. On at least 23 occasions, the man recorded the sexual acts on video. Frans had not told anybody about this. When the police became aware of this and Frans came in for questioning, he knew that the interview was about what the man had done to him, and that the man was in prison because adults should not do such things to children. Frans was six years old when he was interviewed. When Frans was asked the question if the man had done anything with his willy, he denied this and said that he did not remember. Frans repeated this many times, that he did not remember, but he later said that the man had filmed his willy. When Frans was asked the question if the man had done anything with his bottom, as an incident of anal intercourse was substantiated, Frans answered no. After many questions by the investigator, Frans told how the man had put ear-buds into his bottom. Frans denied that he had seen the man's penis, and Frans did not mention anything about anal intercourse. There is, however, a sequence with this on a video film.

WHY DIDN'T THEY TELL US?

CHILDREN WHO CANNOT TELL

Our investigation has confirmed what we had already observed in 1996 – children do not talk about sexual abuse, or are very unwilling to do so. The nexus of causes is however rather more multifaceted this time around. In the material we can identify three groups. The first group composed of the five children who were asleep or were drugged during the time that the sexual abuse occurred. The second group comprised of two children who either because of their young age or that their age together with the perpetrators manipulative techniques made it impossible for the children to understand that something improper had taken place. The third group consisted of twenty-three children who either were old enough or subjected to such obvious sexual abuse that it was considered that they had the circumstances with which to disclose and talk about what had happened to them. Most of the following discussion is chiefly concerned with this third group, but there are good reasons by way of introduction to begin by commenting on the first two groups.

Firstly, it is important to see that a perpetrator can resort to sleeping-pills to drug a child, or to reduce a child's consciousness and thereby the power of resistance, in order to carry out sexual abuse. In the first case, the child had no memory of what occurred and in the second case the child's memory tended to be fragmentary, illogical and incoherent. The child is not reliable. In an international perspective this is not unusual but in Sweden there are fortunately quite few known cases where children are drugged in connection with sexual abuse. When a child's account is fragmentary and incoherent, one should, however, consider the possibility that the child could be influenced by drugs.

The second group is important partly because it points to the fact that sexual abuse can happen to very small children, and partly because this shows – like many of the other filmed sexual abuse of children – how manipulative a perpetrator can act. Because the sexual abuse occurs in stages or takes place simultaneously with conversation and playing, the younger children, who necessarily have more difficulty in grasping that the perpetrators behaviour is wrong, find it harder to give details as to what has happened.

CHILDREN WHO DO NOT TELL

Based on their maturity, age and in combination with the seriousness of the sexual abuse, it was evaluated that twenty-three children could have been able to relate what had taken place. All these children were, on average, subjected to 22 months of sexual abuse. Later, it took on average a further 19 months before the sexual abuse was discovered. These children kept their experiences to themselves during a period in all of around 81 years of life (81 years and 4 months). The average time was 41 months, with a range of between 1 month and 176 months (14 years and 8 months!). Not one of the children spontaneously disclosed any instance of sexual abuse. The children had kept this to themselves and had not talked about this to parents, friends, siblings, relatives or to some other adult. This is a very compelling argument that children do not at all, or very reluctantly, talk about sexual abuse. This is also a very formidable contrast to the idea that children invent or make false accusations of sexual abuse. In reality our investigation provides solid support for the estimation that children keep silent and put up with sexual abuse! From the perspective of our investigation, the so-called "child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome" as described by Summit (66), is the most appropriate way of describing children's' adjustment to sexual abuse.

What, then, is it that makes children not reveal sexual abuse, or, later, in interviews not talk about it? The literature usually mentions the child's insufficient comprehension of having participated in something that is wrong, emotional reasons, memory loss, or a deliberate attempt to forget or not remember. These same explanations can also be used to account why children do not talk during interviews, but this is also contingent upon the quality and the setting/situation of the interview.

Our experience, based on our investigation and from everyday clinical experience, is that usually there are various interpretations as to why children do not tell, but that these also in different ways are in themselves coherent. What can be viewed superficially as memory loss, when investigated, is instead an inability to recollect "visual pictures" from memory, or a deliberate avoidance of remembering. This in turn depends on various types of emotions and consequences that are associated with the incidents that the child will not remember.

THE TRAUMATIC CRISIS

When children have been subjected to sexual abuse it is not uncommon that such a traumatic event can result in a crisis reaction. A psychological crisis can be defined as “an individual’s psychological reaction to an external event of such a character that they experience their physical existence, social identity and security or other aim in life to be seriously threatened” (20). The initial phase, the shock phase, can vary from a short moment to a period of some days. During the shock phase, the child tries to distance themselves from what has taken place and they have difficulty to take in what has happened. The question is often: “Has this really occurred or do I only think it happened?” Those affected may be well-ordered on the surface, but inside everything can be confused.

The next phase is the phase of reaction which in the normal course of events can continue for four to six weeks. During this phase, what has happened becomes more real to the child and s/he mobilizes various psychological defences, such as suppression and denial. The child can also be affected by various symptoms, for instance concentration difficulties, nightmares, stomach ache and anxiety. But even other symptoms can also trouble a child as a result of a serious incident.

Katrin, aged seven years, was interviewed several weeks after the sexual abuse had stopped and a few days after its disclosure. She had great difficulty in responding to the interviewer’s questions. When the interviewer referred to some naked photographs that existed of Katrin, she began to talk about her father (who had not sexually abused her): “My father was stupid when my goldfish died”. Katrin changed the subject when it “started to burn”; she needed to describe something that was more comprehensible to her. She could not speak about the perpetrator who had attempted to have sexual intercourse with her. The interviewer met Katrin for two further interviews, and thus she had new opportunities to put into words what she had been subject to and thus express this to the interviewer.

In the interview, when it began to “burn”, when it got closer to the sexual abuse, both the child and sometimes also the interviewer would “choose” to change subject.

Tore, five years old, was probably at the reaction phase when he was interviewed as follows:

Did daddy usually film you sometime?

Mmm, I think so.

You think so? Mm. What did you do when daddy filmed you with his camera?

I did as he said.

What did you say?

I did as he said.

You did as he said.

Because I am a rascal now

Oh, are you a rascal now?

Mm.

You Tore.

One can well say that I am a rascal. Ah, they have black caps.

What is it about the colour of this cap?

Later, Tore began to talk about the colours of the cap, and the interviewer had temporarily lost the possibility to ask questions on what Tore did when his father filmed him.

Subsequently in the meeting, the interviewer continued to ask what he had done when he was filmed, and Tore said: I just said that, I did as he said.

You did as he said.

Mm.

What did he say that you should do then?

Don't know?

You don't know?

Ah, it's a lot.

What did you say?

It's a lot that he said

But try and remember something that he said that you should do.

It was so long ago. (It was only some weeks since the last occurrence of sexual abuse.)

But can you surely remember something that happened when he film you.

Ah, all I know is that I did as he said. Now I want to look at these here (he began to investigate the alarm buttons in the room).

Tore could not talk about the incredibly many and painful sexual abuses he had experienced without instead changing the subject to something more innocuous, such as how the alarm button in the room worked.

There is a survival value in remembering traumatic events so that we can protect ourselves from similar experiences, but sometimes we need also to avoid the memory of shocking incidents in order for us to keep our mental balance.

The third phase, the working-out phase or the mending stage, can

continue from one to some months after the trauma until perhaps up to half a year or one year. There are many factors that influence the working-out phase – what support the child is given, if the child receives professional help, and the child's previous psychological status.

The new orientation phase, which is the last stage in the course of a crisis, means that the child can begin to leave the trauma behind. There are no longer as many symptoms or intense emotions caused by what has happened. It is now possible to think ahead and to plan for the future, even if the scars will always remain.

MEMORY LOSS

"That I don't remember." "I can't remember that, it was so long ago." "That I have stopped thinking about." When Hans was asked if he knew a particular man, he replied: "Yes, but I have forgotten about him". "He was really just decent." Viktor answered: "I don't know, it was so long ago". "I don't remember, I have also tried to forget ... it takes a long time before one recalls everything." But, with a lot of help from the interviewer, he could later talk about the incidents that were substantiated on film. The list of quotations from children who said that they could not remember is lengthy.

Previously, there was a conception that it could be directly inappropriate or harmful to require children to speak about their experiences of sexual abuse. It was earlier not considered that little children possessed the capacity to remember, while modern research shows that this capability can be ascribed even to little children down to two or three years old (15). Younger children have, however, difficulties with giving an account since they do not have the same ability to organize things and events (information), and they do not have matching conceptions of time as older children and adults. When younger children talk, the subject matter can be more incoherent and fragmentary while simultaneously younger children can get stuck on details such as knowledge about children's ages and interests that are completely relevant but can be interpreted by an interviewer as being akin to non sequiturs.

It is considered that the cognitive development level is of great significance for a child's ability to narrate. The capacity to remember improves generally with age in children, when they are able to organize events, things and time in another way. Memory can be divided into different types of memory systems, such as episodic memory, semantic memory and procedure memory. In episodic memory we store previous expe-

periences or events. This memory is very personal, and it is much more complicated to extract from episodic memory than procedural memory. Procedural memory is the earliest in our developmental history. This contains functions such as being able to walk, sit or drive cars. It can take a long time to learn but they are proficiencies that do not disappear. The semantic memory is a knowledge memory that stores knowledge about factual information, for instance that Stockholm is the capital city of Sweden.

DELIBERATE ATTEMPTS TO FORGET

Our investigation does not show that any of the children suffered from amnesia (memory loss) concerning what had taken place. However, we can see that many children have deliberately chosen to not think about the sexual abuse, as this is connected to unpleasantness. It has been shameful for the children to speak about what has happened to them. They have powerful emotions of humiliation and guilt as well as the feeling of not being believed and alarm over the consequences that the disclosure of sexual abuse might entail. When Erika, aged eleven, was asked by the interviewer why in earlier interviews she had not spoken about having her genitals licked, she answered: "One is not precisely proud about that". Memory faculty is an interplay between an individual's intellectual and emotional function, and the special demands that exist in the situation when the individual shall remember something. The factor that most influences our memory are emotions. The connection between feelings and memory becomes important. Research on whether memory faculty is improved or impaired when we are subject to stress or experience an emotionally charged situation is not unequivocal. There is the view that memory faculty for peripheral details worsens while the faculty to recall central "important" elements if anything increases (15). The emotionally charged situation can accordingly imply that one cannot recollect the colour of the perpetrator's car but very easily remember his breath. For some children it is thought that memory was associated with such severe symptoms that one could talk about posttraumatic stress syndrome (4). Gustav is an example of this. At the same time that he expressed panicky anxiety feelings when he saw pictures of himself, he repeated twenty-four times "that cannot be me". The impression of a posttraumatic stress syndrome is strengthened also by his reluctance to speak about what happened, since he has nightmares when he is reminded about the sexual abuse. This, how-

ever, takes very much energy which makes him emotionally unstable and he has difficulties in concentrating at school. Gustav's history and symptoms also endorse the idea that he is dissociative, that is to say, he splits up his existence into two: one where the sexual abuse is not there and the other where it is present. Dissociation is a defence, a psycho-physiological process, which alters thoughts, feelings and events so that certain information is not integrated with previous information that is the normal (53). Dissociation in children is regarded as a normal process in their development. But when dissociation occurs in connection with traumatic experiences, it can become pathological and instead prevent children from a normal development. Dissociation is an effective way of putting up walls in order to keep at bay traumatic memories, so that they do not become disturbing to normal life. Petra said: "You don't understand enough how things happened, but I shut down my feelings during this time, but the worst is that I continue to shut down even though I don't want to." Olle also speaks about dissociative mechanisms when he said: "I am so used to what he was doing down there, so I take it away". "I never think when he does that." Regarding Tore, there are also suspicions that he dissociates when he cannot give any information in the interview about the seventy-four occasions on which he was subjected to sexual abuse. Instead, he answered: "He is a good pretend daddy".

Dissociated memory continue to disrupt as fragmented feelings and behaviour without understanding their cause. Signs of dissociation can be memory gaps, being in a trance, identity confusion and derealisation, the latter can be described as alienation and feelings of unreality. There can even occur signs of depersonalization, which is described as being isolated from oneself, feeling oneself to be strange, unreal or robot-like. Björn was eight years old when his teacher became worried about him and described his behaviour as: "It's as if he is in a dream, he is not present". Tore is aged five years when in a video clip taken from the seized material, he says: "What am I? Am I a person, am I that? Am I a person?" Tore asks this question straight out into the air at the same time that the perpetrator has anal intercourse with him. During another occasion of anal intercourse Tore is on his knees on the floor supporting himself by his hands, reading a comic and singing "Tulle, tulle, dej, tulle tulle dej". The sequence of pictures shows how the man's penis presses deep into him and there is no doubt that this act is also connected with much pain. There are certainly many reasons why Tore in an interview situation cannot talk about the sexual abuse he has been subjected to. But one weighty reason is that the incidents of sexual abuse are not integrated within him.

INTENSE EMOTIONS

We consider that it is the intense emotions (traumatic experiences) during sexual abuse and the intense emotions after sexual abuse (shame, guilt, fear at not being believed, fear for the consequences) that in the main explains why children do not reveal, or in interviews speak about, what has taken place. When they do talk, their accounts are often fragmentary and consequently parents and interviewer find it harder to understand what has happened. Children need help in this phase and support to gather together their memories.

By way of conclusion, it should not be forgotten that some perpetrators get children to promise not to say anything to anyone about their mutual secret, the sexual abuse. This in turn forces the child to bear the secret themselves, or as Katrin expressed it: "It feels bad what he did, it feel bad to keep this in the heart". Others have felt themselves subtly threatened. "You are certainly a great pal", Olle was told by his perpetrator. Some of the children were afraid of being killed, not being believed or that they would no longer be allowed to live at home. Many of the children were very afraid of what their mothers would say.

Our investigation also shows that children are very badly affected psychosocially as a result of sexual abuse, and for many children examined in the investigation it has taken a long time to recover. During particularly recent years, most of the children have been offered crisis therapy, but not all have received such invitations or the support they needed, and some chose not to have lengthy therapeutic contact.

We think that children always should be offered immediate psychotherapeutic help in connection with the disclosure of sexual abuse, for example in the manner that BUP-Elefanten has developed (68). We also are of the opinion that there are too few specialized units in the country that can offer this support. In order for children to feel better, they need to talk about their experiences, to be listened to, and to be understood.

An interview situation should not be confused with a therapeutic process, which has a wholly different purpose. When an interviewer meets a child, it is essential that the person concerned should grasp the significance of traumatic experiences, post-traumatic stress syndrome and dissociation, and adapt the interview in accordance to these factors. With high-quality preparation and first-rate understanding for the individual child, the interviewer can, through various retrieval strategies, assist the child to make a full account. Examples of such strategies can be to make associations to a child's senses of smell, hearing, taste, touch, and to showing or referring to substantiating material. Memory support

in the form of interviews in the surroundings or at the place where the sexual abuse occurred are other techniques. It is important to optimize the possibilities for a child to talk. This can of course be the beginning of the healing process. It is consequently not only of significance for the judicial process that a child can remember and talk about what happened, but also for the child's mental health and development.

SUPPORT FOR DISCLOSURE AS A PROCESS

The experience from both police questioning and interviews with children supports the proposition that disclosure is a process over time. Anna gave clear expression to this idea. She was fully conscious of that what her father did was completely wrong but through her internal thought process had decided not to speak about the sexual abuse until she had reached to age of majority (in Sweden at the age of 18 years) and could move away from home. She wanted to protect her mother from unpleasantness and probably that she herself was not ready. She even expressed disappointment that she didn't get the possibility to disclose the sexual abuse when she herself had control over the situation.

Even Fredrik described it as a process when he returned two months after first being interviewed and then, in addition to what had come out at the initial interview, spoke about being subjected to anal sexual abuse. He explained: "everything comes out when one has mended oneself. I remember more and more", argues for the idea that disclosure occurs only gradually and at the pace that the child can cope with, and not at the pace that society – via the interviewer – decides.

Likewise, one can see that children are most reluctant to talk about sexual abuse when it is associated with intense feelings of shame, dislike or disgust. To "peel an onion" in the interview is also a method of viewing disclosure as a process over time, in one or a series of interviews.

THE INTERVIEW AND THE INTERVIEW ENVIRONMENT

Some of the twenty-three children have talked about the sexual abuse with their mothers when they were called for interview or when social services contacted the family. This had happened after direct questions from the mothers. At the police interviews, the twenty-three children faced a special situation since the interviewers had substantiating material in the form of video films or photographs, where it was evident that

the children had been sexually abused. When children did not reply to the interviewer's direct questions, sometimes the interviewer would refer to what was shown in the photographs or the films.

Children, then, only talked thoroughly about those incidents that the interviewer knew about – whether as a result of photographs or owing to what the suspected perpetrator had themselves talked about. When the interviewer did not refer to substantiating material that showed what the children had been subjected to, most of the children did not talk about anything. It was only one boy, David, who entirely spontaneously talked about the sexual abuse. In his case, this behaviour was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that hardly any time had past between the sexual abuse and the interview. He also showed great relief that the police had taken him away and that this brought an end to contact with the perpetrator. Gustav talked about an incident of sexual abuse, of anal intercourse, that was not substantiated among the material that the police had seized, but which later also was confirmed by a medico-legal expert.

In Sweden, children were at the time of the investigation normally interviewed in police stations, in other words buildings that often are constructed with long corridors and numerous locked doors, and which are necessitated by the nature of the police authorities' work. Those who led the interviews were police officers, and as a rule no other person took part in the proceedings than the child and the interviewer. The interviews with the children were nearly always video filmed, so that they did not need to personally be present at the verbal deliberations in the district court on whether or not there should be a prosecution. The other reason for video recording is to make it possible for the prosecutor, during the preliminary investigation, to observe the child when they were interviewed.

Regarding our investigation, it was only exceptionally that the children knew about the conditions for the interview and which information the interviewer already had. Likewise, they did not know if they would meet the interviewer only once or on several occasions. Given the circumstances, the interviewers took only a short time to develop a relationship with the child, and it also appears that they did not prepare themselves with everyday information about the child. In spite of this, it is clear that some of the interviewers succeeded in establishing a trusting relationship with the child, but this was far from all cases. The interview situation is a trying situation for both the child and the interviewer. After what is often a shocking experience for a child, and which it has not succeeded in talking to anyone about including not even those

closest, it is now, after walking through long corridors, expected to talk about this with a complete unknown person before them.

When children come to an interview, their attention is diverted by those factors already mentioned, such as the actual surroundings, the police station. They ask questions about police work, similar to “to catch thieves, where are the police cars?” Boys of pre-school age can be markedly distracted by the surrounding environment. The interview with Arvid, soon to be eight years old, is an example of this:

Interviewer: *Mm. Is he silly in some other way?*

No, what's that for a camera?

Yes, this is our camera that we film with.

What are you filming for?

We film when we talk, we film this room here, we film quite a lot. Later, you shall go and have a look at the police cars and I also promise you...

And motors

Sometimes we have...

...cycles also.

Yes, I hope that there are some down there. Sometimes we film...

I only saw a police car.

Here outside?

A: Yes.

Mmm, hmm, but down in the garage we have more.

Hundred?

What did you say?

Arvid is absorbed by the recording camera in the room, the sound from police cars, the police station and the visual impressions from the walk in the police station.

Much is demanded of an interviewer in creating a trusting relationship with a child and to give the child space in a interview situation. With the aim of giving the child the space they need in an interview situation, the interviewer in particular needs to have knowledge about the child. This should be knowledge about children's cognitive development, how they think and express themselves at various ages. How do children remember? What does a child require to facilitate and support the memory process? How to understand and treat a child with posttraumatic stress syndrome, or a child that dissociates? How does a perpetrator go about and manipulate children? Where is it suitable to interview children – at a police station, a day nursery or some

other place where children can be given the best environment possible?

The ability of talking with children is a skill that not all are adept at mastering. However, supervision or consultation can create possibilities for a process of continuous knowledge and development that in turn gives relief from the strain that interviewers are exposed to in their work. An interviewer who unconsciously signals to the child "I can't cope with hearing anything else about how terrible it must have been for the child" can be pretty sure that he will not have to listen. Children and in particular vulnerable children are good at catching such signals.

Our investigation showed very clearly how urgent it is for children's legal protection that police work is pursued more vigorously. It is therefore our opinion that a search of the suspect's house should be carried out, even on the slightest suspicion that substantiating evidence may be found. To put it plainly, this can be the only evidence that sexual abuse has taken place.

This is not of least importance when it concerns pre-school children as, for this group today, there are hardly any cases of sexual abuse reported to the police that lead to a prosecution (22), even though in many instances these children have given statements. Developments have gone so far that, without concrete evidence, children of this age are very seldom indeed believed by prosecutors, witness psychologists and the law courts. According to our estimation, the requirements for obtaining a search warrant should therefore be set lower in this type of situation, than what is otherwise the case. Without a more active attitude by the police investigators, there is a risk that suspicions are not reported to the police and that all the information about the duty to report et cetera, is not seen as credible.

It is also evident that sexual abuse is a mutual responsibility, where the child's need of security and treatment should proceed parallel with the judicial proceedings. This is consequently about a common responsibility by all public authorities, and we welcome the Swedish Child Abuse Committee's proposal that there should be legislation on the subject of co-operation concerning child that are at risk. Likewise, the police and prosecutors are part of the process of helping these children!

CHILD INTERVIEWS – IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

Deriving from our experience of everyday clinical work, and not least emanating from our encounter with the thirty children we investigated, we draw the following conclusions regarding how the interview can

best safeguard the child's interest. In other words, to create the most advantageous conditions for children to do themselves justice and so they can give the most optimal statement possible. Generally speaking, this is about increasing the psychosocial and legal support for them.

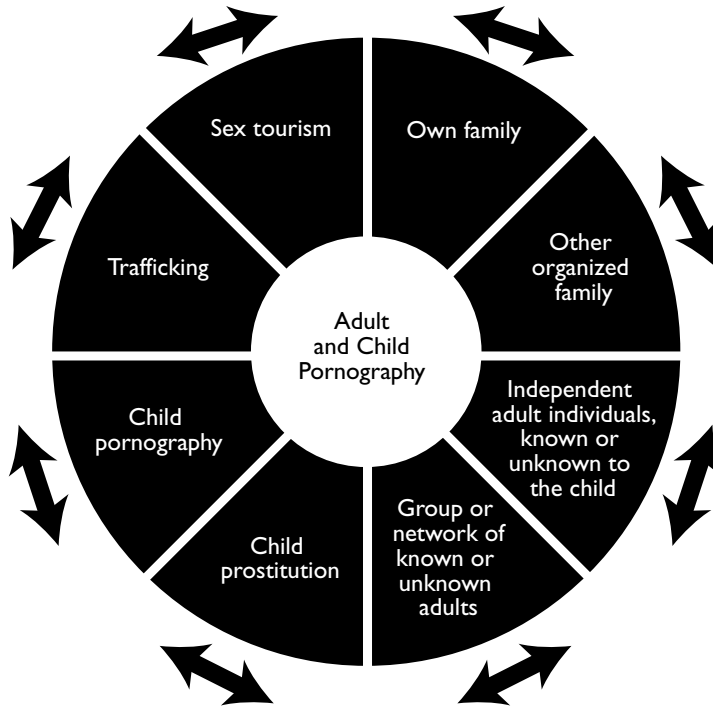
1. The concept "child questioning" can imply, linguistically and attitudinally, that the actual child is guilty of something. This reinforces the child's already existing feelings of complicity and blame. On the contrary, a child arrives at an interview as a victim or the injured party. Therefore, we suggest that "child interview" be applied henceforth.
2. For many reasons, police stations are unsuitable environments for interviews with children. Based on their own conceptual world, children have an expectation of what a police officer does and, for nearly all children, police stations represent a charged or unfamiliar environment. Most of them experience this as frightening and also by many as a distraction. For certain children, the surroundings are completely incomprehensible – they do not know their way about and they experience a loss of control. The surroundings render it more difficult for children to do themselves justice and prevent them from telling straight away about what they have experienced. We therefore suggest that child interviews should be held in surroundings with which children can identify themselves, are familiar with, and feel themselves safe. For smaller children, this can be a nursery or pre-school type of surroundings, with a design that they encounter in their everyday lives.
3. Child interviews should be done by interviewers who are qualified regarding children's cognitive abilities, as well as children's behaviour in connection with traumatic experiences. It may be beneficial if interviews to are arranged in co-operation with experts in child psychiatry.
4. Children often need a longer time to talk, and this frequently requires more than a single interview. Children need memory support in order to tell their story.

EARLIER RESEARCH...

SEXUAL ABUSE IN CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Internationally, many authors have noted the difficulties of demarcating the consequences of pornography, sexual abuse and prostitution (5, 52). Children who are exploited in child pornography are nearly always routinely subjected to sexually abuse, as this is now hardly ever only about innocent nude photography, but usually includes advanced sexual relations in the form of touching, masturbation, sex between an adult and a child, and between children. Furthermore, children subjected to sexual abuse more often live in socially deprived home conditions, where they suffer neglect (18). This also means that children who have grown up in deprived circumstances, for example children who run away from home, can easily become economically dependent and sell themselves for sex and for pornographic exploitation. Today, this group comprises the core of those children who, in different countries, work as street prostitutes; moreover, they are the target group for the ever-increasing sex tourism. This makes for the study of a complex situation. It is extremely difficult to know how to differentiate between the psychosocial effects of sexual abuse, the exploitation in child pornography or a prolonged failure of parental care; such a study requires statistical analysis where most variables are treated simultaneously (46). Kelly and his colleagues (44, 45) suggest that it is not so easy to distinguish sexual exploitation of children for commercial ends from other forms of sexual abuse in childhood, and instead sexual violence should rather be viewed as a continuum. Itzin (39) has gone one step further and constructed an integrated model where sexual abuse within the family has connection with sexual abuse of children outside the family and to sexual exploitation (see Figure 2). Itzin believes that it is not worthwhile to categorize different forms of sexual abuse or types of perpetrators, as it is largely the same individuals who commit these deeds, and that they nearly always are planned.

FIGURE 2. Connection



Children in “sex rings”

Child pornography is often associated with so-called “sex rings” (10). There are three types of sex rings (11). The first type is composed of a single adult leader and a group of children, and no exchange takes place of either children or child pornographic material to other adults (the so-called solo ring). The second type comprises a group of adults who form a highly structured organization for the recruiting of children, the production of pornography as well as the exchange/selling of children’s sexual services as pornography (the so-call syndicate ring). The third type consists of an transitory form between the type previous types (the so-called transition ring).

At a two-year follow-up of a study of sixty-two children who had been exploited in a so-called “sex ring”, it was observed that there were four different patterns or models of reaction displayed by the children: integration, avoidance, repetition of symptoms, and identification with the perpetrator (11).

Children who were categorized as having *integrated* the sexual abuse were described as being able to talk about their experiences without triggering anxiety, to lay the blame on the perpetrator, were interested in the future, and functioned pretty well at home, with their friends and at school. Those who exhibited an *avoidance pattern* either denied what happened or actively refused to talk about this, since this still stirred up feelings of anxiety and dislike. The children were still afraid of the perpetrator(s) and have a tendency to live in the present without having any future plans. Stress could cause earlier symptoms to reoccur, sometimes with depression and self-destructiveness. Relations in the home, to friends and school work were all strained. The children still had feelings of guilt around their involvement in the sexual abuse. Those children who were categorized as displaying a repetition of symptoms were described as having developed a chronic post-traumatic stress syndrome. The children had *many symptoms* and they developed serious anxiety when what had taken place was brought forth in conversation. These children were dominated by powerful feelings of culpability and shame. They put the blame on themselves and were essentially pre-occupied by what had happened earlier. They functioned poorly with friends and in school, and they often had an over-sexualized behaviour which could incur the risk of further sexual abuse. Those children who *identified with the perpetrator* continued to defend the perpetrator and repeated their own trauma by attacking other children. They also displayed other asocial symptoms.

By way of conclusion, the study furthermore showed that those who had been sexually abused in a sex ring for over one year as well as been exploited in pornography, had the most severe symptoms. In addition, they belonged significantly more often to the group which identified themselves with the perpetrator. An investigation from Leeds in England during a two-year period revealed thirty-one sex rings in which 334 children (296 girls and 38 boys) were sexual abused by 47 perpetrators (70). During a two-year period, Sex rings constituted 4.6% of all reports of sexual abuse to the police and 6.6% of all prosecutions for sexual abuse. In 13% of sex rings pornographic pictures had been taken, and in a further 13% pornographic material had been showed to the children.

Behavioural problems were more usual among children who had been used by sex rings for a longer time, especially among those who had had leadership roles, while those who had had superficial contact with a ring did not come to the attention of the authorities because of deviant behaviour (71).

Trauma

Clinics and researchers across the world are largely agreed that three factors are decisive in determining the extent of a trauma faced by a child who has been subjected to sexual abuse. These three factors are: the nature of the sexual abuse; the duration of the sexual abuse; and the perpetrator's relationship to the child. For children who have been victims in so-called sex rings, three additional factors contribute to a higher level of emotional and social trauma. These are: the nature of the seriousness of the threat, the substantiation through photos and videos, as well as the numbers of perpetrators – the greater the number of perpetrators the larger the effect on a child's trust in adults.

Hunt (38) writes that substantiative material contributes to increased feelings of joint responsibility, shame, humiliation and powerlessness. Over and above these effects, it is a powerful means of keeping the victim quiet.

In an investigation of one hundred young victims who participated in child pornography (6 to 21 years old, average age 14 years), the victims' mental health and reactions were recorded, during the sexual abuse, at the time of disclosure, and many years later (63).

During the period of sexual abuse, the children who were abused for a shorter time had symptoms such as vomiting, headaches, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, and they described themselves as temperamental and found it hard to get on with friends they earlier had. Those who were sexually abused for a longer time described a more intense emotional isolation with anxiety and fear.

At the time of the disclosure of sexual abuse (only 1% had themselves revealed abuse), the feeling of conspiracy by children was considerable and the capacity to trust other adults was extremely reduced. The period around the time of disclosure was stated as traumatic and confused.

One year afterwards, the emotions of shame, fear, anxiety and negative self-image were reinforced by despair, lack of emotion, hopelessness and psychological paralysis.

To this can be added the lifelong trauma of constantly living with the knowledge that they are filmed in a degrading situation and which has been distributed both nationally and internationally. Who has seen it

and who recognizes me? This feeling can be a cause of the greatest level of anxiety since the sexual abuse ended (51).

There is very little known regarding the treatment of children and youths who have been sexually abused in child pornography. In an article Schoettle (60) describes three phases of an analytically-oriented treatment of a twelve year old girl. These phases were "ticket of admission", "ambivalent phases" and "integration phase", and they do not differ particularly from general principles of individual treatment of children who have been subjected to sexual abuse.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL ABUSE AT DAY NURSERIES

In investigations of sexual abuse at day nurseries, it is not infrequent that reports emerge about the occurrence of child pornography (29, 32, 43). In spite of this, it is seldom that any material comes to the surface. There are however exceptions, such as a case in the United States known by the name Alicias Preschool (1), as well as the so-called Örebro case in Sweden. It is important that we learn from these cases since preschool children have difficulty to do themselves justice and to be believed in police interviews and in legal proceedings.

The inquiry into the Alicias Preschool case revealed that many children (2 to 5 years old) had depicted sexual abuse and pornographic photos for their parents. Some of the parents were sceptical to their children's descriptions, while others who believed their children removed them from the day nursery. They did this however without reporting their suspicions to the police. One parental couple confronted the nursery manager (the suspect) with what their child had stated, but the head then showed them an ordinary portrait picture of the girl and the parents calmed down. It was only after a complaint to the police by a parent that the police became involved. A house search by the police discovered over 3,000 pornographic pictures, principally of children's genitals. Twenty-four children who attended the day nursery during a six-month period were identified, and a subsequent trial resulted in the nursery head receiving a sentence of more than twenty-six years imprisonment.

This case clearly demonstrated that it is very difficult for preschool children to talk in a way that they are believed, even by their own parents, and without a house search the matter would probably have remained unsolved. This example also demonstrated a paedophile that collected pictures only for his own personal pleasure (isolated collector).

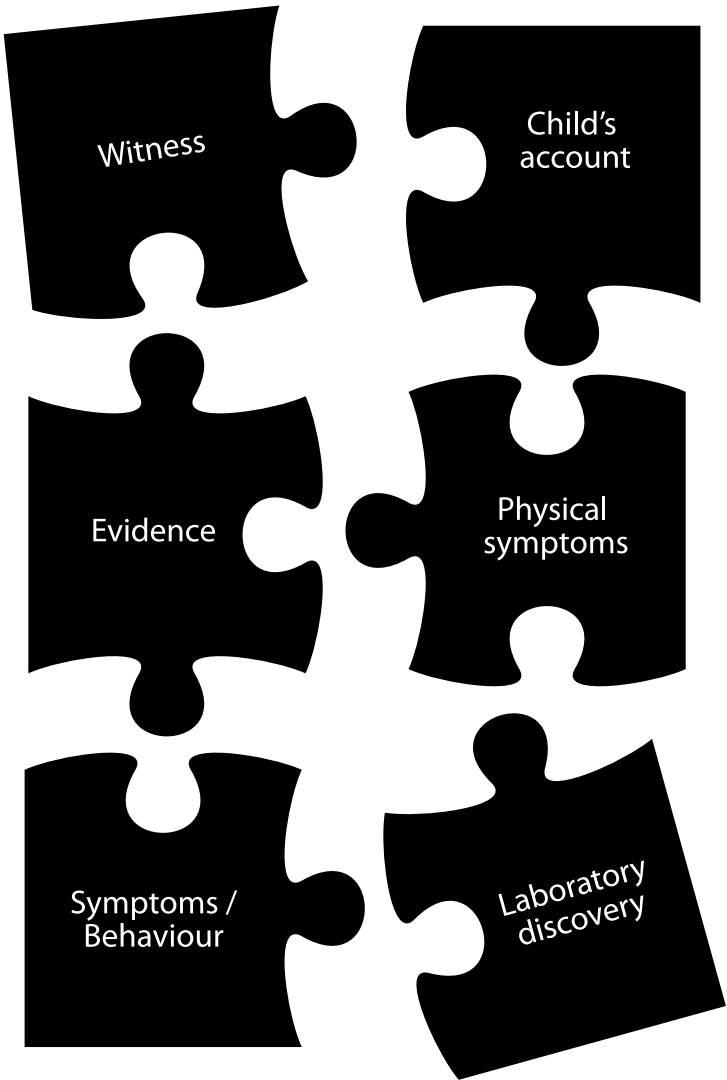
In the Örebro case the perpetrator was discovered through a tip-off that there had occurred child pornographic contacts over the Internet. Pictures of children who were registered at the day nursery had been taken at the nursery as well as in other surroundings. The perpetrator legitimized his own camera at the day nursery by photographing the children and the staff in everyday situations, something that was appreciated by both the staff and the parents. He often carried a rucksack where he always had his camera. In this way he took the chance to perpetrate sexual abuse and at the same time taking photographs when the opportunity presented itself to be alone with some child. He also offered to be a babysitter for those children he had met at the day nursery. In connection with being trusted to be the babysitter, he sexually assaulted the children.

THE DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL ABUSE

The detection of sexual abuse can occur in many different ways – see Figure 3. One type of disclosure of sexual abuse is when a child deliberately tells someone or unintentionally gives themselves away by saying too much. In other cases is it somebody else who begins to have suspicions, for example because the child exhibits symptoms, behavioural disturbances and/or shows physical symptoms. It can be parents, relatives, nursery and preschool staff, school teachers or social workers. In brief, all who in various ways have everyday contact with the child. Finally, suspicions can arise in connection with a medical examination. It is highly uncommon for anyone to see, that is to say witness, sexual abuse, or that routine police work will find evidence that sexual abuse has taken place. It is also unusual that a child is discovered and sexual abuse uncovered through child pornography, but during recent years it has become more common because child pornography is now principally spread over the Internet.

In a study of reports to the police or social services about suspected sexual abuse, 38% of the notifications arose as a result of children talking, 32% because of children's behaviour or symptoms including physical symptoms, and 20% in connection with investigations of other children. In 5% of the notifications, sexual abuse was discovered by witnesses, and in 1% is resulted from confessions from perpetrators (62). Consequently, the commonest means of disclosing of sexual abuse is because of children talking to someone.

FIGURE 3. Disclosure – Discovery



CHILDREN'S OWN DISCLOSURE

Investigations, usually studies of prevalence from the United States and Sweden have shown that less than half of all those who have been subjected to sexual abuse talk/disclose in close connection to the abuse. A large number of cases are not disclosed until later in life, when the victims seek treatment or participate in a research investigation (23, 24, 25, 31). Besides, many studies confirm that only few (6% to 12%) of the disclosure of sexual abuse is further reported to the authorities (25, 58).

Edgarth's (23) research of more than 2,000 seventeen year old Swedish youths reported that 7% of girls and 3% of boys had been subjected to sexual abuse. Around half of the youths declared that they had talked to an adult about the sexual abuse. Only 9% of the youths who admitted that they had experienced sexual abuse had talked to an adult professional about what had happened. None of the boys in the study had spoken with a professional. It is not clear how many of these cases were reported to social services.

A similar picture is found in surveys of those children who seek medical treatment or who are subject of judicial investigations (26, 34, 72). In research on 156 sexually abused children, Sauzier (59) found that only 24% had revealed the sexual abuse immediately after it had occurred, 21% within one year and 17% took a longer time, while 39% never disclosed. It is troubling that those children who had been the most seriously sexually abused (sexual intercourse/penetration) were the least likely to immediately reveal the abuse, and approximately 50% of these never related this. Taking together, the results from the above-mentioned studies confirm that many adults have never talked about themselves being subjected to sexual abuse. One explanation can be that these adults have not connected their mental/psychiatric problems with their earlier sexual abuse.

To Whom Does a Child Confide in?

Irrespective of when a child talks about sexual abuse or how large a proportion of children talk in various investigations, it can be stated that children most frequently will talk to a parent, most often the mother (13, 62). In an investigation from Save the Children's boy clinic in Stockholm, in 58% of cases, the child spoke initially either to the mother or father, or to both of them (69).

THE DISCLOSURE PROCESS

It is usual to distinguish between two types of disclosure: Unintentional and intentional (61). Research by Sorensen and Snow (65) found that of 117 established cases of sexual abuse, 75% were discovered unintentionally and 25% were revealed intentionally. The disclosure described in this research was more of a process than an event. The most common unintentional causes to disclosure included, in diminishing frequency: that the child had been together with the perpetrator, sexualized behaviour by the child, strange remarks from the child, behaviour problems, trusting friends, "victim behaviour", and admission by the perpetrator. Unintentional disclosure was more common among younger children, while intentional disclosure was more frequent among the older children (12, 65). In the study by Sorensen and Snow, the impetuses to talk about sexual abuse were the following, in declining importance: information in school, anger, a suitable occasion when it felt right, support of friends, as well as the fact that the perpetrator had moved (safe to talk) or that the perpetrator was expected to make a visit (fear). This process is described as having four phases:

1. Disavowal, where 75% of the children initially denied that sexual abuse had taken place.
2. Disclosure.
3. Retraction of account, where 25% withdrew their initial narrative of explanation.
4. A fresh confirmation of disclosure, where 93% again endorse the initial account.

The disclosure process has also been described as a so-called "no – maybe – sometimes – yes" syndrome (50). That disclosure is a process is supported by other authors and researchers (6, 21), while yet others arrived at different conclusions and polemicize against this idea. For example, in a study of 249 confirmed cases of sexual abuse, Bradley and Wood (7) drew quite different inferences than Sorensen and Snow, and they could not confirm the hypothesis on disclosure as a process. The research by Bradley and Wood declared that 72% disclosed the sexual abuse for someone else before it came to the attention of the authorities for investigating (6% had themselves gone to the social services or to the police). In official inquiries, 94% said that they had been subjected to sexual abuse, 6% initially denied this sexual abuse. Regarding the earlier disclosed sexual abuse, 4% retracted their earlier disclosure.

The authors could not find any explanation for the disparity between their own investigation and that undertaken by Sorensen and Snow. It is, however, important to remember that disclosure is nevertheless a process that begins long before the social services and the police forces become involved (40).

To conclude, Faller (30) has attempted to systematize the differences between regarding disclosure as an “event” or as a “process”, see Table 4.

Faller suggests that there are many different factors that influence whether one should view disclosure/interview as an event or as a process. The younger the children and the closer they are emotionally to the perpetrator, it is more probable that one must regard children’s accounts as a process. If there has been repeated sexual abuse over a period of time, a child will also find it more difficult to give a single coherent account, as will a child who does not comprehend what took place as sexual abuse. Of course, the better support children receive from their surroundings, it is more probable that they can give a coherent account. The reaction to sexual abuse by children and their mental state will influence their capacity to recount what has occurred. The more traumatized a child is, and the more unpleasant the feelings that are stirred up, it is then more likely that disclosure will take the form

Event	Process
A coherent account	A gradual disclosure
Like a criminal report	Like a confession – embarrassing, shameful
The child very frank. Only requiring one interview, a few direct questions, follow-up questions for elucidation.	The child hesitant, evasive, retracting. Requiring more interviews, many questions, a continuum of questions.
Standardized list of questions employed.	A flexible use of modular questions applied.
The necessity of legal knowledge Introduction Competence Obtain a disclosure No leading questions Avoidance of means of assistance/items or utilizing these first after the child disclosure, trusting in verbal communication	The necessity of clinical knowledge Establishing of contact Support Flexibility Varieated questions based on age and need Varied use of means of assistance/items as related to the need of the child

TABLE 4. Differences if one regards a child’s disclosure as an event or as a process, according to Faller.

of a process. If a child has previously been warned against talking, or a child feels prevented from doing this, then the account will be more process-orientated.

A further difficulty is that children, who earlier had talked about what had happened, during the formal investigation did not always retell (21, 42) what they had said previously. In itself, this supports the contention that retraction is common but there can also be other explanations, especially with regard to younger children. For example, in a study of 251 children in Dublin (42), it was found that 86% of the children, who talked to someone before the official investigation, were again willing to recount to the investigation what had happened. In the age group 0 to 5 years, only 59% related again what they had previously said. For the group of children who had not previously given a verbal account but were being investigated for other reasons (for example, behavioural problems, sexualized behaviour, physical symptoms), only 14% talked to the investigation about what had happened, and most of these were teenagers.

In different studies, the frequency of retraction of the initial account has varied between 4% and 22% (4, 26, 41, 65).

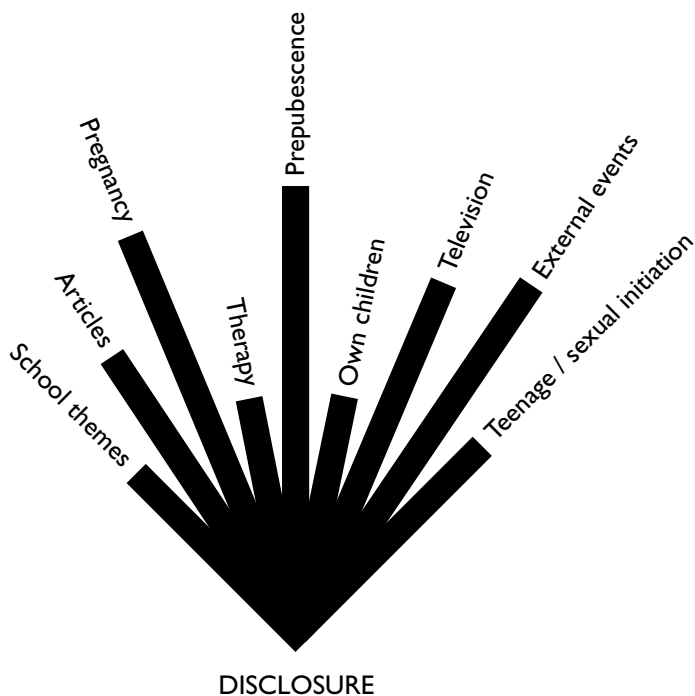
An active approach, i.e. to question children and for that matter even adults, is of significance as to whether children talk about sexual abuse. A study of child- and adolescent non-institutional psychiatric care, showed that the share of cases increased from 6% to 31% if children were asked specifically by trained staff if they had been subjected to sexual abuse (47). Similar figures were obtained when questioning adult women at a psychiatric emergency department. If these women were asked clear-cut questions, the frequency of reported abuse increased from 6% to 70% (14). When an interviewer lacks knowledge about whether or not abuse had occurred, it may actually increase the possibility of disclosure; this is probably because an interviewer without pre-knowledge must have greater patience and flexibility to an individual's narrative (13). Conversely, a recently published experimental study of six to seven year olds demonstrates that children disclose their information to a greater extent (e.g., if one has stolen a pizza) if they believe that the interviewer already knows what has happened. Concerning approach and interview techniques, we refer to other sources (14, 16, 17).

DIFFICULTIES

The assembled empirical and scientific documentation clearly shows that children have great difficulty to talk about sexual abuse, as well as when this occurs later in life. Guilt, feelings of shame, considerations both to the perpetrator and to parents as well as fear are reasons that children give for keeping quiet. Direct threats are unusual but research shows that secrets, i.e., that only the victim and the perpetrator know about the sexual abuse, can cause the incidents during the period to be forgotten (27, 33), while threats reduce the probability of children talking, especially if the perpetrator is close to the child (49).

It seems to be easier to talk if the perpetrator is outside the family than if the person concerned belonged to the family (23). This also meant that

FIGURE 4. The impetus to disclosure



if the perpetrator was outside the family, children more often talked in connection with it happening or in close proximity to the sexual abuse, than if the perpetrator was in the family (35, 59). In a study of 3,220 women, 288 reported that they had been subjected to penetrative sexual abuse before they had reached eighteen years of age, showing that their young age at the time of the sexual abuse and a close relationship to the perpetrator was significantly associated with a late disclosure (64). It also seems as if children and even adults need a nudge, a reminder, which supports or facilitates their giving an own account; see Figure 4, which also receives support in the investigation by Sorensen and Snow. Through an external event or occurrence which reminds an individual on their earlier experiences, for example a television programme, facilitates the recall or memory and a disclosure. In an interview situation with children one can try to find what Christiansson et al. calls retrieval support in order to assist children to remember what happened. For instance, interviewing children in the surroundings where the sexual abuse took place, can improve the child's possibility to extract that information that is in the memory but which the child lacks the strategies to search and find.

Other authors have attempted to explain the child's inability or unwillingness to talk as an adaptation to the system in which the child lived. "The child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome" describes how a child because of guilt and shamefulness, as well as the expectations of the surrounding milieu, conceal their account; they feel powerless, sometimes retracting their account and adapting themselves (66). Much of the empirical data supports "the child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome", even if the syndrome as such was subjected to criticism and could not be scientifically supported. It is worth pointing out that the model is largely based on teenagers and sexual abuse that was committed within the family.

The older the child, the greater the ability it has to reflect over what the consequences of a disclosure are. Not being believed, that the perpetrator will go to prison, that the family will break up, that they will be placed in a foster home or in an institution, are all thoughts and fears that make an older child choose to keep their secret. In an eighteen month follow-up study by Sauziers (59), 19% of teenagers regretted that they had disclosed the sexual abuse. They wanted the sexual abuse to end but feel that they had destroyed their family. Their disclosure started forces that they had similarly little control over as they had over the perpetrator.

The child is dependent on how its surrounding receive its account,

and the aftermath period, together with the sexual trauma, are the most important factors for the child's symptomatology. To be believed by non-perpetrating parents is decisive for a child's subsequent health and development (19, 28). Not to have to take responsibility oneself for disclosure (deliberately) but that it comes about unintentionally, supports this to some extent, as for children where disclosure occurs unintentionally they subsequently feel better than those who disclose deliberately (59).

In the perhaps most well done study in the subject, "Tipping the balance to tell the secret", Sas and Cunningham (57), an investigated 524 children who had been subjected to sexual abuse and where all cases had led to prosecution. The authors described disclosure as a process where children's decision to disclose was a as a point of balance with facilitating features on the one hand and impeding factors on the other. They also describe that a child's disclosure is a decision process with at least four stages. These stages are:

1. Perceiving and understanding that the adult's behaviour was wrong.
2. Overcoming difficulties/obstacles to tell.
3. Deciding when one shall tell.
4. Deciding for whom one shall tell.

DISCLOSURE IN INVESTIGATIONS

In public discussions and in legal circles the focus has often been placed on the risk that children make up and talk about something that has not happened, the so-called falsely positive disclosure. Various types of interview manuals focus solely on this, and everything is done to avoid falsely positive statements. Experience and a good deal of research however show that the problem of falsely negative reports is more common and a greater problem than the positively falsely positive equivalent. What is the reason that children do not talk about sexual abuse to an investigation (falsely negative reports)? One can see two main causes to this: partly communication difficulties, and partly that the child will not talk about what has taken place.

One of the causes to the deficient communication between the interviewer and the child is that the child can have been sexually abused without themselves understanding what had happened. The child does not know whether or not it has been sexu-

ally abused, or that something forbidden had occurred because they had insufficient knowledge about sex. The child lacked names for the genitals, did not know what a sexual act meant or that adult should not perform sexual acts with a child. Besides, the perpetrator may have confused the child by calling sexual acts a game, by disguising it as part of a toilet visit, or by pretending it was for educational reasons. The child did not think it had anything to tell others about. The Sas and Cunningham study found that not less than 40% of all children did not realize that they had been sexually exploited when the abuse began. This lack of comprehension of what had taken place is of course greatest among the younger children but can be observed even among children up to ten to twelve years old.

Another reason is that children do not comprehend the expectations that exist in an interview situation. The whole situation is strange and unfamiliar for most of the children, and they do not understand the purpose with the questions that are asked. For instance a question such as "tell me what happened" can cause bewilderment, and the child does not know what the interview wishes to know. For example, it is hard to get a preschool child to understand this, and thus the interviewer tries to design rules for the interview, rules that are good and facilitating for the child, but these can easily become too many or be forgotten when the child is stressed.

So-called open questions are often too vague altogether in getting the child to focus on something that the interviewer wishes. The child often gives an answer about something other than what is in the mind of the interviewer.

Example:

A six year old boy was interviewed as a witness because a male relative was suspected of having sexually abused the boy's younger sister. The interview took place at a police station and the interviewer began the interview with the question, "you know why you have come here today?" The boy became silent, looked very distressed and anxious and, after waiting a while, answered in a quiet voice: "I think this is because I have quarrelled with my little sister". The boy began to search for answers from his own experience and then drew the conclusion that the police probably interviewed child because they had been foolish/naughty in some way. By putting the boy in this position, he became afraid and the interviewer subsequently could not get the boy to talk about anything that was relevant for the investigation.

Another cause might be that children cannot remember what has happened. This may be due to various reasons, for example a child lives in a disordered environment where other forms of traumatic incidents have occurred. It may have been violence in the family such as the child seeing the mother or some other adult being ill-treated including the child itself being badly treated physically, addiction, or death in the family or among those in the immediate vicinity. These events can completely overshadow what the interviewer wishes the child to talk about. Other incidents become more important and the child cannot be induced to recall the sexual abuse.

To fully comprehend the child's difficulties in these circumstances, still deeper knowledge is needed around the larger question: why do not children talk about the sexual abuse to which they have been subjected?

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

The disclosure of the two child pornography tangled webs in Huddinge and Norrköping led to a heated political and mass medial debate. It was suddenly obvious to everyone that behind every child pornographic picture there was a serious sexual crime against children. The confiscated material alarmed and led to further considerations. This resulted in a parliamentary investigation, and the subsequent Child Pornography Inquiry (SOU 1997:29) final report proposed new legislation containing a prohibition of the possession of child pornography. In January 1999 the new law came into force which criminalized possession of child pornography. It was considered that one could in this way better suppress the spread of child pornographic production and products. However, with technical developments, firstly with video cassette tapes, CD video techniques, and later computers and data bases, the market has moved in a direction that makes it more difficult to obtain disclosure (56).

Since the Stockholm world congress there has been an explosive increase in the distribution of pornographic pictures, including child pornographic pictures, over the Internet. The Internet is also a medium where children and youth, deliberately through curiosity or unintentionally, are exposed to pornography and even to child pornography. The Internet has also been a forum for perpetrators of sexual abuse to seek contact, chat with potential child victims, as well as arranging to meet at some place in order to carry out sexual abuse. It is the growth of a complete new form of criminality, and it is totally boundless and international.

Both the Swedish National Police Board and Save the Children Sweden run a special operation to trace traffic over the Internet, but this and similar operations throughout the world face, to say the least, an unequal struggle. The National Police Board also has been given a European-wide mandate to categorize all confiscated material in a database. This is undertaken in such a way that the interiors of buildings and other details etc are documented and categorized so that one can later identify similarities and patterns. The National Police Board and Save the Children Sweden contributions are important but they reach only a fraction of the homepages that procure child pornographic pictures and films, while simultaneously exercising pressure towards the owners of the servers that the homepages utilize. Often the server owner closes a homepage but new ones emerge all the time. The procurement of child pornography can now also occur via "closed rooms" that are

only open for a short period (hours) to then disappear, which makes it nearly impossible to trace the Internet traffic.

During the Stockholm world congress of 1996 a common declaration was signed in which it was agreed to draw up national plans of action against the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Before the follow-up conference held in Japan in 2001, the Swedish national action plan was updated (54). Furthermore, at the international level, work has intensified within the various co-operative authorities such as the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. This is because the distribution of child pornography and the commercial sexual exploitation of children are predominantly international phenomena. In 2001, the Council of Europe approved measures against Information Technology-related criminality, the "Convention on Cyber Crime" which, inter alia, deal with child pornography on the Internet, as well as issuing a recommendation entitled "On the protection of children against sexual exploitation".

LEGISLATION AT THE TIME OF THE RESEARCH

The new legislation, which came into force on 1st January 1999, criminalizes all dealings with child pornography, which meant that even possession of child pornographic pictures is illegal (possession prohibition). Crimes relating to child pornography that had previously been included under *Brottsbalken* (BrB) – the Criminal Code, *Tryckfrihetsförordningen* (TF) – the Press Law, and *Yttrandefrihetsgrundlagen* (YGL) – the Freedom of Expression Constitutional Law, have now been collected together solely in the Criminal Code (BrB).

In the Criminal Code, Chapter 16, Paragraph 10a is concerned with distribution and, since 1st January 1999, the possession of child pornography. The legal text reads:

A person who

1. portray a children in a pornographic picture;
2. disseminates, transfers, grants use, exhibits or in any other way makes such a picture of a child available to some other person;;
3. acquires or offers such a picture of a child;
4. brings about contact between a buyer and a seller of such pictures of children or to takes any other similar step to facilitate dealing in such pictures; or

5. possess such a picture of a child

shall be sentenced for *child pornography crime* to imprisonment for at most two years, or, if the crime is petty, to a fine or imprisonment for at most six months.

By child is meant a person whose pubertal development is not complete or, if it is apparent from the picture and its attendant circumstances, who is less than 18 years of age.

A person who in the course of business or otherwise for the purpose of making money disseminates a picture of the kind described in the first paragraph through negligence shall be sentenced as there stated.

If the crime described in the first paragraph is considered to be gross a sentence of at least six months and at most four years shall be imposed for *gross child pornography crime*. In assessing whether the crime is gross special consideration shall be given to whether it was committed in the course of business or otherwise for profit, was a part of criminal activity that was systematically practised or practised on a larger scale, or concerned a particularly large number of pictures or pictures in which children are exposed to especially ruthless treatment.

The prohibitions against depiction and possession do not apply to a person who draws, paints or in some other similar artistic hand-crafted fashion produces a picture of the kind described in the first paragraph as long as it is not intended for dissemination, transfer, granted use, exhibition or in any other way be made available to others. Even in other cases the act shall not constitute a crime if, having regard to the circumstances, it is justifiable.

As the production of child pornography nearly always presupposes sexual abuse of the child, all of the sections of the law in the 6th chapter of the criminal code are valid⁴. The most common section of the law that currently concerns children is the sexual exploitation of those under the age of consent. (Chap. 6, Para. 4, 1–2 sections BrB):

If anyone has any sexual relations with those who are under eighteen years of age and who are children to or are being brought up by him or her or whose care and supervision he or she has to answer for because of a decision by the public authorities, sentenced for sexual exploitation of minors to a maximum of four years. The same is valid if someone, in another case that previously referred to in this chapter, has sexual relations with children under fifteen years of age.

If the person who has committed the deed has shown a particular ruthlessness towards the minor or if the crime because of the minor's low age or otherwise is considered serious, shall the sentence for serious sexual exploitation of minors be prison for a minimum of two years and a maximum of eight years.

⁴ At the time for the investigation. Changed 2005.

or sexual molestation, if the crime is judged to be less serious (Chap. 6, Para. 7, 1–2 sections BrB):

Those who, in other cases than those referred to previously in this chapter, sexually touch children under fifteen years of age or induce children to perform or participate in some activity with sexual content shall be sentenced for sexual molestation to fines or to a prison term of a maximum of two years.

The crime of sexual molestation also includes those who through compulsion, beguilement or other inappropriate influence induce someone who is over fifteen but under eighteen years of age to perform or participate in an activity with sexual content, if the action is part of the production of a pornographic picture or amounts to nude posing in another case than when it is a matter of the preparation of a picture.

This means that it is criminal not only to distribute child pornography but even to exploit children up to the age of eighteen years in the production of pornography.

Irrespective of age and relationships, it can moreover be a question of rape (Chap. 6, Para. 1 BrB) or sexual coercion (Chap. 6, Para. 2 BrB). The sentencing range for sexual crimes varies from fines or up to two years in prison for sexual molestation to a maximum of ten years in prison for rape. The period of limitations for various crimes and/or lengths of sentences are detailed in Table 5. This means that for those child pornography crimes that are not regarded as minor offences, the period of limitations is five years.

Maximum length of punishment	Period of limitations
< 1 years	2 years
> 1 < 2 years	5 years
> 2 < 8 years	10 years
For a certain time > 8 years	15 years
Life sentence	25 years

TABLE 5. Maximum length of punishment and period of limitations

In BrB Chap. 35, Para. 4, an exception is made, however, for crimes according to Chap. 6, Paras. 1 to 4. For sexual crimes against children under 15 years, the period of limitations is calculated from the day the plaintiff becomes 15 years old and is for a period of ten years. For example, a young woman in her twenties who talks for the first time about sexual abuse she had suffered in her childhood (before 15 years of age), has until her 25th birthday to notify the police and for a prosecution to proceed. However, according to Chapt. 14, Para. 1 of the social services law, there is no obligation to notify the police or other authorities.

The new legislation's significance

Before 1999 there were rather few cases of prosecutions of distributing child pornography, or indictments under Tryckfrihetsförordningen (TF) – the Press Law. For example, there were only a total of 19 cases for the period 1981-86, where judgements were delivered under the TF, YGL or BrB (SOU:1997:29). According to the Brottsförebyggande rådet – the National Council for the Prevention of Crime – statistics from 1999 led to 35 cases coming to trial (31 verdicts/sentences in district courts and 4 orders of summary punishment. Since then, there has been an increase and in 2000 there were 239 police investigations and the same year 57 cases went to trial (49 verdicts/sentences in district courts and 9 orders of summary punishment). During 2001, there were 368 police investigations concerning suspected child pornography crimes.

Following the new legislation, there has been a marked increase of crimes reported to the police and of crimes which have led to prosecution and that has resulted in convictions. This may be a consequence of the new legislation which created the conditions for disclosure and guilty verdicts (the criminalization of possession), but it can also depend on a real and definite increase or, alternatively, on a improved and more systematic investigation of this type of crime. Subsequently, we can correspondingly state that the amended legislation has been very significant in the battle to suppress the sexual abuse of children in child pornography without, as much as we can judge, altering the freedoms of expression and publications. However, it is important to point out that the struggle against the producers and distributors over the Internet is absolutely unequal, and that the resources of Save the Children and the national police authorities need to be made permanent and strengthened in order to continue to receive reports about child pornography and to trace such material.

Thank you to

all contributory children and families who shared their extremely personal experiences. These have taught us a great deal and enriched our investigation. We also wish to thank all the staff within the police and the judicial authorities who supplied material and helped us to interpret this. A particular thanks to the chief prosecutor Ola Laurell who with his determined commitment for vulnerable children helped us to understand the complicated Internet crimes. Thanks also to our colleagues at BUP-Elefanten, University Hospital in Linköping who supported us in this research project. Our thanks also go to Save the Children (Sweden), who made possible the publication of this book, and to Monika Holm who edited the Swedish text and made it more accessible.

Finally, we will also thank Christopher Steed for his gentle translation and Ethel Quayle and Tink Palmer for their engagement and support which made the English publication possible.

AFTERWORD

Since the first Swedish edition was published in 2003 much has happened both concerning the sex crime legislation and how to do joint team investigations when child sexual abuse is reported. We decided to keep the old legislation in this translation since it reflects the time when these crimes were committed.

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