

Ch@dvce Inventory

Exploratory research in front-line online help
on sexual abuse in Europe



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Introduction

Since social workers began to use e-mail and chat in their welfare work to support and accompany their clients, new initiatives have sprung up all over Europe. Often thanks to the “physical” distance of Internet communication clients and social workers manage to create a powerful proximity whereby clients can verbalise their problems and then engage with the social workers in search of a solution. Little by little, methods around online social work are also being developed by organisations and knowledge centres to support this growing online help practice.

It is from this common commitment to online social work that the three partners in this Ch@dvice project found each other. Child Focus, the Belgian Foundation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children, has been exploring for some time new possibilities of online help. OIAT - the Austrian Institute for Applied Telecommunications- works for the use of technological communication in a safe and efficient manner while the Arteveldehogeschool carries out social work and develops online help methods for welfare workers and supports organisations in the implementation of a range of online help services. These three partners jointly submitted the Ch@dvice project within the framework of the European Commission Daphne III programme. This project has been running since March 2011 and will be finished in February 2013.

This research report describes the current status after a two-stage, exploratory research on the availability of first-line online support on sexual abuse in Europe.

Chapter 1 explains the general research objectives and situates this first research Phase into the broader context of the Ch@dvice project. Chapter 2 defines the different elements of this exploratory research in online help in first-line welfare work on sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe. Chapter 3 explains the methodology employed during this research. Finally, Chapter 4 gives an overview of and discusses the results of the screening of more than 150 websites found in Europe where children and young people with questions or concerns about sexual abuse can ask for information or assistance.

Chapter 5 is focussing on the chat support of 32 European welfare organisations. The main results are explained in chapter 6.

Quite a few chapters comprise print screens or examples of organisations’ websites. All these practical examples are for illustration purposes only and are in no way meant to indicate that these are the only good practices. Our main objective was to introduce the variety of services and to provide inspiration.

By describing current online help practices in first-line welfare all over Europe and in particular by focusing on those initiatives that aim at helping children and young people with their questions and concerns about sexual abuse we hope to inspire further work in the field and hopefully help welfare work organisations reflect on their existing working practices and ambitions. At the same time, we hope this exploratory research may inspire policy-makers to optimize their own welfare policies on important issues such as supporting young (potential) victims of sexual abuse or the future of online assistance.

For the project partners this research was and is an enrichment that, among other things, resulted in a fruitful collaboration as well as in other concrete project outcomes as mentioned at the end of this report.

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1. Ch@dvice Inventory: situation and purpose

This chapter first situates the Ch@dvice Inventory within the four main dimensions of the Ch@dvice project. The objectives of this research are then explained.

1.1 Ch@dvice Inventory as part of the Ch@dvice research and development project

The Ch@dvice project (European Commission, 2010, p. 4) aims to develop material on the protection of (potential) child victims of sexual abuse. This material is directed towards prevention and education as well as social support.

The name of this project - Ch@dvice - summarizes the various relevant objectives of the project:

- * Ch = stands for children and young people, the main beneficiaries of this research;
- * @ ... refers to new media and online technologies because in this project we also pay attention to the risks of sexual abuse via online communication and online help tools in welfare work;
- * Ch@d ... refers to chat help as a low-threshold tool that can help encourage children and young people discuss sensitive topics such as sexual abuse with social workers in an environment that is closer to children's reality and which also offers the possibility to disclose information in a more confidential way than via more traditional communication channels;
- * @dvice ... refers to the possibility for children and young people to receive tailored advice online

The Ch@dvice project comprises five main developments:

* Ch@dvice inventory

In this inventory existing practices of online help in first-line welfare work on sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe are collected and described;

* Ch@dvice case study

This case study focuses on the preparation, organisation and testing of the implementation of chat help on sexual abuse of children and young people by Child Focus (Belgium);

* Ch@dvice guide

This methodological guide, based on the results of the Ch@dvice inventory and the experiences collected during the case study, includes recommendations, examples and questions to reflect on the development or the improvement of services that offer chat help to children and young people confronted with questions or concerns on sexual abuse ;

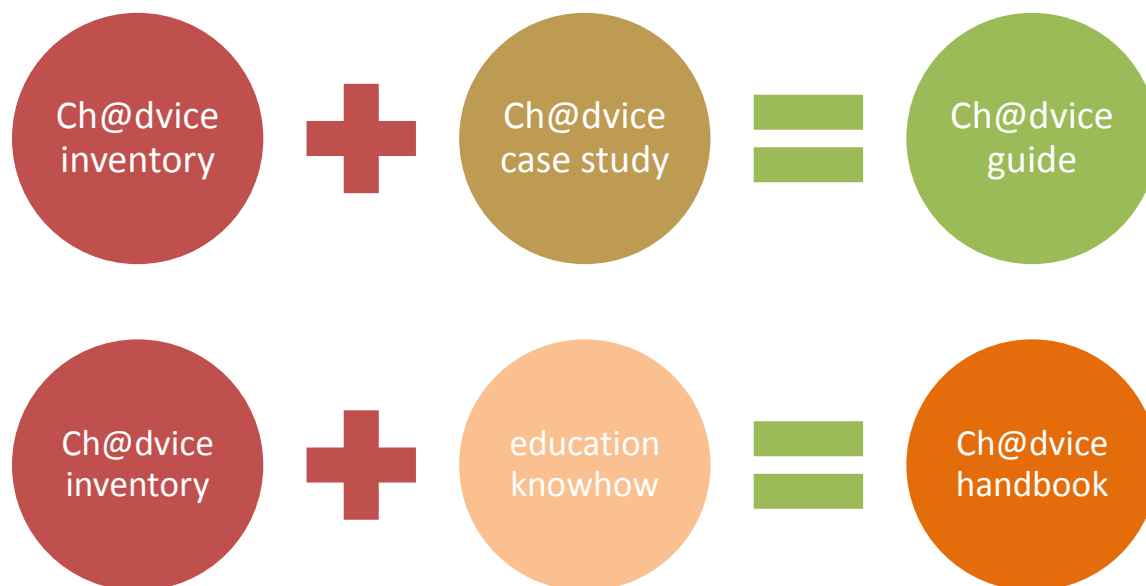
* Ch@dvice platform

The Ch@dvice form will be a European platform, where social services offering online help to young people can exchange and give advice to other services who want to establish online help

* Ch@dvice teachers handbook

This educational handbook aims to support teachers and youth workers deal in a preventive way with sensitive topics such as media violence or sexual abuse. It includes general information,

practical exercises and also contact details of different European organizations that can support children and young people deal with these sensitive issues.



At the end of this report, you will find references to the various other outputs of this project.

1.2 Objectives of the Ch@dvice Inventory

The main aim of the - Ch@dvice Inventory is to collect and describe practices of online help in first-line welfare work concerning sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe.

An exploratory research

This is therefore investigative or exploratory research.

It in no way has the intention to evaluate online help practices concerning sexual abuse of children and young people, nor to select best practices from among the existing range of services. Neither is it the intention of this research to select from existing practices criteria for good online help concerning sexual abuse of children and young people. There was neither time nor indeed the criteria to do so. Cultural contexts in different European countries and regions on a theme such as 'making it possible to discuss sexual abuse' are, for that matter, too heterogeneous for anyone to determine just what 'good criteria' and 'best practices' in fact are.

An exploratory research with an eye for diversity

In this exploratory phase of the research we mapped a wide range of online first-line organisations (government institutions and NGOs) in Europe where citizens can file reports get advice or simply ask questions about sexual abuse. The intention was to get a broad picture of existing European practices and their diversity.

Having a look at this inventory may in itself be inspiring and serve as a mirror for welfare workers to evaluate their own organisation's range of services and for policy-makers to place the 'local' situation into a broader (European) context.

A collection – not an exhaustive list

This inventory is, by no means, an exhaustive panorama of all existing online support sites operating in Europe. However, it does provide a general idea of the existing first-line online support services on sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe. In spite of the methodological limitations, several efforts were made to track down as many online support websites on sexual abuse as possible, in particular networks such as INSAFE, INHOPE and EUCPN were very valuable in helping us identify relevant online social services all over Europe..

2. Online help in first-line welfare work on sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe

One of the first steps of the inventory was to define a clear research focus and agree on existing definitions of the most important concepts used along this research. This chapter defines such concepts, namely, 'sexual abuse', 'social work on sexual abuse', 'online help', first-line welfare work, 'children and young people' and 'Europe'.

2.1 Help on sexual abuse

2.1.1 About sexual abuse

Scientific literature defines sexual abuse of children in many ways. We have chosen to use the definition by Finkelhor (1994)¹ as this definition focuses on different aspects of this phenomenon.

"In general, legal and research definitions of child abuse require 2 elements: (1) sexual activities involving a child and (2) an 'abusive condition'"

1. Sexual activities involving a child (sexual stimulation): sexual abuse with physical contact and without physical contact.
2. Abusive condition exists when:
 - The child's partner has a large age of maturational advantage over the child; or
 - The child's partner is in a position of authority or in a caretaking relationship with the child; or
 - The activities are carried out against the child using force or trickery."

When it comes to sexual exploitation, some sources describe it as sexual abuse with an organized and/or commercial aspect, while others define sexual abuse as a part of sexual exploitation. Furthermore, both sexual abuse and sexual exploitation can occur within the family as well as outside the family.

Examples of sexual offline violence²:

- Rape (vaginal, oral and anal)
- Forced masturbation
- Penetration of a child's anus or vagina with fingers or objects
- Manipulation of a child's genitals
- Sexual activity in which a child is forced to touch the genitals of an adult
- An adult masturbating in the presence of a child
- Joint consumption of pornographic movies (child forced by adults), or watching someone having sex
- Child Pornography
- (Un)dressing a child against their wishes
- ...

¹ Finkelhor, D. (1994). 'Current information on the scope and nature of child sexual abuse'. *Sexual abuse of children*, 2, (4), 31 – 53.

² Eva Borissova, Radoslava Raykova, Mareita Radulova, Tsveta Brestnichka, Georgi Apostolov, Natalia Kirilova, Svetoslava Stoyanova, Kamen Petrov: *Virtu@al and Re@l Violence. A Manual for Prevention*. Association Reditelli, Sofia 2009, ISBN 978-954-92296-1-5, S 66 und Joelle Huser, Romana Leuzinger: *Grenzen. Prävention sexueller Gewalt*. Kohl Verlag 2011, p. 7

Since the use of new technologies by young people, sexual abuse/exploitation also occurs through these new technologies like the Internet, but also via mobile phones or television.

Examples of Sexual Online Violence³

- Invitation to become sexually intimate with the other person
- Luring someone into prostitution
- Cyber-sex against someone's will
- Spreading intimate photos (those showing the victim, but also photos showing the perpetrator that are sent to the victim)
- Spreading child pornographic images
- Spreading intimate pictures without the knowledge or consent of the victim
- grooming (manipulating a minor over the Internet, usually chat, with the intention of abusing the minor)

2.1.2 About social work on sexual abuse

All around the world, children can become victims of neglect and sexual abuse. As from 1980, child sexual abuse is in the scope of several prevention programs and actions. The emphasis has been placed on prevention of sexual abuse by informing potential victims, for instance, on how to avoid unsafe situations, how to tell the difference between a “good touch” and a “bad touch”, etc. Actual knowledge is based on 30 years of expertise.⁴ Prevention programs have proven their efficiency: they promote the cognitive and behavioural performance in order to avoid risks and enhance the child capacities and those of their surroundings. These programs also encourage disclosure and teach children to identify trustful adults. Children who followed such a prevention program on sexual abuse showed an increased autonomy and an increased ability to protect themselves.

Even if the society takes steps to protect children, there are unfortunately still children who will become victims of sexual abuse. The majority of sexual abuse takes place within the family⁵ but it can also occur outside of the family. In most cases, the child knows his/her offender. Sexual abuse concerns all the children, boys and girls, from all layers of society.

In order to help these children, different organizations offer support to victims of sexual abuse and their families. It can be psychological, medical, social and/or juridical assistance, according to the needs of the victim and its family. This can be short-term assistance, for instance providing information, crisis intervention, referral, etc. Other organizations offer a long term assistance, for instance therapy (individual or collective), treatment, social assistance towards a juridical procedure. People who want to contact these organizations have several options: they can make a phone call, send an e-mail, visit the organization,... But even with all these options in place, many victims experience a threshold when it comes to contacting professional help.

This is the why some organizations in Europe decided to open a one-to-one chat application. A chat responds to the needs of young people, who use online technologies and communication tools to

³ Eva Borissova, Radoslava Raykova, Mareita Radulova, Tsveta Brestnichka, Georgi Apostolov, Natalia Kirilova, Svetoslava Stoyanova, Kamen Petrov: *Virtu@al and Re@l Violence. A Manual for Prevention*. Association Reditelli, Sofia 2009, ISBN 978-954-92296-1-5, S 66 und Joelle Huser, Romana Leuzinger: *Grenzen. Prävention sexueller Gewalt*. Kohl Verlag 2011, p. 7

⁴ « L'agression sexuelle chez les adolescents » Child Sexual Abuse, University of Calgary, Programme scolaire de prévention de la violence, 23 septembre 2002, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/resolve/violenceprevention/Francais/examenprog/agressintro.htm>

⁵ As we talk about interfamilial sexual abuse, we refer to Finkelhor's definition: “sexual abuse is interfamilial when the author of the facts is a person with whom the child has a blood link or is affiliated through a common law.”

communicate. Furthermore, research also shows that online counselling services such as the chat can be extremely useful for sensitive and taboo related topics such as child sexual abuse or violence.

2.2 Online help

To describe online help we first give a definition of the concept and then describe the various forms of online help and tools on which we focus in this research.

2.2.1 What is online help?

In this research we use the following definition of online help:

“Online help covers any care intervention that uses information and communication technology (ICT) to communicate with potential clients and persons seeking help and their surroundings for the purpose of improving their welfare in the broadest sense of the word.” (Bocklandt, P., 2011)

This definition implies a clear delineation. It involves the use of ICT applications in the actual support process / communication process with the person seeking help. There are of course many technological and web applications on which we do not focus in this project; for example: electronic patient files, data banks, registration programs, e-mail consultations between colleagues, etc. These can support the day-to-day operations of an organisation, but they are located mostly in the ‘back office’ and fall outside the usual description of online help.

The purpose of online help may vary: from providing info and advice to offering a sounding board, support, guidance and follow up care. In this research we focus on the use of ICT tools in the core business of online help in first-line welfare work, i.e. online communication with potential clients. ICT applications are thus understood as means of online help. The focus, therefore, lies on organisations that have at their disposal a range of online help services for persons seeking help, advice or support.

Online help in first-line welfare work spans the broad diversity of ICT tools used as means of communication between user, visitor, client and client on the one hand and the organisation and social worker on the other. The different tools are explained in point 2.2.2 (forms of online help).



2.2.2 Forms of online help

A variety of forms of online help and tools are used in online first-line welfare work (Bocklandt, 2011 and Schalken, 2010). A basic distinction is made here between, on the one hand, static or non-interactive online help tools whereby the organisation provides the visitor/client with information and, on the other, forms of online help and tools involving (personal) interaction between the user/client and the social worker.

ICT applications and tools	
One-way communication Information sites	Online help with interaction

2.2.2.1 Static – non-interactive – online help tools

There are different ways in which an organisation can make information available online for visitors or clients without having to interact with them. This is known as 'one-way' or 'static' communication.

Tips and advice	Tag Cloud	FAQ's	Links	Testimonials	News
					

Via 'tips and advice' different themes of information, recommendations and advice can be formulated.

The visitor can click on a 'tag cloud' to find concepts in a list or on a cloud behind which there is a clear definition and description of the theme.

A 'FAQ' heading gives answers to frequently asked questions. These often arise from analysis of the number of hits or visits to 'tips and advice' or 'tag cloud' concepts.

Under 'links', reference is made to a selection of other relevant websites where the visitor/client can find information or help.

In the heading 'testimonials' the visitor/client can read true-life stories by persons struggling with similar help issues and evaluations that recipients make of the organisation's help services.

Finally, a 'news' heading offers an overview of recent initiatives and/or views and opinions from the organisation.

2.2.2.2 Forms of interactive online help and tools

In the forms of online help involving actual interaction between client and social worker a threefold division is generally made on the basis of 'time between question and answer'.

The distinction is made between direct, postponed or unspecified interaction.

Forms of interactive online help and tools		
Direct interaction	Postponed interaction	Uncertain interaction





We examine each of these three interaction clusters.

Forms of online help with direct or postponed interaction

These forms of online help involve a 'simultaneous' or 'postponed' communication between the client and the social worker.

These online help interactions may equally be with an individual client and a social worker or between a group of clients and a social worker.

We thus obtain the following fourfold division:

Forum 	E-mail 	Chat room for group 	One to one Chat 
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In a 'forum' the client proposes a topic - a theme on which he or she wants to ask a question or is trying to form an opinion. This is an invitation to the peer group visiting the site and the social worker to formulate a reaction to the topic. The topic and answers remain available online, so that others can also react to them later.

The client 'e-mails' the question using a web form or to the e-mail address of the social worker at any time. A social worker then takes time to formulate a carefully considered answer.

Both forms are examples of postponed interaction, because an answer is not necessarily given immediately after launch of the forum topic or the placing of an e-mail question. On the contrary, direct interaction involves a chat forum conversation in which several clients can engage in a conversation moderated by the social worker at a prearranged time and possibly on a prearranged theme.

In a one-to-one chat a direct online conversation is conducted between client and social worker. The client may log on in a chat room at the times indicated on the website.

Forms of online help with unspecified interaction

Finally, online help uses a number of forms of help that involve interaction between client and social worker, but for which the time of interaction is unspecified. The tools are available online, but it cannot be predicted when the client will make use of them.

These may be:

Social Network Sites 	Serious games 	Self-test and self-help instruments 
--	---	---

As a new form of location-oriented work, welfare organisations are becoming to be active in places where the target group also communicates, for instance, on 'social network sites'. We therefore speak here of "virtual street work".
























Via 'educative games' (serious games) online tools are embedded in game situations through which the clients can acquire knowledge or skills ; make choices and/or perform tasks to attain a particular goal.

'Self-test or self-help instruments' give advice after the user completes a series of questions.

2.2.2.3 A global overview

These forms of online help and tools can be summarized as follows (Bocklandt, 2012):

Table 1 Overview of forms of online help and tools in first-line welfare work

One Way communication 						Online help with interaction 						
Information sites						Postponed interaction 	Direct interaction 		Uncertain interaction 			
Uncertain 												
Tips and advice	Tag cloud	FAQ's	Links	Testimonials	News	Forum	E-mail	Chatroom	One-to-one chat	Social network	Serious games	Self test and SelfHelp instruments
												

These forms of online help and tools have a number of characteristics:

- * Digital communication: the “physical” distance between client and counsellor typical of digital communication, does have an impact on the way clients and counsellors interact. For instance, in many cases, a problem can be more readily discussed via chat than face-to-face;
- * Channel reduction: non-verbal communication is eliminated. One advantage is that clients may feel more at ease when disclosing sensitive information, for instance an episode of sexual abuse. The disadvantage is the chance of misinterpretation;
- * online help means decontextualisation: stripped of context info;
- * online help is often accessible round-the-clock: 24/24 hrs, 7 days a week. The info can be stored and reread;
- * online help is not bound to a specific place: travel expenses do not enter into the equation. Help can be requested and obtained from home.

This often helps online help to lower the threshold:

- * taboos are more readily discussed;
- * the client is autonomous: the client decides when to make contact and which aspects to discuss;
- * anonymity is possible: in this way the client may request essential support sooner;
- * the offer of welfare services is more rapidly and broadly available.

However, online help also involves extra hurdles and points for concern:

- * there is sometimes doubt about the identity/authenticity of the chat partner;
- * channel reduction entails the possibility of communication breakdowns;
- * the client tends to hang up faster if the social worker comes across as too confrontational;
- * in certain forms of online help (e.g., chat help) opening hours are limited and waiting times are usually long;
- * technical failures sometimes cause delay or interruption of communication;
- * the identification and location of online help in relation to the extensive Internet offer is not always evident.

The characteristics, strength and vulnerability of tools for online help on sexual abuse are illustrated later in this report.

2.3 First-line social work

This research does not focus on all existing types of online help but only on first-line online help services. For the definition of social work we employ the definition of social work as accepted worldwide: “The social work profession promotes social change, problem-solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the point where people interact with their environment. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.”⁶

Within organisations where these objectives are pursued, this research focuses on first-line organisations where clients can go online to find a listening ear, support, or crisis intervention, or where they can discuss their problems and receive a referral. This means that organisations that guide and treat children and young people with problems related to sexual abuse beyond this level fall outside the scope of this research.

2.4 Children and young people

In this research, we define a ‘child’ as persons from 0 to 18 years of age, as stated in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. (United Nations, 1989)

2.5 Europe

When we use the term "Europe" in this project we mean the 27 countries that form the European Union. These countries are Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the Czech Republic, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

2.6 Summary: the focus of this exploratory research

On the basis of the above definitions the Ch@dvice Inventory focuses on:

- European first-line welfare organisations (*ergo* no individual professionals and/or organisations that offer guidance and treatment);
- that offer a range of online help services via a website;
- carried out by professionals or trained volunteers (*ergo* no self-help groups);
- concerning (online or offline) sexual abuse;
- of children and young people. Persons who contact these online organisations may be these children or young people themselves or, equally well, their parents, teachers or third parties.

⁶ Since 2001 the definition of Social Work is accepted all over the world. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools for Social Work (IASSW) and the European Association of Schools for Social Work (EASSW) have all at once changed the definition and adopted the new one during the IFSW General Meeting in Montréal, Canada, July 2000, and the common congress of the IFSW (Europe) and EASSW on the 27th June 2001 in Copenhagen.

3. Methodology

The collection and description of online help services in first-line social work on sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe in this research proceeded in two phases. This chapter explains how the researchers systematically set about their work in the different phases.

3.1 Phase 1: a broad ranging inventory

In the **first phase** websites were collected from the 27 Member States of the European Union. The range of online help services on these sites was broadly screened in this phase.

3.1.1 Purpose of the broad ranging inventory

To obtain a first picture of current practice and diversity of the range of online help services concerning sexual abuse of children and young people the first phase surveyed the content elements and forms of online help that featured most prominently on the homepages of the websites of the screened organizations. Only in a few cases, it was necessary to screen websites beyond the homepage.

3.1.2 Working method and motivation

How the researchers set about their work and how they were motivated is described below.

3.1.2.1 Collection of websites

The online help websites to be screened concerning sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe were collected in the period September 2011 to March 2012. The main sources were EUCPN (the European Crime Prevention Network), Chiworld.org (Child Helpline International), Inhope hotlines and Insafe.

1. Via **EUCPN** - the European Crime Prevention Network - a survey was conducted with all 27 Member States of the European Union. This route was chosen because the 27 members of this network are official representatives of their countries. The central question was: "Which organisations (and help lines) in your country have a range of online services where citizens can go with questions and reports on (online) sexual abuse of children and/or young people?" The respondents could complete the survey via a Google Docs tool and answers were sent directly to researchers in the Arteveldehogeschool.

Via EUCPN the researchers received answers from 16 Member States. They received no answer from Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Portugal and Spain.

2. The researchers also searched the Internet using the keywords "Sexual abuse helpline Europe". Among other things they came across 2 international umbrella sites: Chiworld.org and Inhope. The addresses of the European child and young persons' lines were collected via the

Chiworld.org website (Child Helpline International), a worldwide coordinating organisation of helplines for children.

3. **Inhope** also represents and supports reporting points for illegal Internet information worldwide. “INHOPE Hotlines offer the public a way of anonymously reporting Internet material including child sexual abuse material they suspect to be illegal. The Hotline will ensure that the matter is investigated and, if found to be illegal the information will be passed to the relevant Law Enforcement Agency and, in many cases, the Internet Service Provider hosting the content.” (Inhope, 2012). The Inhope website also collects useful websites in Europe.
4. **Insafe** is a European network for “Awareness Centres promoting safe, responsible use of the Internet and mobile devices to young people.” (Insafe, 2012). http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm Via Child Focus (member of Insafe) the researchers obtained a list of the European Insafe websites that have a chat application.
5. During an Insafe training meeting held in Sofia, Bulgaria in March 2012 representatives of the European Member States e-safety helplines and awareness centres complemented inventory data by checking that the local websites collected thus far were, indeed, the most relevant ones in their respective countries. They did this by responding to a short written survey where they had to indicate the relevance of the websites listed for their country and write down the name of any other relevant institution in their country missing from the list. In total, ten new websites were included to the list of websites to be further screened.

The collection of websites for screening was thus conducted thanks to the information and feedback provided by official representatives of each European country (in EUCPN); the members of INSAFE (experts in safer use of the Internet by young people); as well as through the coordinating websites Chiworld and Inhope. This was then all rounded off via the use of search terms 'googled' by the researchers on Internet in various European languages.

3.1.2.2 Screening of websites in phase 1 – working method

All websites were classified in an Excel file⁷. On the basis of a test analysis of a number of sites a screening instrument was designed, tested and adjusted. This resulted in the setting up of a number of parameters against which the selected websites⁸ were further analysed.

The focus of this broad ranging analysis lay on screening homepages of the websites (or one-click-away from the homepage if considered relevant). Because a number of sites are split up into sub-sites by age group or theme, the main pages of the sub-sites were also regarded as homepages for young people and/or children.

Six researchers from the Arteveldehogeschool and Child Focus screened the available websites. In order to increase intercoder reliability, the six researchers first screened the same five websites; any differences in coding were discussed and 'eliminated' so that further screening could proceed from the same interpretation of parameters.

⁷ See Annex 1: inventory of 161 websites screened in this research

⁸ See Annex 2: parameters for screening of the websites, phase 1

3.2 Phase 2: an in-depth screening

In the **second phase** a number of websites were selected for further in-depth screening. The chosen websites had to fulfil the following criteria: (1) They had to have a chat help service; (2) children or young people had to be (one of) the target group(s) addressed by the website.

3.2.1 Purpose and content of the in-depth screening

The purpose of this in-depth phase was to screen real-life examples, practices and experiences of social workers in the provision of chat help services on sexual abuse of children and young people and collect recommendations in connection with the organisation/implementation of such services from various European countries.

We opted to focus on chat help because, for children and young people, chatting is a favourite form of communication and because - in this project - a strong content-specific link can then be made with another facet of the project, namely the development and actual implementation of chat help on sexual abuse at Child Focus (Belgium).

Furthermore, the examples, practices, experiences and testimonials of social workers and recommendations in connection with chat help on sexual abuse of children and young people will be integrated in the Ch@dvice-guide, focusing on the implementation, characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of chat help on sexual abuse.

To collect and make use of real-life examples, experiences and testimonials of social workers and recommendations concerning online help (focussing on chat help) from various European countries in the Ch@dvice guide the following ingredients were central to the in-depth screening of websites:

Focus on chat help

- * figures on turnover of chat help interactions
- * positioning of chat help compared with other (online) forms of help
 - ... which forms of help are offered by the organisation?
 - ... with which organisations do you systematically cooperate and on which issues?
 - ... how do you position forms of help in relation to each other?
 - ... is the number of interventions preset (one-off chat or ...)?
- * variants of chat help user-friendliness on the website⁹: ease of reference, plain language, clear info, links that work, surfing possibilities.

Focus on 'chat help on sexual abuse':

- * What are the possibilities and limits of chat communication on this subject?
 - * How do we deal with these limits?
 - * Who provides this service? (Professionals, trained volunteers)
 - * Which ethical issues/choices arise in the process?
 - * What are the critical success factors in implementation of chat help on sexual abuse?
 - * Which policy choices are made regarding referencing and why are these choices made?
- This in-depth screening does not include any experiences of children and young people as clients of chat help on sexual abuse. In any case it was not feasible to organise a target group survey in this

⁹ Primary objective = not 'quality assessment' but rather an overview of possible variants, points for concern as regards user-friendliness/accessibility of the sites. Here we drew inspiration from Nielsen (2005)

research because of the sensitivity of the theme, differences in objectives of the various chat help services and the language barrier.

3.2.2 Working method and motivation

The way in which the websites were selected for screening and what in-depth screening actually means is described below.

3.2.2.1 Selection of websites and organisations for in-depth screening

The starting point for the selection of the websites to be screened in more depth was the overview of the 161 websites screened in Phase 1. From there, 78 websites were selected for deeper analysis based on a combination of the following criteria:

- included in the general screening Phase 1 (161 sites);
- (also) explicitly targeting children and/or young people (114 sites);
- having an interactive online help service (chat, e-mail, forum or group chat) visible on the homepage (113 sites);

This list of 78 websites was presented at a meeting of members of the Insafe network¹⁰ in March 2012 in Sofia, Bulgaria; a partner from each European country was asked the following question: “This is a list of websites that offer interactive online help that, e.g., children and/or young people can visit on the subject of sexual abuse. State for your country per website whether, in your opinion, it is a very relevant (VR), relevant (R), non-relevant (N) or unknown website”. This yielded a list of 38 websites.

The final selection of sites for further screening was made on the basis of the following criteria from the list of 78 pre-selected websites:

- All the sites that were identified as ‘very relevant’ by local Insafe representatives were selected for further screening. Besides, all the sites that were “unknown” to a representative were also further screened as it was possible that a website was relevant but the Insafe representative was not aware of their existence. (38 websites in total);
- Also sites where Chat help service was available were selected (53 in total);
- Finally, all the relevant sites identified as relevant by the Ch@dvice researchers during the screening in Phase 1.

These stages in the selection process resulted in a source file with 38 websites for the screening in phase two.

It became clear at the start of this in-depth screening that some chat services on the 38 sites were merely a link to a chat support service provided by another organisation (which had already been screened) or that the chat support service had been (temporarily) suspended because of a lack of financial means. The results of this part of the research are consequently based on the screening of only 32 organisation websites.

The 32 selected sites originate from the following countries:

¹⁰ See also pt.3.1.2.1

Table 2 Overview of number of sites included in the in-depth screening

country	Number of websites
Austria	1
Belgium	4
Bulgaria	1
Czech Republic	2
Denmark	2
Estonia	1
Finland	1
France	1
Germany	2
Hungary	1
Netherlands	6
Poland	1
Romania	2
Slovakia	1
Sweden	3
United Kingdom	3
TOTAL	32

The following is a list of the 32 websites screened:

- www.albahus.dk
- www.awel.be/chat
- www.bris.se
- www.childfocus.be/nl/nu-praat-ik-er-over/child-advice-home
- www.childLine.org.uk
- www.Cyberhus.dk
- www.elinka.iporadna.cz/
- www.fierfryslan.nl
- www.getconnected.org.uk
- www.helpline.bg
- www.helpline.org.pl
- www.helpline.sigur.info
- www.helpwanted.nl
- www.hulpmix.nl
- www.ikzitindeshit.nl
- www.jac.be/
- www.jourhavandekompis.se
- www.jugend.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html
- www.kek-vonal.hu
- www.kinderschutz-wien.at
- www.kindertelefoon.nl
- www.lasteabi.ee
- www.linkabezpeci.cz
- www.myh.org.uk
- www.netecoute.fr
- www.nuoret.info/
- www.pomoc.sk
- www.pratenonline.nl
- www.save-me-online.de (www.nina-info.de)
- www.sense.info (canyoufixit.sense.info)
- www.slachtofferchat.be
- www.tjejzonen.se/

3.2.2.2 Work method of the in-depth screening

This second research phase will cover the period between late April 2012 and early September 2012. The 32 websites from 16 European countries are further analysed; attention is here focused on chat help services on sexual abuse of children and young people. The organisations of the websites are also requested to complete an online survey and forward any interesting documents (preferably in English, Dutch, German, Italian or French). The researchers develop this in-depth screening in four aspects:

Screening 32 chat help applications

Through consultation the research team set some 60 parameters / questions¹¹ aimed specifically at analysing those aspects that had to do with the chat help application. Attention was then paid to elements that make the site low-threshold, user-friendly and attractive for children young people. During the published opening hours of the chat the researchers made a maximum of 2 attempts to initiate a chat conversation. During the screening of the websites a screenshot was also made of the various steps during the chat help process.

Online survey with 32 organisations developing a range of chat help services

Additionally to the screening of the websites, the researchers conducted an extensive survey of the 38 organisations included in the original selection for phase two of the screening. The respondents were invited by e-mail to complete an online survey (on Google Documents). Approximately ten days later, this was followed up with a reminder.

On 29 May 2012 the selected organisations were contacted by e-mail and asked to complete an online questionnaire (using Google Forms) relating to their chat service on sexual abuse and to submit relevant documentation about the extent of their chat support. By the end of August 2012, 22 organisations in 12 countries had completed the questionnaire (56% response). The response rate was particularly high in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark.

The following is a list of the 22 organisations:

AlbaHus – Denmark	Jongerenadviescentra – Belgium
Awel – Belgium	Kék Vonal Child Crisis Foundation – Hungary
Børns Vilkår – Denmark	Klikvoorhulp.nl (Impact) – The Netherlands
BRIS – Sweden	Linka bezpečí (Safety Line) – Czech Republic
Child Focus – Belgium	Meldpunt Kinderporno – The Netherlands
ChildLine – United Kingdom	Nobody's Children Foundation – Poland
City of Helsinki Health Center – Finland	PratenOnline (Jeugdriagg NHZ) – The Netherlands
Cyberhus – Denmark	Roditeli Bulgarian helpline for Online Safety – Bulgaria
De Kindertelefoon – The Netherlands	Slachtofferchat (CAW Zuid-Oost-Vlaanderen) – Belgium
e-Enfance NGO – France	Tjezonen – Sweden
Hulpmix.nl – The Netherlands	Unabhängiges Kinderschutzzentrum Wien – Austria

Policy and other documents

In addition to completing the online survey the concerned organisations were asked to provide relevant documents (annual reports, policy memos, operational guidelines, training manuals, etc.) concerning chat help of their organisation. These documents are currently being analysed.

As a result, the researchers were given access to approximately sixty documents.

¹¹ See Annex 4: website screening parameters, p. 91

4. 161 online help websites on sexual abuse in Europe

This chapter presents the results of the broad screening (Phase 1). Attention is mostly paid to the spread of websites found to offer online help on sexual abuse of children and young people in the 27 European countries, to the target groups and the accessibility of these sites, and to the various online forms of help they offer. In addition to figures and descriptions various elements are also illustrated with screenshots from many diverse organisations.

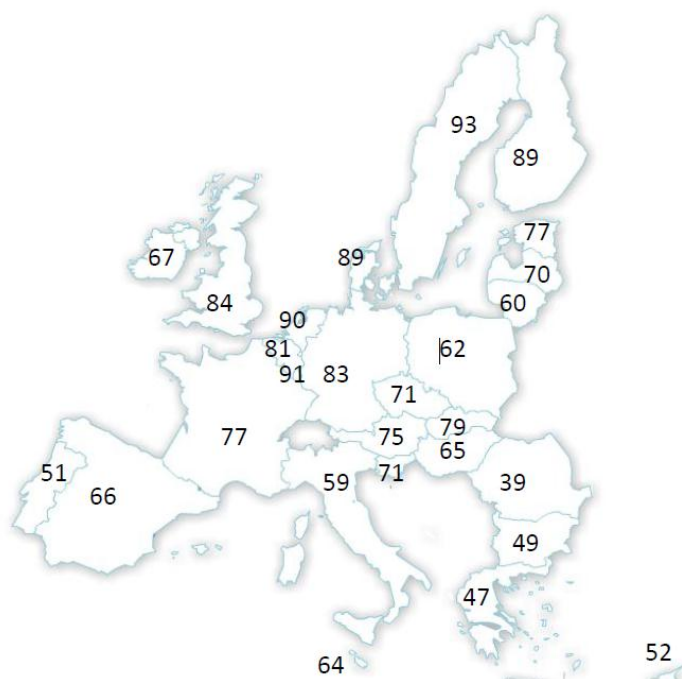
4.1 Screening in a European context

Before giving an overview of the screened websites on sexual abuse in Europe we wish to point out that comparison of data is a perilous undertaking. Cultural differences, difference in organisation of welfare work, openness to make sexual abuse discussible and so many other factors hinder a straightforward comparison. Furthermore, we should bear in mind that it is not the intention of this project to compare online help in Europe, but rather to provide a general overview of the existent available online help on sexual abuse.

In order to better understand the context in which online help takes place in different European countries it is important to have at least a general idea of the degree of Internet penetration in each country. By internet penetration we mean the percentage of the population with Internet access at home. This background variable is important as it may help us frame existing differences in the offer (or lack of offer of) of online help services in the 27 EU member states.

The map below gives an overview¹².

Figure 1: Internet penetration in Europe



¹² <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats4.htm#europe>

4.2 Geographical spread of websites on sexual abuse in Europe

4.2.1 Relevant websites

The survey of sites started out from the question: “Which organisations (and helplines) have an online help service where citizens can go with questions or reports (online or offline) on sexual abuse of children and/or young people? “

As previously mentioned, in an initial phase 161 websites were collected from the 27 Member States of the European Union.

Figure 2: Number of screened websites per country

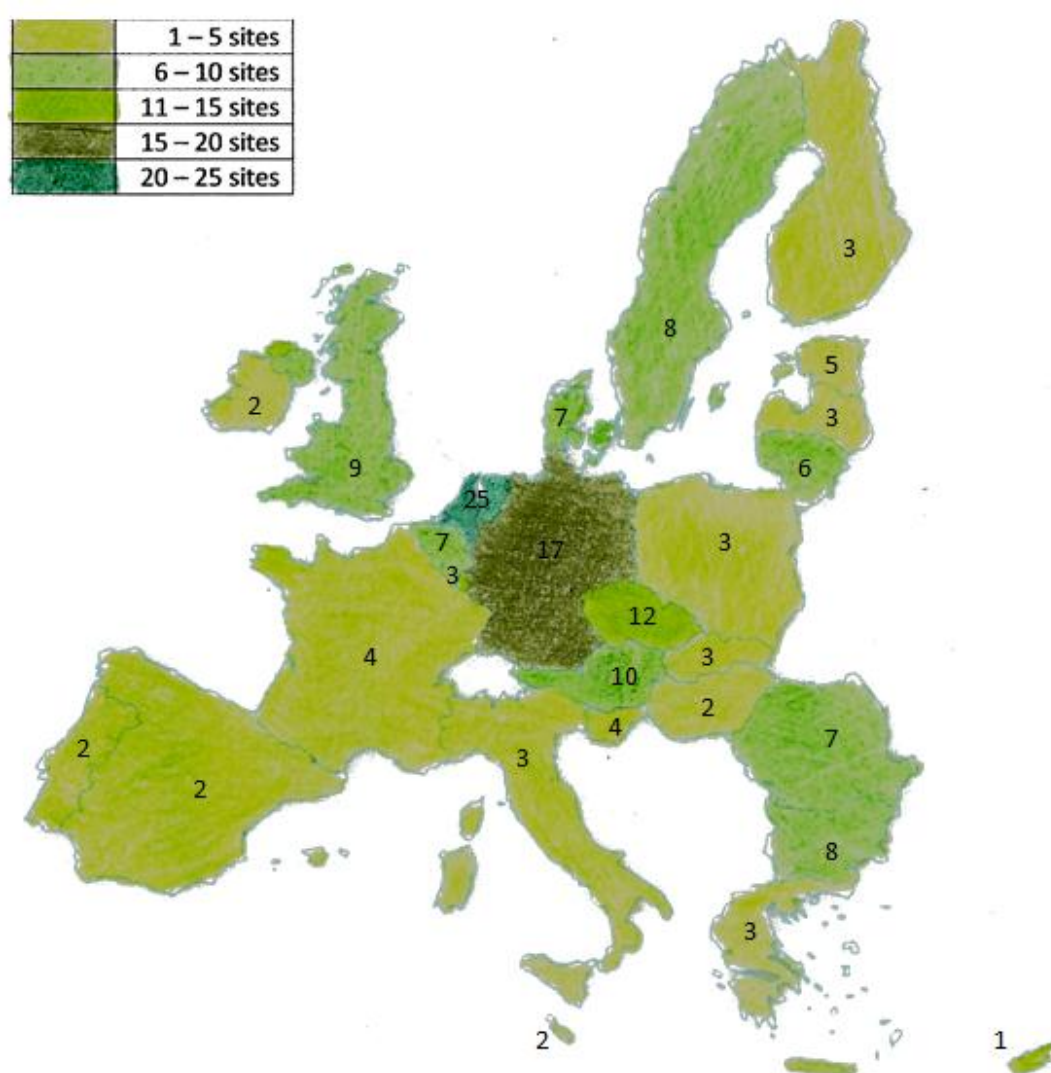


Table 3 Number of screened websites with sexual abuse as (main) subject

countries	Number of screened sites	Number of sites with sexual abuse as subject
Austria	10	5
Belgium	7	5
Bulgaria	8	6
Cyprus	1	1
Czech Republic	12	4
Denmark	7	7
Estonia	5	1
Finland	3	1
France	4	2
Germany	17	7
Greece	3	2
Hungary	2	1
Ireland	2	1
Italy	3	2
Latvia	3	0
Lithuania	6	3
Luxembourg	3	2
Malta	2	0
Netherlands	25	14
Poland	3	2
Portugal	2	1
Romania	7	5
Slovakia	4	2
Slovenia	3	1
Spain	2	0
Sweden	8	3
United Kingdom	9	5
TOTAL	161	83

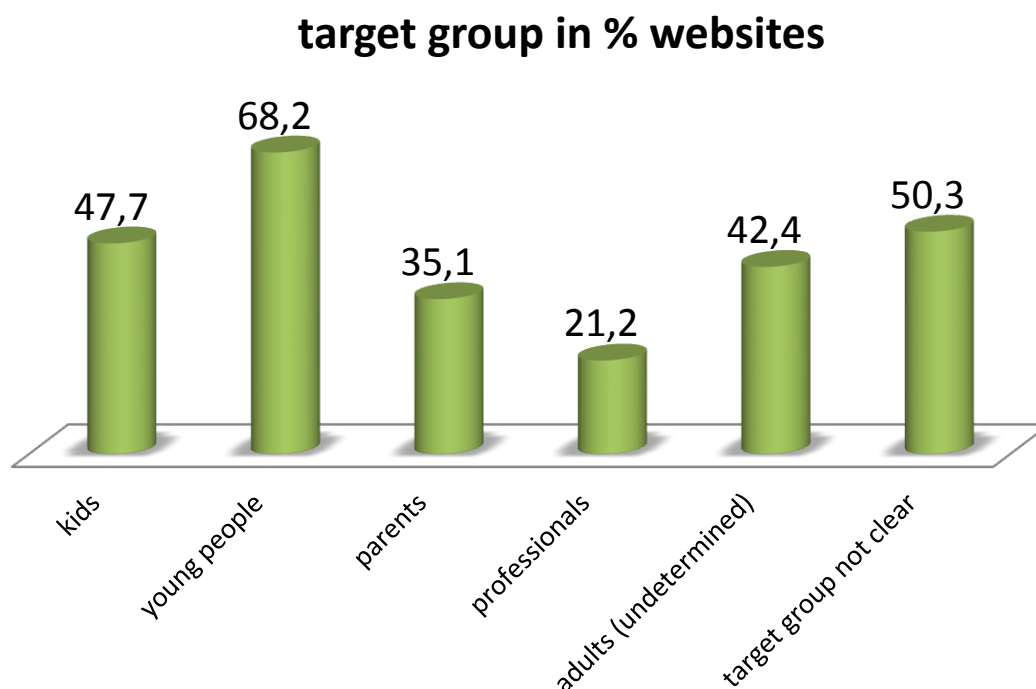
Findings

The results of our screening show that each of the 27 EU countries has relevant online help websites, however, not all websites have sexual abuse as a (main) subject. In 24 countries we found at least 1 website where the subject 'sexual abuse' was presented as the (main) theme on the homepage. Only in Lithuania, Malta and Spain no websites were found with sexual abuse as one of the specific themes or as the main theme.

There are sizeable differences in the number of available sites per country, the polar opposites being Cyprus (1) and the Netherlands (25). Differences are observed even among the biggest European countries. Germany, for instance, has 17 sites while Spain has only 2. We note the same phenomenon in the smaller countries. The size of a country therefore has nothing to do with the number of available sites.

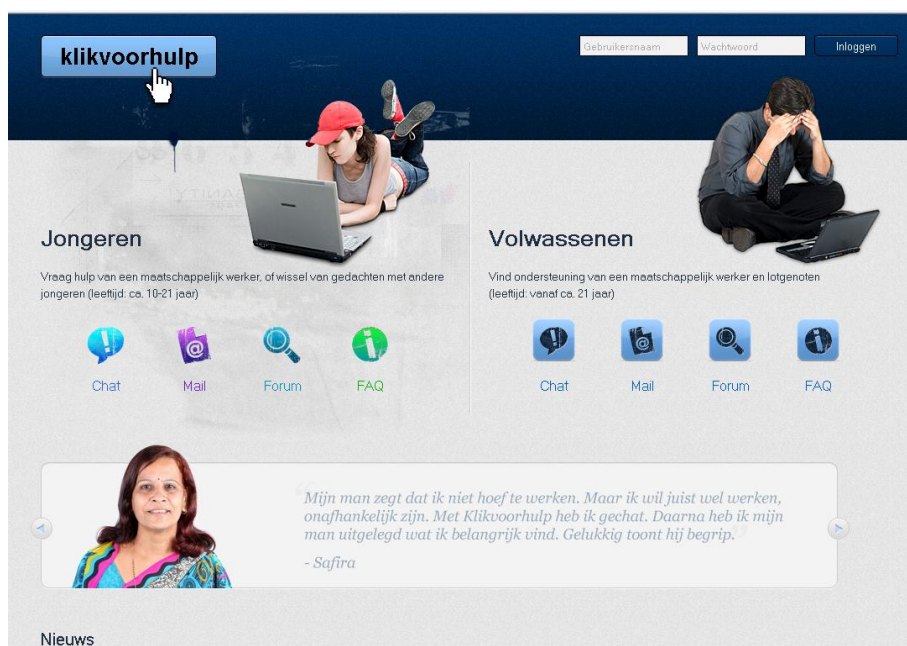
4.3 Target groups of websites on sexual abuse

Figure 3: target groups on websites



Most of the sites have children and/or young people as the target public. A number of initiatives have several target groups and split the information on the site according to target group.

90% of the websites targeting children also target young people. 63% of the websites targeting young people also target children. These age-specific combinations are thus frequent.



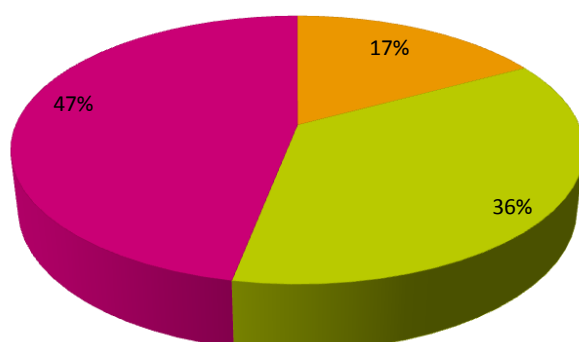
53% of websites targeting children also target parents, and 41.5% of the websites likewise target young people.

Approximately one fifth (19%) of the websites have a target group-related entry on the homepage.

<http://www.klikvoorhulp.nl/> - 5 June 2012

Figure 4: Does the website have sexual abuse as (main) subject?

main theme one of the themes not explicitly named



In almost half of the sites (47%) sexual abuse is not explicitly named as a theme. For example, child and young people's helplines often have a broad front of action. Their broad and low-threshold first-line aid makes it possible for children and young people to go to them in cases of sexual abuse. However, they do not name the theme explicitly on the homepage.

17% of the organisations have sexual abuse as a main theme and 36% have sexual abuse as one of the possible themes/subjects on the homepage.

8% of the websites that explicitly target children mainly focus on problems of sexual abuse.

On sites for parents this is 9%, for professionals 12.5%.

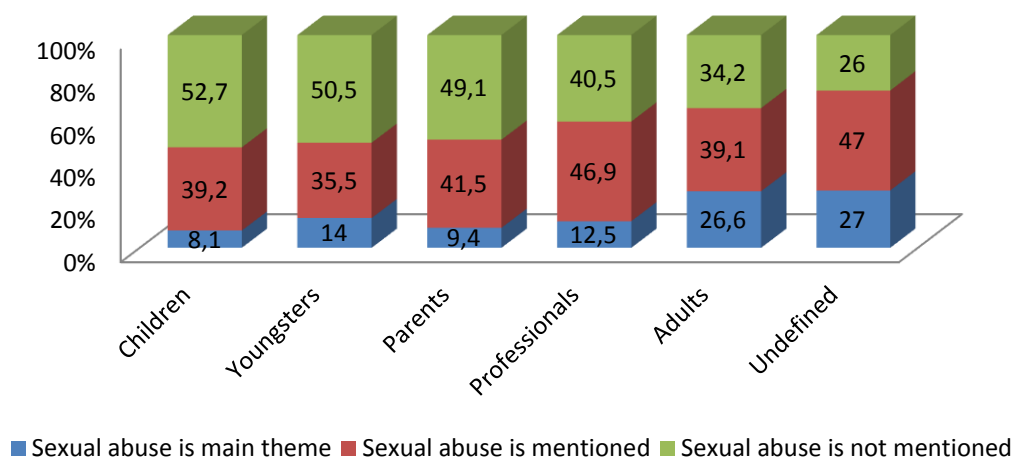
In organisations that target young people this is 14%. 27% of the websites targeting adults mainly focus on problems of sexual abuse.

27% of organisations that do not aim at any particular target group work on sexual abuse as the main theme.



<http://www.albahus.dk/> on 5 June 2012

Figure 5: % with 'sexual abuse' as theme whether or not stated on website per target group



It is interesting to note that sexual abuse is mentioned less explicitly as a theme on websites for children and young people than on websites targeting professionals and adults.

4.4 Clarity and accessibility of these online help websites ...

In this screening the researchers used the following variables to obtain information about the clarity and accessibility of the website:

- * is reference made on the homepage to information about the organisation behind the website?
- * does the website homepage give information about how the organisation deals with privacy and anonymity?
- * must the visitor log in on the website or can he or she use the services of the organisation without having to reveal his or her identity?

4.4.1 ... about the organising organisation

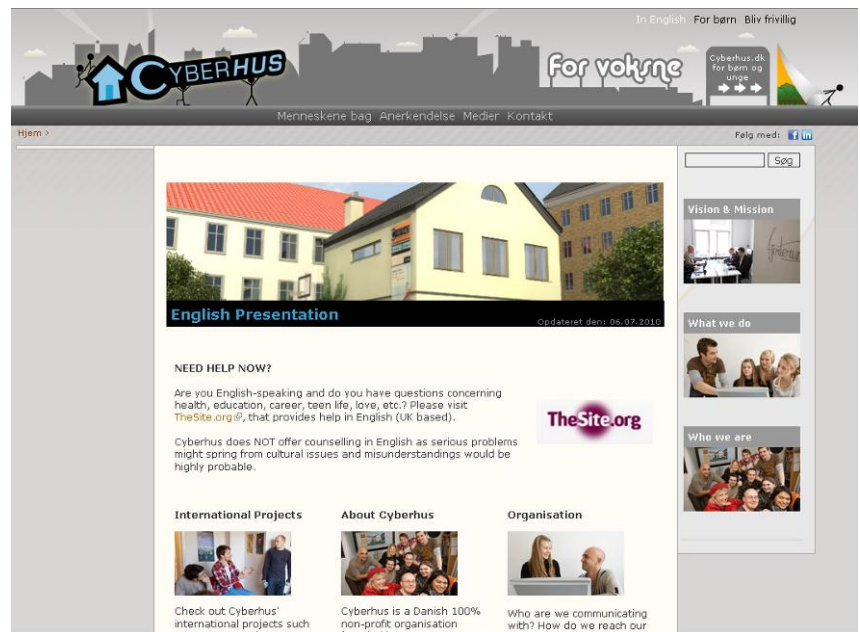
Organisations with an online help service also display great diversity in initiative-takers. This is equally true of government agencies or private organisations. Among the latter group we find, e.g., welfare organisations, health organisations and religious organisations. Sometimes there are local initiatives, but there are also organisations active at a regional or national level.

http://www.nina-info.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14&Itemid=10 – 4 June 2012

83 percent of the sites offer information about who is behind the website. In this connection 77% have a reference/heading on the homepage. That therefore means that, in 17% of cases, the user cannot be sure exactly which organisation is behind the service on offer. The info that organisations place about themselves on their websites varies from limited to very extensive.

The heading 'about Cyberhus' from Denmark says, for instance:

“Cyberhus is a Danish 100% non-profit organisation located in Aarhus. Cyberhus was founded in 2004 as a partner charity under the youth charity, Ungdommens Vel ('Youth Welfare') and is today staffed by more than 70 people - mainly volunteers. Cyberhus is a virtual house or club that offers online counselling for vulnerable children and teens. Counselling is undertaken mainly by volunteer chat-counsellors, all with relevant educational backgrounds, such as teachers, pedagogues, social workers and psychology students. In December 2008 Cyberhus was ranked among the 5 best European websites for marginalised young people (E-inclusion). From September onwards Cyberhus has been chosen as the Danish helpline in the European network INSAFE.”



<http://www.cyberhus.dk/voksne/8599> on 4 June 2012

The Danish site also offers extra information about the organisation, vision and mission, international projects, etc. The information about the organisation is also available in English. This is an example of how an organisation can make a name for itself as ‘professional’ and reliable.

4.4.2 ... about privacy and anonymity

“Anonymity is a winning hand to win clients over. It is therefore important that organisations communicate transparently on the matter on their sites.”
(Bocklandt, P. (red.), 2011, p. 158)

Anonymity makes it possible for clients to talk about difficult subjects. That is certainly important for sites with interactive forms of help (chat, e-mail, forum).

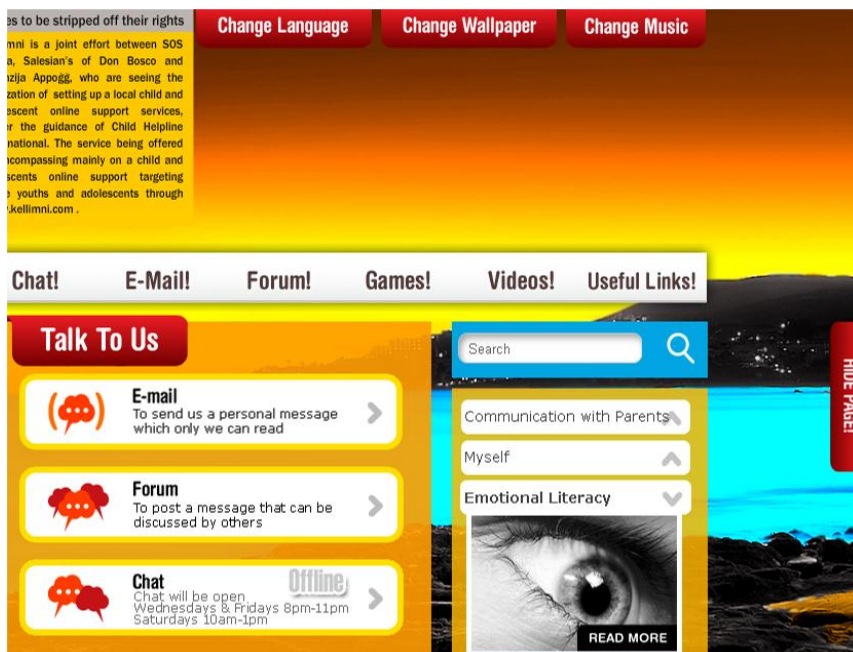
An example:

“Muslim Youth Helpline (MYH) is a registered charity that provides faith and culturally sensitive support services to Muslim youth in the UK. Our core services are a free and **confidential** Helpline service run by young Muslim volunteers, and an online support service called muslimyouth.net.”
(Muslim Youth Helpline, 5 June 2012)



<http://www.anar.org/> on 5 June 2012

However, research (Manhal-Baugus, 2001; Barak, 2005; Suler, 2004; Vlaeminck et al, 2009) shows that anonymity is a strong argument for online help. It lowers the threshold to access to help. This is all the more the case for taboo subjects such as sexual abuse.



<http://www.kelimni.com/mt> on 5 June 2012

On its homepage the Spanish organisation 'Fundación Anar' describes telephone and e-mail as 'confidential'.

Approximately half of the concerned websites (51%) offer information about the 'privacy' or anonymity of users. 44% show the info on the homepage. This implies that for 1 out of 2 sites the visitor will not be certain as to what will happen or can happen or is supposed to happen with the information provided.

A number of organisations with sexual abuse as a theme extend the possibility of anonymity to the environment around the client.

Provision of a shutdown button allows the client to blank the screen quickly if, for example, someone (member of family) suddenly enters the room where the client is visiting the site.

Item 5.6 focuses in more detail on anonymity on the basis of the findings from research phase two.

4.4.3 ... about accessibility of online help websites

12% of the websites ask the user to log in or register on the homepage. A small minority of 3% of the websites also ask for registration, but do not make this known on the homepage while it appears to be necessary later (for example, with the chat function).

Having to log in or register immediately may have a threshold-raising effect, certainly for the user who wishes to remain anonymous.

There is a connection between messages on anonymity or privacy and requests to register. Where there is talk of privacy there are more organisations (22%) that ask for registration than where no privacy message is given (8%).

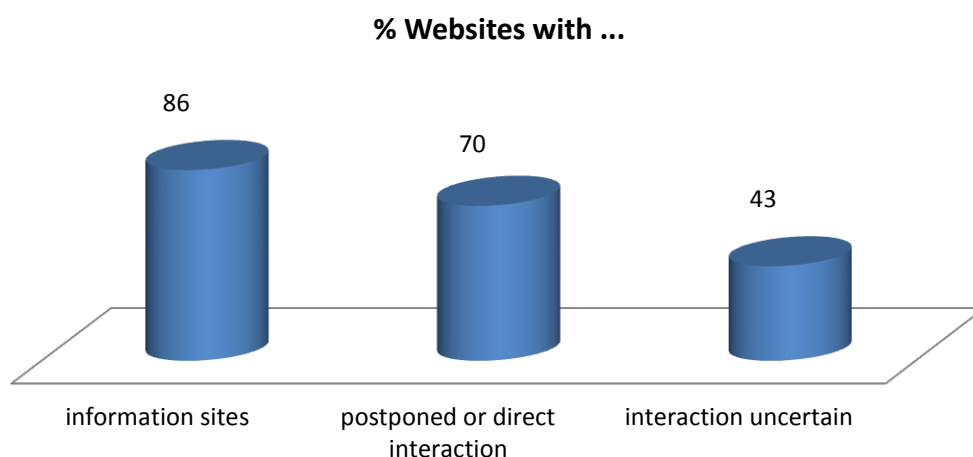
Table 4: relation between 'info on anonymity' and 'request to register'

	Register	Not register	Total
Message on anonymity	21.9%	78.1%	100.0%
No message on anonymity	7.8%	92.2%	100.0%
Total	15.1%	84.9%	100.0%

4.5 Online help tools on websites on sexual abuse in Europe

Of the 161 screened websites offering help in connection with sexual abuse of children and young people 139 sites had information available for their clients or visitors. 113 websites had (one or more) tools available to enter into direct or postponed interaction with their clients and 69 sites had a link available on the homepage to an online help tool with unspecified interaction.

Figure 6: % websites with static information, postponed, direct or unspecified interaction



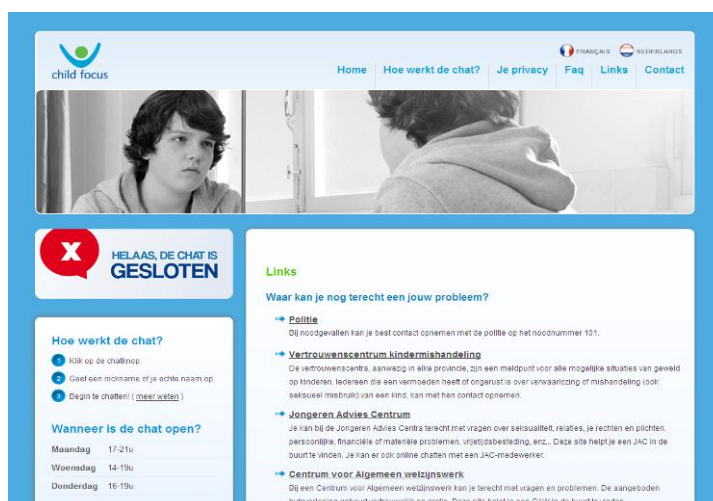
4.5.1 Informative online help tools



<http://www.tjejjouren.se> – 1 June 2012

On 73 of the 161 online help sites the visitor can click on the homepage to **'links'**. If these connections to other welfare organisations are selected carefully, this is already an important form of providing service. In the broad range of websites a selection of other organisations where the website visitor can go is after all an added value.

Links can also be an important opportunity if the referencing possibility is available at times when one's own online help services are not accessible.



<http://www.childfocus.be/nl/nu-praat-ik-er-over/links> - 1 June 2012



<http://www.stopitnow.org.uk/> - 1 June 2012

103 of the 161 screened sites have a **'news feature'** on their homepage. This is an opportunity to let the visitor know that the organisation offers current and up-to-date help. In the example this Swedish site splits the news feature into 'news reports', a 'blog', a 'theme series', a 'question of the month', 'press reports' and 'discussions'

One third of the websites refer on the homepage to a **'tips and advice'** section.

If it concerns help following sexual abuse, it should be possible for example to split the content of the tips and advice into sub-themes on 'concerned about sexual abuse' or on 'provision of help after abuse' as shown in this example of a website from the United Kingdom.

Some organisations – in this research 50 of the 161 – make use on the basis of these tips and advice of an FAQ section where answers are given to the ‘frequently asked questions’. These may concern the themes about well-being or the way in which the organisation operates.



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<http://www.jeunesviolencesecoute.fr/espace-jeunes/faq.html> - 1 June 2012



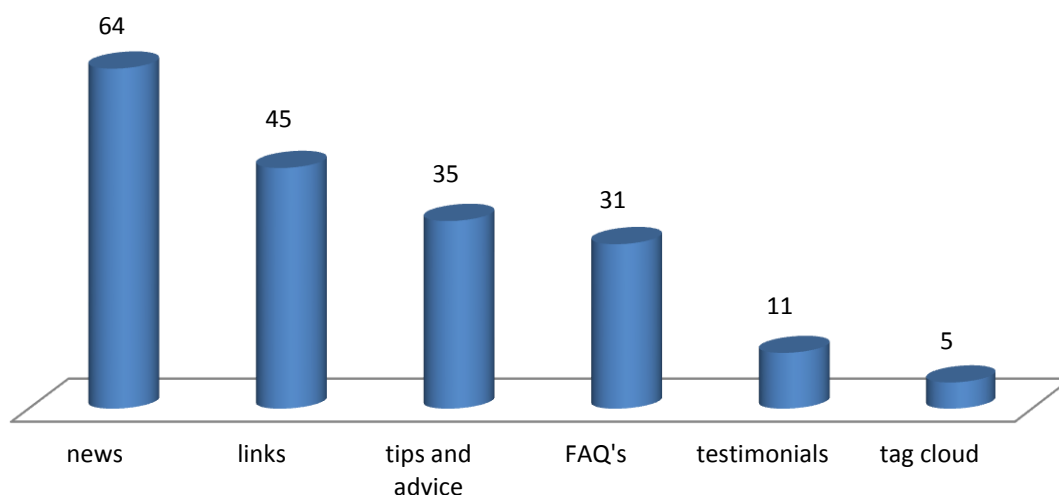
<http://www.cyberhus.dk/node/2307> - 2 June 2012

A limited number of screened websites included a section with ‘testimonials’. These personal accounts (e.g., about sexual abuse) give visitors the opportunity to arrive at the conclusion that they are not alone in their plight and that others are struggling with similar problems. These testimonials possibly also give some idea of the range of help services that the organisation offered to the witness.

As last informative tool, 5% of the screened websites have a ‘tag cloud’ or ‘word cloud’ in which more information about a particular subject can be obtained via clicking on a word in the word cloud. The above example shows such a word cloud bottom right.

Regarding the use of informative online help tools without interaction with the visitor to the website the screened websites present the following overview:

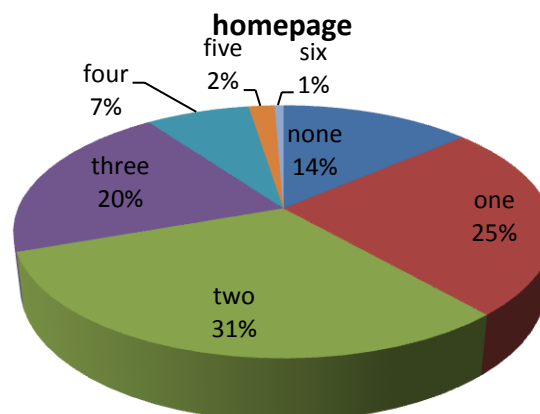
Figure 7: % websites per informative tool



As stated in point 3.1.2. much of the information on these sites does not (only) concern sexual abuse because the organisation in question (also) offers other help themes.

Organisations often combine several of these informative online help tools. The pie chart on the right shows that 31% of the screened websites have 2 informative tools available on the homepage; 25% of the sites limit themselves to only 1 informative tool and 20% offer 3 informative tools.

number of information tools available on the homepage



From the client's perspective these informative tools have the following advantages and disadvantages (Bocklandt, 2011; Gray, 2005; Schalken, 2010):

Table 5: Advantages and disadvantages of informative tools from user's or client's perspective

From the perspective of the user/client	Strength - advantage	Vulnerability - disadvantage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding words and language for a vague feeling Finding structure Finding concrete info Well organised You can search info yourself Low threshold Easy to use Available 24/24 hrs and 7/7 days Safe - anonymous Easy to download Being able to read info 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is not your own story But what do I do next? Info alone is often too limited Voyeurism/"accident tourism" in testimonials Often lack of stimulus to do anything further Danger of 'self diagnosis' Chance of misinterpretation Source? How reliable is the info? Losing your way in the mass of info (film, tips, ...) Shop behaviour

From the perspective of the organisation these informative tools have the following advantages and disadvantages:

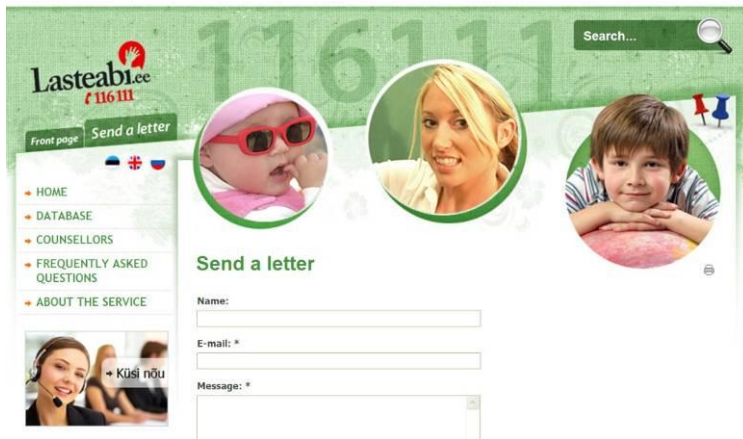
Table 6: Advantages and disadvantages of informative tools from the organisation's perspective

From the perspective of the organisation/social worker	Strength - advantage	Vulnerability - disadvantage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-threshold Selection of info is already a substantial service Info = complete Saving time Combination of tools and interaction Larger outreach Available 24/24 hrs and 7/7 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored = much work Updating requires sustained effort Importance of profiling Matching language and style to different target groups is not easy Accessibility + locatability on website =? Digital gap!! Chance of misinterpretation Difficult to decide which info to give/not to give Preserving witness anonymity is a must

4.5.2 Interactive online help tools

Interactive online help tools therefore focus on online forms of help involving personal interaction between client(s) and a social worker.

For an individual help course an 'e-mail' and '1-to-1-chat' are used as forms of help.



Despite the use of e-mails among children and young people being much reduced because of the growing popularity of SMS and chat communication via social network sites, 95 of the 161 screened organisations have a range of '**e-mail help services**'. That should come as no surprise. It is, after all, an interactive tool with which a request for help can be made safely 24/24 hrs and 7/7 days.

<http://www.lasteabi.ee/eng/send-a-letter> - 2 June 2012

Annual reports of countless organisations also indicate that extensive use is made of the e-mail service and help. After all, as far as the client is concerned, sending an e-mail has the advantage that the (perhaps anonymous) request for help can be made at the time that suits the client best with the wording and structuring desirable and feasible at that moment. For the social worker e-mail contact has the advantage that a correct and carefully considered, well structured answer can be given. Documentation, referencing possibilities or consulting a colleague occurs easily precisely because this is all about postponed (= non-direct) communication.

53 of the 161 organisations provide '**1-to-1-chat**' in their range of help services. Staff are available for a number of hours each week to chat with clients. Thanks to the distance in - often anonymous - conversations there is proximity because clients are generally quick to talk about the essence of their problems. Because chat is a frequently used means of communication for children and young people to be able to talk about taboo subjects such as sexual abuse we examine this form of help in detail



<http://www.kinderschutzzentrum-wien.at/index.php/help-chat> - 4 June 2012

In Section 4 of this report we screened and questioned 32 organisations in more depth on their range of chat services in connection with sexual abuse of children and young people. Chat help on sexual abuse of children and young people also included the content of the 'Ch@dvice guide'. This guide

came into being after earlier research by the project partners, on the basis of the findings in Section 4 of this research and from experience in start-up of the chat help services on first-line help following sexual abuse of children and young people in Child Focus.

One interesting result of the screening of the 161 sites was also that 5 sites said that the chat help service was (temporarily) unavailable was “because of financial problems or lack of sponsoring”.

In addition to the individual forms of interaction just mentioned there are two online forms of help interaction whereby clients can enter into interaction with each other about their help questions and whereby the conversation can be steered by a social worker.

33 of the 161 screened organisations offer a **‘forum’** where visitors can open their help request or subject to discussion and the peer group can then post forum reactions on the theme. A moderator then screens the forum subjects and reactions according to the published rules of the game before publishing these on the website. Moderating requires a balancing act between ‘freedom of expression’, self-correction after undifferentiated or incorrect answers by the peer group’, ‘own interventions by the social worker’ and ‘censorship by the social worker’.



In this example from the British ChildLine the forum topics are divided into various themes (see bottom right) in which ‘types of abuse’ is a visible theme. The middle column also refers to the house rules for use of the form.

<http://www.childline.org.uk/Talk/Boards/Pages/Messageboards.aspx> - 4 June 2012

In 2 of the 161 screened websites the organisation offers **‘group chats’** at a prearranged time in which a moderator steers a conversation between several persons (whether or not on a set theme). The example below includes 4 moderated group chats of 120 minutes, for each of which 8 to 12 participants had signed up.

The rules of the game of the chat forum are explained above the chat forum data.

bke jugendberatung

Benutzername:
 Kennwort:
 Anmelden »

Registrieren
 Einzelberatung
 Sprechstunde
 Gruppenchat
 Themenchat
 Forum
 Wichtige Infos
 Deine Meinung

Aktuelle Gruppenchats

» meine bke | Forensuche | Heutige Forenbeiträge | Newsletter-Archiv | Deine Meinung «

Im Gruppenchat werden Probleme innerhalb der Gruppe offen angesprochen, du kannst direkt auf die Aussagen reagieren. Damit ein vertrauliches und hilfreiches Diskussionsklima entsteht, ist es wichtig, dass du dich an folgende Regeln hältst:

- Mit deiner Teilnahme akzeptierst du, dass eine Fachkraft den Chat moderiert und diese die Gesprächsleitung und die Verantwortung für den Chatverlauf hat.
- Verhalte Dich im Chat jederzeit in einer Form, die du auch von anderen erwartest und die geeignet ist, dass Chatgeschehen hilfreich zu gestalten.
- Im Chat sind rassistische, rechtsextreme, menschenfeindliche Äußerungen nicht erlaubt. Darüberhinaus erwarten wir, dass du auf (detaillierte) Beschreibungen von Gewalterfahrungen, von selbstverletzendem Verhalten (SVV) und von Symptomen der Essstörungen verzichtest, da direktes Beschreiben zum Triggern (Anstacheln, Nachahmen) führen kann. Selbstverständlich kannst du jederzeit über Hintergründe und Impulse reden, die ein bestimmtes Handeln auslösen.
- Ebenfalls nicht erlaubt ist die Ankündigung eines geplanten Suizids. Wenn du verzweifelt bist, sollst du über das reden, was dich so verzweifeln lässt. Wir unterstellen, dass du den Chat besuchst um Hilfe bei der Bewältigung deiner Probleme zu bekommen, nicht um andere zu erschrecken.
- Setze nicht voraus, dass der Moderator/die Moderatorin und andere Ratsuchende über dein Thema schon durch Beiträge von dir im Forum informiert sind. Gib anderen durch Informationen eine Chance, dein Thema nachzuvollziehen und sich daran zu beteiligen.
- Wird ein Thema bereits behandelt wenn du den Chat betrittst, dann warte bis das Thema beendet ist, bevor du fragst, ob für dein Thema noch Zeit ist.
- Im Chat kommen unterschiedliche Meinungen und Bedürfnisse zur Sprache. Jeder hat das Recht, sein Thema einzubringen, sich am Gespräch zu beteiligen oder die Diskussion nur mitzulesen. Wir erwarten Respekt vor anderen Meinungen und Einstellungen.
- Der Chat ist ein offener Raum, der zu jedem Zeitpunkt verlassen werden kann. Wir bitten darum, das Verlassen des Raumes den Anwesenden mitzuteilen.
- Achte auf Deine Anonymität und setze diese nicht leichtfertig außer Kraft, in dem du persönliche (sensible) Daten weitergibst. Denke daran, dass das Internet ein langes Gedächtnis hat, wenn du Spuren hinterlässt.
- Konflikte, die im Chat entstehen, können ausschließlich im Chat geklärt werden (und gehören nicht ins Forum).

Wenn du gegen diese Regeln verstößt, kannst du aus dem Chat ausgeschlossen werden, kurzfristig oder für die Dauer des Chats.

Neu registrierte Jugendliche können an den Chats nur dann teilnehmen, wenn die Registrierung mindestens eine Stunde vor Chatbeginn erfolgte!

Datum/Zeit	Thema	Fachkraft	Dauer	Teilnehmer
13.06.2012 20:00	Moderierter Gruppenchat kein Thema festgelegt 10 Tag(e) - 2 Stunde(n) - 21 Minute(n)	bke-Tamira	120 Minute(n)	8
13.06.2012 20:00	Moderierter Eltern-Jugendchat mit bke-Helena-Faber und bke-Charity-Stern kein Thema festgelegt 10 Tag(e) - 2 Stunde(n) - 21 Minute(n)	bke-Charity	120 Minute(n)	12
14.06.2012 16:00	Moderierter Gruppenchat mit bke-Helena kein Thema festgelegt 10 Tag(e) - 22 Stunde(n) - 21 Minute(n)	bke-Helena	120 Minute(n)	10
16.06.2012 15:00	Moderierter Gruppenchat mit bke-Helena kein Thema festgelegt	bke-Helena	120 Minute(n)	

Mitglieder-Online

Mitglieder: 57029
 Wir begrüßen: dexxy93
 Mitglieder online: 27

Passwort vergessen?
 Klicke hier, um dein Passwort anzufordern

Aktuelle Gruppenchats

Moderierter Gruppenchat
 13.06.12 20:00
 Fachkraft: bke-Tamira

Moderierter Eltern-Jugendchat mit bke-Helena-Faber und bke-Charity-Stern
 13.06.12 20:00
 Fachkraft: bke-Charity

Moderierter Gruppenchat mit bke-Helena
 14.06.12 16:00
 Fachkraft: bke-Helena

Aktuelle Themenchats

"Neue Wege gehen - wie weiter nach sexuellem Missbrauch?" mit bke-Ella und bke-Suska
 04.06.12 20:15
 Fachkraft: bke-Suska

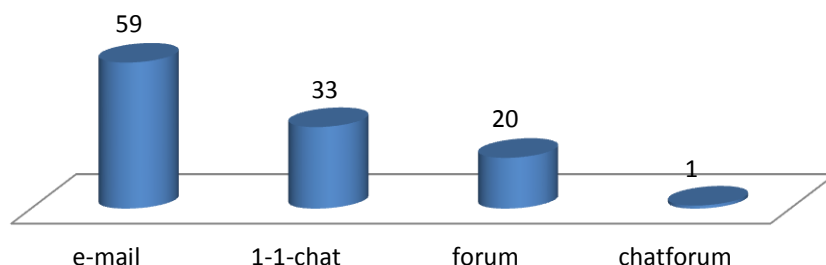
Junge, Junge - Mann, oh Mann. Themenchat nur für Jungen!
 05.06.12 16:00
 Fachkraft: bke-Marc

Bei Drogen zahle ich immer drauf! Aber bin ich bereit, den Preis zu zahlen?...mit bke-Natascha

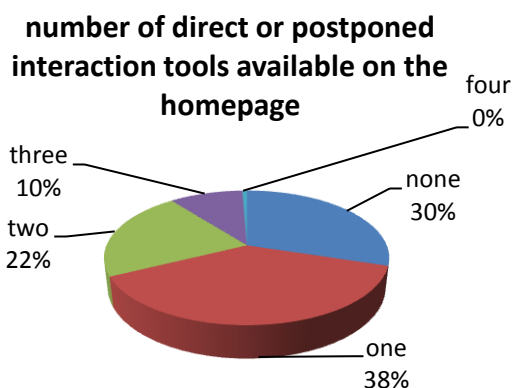
<https://jugend.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html> - 6 June2012

By way of summary the screened websites thus deliver the following direct or indirect interactive online help tools:

Figure 8: % websites with direct or indirect interactive online help tools



On 59% of the 161 researched websites visitors can take their question or experience to a social worker via e-mail. In one third of the websites they can also do so in direct interaction via a one-to-one chat.



30% of the organisations do not have any form of interactive online help. 38% of the screened sites offer 1 interactive form of online help. 22% combine 2 interactive forms of online help and on 10% of the screened the client may choose from three interactive forms of online help to make possible discussing sexual abuse with social worker and/or the site target group. Three online help tools with unspecified interaction between client and organisation

were also screened, namely: the use of social network sites, serious games and self-test or self-help instruments.

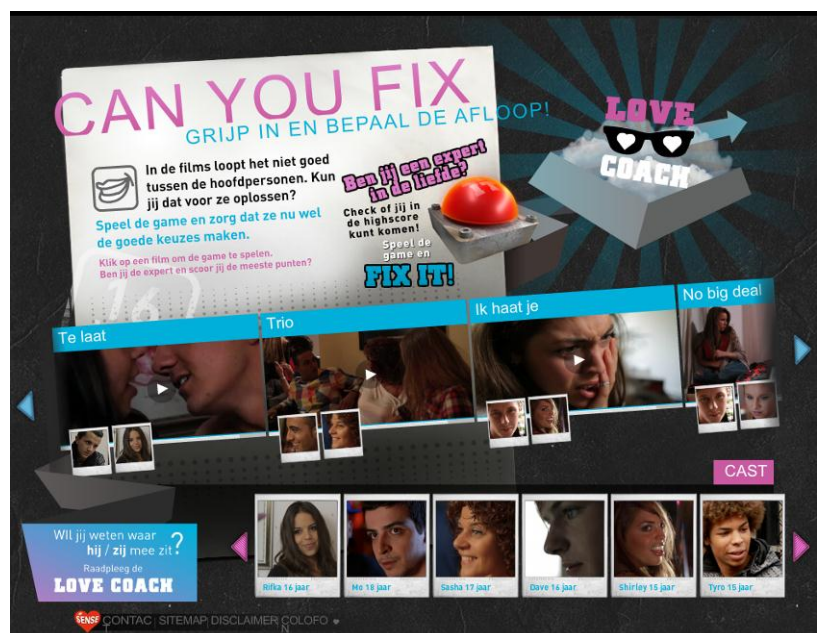


<http://www.facebook.com/mannerheiminlastensuojeluliitto> - 4 June 2012

52 of the 161 screened sites refer on their homepage to their presence and/or activities on 'social network sites' (for example, to Facebook, Netlog, etc.). Presence on social network sites not only means that an organisation can make its activities known where the target group is present. It also offers opportunities to announce activities, to share links and to get the target group involved in, for example, positions that the organisation adopts or initiatives that it might wish to organise.

Via 'serious games' the visitor or client is given the chance to acquire knowledge or skills in a playful manner. This is not obvious when it concerns a subject such as sexual abuse. 19 out of the 161 screened sites indicate on their homepage that they aim to reach the target group via (an) educative or serious game(s). In this example of a Dutch website the visitor is asked to make choices and 'to intervene in short films on various sexual themes'.

Eight of the 19 organisations provide a link to one or many



<http://canyoufixit.sense.info/> - 4 June 2012

online games intended solely

for fun. Sometimes, it is pointed out that this relates to play in a safe manner.

Six of the 19 organisations offer a selection of serious games on the promoting a safe use of the internet: interactive film clips, knowledge tests, decision making games, skills games intended to promote the (safe) use of computers and the internet. Often they are split into games for children and games for young people.

Five of the 19 organisations offer games focused on sexual abuse: reality games with 'stop moments', a quiz or game on the subject of safe sex, decision-making games on how to get help and games to

recognise the symptoms of abuse, a creative drawing tool to express emotions or experiences. Some of these sites also include testimony and information films talking about abuse.

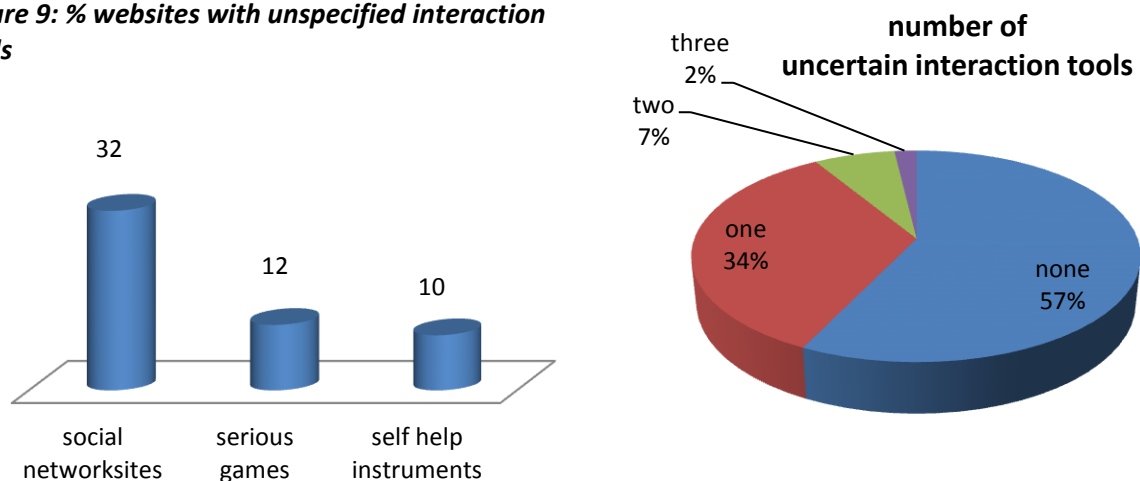
The screenshot shows the 'net écoute' website interface. At the top, there are two blue buttons labeled 'DISCUTER' and 'COMPRENDRE'. Below them is the 'net écoute' logo and a quiz title 'Quel(le) internaute es-tu ?' in pink. A subtitle reads 'Détermine ton profil d'internaute en répondant à 10 questions'. The first question is 'Le mot SPAM (email non-désiré) est la contraction de :'. There are three radio button options: 'Sexy PAMela (ces messages sont souvent pornographiques)', 'Source de Problèmes AutoMatique', and 'SPiced hAM (jambon épicé)'.

On 16 of the 161 screened websites the homepage also makes reference to '**self-tests or self-help instruments**'. An idea of the client's knowledge or behaviour is often formed via a set of questions. After the questions are answered advice is given. These tools often stimulate further thinking on the theme or problem around which the self-test is constructed.

<http://www.netecoute.fr/quiz.php?quiz=2> – 4 June 2012

Fewer than one third of the 161 screened sites use an online help tool with unspecified interaction.

Figure 9: % websites with unspecified interaction tools



57% of the screened sites make no reference to social network sites, serious games or self-test. 34% use one of the three tools.

So, from the perspectives of the client and organisation, the online forms of help and tools with interaction also have advantages and disadvantages (Beattie, 2006; Bocklandt, 2011; Brunner, 2009; Chester, 2006; Christopherson, 2007; Knatz, 2009; Riper, 2007; Schalken, 2010):

Table 7: Advantages and disadvantages of interactive tools from user's or client's perspective

From the perspective of the user/client	Strength - advantage	Vulnerability - disadvantage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rereading info ▪ Writing = therapeutic ▪ Taboos more readily open to discussion ▪ Direction/production ▪ Anonymity ▪ Often available 24/24 + 7/7 ▪ Low-threshold/(more) anonymous ▪ Avoids travel time ▪ Active help as and when ▪ From familiar surroundings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Illusion of instant cure ▪ 'Non-committal commitment' ▪ Channel reduction ▪ Chance of misinterpretation ▪ Mail = slow ▪ Technical failures ▪ Digital footprint

Table 8: Advantages and disadvantages of interactive tools from the organisation's perspective

From the perspective of the organisation/social worker	Strength - advantage	Vulnerability - disadvantage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Giving the client 'language' ▪ More complete info ▪ Faster work alliance ▪ Stimulating tools ▪ Efficiency (in time) ▪ Regaining lost target group ▪ Outreach to new target groups ▪ Wider accessibility/availability ▪ Possibility of work from home (?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethical uncertainties ▪ Over and under disclosure ▪ Doubt regarding authenticity ▪ Chance of misinterpretation ▪ Filling in missing info ▪ Development/delivery costs time and money ▪ Doubt after loss of contact ▪ Limited 'google-ability'

4.5.3 Frequent combinations of online help tools

The table below gives a combination. Some results:

- The websites that offer chat offer more help via e-mail, forum, and games than the average. They offer less news than the average.
- The websites that offer e-mail help offer more help via telephone than the average.
- The websites that have a forum offer more help via chat, e-mail and testimonials than the average. They refer less than average face-to-face help.
- The websites that refer to telephone help also offer more face-to-face help and e-mail help than the average.
- The websites promoting face-to-face help more often also have telephone help and links than the average but pay less attention to FAQs, forums, news features, self-tests and social network sites on the site than the average.

- The websites offering games pay more attention to chat help, tips and advice, FAQs and self-tests and less to testimonials than the average.
- Websites offering testimonials also have on their site more chances for chat applications, e-mail help, forums, tag clouds, tips and advice and FAQs. However, games are much less common. The websites that offer tag clouds also pay attention to chat, e-mail, forums, face-to-face help, links, testimonials, FAQs, news reports, self-tests and social network sites. The offering of tag clouds or testimonials is evidently a sign that other online forms of help are also being used. Or, in other words: tag clouds or testimonials happen to be the little bit extra where other basic resources are also offered.
- The websites with tips and advice also have more than average FAQ pages or games.
- Websites with a FAQ page also have more than average tips and advice.
- Websites with news reports also refer more than the average to social network sites.
- Websites with a self-test application also offer more than average chat help, a forum, telephone help, games and tips and advice, but offer less than average face-to-face help, links or news reports.
- Websites that link up to a social network site have more often than the average a section with news reports.

Table 9: combination of online help tools on screened websites first-line welfare work

		If this tool is present ...														TOTAL
		Chat	E-mail or Question form	Forum	Telephone	Face-to-face	Games	Links	Testimonials	Tag cloud	Tips and advice	FAQ's	News	Self-test and self-help	Social network site	
TOTAL		33.5	59.6	20.5	61.5	14.9	11.8	46.0	10.6	5.0	35.4	31.1	64.0	9.9	32.3	
... the other tool is then present in ...% of cases.	Chat	100.0	42.1	60.6	32.3	33.3	52.6	29.7	76.5	75.0	38.6	42.0	28.2	56.3	32.7	33.5
	E-mail or question form	75.5	100.0	72.7	73.7	79.2	63.2	68.9	82.4	87.5	63.2	62.0	57.3	76.0	69.7	59.6
	Forum	37.7	25.3	100.0	19.2	8.3	26.3	21.6	35.3	37.5	21.1	26.0	20.5	31.3	21.8	20.5
	Telephone	60.3	76.8	57.6	100.0	95.8	68.4	70.3	58.8	62.5	64.9	62.0	68.1	75.0	66.2	61.5
	Face-to-face	15.1	21.1	6.1	20.0	100.0	15.8	24.3	17.7	25.0	14.0	10.0	11.8	6.3	11.5	14.9
	Games	18.8	12.6	15.2	12.6	12.5	100.0	12.2	0.0	12.5	22.8	16.0	11.8	51.0	11.5	11.8
	Links	41.5	53.7	48.5	53.7	75.0	49.4	100.0	52.9	62.5	54.8	48.0	49.6	37.5	50.5	46.0
	Testimonials	26.0	14.7	20.2	14.7	13.5	2.1	14.2	100.0	50.0	18.6	16.0	11.3	13.5	9.9	10.6
	Tag cloud	11.3	7.4	9.1	7.4	8.3	5.3	6.8	23.5	100.0	5.3	8.0	6.8	12.5	9.6	5.0
	Tips and advice	41.5	37.9	36.4	37.9	34.8	68.4	42.6	58.8	37.5	100.0	52.0	37.9	68.8	42.3	35.4
	FAQs	39.6	32.6	39.4	32.6	20.8	42.1	32.9	47.1	50.0	46.4	100.0	35.1	37.5	36.9	31.1
	News	54.7	62.1	63.6	62.1	50.0	63.2	69.2	64.7	87.5	68.4	72.0	100.0	50.0	84.6	64.0
	Self-test and self- help	17.0	12.6	15.1	12.6	4.2	42.1	8.1	11.8	25.0	19.3	12.0	7.8	100.0	11.5	9.9
	Link to social network site	32.1	37.9	33.3	37.9	25.0	31.6	35.8	29.4	62.5	38.6	38.0	42.8	37.5	100.0	32.3

4.6 Conclusions concerning online help websites on sexual abuse in Europe

The researchers collected 161 different websites of European first-line welfare work organisations with a range of online help services on sexual abuse of children and young people. A child or young person in each country of the European Union can visit at least one such site.

There is however a considerable difference in the range of available help services in Europe: from 1 website in Cyprus to 25 websites in the Netherlands. The organisations behind these websites are also very diverse: there are public and private initiatives, local and national websites.

Half of the websites mention 'sexual abuse' as an explicit or main subject on the website. 10% of the websites have "sexual abuse" as a/the main theme on the online help offer.

Most of the sites have children and/or young people as explicit target publics. A number of initiatives have several target groups and split the information on the site according to target group. It is interesting to note that 'sexual abuse' is mentioned less explicitly as a theme on websites for children and young people than on websites targeting professionals and adults.

Can the user easily discern whether this online help is reliable?

Four out of five of the websites have information readily available about which organisation is behind which offer. An 'about us' section with relevant information about the organiser consists for example of: structure of the organisation, purpose, planning, history of the services, staff, financing, etc.

This immediately also means that, for 17% of the websites, the information just is not there.

Half of the websites also provide transparent information about how the organisation deals with the issues of privacy and anonymity. Some sites also have a 'shutdown button' or 'hide page' with which the user can blank out the website quickly when 'nosey parkers' enter the room.

What do the websites have to offer?

86% of these online help websites offer static information—one-way traffic from organisation to visitor/client. In most organisations this is a 'news feature' or 'links' to other organisations. One third of the websites also offer 'tips and advice' or a section 'frequently asked questions'. A minority of the websites include 'testimonials' or a 'tag cloud'.

70% of these websites offer interactive contact possibilities between the client/visitor and a social worker from the organisation. In most organisations this communication happens via e-mail. One third of all websites offer 1-to-1 chat. One fifth of the websites also offer a forum in which steered peer-to-peer communication is possible between persons in the target group. 1% of organisations also offer group chat services.

The researchers would like to mention two other results in this connection.

First, 30% of the organisations with an online help website have not created any possibility for any interaction between social workers and the target group.

Second, in the screening 5 organisations communicated on their websites that 1-to-1 chat was (temporarily) not (no longer) available due to lack of financing or sponsoring. This is a significant area for concern: new forms of online communication are often developed in the pioneer phase with (extra) project financing. Yet implementation in regular working often appears problematic. In the meantime, however, it raises expectations in the target group.

Besides static and (in)direct interaction 43% of the websites also offer a link to social network sites and/or serious games and/or self-test or self-help instruments.

5. Chat support in first-line care work on sexual abuse in Europe

This project focuses on the availability of chat support relating to the sexual abuse of children and young people. The second phase of the survey also included an in-depth screening of the availability of chat support. The in-depth screening procedure was described earlier, in chapter 3.

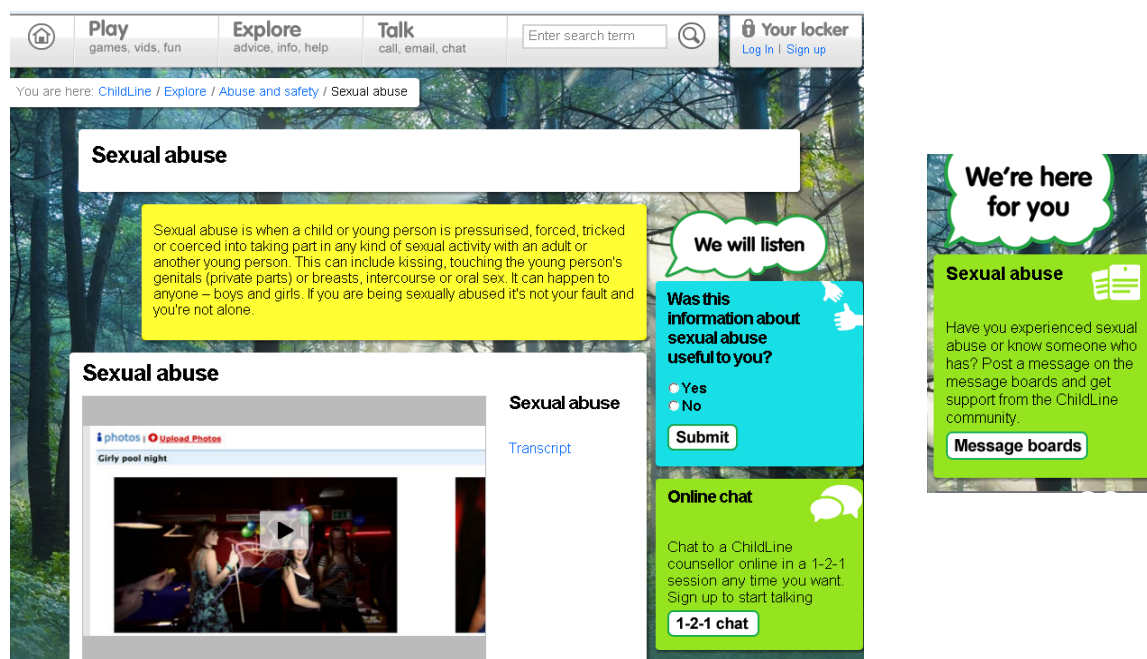
This chapter deals with the findings from the web-based screening of the availability of chat support provided by 32 organisations, from the survey of 22 organisations and the documentation they provided.

5.1 Sexual abuse as a topic?

15 of the 32 chat support sites involved in this in-depth screening focus on the subject of sexual abuse.

The (sub) agenda of sexual abuse is not always visible. Some sites specifically focus on the topic of sexuality or sexual abuse (e.g. Child Focus); other sites have a more wide ranging approach, in which sexual abuse is referred to explicitly or implicitly. 21 sites contained implicit or explicit references. Cyberhus, for example, does not specifically concentrate on sexual abuse. The site has a wide public appeal, but sexual abuse is a theme and is referred to specifically.

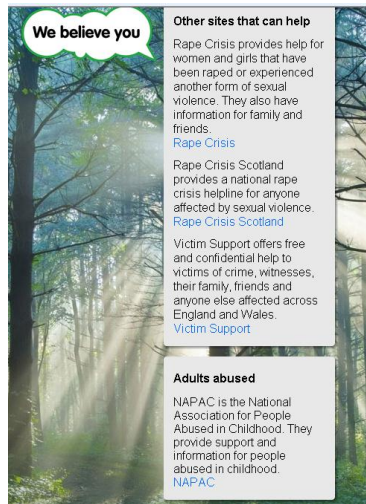
50% of the sites also offer additional material, information and tips relating to sexual abuse. The chat website from Child Focus clearly mentions sexual abuse as a topic but does not offer additional material. The opposite is also possible.



<http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/AbuseSafety/Pages/Sexualabuse.aspx>. (10/09/2012)

The British www.childline.org.uk is a typical example of a general children's and young people's helpline, which focuses in detail on sexual abuse, although the subject does not dominate the homepage.

The 'explore, advice, info' ... section refers to various topics, including sexual abuse. It provides extensive information on sexual abuse, including a film clip, testimony, references to other organisations, a forum, FAQ section, etc. It also contains similar pages on sexting and cyberbullying. The information pages are geared to the specific target group and have a range of interactive tools. Children and young people are given the opportunity to indicate whether the information is useful, to initiate a chat, post a message, point out whether something is missing on the page, etc. A number of sites with a broader appeal that provide information on sexual abuse sometimes refer to other (specific) organisations that focus explicitly on this subject.



In the section alongside the British children's helpline refers to organisations such as 'Rape Crisis', 'Victim Support' and 'The National Association for People Abused in Childhood'.

The Dutch site 'ikzitindeshit' (victim support the Netherlands) states: *"If you notice inappropriate behaviour or you are the victim of (sexual) harassment on or via the internet, please report this to www.helpwanted.nl."*

The Flemish children's and young people's support line 'Awel' refers to the Child Focus site for matters relating to sexual abuse.

<http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/AbuseSafety/Pages/Sexualabuse.aspx>. (10/09/2012)

5.2 Chat support availability figures

The chat support **opening times** at the 22 surveyed European organisations vary considerably:

- Always: 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- At fixed and regular (i.e. predictable) times such as always during the day on week days or after school, but rarely at weekends
- Very irregular hours and consequently unpredictable
- Limited number of hours (i.e. only one evening)
- By appointment via e-mail only

When screening the 32 sites, researchers noticed major differences in the accessibility times on the various websites.

Table 10: number of hours of chat availability per week on 32 sites, as indicated on the site

website	Hours of chat availability /week
www.albahus.dk	21 hrs
www.awel.be/chat	8 hrs
www.bris.se	27 hrs
www.childfocus.be/nl/nu-praat-ik-er-over	12 hrs
www.childLine.org.uk	168 hrs
www.Cyberhus.dk	24 hrs
www.elinka.iporadna.cz/	?
www.fierfryslan.nl	15 hrs
Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.	70 hrs
www.helpline.bg	42 hrs
www.helpline.org.pl	30 hrs
www.helpline.sigur.info	30 hrs
www.helpwanted.nl	15 hrs
www.hulpmix.nl	10 hrs
www.ikzitindeshit.nl	9 hrs
www.jac.be/	35 hrs
www.jourhavandekompis.se	8 hrs
www.jugend.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html	10 hrs
www.kek-vonal.hu	34 hrs
www.kinderschutz-wien.at	?
www.kindertelefoon.nl	42 hrs
www.lasteabi.ee	84 hrs
www.linkabezpeci.cz	28 hrs
www.myh.org.uk	54 hrs
www.netecoute.fr	70 hrs
www.nuoret.info/	4 hrs
www.pomoc.sk	30 hrs
www.pratenonline.nl	?
www.save-me-online.de (www.nina-info.de)	5 hrs
www.sense.info (canyoufixit.sense.info)	60 hrs
www.slachtofferchat.be	6 hrs
www.tjejzonen.se/	10 hrs

The number of available chat hours provided by online support organisations in Europe varies considerably, from 4 hours at the Finnish organisation Nuoret and Flemish Slachtofferchat (Victim Chat) to 168 hours at www.childLine.org.uk. On average European chat lines are open between 10 and 30 hours per week.

The three sites we looked at in the United Kingdom are open 168, 70 and 54 hours. A few organisations are open 24 hours a day (e.g. www.childLine.org.uk 24/7).

It should be noted though that the actual opening times of some sites do not always coincide with the times quoted on their website! Overall, it appears that the chat facility is not always open as indicated. It seems that sometimes, the chat facility is actually offline rather than occupied.

The focus with respect to opening times is clearly on week days. Chat facilities are mainly accessible between 2pm and 7pm. Children and young people have most opportunities to chat in the evening, some in the afternoon and few in the morning. Spread across the week, most week days are more or

less similar with respect to chat availability (slightly fewer hours on a Friday). Remarkably only a few organisations offer chat facilities during the weekend.

Www.sense.info (canyoufixit.sense.info) offers different types of chat facilities depending upon the time of day. For example, they offer a 'chatbot' (chat robot/computer), which is accessible 24/7, e.g. 'Chat met Bzz over seks en soa' (Chat with Bzz about sex and STDs). www.kindertelefoon.nl also has a chat robot.



<http://www.sense.info/vragen-en-advies/chatten/bzz/> - 9 December 2012

Occasionally chatting by appointment is available.

The **number of support chats** provided in 2011 by the 22 surveyed organisations also appears to vary, from 191 to 7,000, of which between 4% and 74% related to sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is usually indicated on the website as a possible topic, but it is rarely the only or most important subject of chat support.

The **number of support chats with a client** varies, but is usually more than one chat per client in most European countries. In Flanders and the Netherlands the situation is different as there are more organisations that focus on one-off support chats.

The screening demonstrates that most sites do not indicate the maximum number of chats that are available. Exceptions are:

- www.tjeizonen.se/: This site not only offers general and eating disorder chat facilities, it also has a 'big sister' feature. A 'Big Sister' online is a volunteer, a young woman between 20 and 35, with whom a younger girl, i.e. the 'Little Sister', can have a chat. Clients can talk to the chat sister 1 hour per week, for a maximum of 1 year.
- www.pratenonline.nl indicates that clients can chat 4 times (if anonymous) and 8 times if they provide their health insurance policy number.

Chat support workers are usually (trained) volunteers.

This applies to 90% of cases, the other 10 % tend to be professionals.

The number of professionals per organisation varies between 0 and 150, with 20 being the average.

The number of volunteers per organisation varies from 0 to 850, with an average of 96.

5.3 Availability of chat support on the website

The description of the way in which chat support is presented on the organisation websites is mainly based on the screening of the 32 websites and their chat applications. We have considered the following sub criteria:

- * Is the site designed for children and young people?
- * Can clients choose who they want to chat to?
- * Do clients have to register?
- * What information is provided to clients concerning chat support?

- * How to use the chat facility
- * Recommendations concerning the chat support facility on the website.

5.3.1 Is the site designed for children and young people?

Sites can specifically target children, young people or both. They may also include subpages for adults, parents, professionals, etc. However, the chat support application may only be available to children and young people. Some sites are specifically targeted at only one of the sexes or a particular target group, e.g. Muslim children.

Despite the fact that this survey was not meant to include a systematic analysis of the focus and attractiveness of the organisation websites, we would like to highlight specific aspects that researchers noticed during the screening.

Use of specific language and images, adapted to their own world, are the aspects that make a site attractive to children and young people. It is clear that these aspects have been taken into account on all the screened sites, with an equal focus on 'language' and 'images'.

The following aspects appear important with respect to language:

- Appropriate language (e.g. familiar style, adapted to specific level, etc.);
- not too much text and text and images in harmony;
- text kept to the point but still offering access to extensive information;
- letters that are large enough;
- headings that grab attention.

With images the emphasis is on:

- A 'young' eye-catching layout;
- Drawings/photograph(s) of young people/children on the homepage;
- Flashy start (e.g. creative introduction of the logo);
- Transfers to other screens via funky shapes/colours/lines;
- Interactive features (e.g. choice of different backgrounds for the computer screen);
- Layout built around an interesting topic (e.g. helpwanted.nl uses a cowboy theme or cyberhus.dk a house containing many different rooms).

The selected European sites for a young audience provide a wide range of interactive tools, even though many sites do not include them. In addition to the (more) traditional interactive tools (forum, game, poll, self test, quiz, survey, feedback questions, etc.) the following inspiring examples stand out:

- *young blogs* (cyberhus.dk or tjejjouren.se)
- *puzzle corner* as a combination of forum and group chat (nuoret.info)
- *original interactive headings*, games and films/music clips offering the chance to win a prize and, in particular, a fun zone with 12 film clips and instructions to make a choice and define the outcome in a situation, involving a boy and girl, getting out of hand (canyoufixit.sense.info)
- *scribble* (reminder) = you can draw how you feel and save your drawing (getconnected.org.uk)
- *heading 'idols were young once too'*: cards/photographs of idols recounting a personal problem when they were little (bris.se)
- *'tell a friend'*: send an email to a friend to introduce them to the site (*kindertelefoon.nl*)
- *forum directly on the homepage*: when you click on a question/heading in the forum, you immediately gain access to a list of additional information/links/etc. relating to that specific topic; the site provides a suggestion box for suggestions/ideas to improve the site, with an H&M clothing voucher as a prize (hulpmix.nl).
- *interactive stories*, clips and videos. (www.pomoc.sk)

Information on the organisation on the homepage is often perceived as a positive feature as it raises the feeling of reliability (also refer to item 4.4). www.awel.be, for example, shows an interview with a volunteer on the subject of the organisation. www.bris.se shows a film clip of children talking about the organisation. Sometimes the opportunity is taken to provide information on, or refer to, other organisations. sense.info comprises a section entitled 'sense in your region', which provides users with information on consultation times, STD tests, condom shops/machines and the morning after pill in their area. Kinderschutz-wien.at explains children's rights and suggests other organisations (youth services, crisis centres, police, family courts, etc.).

5.3.2 Can clients choose or indicate who they would prefer to chat to?

A number of sites (5) allow users to indicate who they would like to chat to, but this is a fairly exceptional feature, probably for practical reasons. A typical example can be found at www.elinka.iporadna.cz.

However, this 'selection' feature is not all that great. For example, at www.save-me-online.de (www.nina-info.de) the chat times are directly linked to a single employee. In that sense you know that you will chat with the same person the second time around (moreover, it appears that chatting is only available by appointment).

At www.pratenonline.nl the choice is defined by availability the first time around. Thereafter you have no option but to chat with the same person. 'Choosing' must, therefore, be put into perspective! At www.kinderschutz-wien.at users can choose between 1 male and 1 female operator (by appointment only). Even though this is a limited choice, it is definitely a positive one as it may be relevant in cases of sexual abuse!

5.3.3 Do clients have to register?

One third of the sites require registration, the others don't. With some chat support applications, however, it is impossible to access the chat facility from abroad.

When registering at <https://jugend.bke-beratung.de/~run/views/home/index.html> specific data is requested, although the user can choose which data he/she wants to reveal to third parties.

At www.klikvoorhulp.nl registration is mandatory if you want to post messages on the forum, make a chat appointment or send e-mails. You have to enter a postcode first in order to find/not find an organisation.

The requested information varies on the different sites, but usually consists of a combination of the following: (nick) name, gender, age, place of residence, password, e-mail, acceptance of terms and conditions, village/town, ethnic background. Sometimes a date of birth is requested.

www.klikvoorhulp.nl asks for a nickname and password. Users can enter their age and gender (not obligatory). www.pratenonline.nl initially asks for a username/password/secret question and answer. Once logged in with the username and password, additional information is requested although only the date of birth, gender and e-mail address are mandatory.

www.save-me-online.de (www.nina-info.de) asks you to enter a (nick) name and password, then your name, e-mail and password again, following which you can sign in.

5.3.4 What information is provided to clients concerning chat support?

The chat facility is usually free of charge although organisations do not always indicate this on their sites. Only one third of the sites show clearly that their service is free.

Only 5 of the 32 sites provide information on the chat facility in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section, partly because a number of sites do not include FAQs and/or because the information is provided in the chat section itself.

... More on the objective and subjects of the chat

Only 8 sites provide specific information on the objectives of their chat service. Sometimes, the information is not particularly clear or sufficiently detailed. At times, the information is part of the general information section, in which case the information relating to the objective does not specifically apply to the chat facility but to support provided by the organisation in general. Typical examples include www.netecoute.fr and www.kinderschutzwien.at.



www.netecoute.fr



www.kinderschutzwien.at

Sometimes, the target group is addressed directly, in an open and respectful manner.

- 'Sigur.Info Helpline is a counselling line, which talks to young people about Internet safety. If you have a problem, no matter how large or small, related to Internet use, we are here to listen, advise and help you. If you need information you can contact us securely online and we'll provide the information you require.' (www.helpline.sigur.info)
- 'You can talk to us about your problems. We will help you along if you are looking for information, need advice or have a problem. We don't have a 'magic wand' but what we can do – together with you – is look for the best possible solution.' (www.awel.be)
- 'Find a way out with support from our team' (www.linkabezpeci.cz)
- 'Tell us your story, ask for advice or support' (www.hulpmix.nl)

Information on acceptable chat topics is provided on one third of the sites.

On the website of Child Focus, which concentrates specifically on support for sexual abuse, possible chat subjects are listed in question format on the homepage: 'Do you have questions about sexual abuse? Are you the victim of sexual harassment? Are you being forced to do things you don't want to do? Do you know someone who is struggling with this kind of problem?'

At www.bris.se the message states specifically: 'You can talk about anything, you decide!'.

Other sites employ different approaches: The www.childLine.org.uk site includes a film clip with possible subjects or reasons to contact the helpline.

On www.jac.be the FAQs section includes the following: 'What can and can't you expect from a chat session? You can use the chat facility to tell us your story or concerns, or ask for information and advice on sexual abuse and inappropriate sexual behaviour both online and offline'.

... More about rules and agreements

Only one third of the sites provide information on rules and agreements (net etiquette) spread across different locations. Sometimes this consists in a call to show respect.

... More about registration and recording of calls

Many sites (20) provide information on what will be registered and whether call transcripts are saved. Sometimes this information is difficult to find, in places where children / young people wouldn't look: e.g. at the bottom of the homepage via a 'privacy rules' link.

Cyberhus does not keep call records.

"When the chat is over, everything we've talked about disappears. We do not save call records. To improve our advice we ask clients to complete a form anonymously after each counselling session. We list the date, time and the problem relating to the advice. Evaluations are general and anonymous." (www.Cyberhus.dk on 12/09/2012)

Reasons quoted on the website for keeping call transcripts include: to learn from them, for statistical, research, training purposes, etc. Typical examples include:

"Discussions during individual and group chats will be stored in a chat log. The saved data can only be evaluated for statistical purposes. No data shall be transferred to third parties." (<https://jugend.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html>)

"Records of e-mail correspondence and chats will be kept. Employees of Slachtofferhulp Nederland have access to them to enable them to improve their understanding. E-mail correspondence and chat records are also stored for research purposes. We only keep a record of your age, gender and e-mail address if you contact us by e-mail." (<http://www.ikzitindeshit.nl/12tot18jaar/?pageID=147&lb=True> on 12/09/2012)

"Chat records are kept for a period of 1 month. They can only be accessed by, and used for training sessions involving, 'Chatmetfrier' employees. Chatmetfrier uses cookies to monitor how visitors use our site. A cookie is a small piece of information (file) which a website leaves behind on your computer. If you do not want us to use cookies you need to adjust your browser to 'cookies off'. If you accept cookies, they will remain on your computer until you delete them." (www.fierfryslan.nl on 12/09/2012)

Little information is provided about other data which are kept in addition to chat records.

The Friesian site Fierfryslan indicates that it also stores data about the website visit.

"Storage of data relating to website visit

During visits to the internet site www.fierfryslan.nl the web server automatically recognises IP addresses. When you visit our internet site we keep a record of:

- *your e-mail address if you submit a contact form*
- *the domain name of other internet sites you have consulted in order to access our internet site*
- *any information relating to the pages you have consulted on our internet site*

This information is used:

- *to improve the content of www.fierfryslan.nl*
- *to enable us to record the number of visits to www.fierfryslan.nl*

The information will only be used internally and not transferred to other organisations for commercial purposes." (www.fierfryslan.nl on 12/09/2012)

... More about anonymity

Most of the screened sites (27 of the 32) report that chats are conducted anonymously. The way in which European sites provide users with information on anonymity and privacy varies from minimal to extensive details on anonymity and confidentiality. www.childline.org.uk is a typical example of a site with extensive information. A 'Confidentiality promise' is included at the bottom of the homepage. When clicked it opens up a comprehensive page with the option to scroll to the following questions for more information:

- What does confidentiality mean?
- Is ChildLine confidential?
- You say you might need to tell someone if you're very worried about me or someone else. What does this mean?
- Is ChildLine's confidentiality different from school?
- Do I have to tell you my name?
- What happens if I do tell you my name?
- What happens if I want ChildLine to tell someone about what's happening to me?
- Do you know my phone number/e-mail address?
- Will my call to ChildLine be on the phone bill and can I call free on my mobile?
- Can anyone see that I've used my home computer to get in touch with ChildLine?
- Who at ChildLine knows what I've talked about?
- Do you record phone calls to ChildLine?
- I've got another question about confidentiality.



www.childline.org.uk/pages/confidentiality.aspx - 28/09/2012

13 organisations indicate in which (exceptional) circumstances anonymity may be waived. For example:

"All Klikvoorhulp (Click for Support) employees are bound by a secrecy pledge. Any information they gain access to via chats or e-mails can only be discussed with people involved with Klikvoorhulp. This secrecy pledge will only be waived if we are aware that you are at risk of putting yourself and/or your environment in (mortal) danger. Text relating to chats and e-mail contacts can, therefore, only be accessed by Klikvoorhulp employees. Support workers are bound by a secrecy agreement and thus prevented from publicising information. The same applies to the technical managers of this site."
<http://www.klikvoorhulp.nl/jongeren/607151-privacy> (10/09/2012)

Information on breaching confidentiality is not necessarily part of the chat information, it may also be included under a general heading, as is the case with the Dutch children's helpline.

"If you are in trouble we will put you in touch with someone who can help you. For example someone from 'Bureau Jeugdzorg' (Youth Care Bureau). We will only do this with your approval. Kindertelefoon (Children's Helpline) employees will not visit you and will never contact you uninvited. We wait for you to call or start a chat."

<http://www.kindertelefoon.nl/13-18/over-de-kindertelefoon.php#Anoniem> on 12/09/2012

5.3.5 How to use the chat facility?

Young people using a site must be able to navigate it easily to find general and chat related information. It should be clear that the chat facility is provided as an online support feature, where it can be found, whether it is open, closed or engaged, how it works, etc.



www.kek-vonal.hu is a typical example of four clearly defined chat stages.

www.kek-vonal.hu – 28/09/2012

More often than not the user soon finds out how to start chatting, although this is not necessarily always the case! Sometimes the button or link is easily overlooked.

Www.helpwanted.nl shows 'Click here to start chatting'. Speaks for itself!



www.helpwanted.nl/chat_met_ons.htm - 28/09/2012

Sometimes, the chat line is actually open but already in use.

For example: www.cyberhus.dk uses colours to show whether the chat line is available (red = closed, green = available).

The European sites we looked at provide little information on waiting times.

www.childLine.org.uk is one of the few to provide details (in the FAQ section):

[Why don't you show how long I have to wait for a 1-2-1 chat?](#)

We would really like to be able to tell you how long you'll have to wait for a 1-2-1 chat. We know it can be frustrating to wait, when you want to talk to someone. Unfortunately it's not possible to say how long you will have to wait, because it depends on lots of things, like:

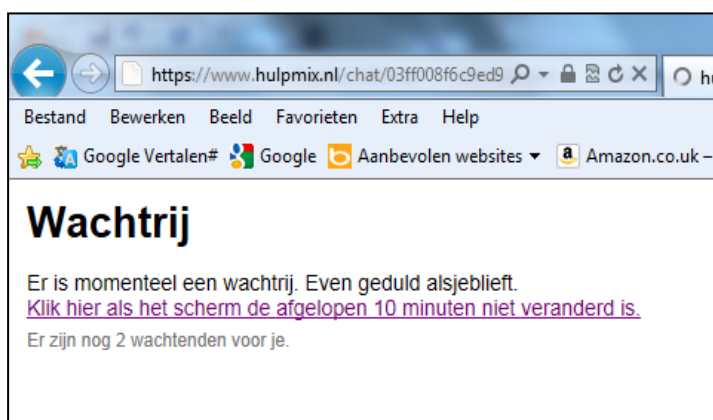
- how many other people are waiting
- how many counsellors are working at that time
- how long other young people need to chat to our counsellors.

A 1-2-1 chat also takes longer than a phone call because both you and the counsellor type rather than speak, which means that it can take a while longer.

We have looked into trying to give you some idea of the waiting time, but we can't do this technically at this time. We will continue to look at ways to solve this problem and apologise for any inconvenience. If you need to speak to someone urgently and can't wait for a 1-2-1 chat, you might find it easier to phone us on 0800 1111.

www.bris.se does the same. It indicates that there is a queue but that you will get the opportunity to chat even if this requires going over time.

Another example can be found on www.hulpmix.nl. This is one of the few sites to indicate, once you have accessed the chat facility, how many people are ahead of you in the queue and that you can click after 10 minutes if the screen hasn't changed.



www.hulpmix.be – 28/09/2012

Only 10 sites give suggestions on what to do during the waiting time.

A typical example is www.netecoute.fr, where the user can look at information. The site also comprises an interactive film clip depicting a girl showing part of her breast to a boy (who promptly places the picture on Facebook), three educational quizzes, three videos (also dealing with the dangers associated with the internet), three games (for children between the ages of 3 and 12), comic strips and the option to change the background. The site also has three topics to click on: talk,

understand and entertainment. A clearly designed and interesting layout!
www.sense.info (canyoufixit.sense.info) is another inspiring site that provides many different options.

Various suggestions to spend waiting time can be made indirectly, for example, by introducing links on the same page to information, FAQs or a forum.

In some cases, specific references are included as it is the case with www.albahus.dk.



There are many who would like to use AlbaHusChatten, so occasionally there may be a long wait in the queue. For example, use the time to look at Albahus.dk where many find good help

You are number 1 in the queue

Leave the queue

[Conditions for use of chat](#)

www.albahus.dk. – 28/09/2012

www.nuoret.info provides the option to submit questions via its puzzle corner.
Www.childLine.org.uk states: 'You can watch videos and play games while you wait'.
Www.killfragor.se suggests that the client should add something to its blog.

5.3.6 Recommendations concerning the chat facility on the website

The following recommendations were compiled following the screening and comparison of the websites with recommendations found in various literary publications (Bocklandt, 2011, page 135; Eidenbenz, 2009, page 213; Gerö, 2009, pages 65–71; Schalken, 2010, page 238).

Adaptation to target group, attractiveness

- Focus adequately on layout/attractiveness.
- Avoid too much text, images have more impact. Ensure that the layout is harmonious particularly on the homepage.
- When using small(er) font sizes, ensure that headings are in a larger letter type.
- Provide distinctive categories to find information on the website e.g. 'Who are we?', 'How does the chat facility work?', 'FAQ', etc.
- Select your heading 'labels' carefully, i.e. they should reflect the content.

The homepage should have an attractive layout and contain details about, or refer to, ...

- Information about the organisation, which promotes a sense of reliability;
- Contact data/data relating to (online) support methods;
- Who is the site targeted at?
- Information on those responding to the calls (professionals, trained volunteers, peers);
- Information relating to the actual chat;
- Information on privacy and anonymity;

- Sexual abuse or other topics about which the target group can contact the site;
- A 'hide page' button to be used if someone enters the room unexpectedly.

Information relating to chat support:

- FAQs are a significant part of the site. FAQs should also provide information on the actual chat.
- Keep information up to date.
- Users should be able to access information quickly, without too many 'clicks'. Chat opening times should be easy to find.
- It should be clear where the chat facility can be accessed.
- Chat links and stages should operate smoothly.
- Describe the chat procedure and its various stages, even if the facility is closed at the time.
- Make it clear from the start (preferably on the homepage) whether the chat facility is open, engaged or closed.
- Don't give a client the opportunity to log in if the chat facility is closed.
- Provide waiting time information.
- Keep the registration procedure short and to the point, particularly when dealing with children.
- Keep it simple!

5.4 Strengths and challenges of chat support

The selected organisations have opted to reach out to children and young people via a chat facility. The following section focuses on some of the benefits found in documentation and literature we were given access to.

5.4.1 Strengths of chat support

Communication relies on a combination of different factors. Body language defines approximately 55% of our communication (in both the sender and receiver), voice, timbre and intonation count for 38% and words for 7%. (Bulgarian, page 12)

The way in which we say something often expresses far more than the content of what we say.

Chatting (similar to phone calls) is devoid of non-verbal signals, conversations are limited in time, situations cannot be 'seen', etc.

Because the number of communication channels is greatly reduced conversation partners have to express themselves mainly with words (content), although they can use other means to understand and interpret the conversation, e.g. they can introduce 'silences', type text in bold, use 'smileys', etc. (Schalken, 2010 and Bocklandt, 2011)

Chat support also has (other) benefits!

In a literary summary on chat support in the Danish Pedagogic Psychological Magazine, Trine Sindahl (2008) refers to the impact of writing about problems, the combination of 'long distance communication' and 'real time communication' and anonymity.

Fukkink and Hermanns (2009) indicate the reasons quoted by children as to why they prefer to use a chat facility:

* Distance, particularly when it involves emotional problems: "talking about personal stuff is kind of scary".

- * Anonymity is perceived as a safer environment in which to relate personal problems.
- * Chatters perceived the response to their account as more 'real'.
- * Some children indicated that chatting gave them a greater sense of control with respect to their 'self presentation', because they had more time to think about what they were going to type. For example, these children stated that they felt "less ashamed". Chatting was definitely perceived as easier particularly if they thought they might cry ("I find calling difficult because I'm afraid I might cry").
- * A chat cannot be overheard (enhanced feeling of privacy).

Children have various preferences for the type of chat support they might choose. Sindahl also noticed this: 'Chat children' rarely resort to telephone advice and vice versa (Sindahl 2012).

In the BRIS survey (2012) children indicate that their choice is defined by their specific needs. Most children would like to chat but indicate that the chat facility is often engaged or closed, which is why they use e-mail. BRIS researchers are lobbying for 'around the clock' accessibility.

Other advantages of chatting include independence from the location, i.e., if the client has access to an internet connection, he/she has access to support and advice free of charge no matter where they are. Chats are based on typed communication, which gives the client more time to think about what he/she actually wants to 'say'. Clients can print out and reread their conversation. With face to face or telephone conversations a lot of information is subsequently 'lost'. This feature can also be of interest to the counsellor for training, research, self-reflection and supervision purposes. (Bocklandt, 2011)

The online survey demonstrated that organisations indicate several reasons for starting a chat support facility:

- * 'to be there' for children and young people,
- * to offer the target group more support choices or a different support option,
- * to reach new target groups,
- * to reach clients asking for support who prefer to use a chat facility,
- * to assist children and young people with their problem management (i.e. chatting gives users a high degree of control), help those seeking support solve their problems, etc.

"Slachtofferchat (Victim Chat) aims to support those who were afraid to ask for support before or who don't relate to existing support facilities. Slachtofferchat is also targeted at people who have already used existing support facilities but require additional support. " (Slachtofferchat, 2010, page 3)

"Via the internet Tjezonen is able to make contact with girls that might never have talked to anyone about their thoughts and worries. In our experience many girls feel that they are not taken seriously, not seen or listened to. They often find it difficult to put their problem into words. The fact that these girls can talk about themselves anonymously, and try and put their thoughts into words together with an adult, creates a basis for potential change. The chat becomes an opportunity and place where these girls can talk freely about their problems. There are obvious differences between girls who seek contact offline or online. Girls who seek contact online usually face more severe problems with pronounced anxieties and worries. (Munkesjö, 2011)

The following overview summarises the strengths of chat support from the perspective of both the client looking for support and the counsellor or organisation:

<i>Chat support from the perspective of the client</i>		Strengths - Benefits
	<i>Content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual counsellor (quickly) available ▪ Not having to talk ▪ Specifically tailored personal feedback ▪ Distance makes it easier to divulge information ▪ Typing allows more time for reflection ▪ Writing in itself is therapeutic ▪ Taboos easier to talk about ▪ Less embarrassment ▪ Being able to read the conversation again during and after the chat ▪ Being in control (and able to interrupt the chat at any time) • No awkward silences ▪ Stimulates client's initiative ▪ Anonymity
	<i>Communication channel</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy access ▪ User friendly ▪ Safe and anonymous (accessible and distant at the same time) ▪ No need to change location or spend time doing so ▪ Can be accessed from any location, i.e. including the familiar environment ▪ Easily accessible – even from a remote location ▪ (Usually) free of charge ▪ Immediate communication (immediate response) ▪ Less risk of the client being observed or overheard ▪ Sense of proximity possible as a result of strong bond

<i>Chat support from the perspective of the organisation or the counsellor</i>		Strengths - Benefits
	<i>Content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy access ▪ Quick work link ▪ Core problem identified more quickly ▪ No awkward silences ▪ Fewer channels: less prejudice based on looks or voice intonation ▪ Stimulates client's initiative ▪ Immediate response and feedback from client possible ▪ Being able to reread the content of the chat (= scrolling) during and after the conversation (for supervision or research purposes) ▪ Stimulating tools: hyperlinks to FAQs, testimonials, tests, referrals, etc.
	<i>Communication channel</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing a channel that facilitates the revelation of a problem (disinhibition) ▪ Link to other online support tools possible ▪ Re-establishing contact with lost target group (e.g. young people who can no longer be contacted face to face or by phone) ▪ Addressing new target groups ▪ Providing contacted target group with more contact options ▪ Chat feature ties in with the target group's familiar culture ▪ Proximity: strong bond possible ▪ In-depth contact possible because of both distance and proximity ▪ More easily accessible ▪ Possible from different locations – home work possible

5.4.2 Impact of chat support

Research into when, whether and how chat support works for children and young people is still limited. In both Australia and the Netherlands the results of improved wellbeing were clearly demonstrated.

In 2011 the Swedish organisation Bris highlighted the positive impact of its chat and e-mail facilities. Research carried out by Fukkink and Hermanns (2009) shows that both chat and telephone support can promote a feeling of wellbeing amongst children and reduce the seriousness of their problems. Swedish evaluation research conducted by BRIS (2011) noted that, irrespective of the type of support they selected, children felt better for having contacted BRIS. The most marked effect of support contact could be found in this feeling of wellbeing and the experience that children knew (better) what to do about their situation. Children value being listened to. It is often the first time they talk to an adult about their situation. With small problems they prefer help from their peers, but with major problems, they seek support and advice from adults.

Research into the role of writing suggests there is a therapeutic effect associated with typing. This is particularly useful for people who have difficulty expressing their emotions orally, are embarrassed or inhibited by other emotions. (Vlaeminck, 2009)

5.4.3 Vulnerability of, and risks associated with, chat support

Using various sources, we compiled an overview of the different disadvantages, challenges or sensitive aspects associated with chat support. We listed them from the perspective of both the client asking for support and the organisation or counsellor.

Vulnerability – Disadvantages - Challenges		
Chat support from the perspective of the client	Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Immediate interaction reinforces expectation of immediate solution▪ No obligation commitment▪ Sometimes superficial▪ Reliable counsellor?▪ Response time is limited▪ Is the client understood correctly?
	Communication channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Risk of misinterpretation and misunderstanding▪ Is the internet really safe?▪ Behaviour similar to shopping: switching from chat to chat▪ Digital divide: not everyone has access to the internet or the necessary computer competencies▪ Fewer channels: few non-verbal communication options▪ Technical errors▪ Long waiting times▪ Digital footprint: the chat can always be traced somehow▪ Remoteness because of the medium▪ Risk of 'dependency upon, or addiction to, chat support contacts'▪ only accessible if counsellor is online too.

Chat support from the perspective of the organisation or counsellor		Vulnerability – Disadvantages - Challenges
	Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is acceptable that the chat is controlled by the client. But is the counsellor not easily worried that he/she might lose the client? ▪ Legal/judicial uncertainties ▪ Over- and under-disclosure: problems revealed too quickly or too slowly ▪ Doubts about authenticity ▪ Risk of misunderstanding ▪ Incorrect completion or interpretation of missing information ▪ Fewer channels: non-verbal signals no longer possible ▪ Risk evaluation and crisis intervention difficult to achieve ▪ Screen based reading and writing competencies required ▪ Multi-tasking: is the counsellor (exclusively) focused on the chat support session?
	Communication channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessibility of the website and ability to find it? ▪ Organisation and training of chat support take time and money ▪ Managing care workers' resistance is a demanding task ▪ Specific and safe chat support software is a necessity ▪ If clients are anonymous, it is difficult to find finances or subsidies for the chat service ▪ Labour-intensive ▪ It takes a lot of effort to bring the chat conversation forward ▪ Communication proceeds differently ▪ Need for more specific information ▪ Are counsellors familiar with map of social services online? ▪ Risk of incorrect interpretation ▪ Doubts following loss of contact or technical fault ▪ Transcripts might be read by other people (digital or paper copies) ▪ Difficult to introduce local or regional limits

5.5 Organisation of chat support

The 22 organisations that participated in the online survey were asked to provide advice on setting up chat support, critical success factors, problem areas and ethical/legal issues. The following is a summary of the advice they provided.

5.5.1 Suggestions on starting up chat support

The following are **suggestions** relating to starting up chat support in a care organisation:

- Start small, slowly and calm; take your time, but be prepared for rapid growth.
- Keep the chat support line anonymous and free of charge.
- Develop procedures, protocols and methods to be used by counsellors relating to crisis situations, referrals (to emergency services and other organisations) and legal issues.
- Invest in (permanent) training for counsellors.
- Provide a support, feedback and back-up system that will enable counsellors to 'blow off steam' after a demanding chat session. Don't leave them to their own fate.

- Combine your chat support line with an own offline service to facilitate referrals and promote more intense use of the knowledge available within the organisation.
- Join forces and cooperate with respect to care work. Limit the number of new (short term) initiatives in order to maintain continuity and control.

5.5.2 Critical success factors in the realisation of chat support

According to the 22 surveyed organisations the **critical success factors** associated with a chat support line for sexual abuse are as follows:

- Keep the service free of charge, anonymous and easy to access.
- Be available and maximise opening times.
- Keep the service user friendly; the focus should be on the client rather than on technology or the organisation.
- Ensure that the chat support facility is secure. Be a listening service to start with, build up trust and don't refer on immediately.
- Ensure that the technology is secure. Software should be stable, secure and reliable. Technical problems make it very difficult to maintain a chat based bond.
- Methods should be refined and updated at all times. Also provide training for counsellors, on chat support in general, but also on (online and offline) referrals, sexuality and sexual abuse, chat support for children and legal/deontological issues.
- Work together and create networks.
- Invest in your organisation's reputation and chat function.

5.5.3 Critical problematic areas when developing chat support

The 22 organisations also highlighted a number of **critical problem areas** when developing a chat support line:

- The risk of misunderstandings resulting from a lack of (non) verbal communication. Tension between the client and counsellor can quickly build up when providing chat support. Clients do not always know how to express themselves via a chat facility. The counsellor on the other hand has to be able to read between the lines and show empathy, which is not always easy. It requires training and experience.
- Creating a balance between actively listening and providing support is difficult. And how do you ensure that your advice is taken?
- In order to protect anonymity it is tricky to chat without knowing the client's age and gender. Confidentiality and anonymity represent a constant dilemma particularly in situations where children are in danger.
- Anonymity makes it difficult to refer on. However, good (referral) agreements are a must in the event of a crisis, such as situations involving suicidal tendencies.
- How do you deal with the uncertainties associated with testers, bullies, lies and exaggeration?
- How do you deal with frequent users of various online services, without them wanting/receiving offline support?
- Finalising a chat session successfully is often difficult, particularly following a long and demanding chat.
- With individual chat support the family unit may not be included in to a sufficient extent in the management of the problem.

- Chat counsellors are under considerable pressure. Clients often demand more time and energy than via other support services. Anonymity makes things more difficult, i.e. less certain and more disturbing, for counsellors. Often these are long and difficult conversations that take more than an hour and are not easy to finalise successfully.
- Counsellors often feel helpless, particularly when they can only listen and not actually do something. Counsellors at primary support services are often not yet inclined to take further steps. How do you deal with situations that require therapeutic support?
- Guaranteeing availability requires considerable organisation. Demand for chat support far outstrips the available volunteer or employee capacities. It is also difficult to provide a permanent chat facility and simultaneously plan other employee activities (meetings, peer reviews, breaks, holidays, etc.).
- Waiting times to be connected to a counsellor can be long, which irritates clients and puts pressure on counsellors.
- Technical ICT problems: if a serious, anonymous chat is interrupted as a result of a technical failure, it may be difficult to continue the conversation with the same counsellor.
- Anonymity cannot be guaranteed using Skype.
- Technical support is expensive.
- The creation of appropriate back-up support should not be overlooked. The relevant field of activity and the authorities need to be persuaded that chat support is a fully fledged, complementary care service.
- Obtaining regular, structured financial support is a constant concern. The huge demand for chat support necessitates more extensive opening times, more support from professionals and better organisation, all of which are expensive.
- The organisation of chat support by a local, area bound organisation conflicts with the range of the internet. Cooperation must be established between different regional mental health care services.
- Cooperation requires more time and energy in order to coordinate, take joint decisions, manage, etc.
- There is a lack of training for counsellors concerning methods and chat support skills. Many counsellors are faced with this hurdle when they first start out.

5.6 Importance of anonymity when providing chat support for sexual abuse

“Sexual abuse of children occurs in all cultures and social classes and has devastating consequences for those affected. Media coverage highlighting the failure of health and social services to identify and protect children who are being, or who are at risk of being, sexually abused may represent only a small proportion of those being abused, because a lot of abuse goes unreported. ... The true incidence of child abuse may be complicated by delayed or non-disclosed abuse. Hébert et al (2009) found that 20% of adults who had been sexually abused as children had never disclosed this abuse, while 57.5% reported delaying disclosure for at least five years.” (Walsh & Major (2011), page 35)

Many organisations offering online support choose to guarantee the anonymity of clients seeking help. This is all the more important when complex issues such as sexual abuse are involved.

Typical examples taken from documentation provided by organisations:

When it comes to anonymity, chatting has an advantage over telephone calls: *“The anonymity guaranteed by Bris via all its channels (phone, chat, e-mail, etc.) is an aspect children really appreciate. However, some children are afraid that their parents or other family members may notice on the phone bill that they have contacted Bris, or that their phone conversations may be overheard.*

Some also express concern that the person who responds (at Bris) may recognize their voice.” (Bris, 2011)

‘Klik voor hulp’ (Click for Help) quotes the following reasons for maintaining the anonymity of clients (‘Klik voor hulp’ page 11):

* The anonymous context gives the client extensive control and security: *“Control because he/she decides which personal information to reveal and when to interrupt the support line. Security because he/she, or the people he/she is talking about, cannot be identified by the person providing the support.”*

* *There is no embarrassment: ‘For example the client may feel ashamed about the problematic situation, the way in which he/she has acted or the (medical) problems he/she is facing.’*

* Clients will perceive less of an imbalance of authority between themselves and the counsellor. Minimizing authority in the online world: 'People are reluctant to say what they really think when they face a figure of authority. Fear of disapproval and punishment from a higher authority dampens the spirit. But online, in what feels like a peer relationship – with the manifestation of “authority” minimized – people are more willing to speak out or misbehave.' (J. Suler, 2004)

5.7 Ethical and legal issues relating to chat support

Responsible online support for sexual abuse implies that, in these often dramatic situations as far as the client is concerned, counsellors and organisations have to be very aware of what is acceptable and can or must be done.

The challenge is to find a (delicate) balance between legal obligations and ethical choices; a balance between the (often highly specific) expectations and choices of the client, the organisation and the counsellor in question. Legal and ethical questions relating to sexual abuse are complex issues because there is a need to combine conflicting insights, interests, guidelines and expectations.

At a European level there are also the distinctions between regulations in EU countries and cultural differences (even within the same region) in our vision of ‘privacy’, ‘the client’s self determination’ and ‘support’.

This project makes 2 contributions to this ethical/legal issue:

- * an inventory of replies received to questions about the ethical and legal issues that affect chat support, coming from the online survey of 22 organisations.
- * an overview of the choices made by organisations in respect of ethical and legal issues, based on the documentation they submitted.

5.7.1 Summary of ethical and legal issues based on the online survey

The response to the online survey relating to questions about ethical and legal issues associated with chat support focuses on two significant questions about sexual abuse:

- Is there a risk that chat support on sexual abuse makes a difficult situation more bearable and thus perpetuates it?
- How should the conflict between ‘anonymity’ and ‘duty to report’ be tackled? Anonymity is essential as far as clients are concerned. Sexually abused children often worry what would happen if they were to report the abuse. They feel responsible, are afraid they might be threatened ... without guaranteed anonymity they would be too frightened to reveal their situation to chat support.

Chat support organisations highlighted the following issues when treating sexual abuse in their chat services:

- The requirement for anonymity and professional secrecy is at odds with a keenly felt moral obligation to intervene. Moreover, in most countries counsellors are burdened with a heavy responsibility concerning the reporting of child abuse to parents, police or the judiciary (reporting duty). The anonymity requirement of chat support makes it difficult for counsellors to inform care/emergency services, but can they, are they allowed to or are they obliged to waive this requirement by tracing the IP address?
 - Are you entitled to waive the anonymity requirement in such cases?
 - What is the responsibility or mandate of counsellors in these cases?
 - When is it acceptable/necessary to take action? Does this require the client's approval?
 - If you are obliged to report the abuse, should you inform the client accordingly? And when do you do this?
 - How do you attempt to intervene in a situation involving child abuse, when the child does not fully understand why you want to do this?
 - Children need to be protected from abuse, but they should also be able to decide for themselves to take action when they are ready to do so.
- In the event of suicidal tendencies and other crisis situations the limits (and possibilities) of chat support need to be monitored and explained to clients.
- Considering chat support as a form of psychotherapy could have ethical/legal consequences.
- There is no specific legal framework pertaining to online support as such. Online support often operates within a vacuum. International, national and local legislation is not always geared to online support.

5.7.2 Summary of legal and ethical chat support related choices at various organisations

The following is a summary of some legal and ethical choices made by chat support organisations. We need to take into account the variations in legal context in different European countries and the different positions these organisations occupy in the care support sector in their countries. The summary is based on information we obtained from documents or telephone contacts with 8 organisations.

5.7.2.1 Professional secrecy and reporting duty in Albahus - Denmark

Professional secrecy is mandatory. Reporting duty applies to sexual violence involving children and young people below the age of 18 – even if professional secrecy is mandatory. Professional secrecy can also be breached if the client in question agrees.

“All private individuals and professionals must inform the local authority if they become aware of a child or young person being exposed to neglect or humiliating treatment, or living in conditions that could jeopardise their health or development – as stipulated in the social services act.

The objective of this reporting duty is to tackle children's or young people's problems as early as possible and thus prevent more serious problems from affecting their further development. Sexual violence against children and young people is of such a serious nature that anyone is obliged at any time to inform the authorities.” (Albahus, 2012)

5.7.2.2 Specific situation at Bris (Sweden)

At Bris the main task is to convince children, who have never discussed their problems before, to talk about them. Bris represents a “link” between children and other (social) services. As the main objective is to gain the child’s trust the chat are entirely anonymous. Anonymity is a sacred principle at Bris. Bris will only take further action if the child agrees. The only exception to this rule is if the child’s life is in danger (i.e. if the child would die if Bris did not take action). Sexual abuse is not considered an exceptional situation.

Swedish law stipulates that all social services must inform the authorities if a child is in danger. Bris operates according to a special protocol in this respect that relieves it from this legal obligation. Bris does not have a legal obligation to inform the authorities. This is the result of the specific position Bris occupies in Swedish care work, i.e. it aims to offer maximum accessibility to ensure that children feel secure enough to tell their story.

5.7.2.3 Choice criteria concerning reporting duty at Child Focus – Belgium

The criteria that define specific options pertaining to legal and ethical choices for the (recently established) chat support facility at Child Focus are as follows:

- “Transparency towards clients is extremely important. Clear information about the way in which Child Focus operates is essential on the website.
- If the counsellor is concerned about a client’s situation, he/she will first try to persuade the client to report it to the police.
- If the counsellor intends to breach professional secrecy, the case will first be discussed with the coordinator and between them they agree who will contact the authorities.
- Breaches of professional secrecy are less common with one-off contacts. The counsellor often does not have sufficient information after a single contact to make a considered judgement.
- The following criteria could be useful when considering whether or not to breach professional secrecy:
 - Abuse occurring in the past/now;
 - Actual risk of abuse happening again (within which time frame?);
 - Actual risk of other victims being involved;
 - Differentiation by the nature of the abuse: ‘my dad rapes me’ versus ‘my dad smacks my bottom’;
 - Differentiation between abuse within the family and abuse outside the family;
 - Age of the victim;
 - Organisations/people who are already aware of what is going on;
- The client must always be told if a report is to be submitted to the relevant authorities/courts.” (Child Focus, 2012)

5.7.2.4 Reporting duty at Cyberhus – Denmark

Cyberhus offers an anonymous chat facility and does not have access to IP addresses. Its counsellors cannot report anything - even if they wanted to.

However, the law stipulates that if a child's (or someone else's) life is in danger Cyberhus has a duty to report it. In life threatening situations, Cyberhus will suggest to the child to report the situation or contact the police.

In cases of ‘child in danger’, Cyberhus adopts one of the following two approaches (protocols):

- In case of immediate danger (e.g. a suicide attempt actually taking place) the counsellor involved in the chat will change from dialogue to 'control' and tell the child what to do, before continuing the conversation. Advice or control may, for example, be 'call the police, run out of the house or call an ambulance'. The counsellor may propose to continue the chat until the ambulance arrives, but will clearly state that Cyberhus cannot be held responsible if a child is injured during a chat session.
- Another approach would be to propose to the child that Cyberhus call the police or an ambulance. In such cases the child would have to waive his or her anonymity and will be told that the situation will be reported to the relevant authorities.
This kind of situation has occurred only three times in the past four years.

5.7.2.5 At 'Jongerenadviescentra' (Youth Advice Centres) in Belgium young people are responsible themselves

The following procedure is observed at Jongerenadviescentra: if the counsellor is concerned about a situation involving a youngster, he/she will contact the team and together they will decide how to tackle the situation. Jongerenadviescentra will not breach anonymity. In disconcerting situations, the counsellor will ask the young person for contact details in order to pass them on (with the youngster's approval) to other organisations (confidential child abuse centres, police, etc.), based on the premise that this leaves the responsibility where it should be, i.e. with the young person. Jongerenadviescentra admits that this approach is easier to apply with young people (14+), than with children. They are still trying to establish the best way to approach this with the younger target group.

Only in a few cases did they take action on the basis of the IP address.

Normally they will ask the young person for contact information.

(Telephone call with Steunpunt Algemeen Welzijnswerk (General Care Work Network))

5.7.2.6 Focus on the young person at Kék Vonal - Hungary

Kék Vonal is a helpline for children and young people.

Its chat service is anonymous. Kék Vonal can see the client's IP address (a requirement imposed by the sponsors of the chat project) but never uses it. It is part of their philosophy that the focus is on the child and on a non directive approach.

Kék Vonal puts children and young people in complete control. Clients decide when to contact Kék Vonal, what to talk about, when to stop talking, whether or not they would like to chat again, what they will eventually do, etc.

Counsellors will never take any action against the child's will. They always ask for the child's approval before intervening, even if the child is in danger. Obviously, counsellors will try to convince children to take action themselves or seek their permission to take action on their behalf.

Counsellors manage the chat sessions but if further intervention is necessary someone else in the team takes over the case.

- 1) The counsellor assesses whether action is required. Is the child in danger (risk of physical or emotional abuse, violence or neglect, threat of suicide, bullying, teenage pregnancy, risk of running away, etc.)?
- 2) The counsellor evaluates the possibilities open to the child and his/her environment. Can the child take steps independently or ask someone to do so? Where possible, Kék Vonal

encourages the child to take some form of action. This way, the child will know what to do in similar situations in the future.

- 3) If the child is unable to take action the counsellor will explain what Kék Vonal can do and what the consequences will be. It is important to provide comprehensive information. Kék Vonal can only take action (e.g. contact the police or social services) if the child agrees.
- 4) Kék Vonal will ask for feedback until the child is safe.

The organisation works with national police services in accordance with a written protocol.

5.7.2.7 Conditions associated with IP address use at Awel – Belgium

The following procedure is observed at Awel: Anonymity will be breached if the following two conditions are met. Firstly, it has to be a 'critical emergency situation', which means that the situation not only has to entail actual abuse, but also a very high risk of the abuse being repeated in the very near future (e.g. 'I have been abused for three years and my father is at the door waiting to do it again'). It also requires the approval of the underage person, on the basis of the underlying premise that (in the case of abuse within the family) parental loyalty should not be jeopardised without justification.

If both conditions are met the IP address is passed on to a local police department. (Telephone conversation with Awel coordinator)

5.7.2.8 Cooperation at Meldpunt.nl – the Netherlands

IP addresses are not visible at Meldpunt.nl, which has a cooperation agreement with the children's helpline, which is part of Bureau Jeugdzorg (Youth Care Bureau).

When a child reports to Meldpunt.nl that he/she is being sexually abused, they will be asked whether the chat can be switched through to the children's helpline. If the child agrees, the online connection will be maintained until a link has been established with the children's helpline and one of their employees takes over the chat session.

A Meldpunt.nl employee will contact an employee at the children's helpline and explain the situation to ensure that the client does not have to repeat their story.

If the child does not want to be put through, the Meldpunt.nl counsellor will provide general advice on what the child could do (e.g. talk to a trusted adult).

If a child is at risk of immediate danger the Meldpunt.nl counsellor will try to convince the child to switch to the telephone, resulting in the child losing its anonymity and making intervention possible. If the child continues with the chat session, the absence of the IP address makes intervention impossible.

Cases that require police intervention are rare. Moreover, the police will only be contacted if the child agrees.

Meldpunt has specific police contacts in different locations, which makes it possible to put children in touch with people in their own region who are aware of the work of Meldpunt.nl.

6. Conclusion and final comments: chat support ... an added value for support on difficult subjects

Is online support – and more specifically chat support – feasible?

Can you make contact with clients purely via ‘characters on a screen’?

Does chat support have something to offer even in serious situations such as those involving sexual abuse?

What could be the additional benefit of chat support?

What are the weaknesses and disadvantages of chat support?

How do you implement chat support within your organisation?

The above and other questions were at the heart of the European Ch@dvice project, executed by two Belgian partners (Arteveldehogeschool (Artevelde University College) Ghent and Child Focus) and an Austrian partner (Österreichische Institut für angewandte Telekommunikation OIAT – Austrian Institute for Applied Telecommunication), with the support of the European Commission’s Daphne III programme. The aim of the project was to chart European experiences with chat support relating to the sexual abuse of children and young people. This conclusion lists the main findings from the following 4 research stages:

- the screening of 161 websites that children and young people can contact with questions relating to sexual abuse;
- the in-depth screening of 32 chat support services;
- an online survey amongst 22 European care organisations;
- a documentation analysis amongst 22 European care organisations.

6.1 Social developments are promoting online support in care work

Since the start of this century various social developments have promoted the fact that care work is increasingly switching to online services. The main developments in this respect are probably advances in online communication and the fact that taboo subjects are becoming easier to discuss.

6.1.1 Extremely rapid evolution in online communication

‘Digital natives’ probably cannot remember how it used to be, but ever since the introduction of PCs and mobile internet our communication with each other and with organisations has changed dramatically. Bank transactions, holiday bookings, etc. are all made online. Counter services at banks and travel agents have been completely reorganised. We no longer use encyclopaedias but go online to find information. Inevitably, care work had to follow suit, often hesitantly though because face to face contact has still a significant advantage when trying to understand and support people and their problems.

Internet communication has also progressed from one sided information on statistical websites (one to all communication) to interactive online communication enabling people to exchange personal information (one to one communication).

These opportunities presented a challenge to organisations involved in care work. Particularly when they noticed that they were gradually losing their target group in face-to-face or telephone communication, but reaching new target groups via their online support services. Online support pioneers often adopted the motto: support should be available to young people where they are, i.e. online. Virtual outreach work was born.

6.1.2 Social taboos becoming easier to discuss

Taboo subjects – such as sexual abuse – are also becoming easier to discuss. However, this doesn't mean that victims necessarily felt more inclined to tell their personal story, but care organisations were able to deal with the subject more specifically in their work or via their online support facility.

6.1.3 161 websites throughout Europe that will deal with sexual abuse

The Ch@dvice project listed 161 websites that children and young people can turn to for support on sexual abuse, often as one amongst other topics.

Each country in the European Union provides at least one website that children or young people can turn to. However, there is a marked difference in availability within Europe, from 1 website in Cyprus to 25 websites in the Netherlands. The organisations behind the websites also vary greatly and are based on both government and private initiatives and local and national websites.

50% of the websites indicate 'sexual abuse' as a specific topic. 10% of the websites show 'sexual abuse' as the leading theme of their online support service. Organisations that deal with a wide range of topics (such as a children's helpline) do not specifically refer to 'sexual abuse', but the subject may become the topic of conversation as clients can contact the site with 'anything that affects them'. Where 'sexual abuse' is a specific theme, organisations use various ways of addressing the subject, i.e. "Do you have questions about sexual abuse?" or in a more veiled way "Do you feel you are being forced to do things you don't want to do?".

Most websites have children or young people as their main, specifically indicated target audience. A number of initiatives address several target groups and divide their information on the website according to target group. Remarkably, we found that 'sexual abuse' is indicated less specifically on websites for children and young people than on websites targeted at professionals and adults.

6.1.4 Is it easy for the user to determine whether the online support facility can be trusted?

83% of the websites provide clear information on the organisation behind the support service. A section 'About us' containing relevant information about the organiser may include, for example, the organisation structure, objective, history of the support facility, employees and finance. This implies, however, that 17% of the websites do not make this information easily available.

50% of the websites provide transparent information on how the organisation deals with privacy and anonymity. Some sites also provide a 'close' or 'hide page' button to enable users to close the site quickly if undesirable 'onlookers' appear.

6.1.5 What do online support websites for sexual abuse offer?

86% of these online support websites offer static information in one direction, from the organisation to the visitor or client. In most cases, this consists of a 'news section' or 'links' to other organisations. One third of websites also offer 'tips and advice' or a 'frequently asked questions' section. A few websites contain 'testimonials' or 'a word cloud'.

70% of these websites offer interactive contact opportunities between clients or visitors and one of the organisation's counsellors. In most organisations, this communication is managed via e-mail. One

third of all websites offer a one to one chat facility. One fifth of the websites also run a forum, in which a moderator facilitates peer to peer communication between people in the target group. 1% of organisations also offer group chat opportunities.

43% of the websites not only offer static and (in)direct interaction, but also links to social network sites, educational games or self-test and self-help tools.

Two additional findings were obvious from the screening.

Firstly, 30% of the organisations with an online support website have not yet created an interaction facility between counsellors and the target group.

Secondly, at least 5 organisations indicated on their website during the screening that (for the time being) one to one chats were no longer available due to a lack of finance or sponsorship. This is an important aspect as new online support tools are often developed with (additional) project finance during the pioneering stage. Their implementation in normal day-to-day operations can then be problematic and in the meantime certain expectations have been raised amongst the target group.

6.2 Chat support... a unique opportunity

The in-depth screening of 32 chat support services (on sexual abuse) highlighted the strengths and vulnerability of this type of online support.

6.2.1 Diversity in chat support

Chat support varies considerably throughout Europe. The opening times for sexual abuse chat support differ greatly throughout Europe from:

- 24/7;
- to specific times during the day on week days or after school, but little at weekends;
- or for a limited number of highly irregular hours and consequently unpredictable;
- or only by appointment via e-mail.

In 2011 the number of chat support sessions at the screened organisations varied from 191 to 7,000 per year and between 4% and 74% of the conversations related to sexual abuse.

Some organisations focus on one-off chat support sessions, others offer on-going chat support. Most organisations provide one-to-one chat support.

A few organisations also offer group chats and some organisations have a chatbot, i.e. automated computer generated replies at times when the chat facility is not accessible.

Chat counsellors or counsellors are usually (trained) volunteers (90%). 10% of counsellors are professionals.

6.2.2 Strengths and benefits of chat support

Is it possible to give support if you cannot see the client and only communicate via screen characters? Chat counsellors are positive about this and even draw attention to an extra advantage of chat support, i.e. distance and anonymity often quite quickly result in a sense of 'proximity'.

The fact that clients are 'invisible' and able to chat from their own safe environment makes it easier for them to discuss the problem they are faced with. Frequently the 'question behind the question' stage can be skipped as a result.

Chatting also offers additional benefits for both conversation partners, i.e. typing creates more time for reflection, the chat information can be reread, there are no awkward silences, the response to ideas and proposals is immediate and prejudice based on looks and voice intonation is eliminated.

The additional benefits from chat support for clients are that individual counsellors are quickly accessible (no waiting times), that they do not have to talk and feel less embarrassed, that writing in itself is therapeutic and that they stay in control, i.e. they decide when to end the chat session. The main advantage, however, is the facility of access, i.e. being able to chat anonymously in a user-friendly manner (no need to change location – saving time and money) from a familiar environment, usually free of charge, without being seen or overheard.

Additional benefits from chat support for counsellors and their organisations relate to the fact that the client is encouraged to take the initiative, it is easier to create links to other tools, new target groups can be reached, lost target groups can be regained or actual clients can be given additional contact opportunities. Furthermore, this system facilitates working from home, which can be a definite bonus for volunteers.

6.2.3 Additional value of chat support for sexual abuse

Does this additional value also apply to chat support for children and young people experiencing sexual abuse?

Statements from European chat counsellors indicate that chat support clearly offers additional benefits in the case of a taboo subject such as sexual abuse. Child Focus in Belgium, for example, found that as a telephone and e-mail based support service for sexual abuse it received questions and reports from parents (mainly mothers), but virtually no enquiries from young people. Five months after the launch of its chat support facility (available 12 hours per week spread across 3 days) its website had received 10,000 hits and clocked up 200 chat sessions relating to 124 cases. 74% of the cases involved young people who wanted to talk about sexual abuse.

Furthermore, they felt reassured by the fact that the chat support facility was clearly intended to discuss sexual abuse. They assumed that the counsellor would not be alarmed, and would be able to react appropriately, if the subject came up. This created a sense of trustworthiness.

Other European chat support services also indicate that in many cases children and young people feel able to discuss their problem with someone else for the first time via the chat facility. The information and chat support available on the various organisation websites assist clients in three different ways. Firstly, it helps them describe and structure their experiences; secondly, it helps them recognise that what they perceive as a vague, uncomfortable feeling is actually a problem and thirdly, it helps when considering how to seek help to deal with, and stop, the abuse.

The easy access and anonymous facility makes it possible to talk about various aspects of this problem for the first time. Often clients indicate that they are aware of the existence of school based social support or that they are already seeing a therapist, but that they don't yet feel able to raise the subject of abuse in these face to face consultations. In these cases, chat support is an initial, secure support platform that makes discussion possible.

6.2.4 Vulnerability, risks and limitations associated with chat support concerning sexual abuse

Obviously chat support relating to sexual abuse also has its limitations.

Fewer access channels – the lack of personal contact or non-verbal communication – can lead to uncertainty for both conversation partners. How genuine is the client? How reliable is the organisation or its counsellors? Is my writing understood correctly? This is further compounded by

the unreliability associated with internet technology and the security aspect of information exchanges.

Other disadvantages of chat support for the client include the fact that he/she often expects an immediate solution, that he/she often has to wait for a long time before being able to chat and that he/she leaves a digital footprint behind. Some traces of the communication will remain on the world wide web. Placing something on the internet is easy, removing it, however, is frequently impossible.

As far as the counsellors and their organisations are concerned, the energy required to develop the chat support facility is another disadvantage. Moreover, because of the digital divide, part of the target group does not have access to the internet or is not media savvy enough to utilise it. The fact that talking about sexual abuse via a chat session represents a first step for many clients, poses various challenges for those involved in care work. How can they encourage the client to switch to other types of support and assistance in order to deal with this situation?

Chat support is also associated with various ethical and legal issues, which are discussed in more detail in the section below.

6.3 Organisational requirements ... chat support needs to be organised correctly

The conditions and critical success factors for the organisation of chat support were outlined on the basis of an online survey amongst 22 European chat support organisations. Chat support needs to be organised correctly; it entails much more than the mere organisation of face to face conversations via the web.

6.3.1 Suggestions pertaining to the chat support start-up process

Chat support organisations formulated the following specific recommendations with respect to the chat support start-up process:

- Start small, slowly and calmly; take your time but be prepared for rapid growth.
- Develop procedures, protocols and methods to be used by counsellors with respect to crisis situations, referrals and legal issues.
- Invest in (permanent) training for counsellors.
- Provide a support, feedback and back-up system that will enable counsellors to 'blow off steam' after a demanding chat session. Don't leave them to their own fate.
- If possible, combine your chat support line with an own offline service to facilitate referrals and promote more intense use of the knowledge available within the organisation.
- Join forces in care work and cooperate within networks. Limit the number of new (short term) initiatives in order to maintain continuity and control.

6.3.2 Critical success factors for the realisation of chat support

According to the 22 surveyed organisations the critical factors of success associated with a chat support line on sexual abuse are as follows:

- Free, anonymous and easy access chat support;
- Wide availability (extensive opening times);

- To keep the service user friendly, the focus should be on the client rather than on technology or the organisation;
- Secure chat support; listen, build up trust and don't refer on immediately;
- Secure technology; the software should be stable, secure and reliable;
- Methods should be continuously refined and updated. Also provide training for counsellors;
- Cooperation and networking;
- Ensure that your organisation and its chat support facility are widely known.

6.3.3 Critical problems when developing chat support

The 22 organisations also highlighted a number of critical problems when developing a chat support line:

- To minimise the risk of misunderstandings counsellors require continual training and exchanges of experience.
- Anonymity is important but the subject makes it difficult to chat without being aware of the client's age and gender.
- How do you deal with the doubts associated with testers, bullies, lies and exaggeration?
- How do you deal with frequent users of various online services, without them wanting/receiving offline support?
- The family unit may not be included to a sufficient extent when the chat support is given to an individual.
- Counsellors often feel helpless, particularly when they can only listen and not actually do something.
- Guaranteeing availability requires considerable organisation. Demand for chat support far outstrips the available volunteer or employee capacities.
- Waiting times before chatting with a counsellor can be considerable, which irritates clients and puts pressure on counsellors.
- Technical ICT problems: if a serious, anonymous chat is interrupted as a result of a technical fault, it may be difficult to continue the conversation with the same counsellor. Technical support is expensive.
- The creation of a solid foundation for online support should not be overlooked. The relevant field of activity and the authorities need to be persuaded that chat support is a fully fledged, complementary care service.
- Obtaining regular, structured financial support is a constant concern.
- Cooperation and networking require considerable investment in terms of time and energy.

6.3.4 A successful website is a significant starting point

Other than the fact that the language and images used on a support website for children and young people needs to be geared to the target group, it also acts as an important starting point for a successful chat support service. Which informative and interactive tools are available on the website other than, or in anticipation of, a chat support session? What level of importance is attached to the chat support feature on the website and what information is provided on chat support before the actual chat starts? How user friendly is the chat application? Are the various stages that need to be completed clear to users?

Other elements also affect the conditions that might prevent the client from feeling confident about talking about his/her sexual abuse related problems. For example, the online support website must provide information about counsellors and explain whether or not clients have to register to use the chat facility (and which information will be required).

Organisations offering chat support must also consider which chat related information will be visible to potential clients, i.e. information on the objective and subjects that can (not) be talked about, on the exact nature of anonymity, on how clients' IP addresses will be dealt with and information on the chat procedure itself.

It is vital that the chat application should be accessible during the proposed opening times (which was not always the case during the screening process). If the chat facility is engaged, it is advisable to provide information on waiting times, suggestions on how to spend the intervening period or references to other support.

6.3.5 Ethical and legal issues concerning sexual abuse chat support

Organisations have to tread carefully when dealing with the ethical and legal issues associated with sexual abuse chat support. They have to find a balance between the choices available to the client, counsellor and organisation and between the ethical and legal guidelines applicable to often very complex situations.

Two major topics come to the fore when care organisations describe their ethical and legal dilemmas relating to sexual abuse chat support:

- How do we deal with the conflict between the added benefit of anonymity and professional secrecy on the one hand, and the obligation to breach this anonymity and report sexual abuse if the youngster is in danger on the other hand?
- What happens with the information typed during a chat session? How is it dealt with internally? And is it put at the client's disposal?

Organisations with experience in providing chat support on sexual abuse agree in the survey that, where possible, the same ethical and legal choices should be made as with face to face and telephone support. However, we noted major differences in choices between organisations in different European countries and also between organisations in the same country.

Some organisations, for example, maintain that the client's anonymity should never be breached and that the organisation is exempt from its reporting duty because it wants to maximise the benefits of easy access care work. Other organisations explain clients that the authorities/courts will be alerted in the event of imminent danger to the client's physical or mental integrity. Some organisations consider long-term sexual abuse an imminent danger. Other organisations indicate that they do not consider it so. There are also quite a few differences in the way in which the client is included in the process of reporting the abuse, i.e. from reporting via the client only to reporting with the client's knowledge (but not necessarily approval).

There are also major differences in the use of chat support transcripts. In some European chat services, the information from the chat is deleted when the call ends. Chat transcripts are not saved; even the client cannot save or download the chat information. Other organisations consider it to be beneficial that the client can access or download the chat transcript, to enable him/her to reread it later. Chat sessions are often saved for research or supervision purposes though. Moreover, in some cases, information is compiled in a file so that data from previous chat support sessions can be referred to during subsequent support projects. When conversations are saved, it is important to introduce and to observe unequivocal rules on where, by whom, in which way and how long information is stored, as well as who is authorised to consult it.

6.4 Future outlook

Chat support offers great benefits also with respect to support subjects such as sexual abuse. Those involved in care work and in charge of government policy are facing a number of significant challenges concerning the development of online support and chat support services. They mainly relate to policy choices, the development of combined support and enhancement of care worker competencies.

6.4.1 Policies will have to focus on specific choices when developing online support

Often finance and subsidy regulations affecting care organisations are based on face to face support services. Organisations are financed according to the time of contact or number of client files. The distribution of available care is organised geographically, on local or regional levels, or by the category of counselling topics. The development of online support is often achieved on the basis of a project sponsorship, but the government is relied upon for structural recognition and regulation. And this is where (for the time being) the problem lies; resulting in, amongst others, the following issues as far as the government is concerned:

- How can anonymous online support be combined with the demand for named client registration by name?
- How can online contact opportunities involving unidentified locations be financed and organised, when care work is structured by region or target group?
- How will an acceptable payment arrangement be organised for online services that are subject to charges?
- What (government) efforts are needed to develop new networks and chain organisations for online support?
- Which judicial clarifications, specifications or amendments are required regarding existing legislation pertaining to professional secrecy, privacy and/or the duty to report when developing online support?

6.4.2 The future lies in combined support services

As in the case with many new developments, the advance of online and chat support raises the question as to whether this new support tool represents a threat to, or replacement of, existing face to face support services. This survey and other analyses demonstrate that chat support can be an additional benefit as far as care work is concerned. The question is where chat support will be positioned within the overall care package and in the combination of support services offered by individual organisations. Chat support can be an added benefit when taking calls for support, as an essential part of the overall support facility and in aftercare. Organisations will have to position chat support quite clearly as an element of the 'combined support' package they provide. Care organisations face three challenges in this respect, i.e. to make this position clear, workable and communicate it to the target group in a comprehensible format.

6.4.3 Enhancing care workers' online support competencies

In view of the fact that chat support is still in its infancy and is a continually developing method of support, the enhancement of care workers' online support competencies will remain a constant challenge. Experienced counsellors will have to update their online communication skills and new recruits will have to acquire additional competencies – after all, chat support is much more than a friendly chat.

In practical terms this means that chat counsellors will require on-going training to acquire better screen based reading, writing and empathy skills. This method of support is still evolving continuously.

6.5 European chat support organisations coming together

The Ch@dvice project showed that chat support on sexual abuse for children and young people is 'united in diversity'. The screening, exchange and analysis of such an abundance of European know-how produced four results.

First, this research report. The **Ch@dvice Inventory** combines the results of the extensive screening of 161 organisations and in-depth screening of 32 chat support services.

Second, the **Ch@dvice Guide** includes descriptions, questions, recommendations and examples relating to chat support focused on sexual abuse; a useful tool for those wishing to take online support a step further.

Third, the **Ch@dvice Reflector** contains more than 200 questions for the benefit of organisations intent upon developing chat support. It acts as a 'mirror' in their quest for the implementation of chat support within their organisation.

Fourth, the **Ch@dvice Teacher's Handbook** 'Sex and violence in digital media – prevention, support and advice', is targeted at teachers and youth workers. It aims open discussion amongst children and young people on the safe use of the internet and to create support for the victims of sexual abuse, using structured illustrations and exercises as a basis.

Finally, the European **Digital Youth Care** Network (<http://digitalyouthcare.eu>) acts as a hub where online counsellors can exchange experiences and expertise with the aim of improving the online support availability for this target group.

All the above documents can be downloaded from www.onlinehulp-arteveldehogeschool.be and www.digitalyouthcare.eu

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8. Annex

8.1 Annex 1: Inventory of the 161 websites screened in this research

Countries	Website
Austria	rataufdraht.orf.at
Austria	www.arcus-sozial.at/de/mikado-beratung.html
Austria	www.die-moewe.at/
Austria	www.happykids.at/
Austria	www.jugendservice.at/jugendservice/onlineberatung.html
Austria	www.kinderfreunde.at
Austria	www.kinderschutz-wien.at
Austria	www.stopline.at
Austria	www.tamar.at
Austria	www.wien.gv.at/menschen/frauen/servicestellen/chat/
Belgium	http://www.childcry.com/indexnl.html
Belgium	http://www.childfocus.be/nl/nu-praat-ik-er-over/child-advice-home
Belgium	http://www.jac.be/
Belgium	www.childfocus.be
Belgium	www.kjt.org
Belgium	www.victimchat.be
Belgium	www.stopchildporno.be
Bulgaria	http://helpline.bg/
Bulgaria	http://nmd.bg
Bulgaria	http://sacp.government.bg/
Bulgaria	http://www.sapibg.org/index.php?lang=en&page=12
Bulgaria	www.cybercrime.bg
Bulgaria	http://www.116111.bg/
Bulgaria	www.safenet.bg/
Bulgaria	www.web112.net
Cyprus	www.cyberethics.info
Czech Republic	www.dkc.cz
Czech Republic	www.elinka.iporadna.cz/
Czech Republic	www.ewamaproblem.cz
Czech Republic	www.horka-linka.saferinternet.cz
Czech Republic	www.internethotline.cz
Czech Republic	www.linkaduvery.kh.cz/
Czech Republic	www.mnof.cz/linka_duvery/
Czech Republic	www.modralinka.cz
Czech Republic	www.ruzovalinka.cz/helpline.htm
Czech Republic	www.soscentrum.cz
Czech Republic	www.internethelpline.cz
Czech Republic	www.linkabezpeci.cz

Countries	Website
Denmark	www.bornsvilkar.dk
Denmark	www.Cyberhus.dk
Denmark	www.redbarnet.dk
Denmark	www.servicestyrelsen.dk
Denmark	www.albahus.dk
Denmark	www.januscentret.dk
Denmark	www.sexlinien.dk
Estonia	www.abikeskused.ee/
Estonia	www.lapsemure.ee
Estonia	www.lasteabi.ee
Estonia	www.lastekaitseliit.ee/ www.vihjeliin.ee
Estonia	www.naisteliin.ee
Finland	http://www.nuoret.info/
Finland	www.mll.fi
Finland	www.pelastakaalapset-fi
France	http://www.jeunesviolencesecoute.fr/
France	www.allo119.gouv.fr
France	www.netecoute.fr
France	www.pointdecontact.net
Germany	www.beauftragte-missbrauch.de
Germany	www.hilfe-missbrauch.de
Germany	http://www.bke.de/?SID=06D-676-5DC-ABC
Germany	https://www.nummergegenkummer.de
Germany	subsite https://jugend.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html
Germany	www.dbk.de
Germany	www.dgfpi.de
Germany	www.fsm.de
Germany	www.internetbeschwerdestelle.de
Germany	www.jugendschutz.net
Germany	www.kinderschutz-zentren.org
Germany	www.nina-info.de
Germany	www.nummergegenkummer.de
Germany	www.profamilia.de
Germany	www.sprechen-hilft.de
Germany	www.weisser-ring.de
Germany	www.wildwasser.de
Greece	www.hamogelo.gr
Greece	www.safeline.gr
Greece	www.tilefonikigrammi.gr

Countries	Website
Hungary	www.kek-vonal.hu
Hungary	www.nane.hu/
Ireland	www.childline.ie
Ireland	www.hotline.ie
Italy	www.azzurro.it
Italy	www.stop-it.org
Italy	www.telefonoarcobaleno.org/
Latvia	www.bernutaļrunis.lv
Latvia	www.bti.gov.lv/eng
Latvia	www.drossinternets.lv
Lithuania	en.pvc.lt/
Lithuania	http://www.vaikulinija.lt/
Lithuania	www.pastoge.lt/lt/
Lithuania	www.raida.lt/
Lithuania	www.saugus-vaikas.lt/index.php/en/
Lithuania	www.draugiskasinternetas.lt
Luxembourg	www.caritas.lu
Luxembourg	www.12345kjt.lu
Luxembourg	www.lisa-stopline.lu
Malta	www.besmartonline.org.mt
Malta	www.kellimni.com
Netherlands	canyoufixit.sense.info
Netherlands	researchjegrens.nl
Netherlands	stichtingstade.nl/Pretty-Woman-97.html
Netherlands	www.bewareofloverboys.nl/index.php
Netherlands	www.fierfryslan.nl
Netherlands	www.geentaboes.marokko.nl
Netherlands	www.goetfoud.nl
Netherlands	www.hallokezb.nl
Netherlands	www.helpwanted.nl
Netherlands	www.hulpmix.nl
Netherlands	www.ikzitindeshit.nl
Netherlands	www.interapy.nl/behandelingen/sexual-geweld/index.html
Netherlands	www.internethulpverlening.nl/young people
Netherlands	www.kindertelefoon.nl
Netherlands	www.klikvoorhulp.nl
Netherlands	www.lover-boys.nl/
Netherlands	www.maaksekslekkerduidelijk.nl
Netherlands	www.meldpunt-kinderporno.nl

Countries	Website
Netherlands	www.mindyourownlife.nl
Netherlands	www.pratenonline.nl
Netherlands	www.question-zone.nl
Netherlands	www.sexualgeweld.nl
Netherlands	www.shit.nl
Netherlands	www.tegenhaarwil.nl
Netherlands	www.umcutrecht.nl/subsite/Psychotraumacentrum/Wat_biedt_het_centrum/The_rapie-na-eenmalig-sexual-geweld
Poland	www.116111.pl
Poland	www.dyzurnet.pl
Poland	www.helpline.org.pl
Portugal	linhaalerta.internetsegura.pt/
Portugal	www.soscianca.pt
Romania	www.helpline.sigur.info
Romania	www.safernet.ro
Romania	www.telefonulcopilului.ro/acasa
Romania	www.copiidisparuti.ro
Romania	www.sigur.info
Romania	www.safernet.ro
Romania	www.salvaticopiii.ro
Slovakia	www.stopline.sk
Slovakia	www.unicef.sk/Idi
Slovakia	www.pomoc.sk
Slovenia	www.nasvetzanet.si
Slovenia	www.safe.si
Slovenia	www.spletno-oko.si
Slovenia	www.zpms.si
Spain	www.anar.org
Spain	www.protegeles.com
Sweden	jourhavandekompis.se
Sweden	tjejjouren.se
Sweden	umo.se
Sweden	ungaboj.se
Sweden	www.bris.se
Sweden	www.bup.nu
Sweden	www.Killfragor.se
Sweden	www.tjejzonen.se/

Countries	Website
United Kingdom	http://www.ecpat.org.uk/
United Kingdom	http://www.stopitnow.org.uk/
United Kingdom	www.ceop.police.uk
United Kingdom	www.childLine.org.uk
United Kingdom	www.getconnected.org.uk
United Kingdom	www.iwf.org.uk/
United Kingdom	www.myh.org.uk
United Kingdom	www.nspcc.org.uk
United Kingdom	www.runawayhelpline.org.uk

8.2 Annex 2: parameters for screening of websites in phase 1

Type of organisation

- This may be: KJT - reporting point - cooperation association ...
- We base ourselves on what 'the source' says.

Target group

Several options are possible:

- Children
- Young people
- Parents
- Professionals
- Adults (unspecified)
- Target group not clearly defined

We base ourselves on what the site itself says. If it is not clear but an age is indicated, we understand Children (to 12 yrs) and Young people (from 13 yrs)

Website divided into ...

(Both or neither options are possible)

- **In target groups/ages**

We further examine the homepage and the homepages per age group!

- **in sub- or other sites**

If it is a case of reference on a site to another organisation (website is in fact not split), we refer the option to, e.g., <http://www.draugiskasinternetas.lt/en>

Insertion on homepage: sexual abuse ...

Choice of three possibilities (enter **1**): sexual abuse ...

- is main theme
- is mentioned as one of the possible themes
- is not mentioned specifically

INFO ON HOMEPAGE

Here we surveyed which info is visible on the homepage. When the meaning of certain sections was not clear on sites (in other languages) we clicked further on them.

Message on anonymity or privacy/link to more explanation about privacy/confidentiality:

This can stand separately on the homepage or appear in text on the homepage. This category is ticked once there is a reference to a message of anonymity/privacy/confidentiality.

Register/log in

ONLINE FORMS AND MEANS OF HELP

Chat Does the homepage include a reference to a chat service (one-to-one)?

E-mail or possibility of placing a question on the website via a form.

Asking a question via a form on the website (anonymous or not) or reference to the possibility of mailing enter into consideration.

Questions via form that refer to forum input are not included.

If there is a mail address on the homepage but the target group is not encouraged to mail (whereas this does happen for chatting or telephoning for example) this is a **0**. 'Talk to us via email' is **1**.

Forum

We speak of a forum if participants do not type in their reaction at the same time. E.g.

www.childline.org.uk.

English names: conversation board/message board/bulletin board

Group chat

We speak of a group chat if participants type and react to each other at the same time.

Telephone:

The mention of a telephone number is not sufficient, but an encouragement/offer to call is necessary. E.g., you can call us.

FTF (face-to-face)

If explicit mention that you can 'drop in'.

Game(s) option is crossed, also if it stands, e.g., under 'fun'.

Links

Presence of a section with links referring to other websites.

Reference

Can you click direct on the homepage to the websites of other organisations? E.g., Childhelpline on <http://www.draugiskasinternetas.lt/en>.

Testimonials: personal accounts (target group) on one of the themes on the website.

Tag cloud

A tag cloud, or word cloud, is a visual rendition of content tags used on a website, usually a weblog. Tags that are used more frequently, for example, are displayed larger or emphasised in some other manner.

Tips - advice

FAQs

News (or section, or news - or current announcements on homepage)

Self-test - self-help

Social Network

Reference to Facebook. Twitter, etc. Icon or in text, both good for **1**.

Message button form

Mainly on 'message points'. This can be a message button or the reference 'report abuse here'.

SMS. Skype ...

Reference to SMS, Skype or other forms

If Skype but not yet active: **0**

Skype can be with or without image. This is phoning via Internet.

Close button on page

E.g., shut down (the website shuts down and is no longer visible for your environment in the menu bar that was on the bottom of the website).

Besides these sections that are each time marked with 0. 1 or ? , there were also a number of extra fields in which the researcher could obtain information.

INFO RESEARCHER

Notes: Here the researcher gives a concise description of other matters that caught his attention on the sites. This can be positive or negative.

For further screening: Here the researcher ticks whether he finds the website promising for further screening. Examples (of good practices) are noted.

8.3 Annex 3: the selection of 38 websites/organisations for Phase 2

	Countries	Website
1	Belgium	http://www.childfocus.be/nl/nu-praat-ik-er-over/child-advice-home
2	Belgium	http://www.jac.be/
3	Belgium	www.kjt.org
4	Belgium	www.victimchat.be
5	Bulgaria	http://helpline.bg/
6	Denmark	www.Cyberhus.dk
7	Denmark	www.redbarnet.dk
8	Denmark	www.albahus.dk
9	Germany	www.nina-info.de
10	Germany	subsite https://jugend.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html
11	Estonia	www.lasteabi.ee
12	Finland	http://www.nuoret.info/
13	Finland	www.mll.fi
14	France	www.netecoute.fr
15	Hungary	www.kek-vonal.hu
16	Netherlands	canyoufixit.sense.info
17	Netherlands	www.helpwanted.nl
18	Netherlands	www.klikvoorhulp.nl
19	Netherlands	www.shit.nl
20	Netherlands	www.fierfryslan.nl
21	Netherlands	www.hulpmix.nl
22	Netherlands	www.kindertelefoon.nl
23	Netherlands	www.pratenonline.nl
24	Austria	www.kinderschutz-wien.at
25	Poland	www.helpline.org.pl
26	Romania	www.helpline.sigur.info
27	Romania	www.sigur.info
29	Slovakia	www.pomoc.sk
29	Czech Republic	www.elinka.iporadna.cz/
30	Czech Republic	www.linkabezpeci.cz
31	United Kingdom	www.childLine.org.uk
32	United Kingdom	www.getconnected.org.uk
33	United Kingdom	www.myh.org.uk
34	Sweden	www.bris.se
35	Sweden	www.tjejzonen.se/
36	Sweden	jourhavandekompis.se
37	Sweden	tjejjouren.se
38	Sweden	www.Killfragor.se

8.4 Annex 4: parameters for screening of websites in phase 2

For each question we provide a column in which a figure can be entered (0.1. 2 ...) and then also a text field

Item/question	Answer category digital	Text field
Concerning the target group children and young people		
1. Site is split into age group/target group	0=no 1=yes	
2. There are subsites/subpages for:		E.g. children. young people. adults
Concerning attractiveness, user-friendliness of site for target group		
3. The pages seem to be designed for children/young people	0 = no 1 = yes	
4. Elements that contribute to this in my opinion are:		Open text field
5. The type size is ...	1 = sufficiently large 2 = too small 3 = too large	
6. The image / text ratio on the pages is predominant ...	1 = good balance 2 = mainly text 3 = mainly images	
7. On some pages you have to scroll - even horizontally	0 = no 1 = yes	
8. Are there interactive tools?	0 = no 1 = yes	
9. The links/ steps in chat work	0 = some links do not work 1 = yes	
10. Are the steps (to chat) clear?	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + good example of text for guide	Text of reference to good example
11. A method/steps are described in chatting (even when chat is closed)	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + good example of text for Ch@dvice guide	Text of reference to good example
Concerning the subject of sexual abuse		
12. The site has sexual abuse as subject	0 = no 1 = SM is given as one of the themes 2 = SM is the main theme	
13. The site contains extra material / info / tips / FAQs about sexual abuse	0 = no 1 = yes	
14. Sexual abuse is mentioned explicitly/implicitly	0 = no 1 = yes	
15. There is an SM report possibility (button or link) on the homepage	0 = no 1 = yes	
16. There is a 'close' (hide page) button	0 = no 1 = yes	

Item/question	Answer category digital	Text field
Info on the respondents		
17. There is info about sort of respondent	0 = none 1 = professional 2 = volunteer 3 = trained volunteer 4 = peer 5 = no info on 'status'.	Open text field
18. There is info about age and/or gender	0 = no info 1 = on age 2 = on gender 3 = on age and gender	Open text field
19. Extra (profile) info includes		Open text field
20. There are profile photos of the respondents on the site	0 = no 1 = yes	
Info about the organisation		
21. A section with info about the organisation is visible on	0 = no 1 = yes	
22. The info includes info about		Text field: e.g. Sort of organisation. objective. vision. mission. cooperation
23. Other interesting info 'about us'		Open text field
About the position of the chat		
24. The homepage includes explicit mention of the following interactive forms of help/contact opportunity		Summary in text field (FTF. telephone. forum. group chat ...)
25. On the de homepage chat is ranked equal with other contact possibilities	1=equal 2= lesser or inconspicuous 3= greater or more prominently present	
About the chat as (online) form of help		
26. It is mentioned whether chat is free of charge	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = no because paid for	
27. Opening hours of the chat		Include hours and days in text field
28. Total hours open per week	Enter number of hours	
29. Is there mention of the maximum number of chat?	0 = no or yes 1. 2 or 3 ... chats	
30. Maximum duration or target duration of a chat ...	In minutes or x if not stated	
31. There is info about possible chat topics	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + example for guide	
32. Possible chat topics include ...		open text field
33. There is info about the purpose of the chat		open text field
34. There is info about the chat in FAQs	0 = no 1 = yes	

Item/question	Answer category digital	Text field
About chat procedure/progress		
35. Is there a choice of whom the caller wishes to chat with?	0 = no 1 = yes	
36. Is it clear on which button/link the caller must click to start chat?	0 = no 1 = yes	
37. Is there info about waiting times?	0 = no 1 = yes	
38. Are there suggestions about bridging the waiting time?	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + good example van text for Ch@dvice guide	
39. Other explanatory info	(open text field)	
40. The first screen you see when you click on the chat option is		Screenshots
41. The first screen you see when you click on the chat option contains:		Info about (open text field)
42. Is it clear for whom the chat is intended?	0 = no, not specifically defined 1 = yes, info about age, target group young people or children	
43. Is there info about rules and arrangements?	0 = no 1 = yes	
44. Is info given about how to remove traces of a chat?	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + example guide	
45. Is there info about anonymity/ privacy?	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + example guide	
46. Is there info about situations in which anonymity ceases to apply?	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + good example van text for Ch@dvice guide	
47. Is there info about the recording and storage of chats?	0 = no 1 = yes 2 = yes + example guide	
48. Is recording necessary?	0 = no 1 = yes	
49. Which info is requested in recording?	Text field	
50. Which message do you receive when chat is closed?		

Item/question	Answer category digital	Text field
51. Are alternatives suggested when chat is closed	0 = none (return is none) 1 = reference to other chat sites 2 = reference to other possibilities on own site 3 = reference to other help. e.g., police, teachers 4 = opening hours repeated/stated?	
52. What other channels are suggested if chat is closed?		text field
53. Which message do you receive when chat is open?		text field
54. Does the site provide feedback or an evaluation tool/question for chat?	0 = no 1 = yes. text only 2 = and other (visual) tools	
55. Is there mention of what happens to the FB form?	0 = no 1 = yes	
About navigation		
56. Are there clear categories to find information in the website?	0 = no 1 = yes	
57. Are the "labels" used clear?	0 = no 1 = yes	
58. Can you find info fast without having to click too much? (=not too "deep")	0 = no 1 = yes	
Other items concerning research		
59. Site not screened because of ...		text field
60. Online reporting available		text field
61. Other comments		text field
62. Suggestions		text field

8.5 Annex 5: online survey of 38 organisations on their chat help services

May we also process your experience?

This questionnaire is intended to collect data on your experiences with the use of chat help in communication with your clients. By completing this questionnaire you can help us to better understand your chat help and you also give us the chance to share your expertise and know-how with your European colleagues.

The closing date for this questionnaire is 12 June 2012. The results will be used to document a unique 'Ch@dvice guide' about chat help on sexual abuse. The guide will contain relevant methods, interesting good practices and tips about the use of chat help in first-line welfare work on sexual abuse from 27 European countries.

Obviously we first provide you with the research report and the 'Ch@dvice guide' at the end of this project in March 2013.

Meanwhile, thank you for the time and effort that you will spend on this question.

The research team of the Arteveldehogeschool Gent and Child Focus Belgium
Philippe Bocklandt. Sara Botte. Martine De Zitter. Verónica Donoso. Ann Ryckaert and Tim Vanhove

Background information

1. Name of your organisation *

2. E-mail address of the contact person *

3. Website address for your chat help application *

About your chat help application

4. How many days and hours per week is your chat help accessible? *

5. How many chat help conversations were held in your organisation in 2011? * If your chat help did not start until 2012: how many chat help conversations were held in your organisation between January and late May 2012?

6. How many chat help conversations - on average - do you normally have with the same client? *

- ☐ 1 chat help conversation per client
- ☐ 2 to 4 chat help conversations with the same client
- ☐ 5 or more conversations with the same client
- ☐ it differs from client to client (there is no trend)
- ☐ don't know

7. How many chat help conversations in 2011 had the theme (online or offline) 'sexual abuse of children and/or young people'? * If your chat help did not start until 2012: how many chat help conversations between early January and late May 2012 had the theme 'sexual abuse of children and/or young people'?

8. Do you refer your clients on the theme sexual abuse of children and/or young people to another (online or offline) help service?

	never	rarely	occasionally	usually	always
To online first-line aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To offline first-line aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To online psychosocial counselling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To offline psychosocial counselling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To online treatment or therapy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To offline treatment or therapy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To the police	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To school social work or centres for student counselling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Explanation of your manner of working with referencing:

About the objectives and themes of your chat help

9. Is 'sexual abuse of children en/of young people' a main theme of your chat help? *

- ☐ yes, it is the main theme
- ☐ it is one of the themes, but not the main theme
- ☐ it is a theme that is seldom discussed
- ☐ don't know

10. What are the primary objectives of your chat help conversations on sexual abuse of children and/or young people? * Several answers are possible.

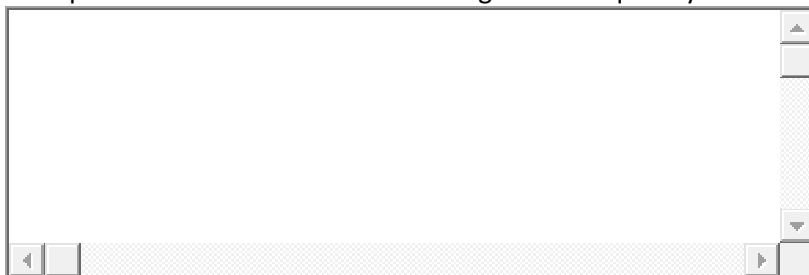
- ☐ giving information
- ☐ giving advice
- ☐ listening to clients who want to tell their story
- ☐ giving support
- ☐ referring the client to other organisations
- ☐ offering psycho-social counselling
- ☐ offering treatment
- ☐ don't know
- ☐ Other:

Concerning the training of the chat social workers in your organisation

11. How many chat social workers are professional staff in your organisation? *

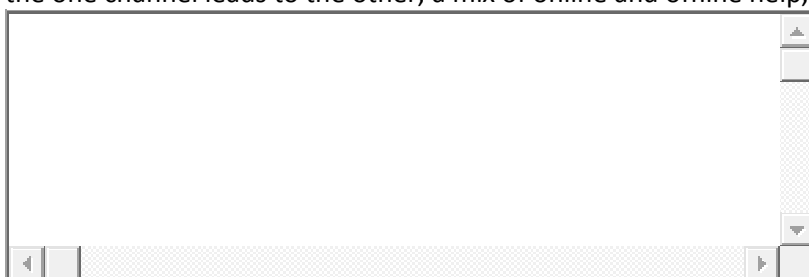
12. How many chat social workers are volunteers in your organisation? *

13. Which (basic and advanced) courses and training do you organise for your chat social workers? Who provides these courses and training? How frequently are these courses and training given? *

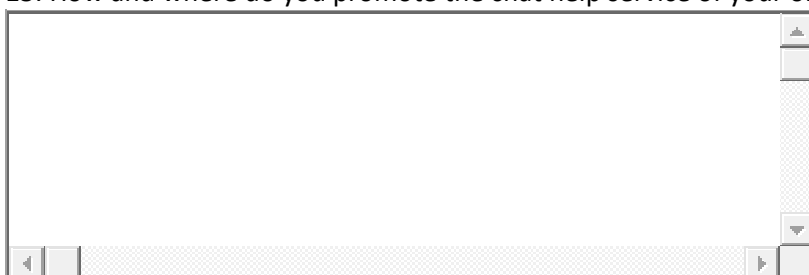
A large rectangular text box with a light gray border and a small grid pattern. It contains no text. There are small navigation icons (back, forward, up, down) in the corners.

About the channels of communication of your organisation

14. Which channels of communication are available for the clients in your organisation (face-to-face, telephone, e-mail, SMS, forum, etc.)? How do they behave in relation to each other (independent, the one channel leads to the other, a mix of online and offline help, etc)? *

A large rectangular text box with a light gray border and a small grid pattern. It contains no text. There are small navigation icons (back, forward, up, down) in the corners.

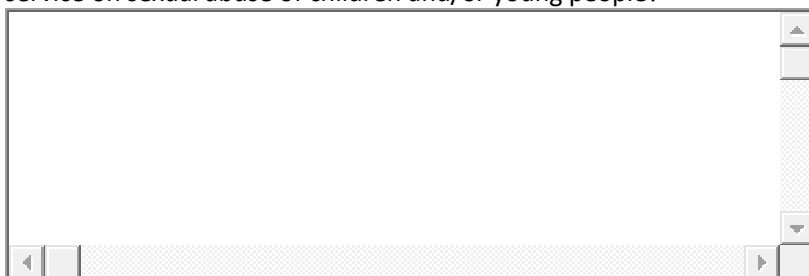
15. How and where do you promote the chat help service of your organisation? *

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Your experiences and advice in connection with chat help on sexual abuse

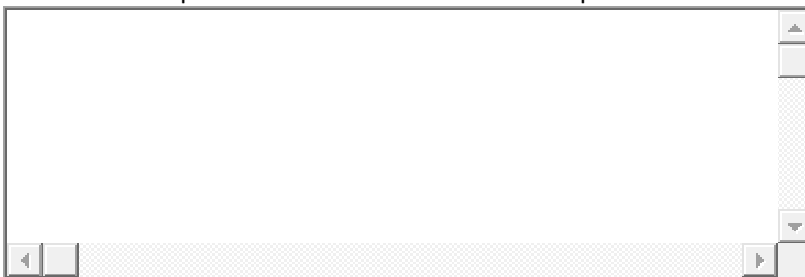
We would like to know your experience that may be useful for other organisations thinking about starting up a chat help service. The questions concern your major considerations in the start-up of your chat help service (on sexual abuse).

16. What advice would you give a first-line welfare organisation thinking of setting up a new chat help service on sexual abuse of children and/or young people? *

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17. What, in your opinion, are the three most important success factors for chat help on sexual abuse of

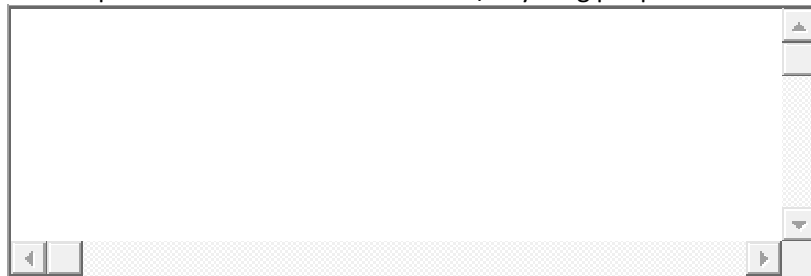
children and/or young people? *

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18. What are the three biggest problems that you and your organisation had to contend with in setting up your chat help service on sexual abuse of children and/or young people? *

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19. Can you - finally - formulate some important deontological, ethical and/or legal questions in the use of chat help on sexual abuse of children and/or young people? *

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Thank you...

As researchers we offer you our sincere thanks for the time that you spent on this questionnaire. You may be certain that we will treat this information with care and confidentiality according to the formulation of practices and recommendations for (even) better chat help on sexual abuse of children and young people in Europe.

PRESS 'SUBMIT' or 'SEND' TO SEND YOUR ANSWERS.

The Ch@dvice research team

Deliverables of the Ch@dvice project

The following publications have been developed in the Ch@dvice-project:

Bocklandt, P., Botte, S., De Zitter, M., Donoso, V., Ryckaert, A. and Vanhove, T., (2012), *Ch@dvice Inventory – exploratory research into primary online support for sexual abuse in Europe*. Ghent: Arteveldehogeschool (Artevelde University College).

Bocklandt, P. (2012), *Ch@dvice Reflector – tool to promote the (further) development of chat support concerning sexual abuse*. Ghent: Arteveldehogeschool (Artevelde University College).

Bocklandt, P., De Zitter, M., Ryckaert, A. & Vanhove, T., (2012), *Ch@dvice Guide – guide to promote the (further) development of chat support for sexual abuse*. Ghent: Arteveldehogeschool (Artevelde University College).

Amann-Hechenberger, B., Buchegger, B., Gerö, S., Schwarz, S. (2012). *Sex and violence in digital media: prevention, help and counseling - Ch@dvice handbook for educators*. Vienna: OIAT. 84 p.

All the above documents can be downloaded from www.onlinehulp-arteveldehogeschool.be and www.digitalyouthcare.eu



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