Picture This:

At-Risk
Children & Youth
Researching health issues can be as basic as finding research papers on the Internet or as complex as delving into public policy and the philosophical positions of interest groups. Most important is the perspective of people who, for one reason or another, make a deep commitment and dedicate their time to a cause.

This document is a publication resulting from a formal meeting of experts in the field of at-risk children and youth, as well as three key entertainment professionals at the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington, D.C. Numerous individuals and organizations provided insight into the complex issues surrounding at-risk children and youth and related concerns as we created *Picture This: At-Risk Children and Youth*.

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**Picture This Team**

- Marie Gallo Dyak, Executive VP, EIC, Program Services and Government Relations
- Larry Deutchman, Executive VP, EIC, Marketing and Entertainment Industry Relations
- David Michael Conner, EIC Writer-Editor and Publications Manager
- Jane Kim, EIC, Program Manager
- Elyse Blye, George Mason University
- Laura Catarineau, George Mason University
- Kenneth Paule, EIC, Executive Assistant to the President and CEO
- Daphne St. Surin, American University
- Jennifer Stratton, George Mason University

*Picture This: At-Risk Youth* was written for the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. by David Michael Conner. Additional reporting by Elyse Blye and Jennifer Stratton. Edited by Brian Dyak, Marie Gallo Dyak, Larry Deutchman, and Jane Kim. Designed by Ann Bauckman, Output Printing & Graphics.
A resource for creators…

Picture This is a guide to the key issues within the realm of at-risk children and youth, as identified by experts, advocates, policy-makers, and others working to improve public awareness about factors that put young people at risk.

www.eiconline.org

www.ojp.usdoj.gov

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Panel Comments: What the Writers and Producers Said

Sarah Goldfinger—Supervising Producer, CSI: Crime Scene Investigation

I think the event is about more than the four hours spent in the room. It’s about consciousness raising and bridge building between non-profits itching to get their word out and media outlets hungry for story ideas. What I heard during the session was great, but more than that, I came back to work with a pocket full of business cards from people willing to answer questions I might have and give of their resources simply because they are passionate about what they do and want those stories heard by the kind of audiences TV brings in.

Goldfinger also gave insight into the television writing process, including the types of communications between network standards and practices offices and production teams. CSI, one of the most consistently high-rated primetime dramas of the decade—scoring over 26 million viewers for some episodes—represents the astounding reach that the entertainment industry has and its potential to inform millions of people in a single hour.

James Kearns—Writer/Co-Producer, John Q

[Picture This] was a provocative and challenging discussion with no easy answers…children today are at risk from so many segments of society. Parental abuse, poverty, alcoholism, drugs, online pedophilia, recidivist sex offenders, just to name a few…selling a film script or idea that deals with this subject to the Hollywood studios is an extremely difficult task. Film is a very real and visual experience. Depicting cruelty to children in any kind of graphic detail is not the kind of story that easily sells tickets. And studios today have never been more cautious, more risk adverse. From a social activist standpoint, I am outraged at the heinous acts inflicted on our youth. As a screenwriter, I would have to think very carefully before endeavoring to recreate such acts for the screen.

Janet Tamaro—Writer and Supervising Producer, Bones

There’s something refreshing and hopeful about meeting [at EIC’s Picture This! Meeting] as people instead of as representatives of Hollywood and Washington. When Brian Dyak made an open plea not to be judgmental to the heads of organizations gathered together all in the spirit of helping abused and neglected children, I felt free to try to explain the challenging creative process we go through when we’re writing an episode of Bones. I was inspired by the level of passion I witnessed and the wealth of stories I heard, and I have no doubt some of those stories will find their way into my work.

Janet Tamaro showed a short clip from Bones that featured a scene in which a child suffers an emotional breakdown after being removed from the custody of a foster parent. In the clip, co-star Emily Deschanel questions and comforts the boy and, as Ms. Tamaro carefully pointed out, the scene makes it clear that Deschanel’s character was at one time a foster child who went through the same turmoil that the child character was going through—all without ever saying this in dialogue or flashback. Ms. Tamaro brought the clip to illustrate how powerful dramatic portrayals can be and how talented writers can help people to understand the nuances of important issues in a nondidactic way that will have a greater potential impact than simply rattling off statistics to which most people will not relate.
More than perhaps any other group of people in the world, the entertainment industry has the opportunity to inform audiences and shape public attitudes. EIC invites you to use your unparalleled creative power to lead the public in challenging misconceptions about at-risk children and youth—to make a difference, just by doing your job and creating compelling entertainment.

CSI: Crime Scene Investigation Supervising Producer Sarah Goldfinger, John Q Writer/Co-producer James Kearns, and Bones Writer and Supervising Producer Janet Tamaro represented television and film at Picture This: At-Risk Children and Youth, an exclusive meeting of many of the nation's leaders in children's personal safety, health care, and social work.

Picture This was held at the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington, D.C. The event was part of a series of Picture This events, each focused on a specific health or social issue.

The goal of this meeting was to identify the key aspects to understanding children and youth who are at risk so that EIC can convey this insight to the entertainment industry's creative community in a manner that is clear, engaging, accurate, and national in scope.

Our Picture This panelists discussed the process of developing, researching, and writing for television and feature films so that the participants could understand the challenges presented by working an “issue” into a script. All agreed that characters and conflict are the sources of drama and encouraged participants to work with EIC when considering how their issues could be delivered to the entertainment industry.

What does “at-risk children and youth” really mean?

All children are vulnerable. Certain circumstances may put young people at an increased risk for becoming victimized. Through real-life stories of abused or exploited young people, this publication hopes to inspire stories that accurately depict the dangers posed to young people who are at risk.

Victims of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse fall into the “at-risk” category. So do young people who have been victimized in any other way, from incest or other sexual abuse to bullying. Children of alcoholics or drug-abusing parents; incarcerated or absentee parents; and runaways and minorities, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth, are more likely to seek approval from others and may become involved in gang-related activities, may abuse drugs or alcohol, or may even willingly prostitute themselves as a reaction to not finding acceptance in their families or in mainstream culture. Likewise, young people with disabilities or with mental or physical illnesses may not feel accepted or may not have a full understanding of what relationships are appropriate between adults and children. And in many cases, young people who succumb to risk factors either are unable to get out of their situations because of feelings of shame or guilt imposed by their families, or fear of “betraying” their homes by exposing abuses by family members or close friends.

So when we speak of “at-risk children and youth,” we are referring to a broad range of young people, from potential victims to those who have been victimized or to those who may continue to be victims. And while certain populations may be at increased risk, it is important to realize that many risk factors and symptoms can be either hidden or visible. In the examples that follow, we ask that you pay attention to those situations in which there may have been outward signs, as well as to those situations in which parents, friends, or others saw no warning signs of abuse or inappropriate behavior. Both of these situations can be considered for dramatic purposes, for crafting compelling storylines that inform while entertaining.

Sincerely,

Brian Dyak, President and CEO
Entertainment Industries Council, Inc.
The Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. hosted the Children and Youth at Risk Creative Briefing at the Fox Studio Lot. With over 50 attendees from the entertainment community and six panelists, the event allowed the opportunity to share stories, facts, and questions regarding at-risk children and youth, including issues such as child abuse, internet predation, human trafficking of young children, and the progress that is being made with the hope of breaking the abusive cycle in the future.

Among the entertainment industry professionals who attended were writers, researchers, producers or others from the following shows: 24, American Dad, Bones, Cold Case, Criminal Minds, Drive, ER, Family Guy, Heroes, House, Law & Order, Prison Break, Shark, The Simpsons, The Unit, The Young & The Restless, and World Of Wonder. Also represented were the following companies: 20th Century Fox TV, ABC, ABC Daytime, ABC Family, ABC Television, CBS Entertainment, Disney ABC Cable, FOX Broadcasting Company, Fox Cable Networks, Full Fathom 5 Productions, Interactive Entertainment, MTV, NBC, NBC Universal Television, Once Upon a Time Films, USA Network, Worship Productions, and Zipper TV.

EIC Board Directors Michele Lee, with Michele Lee Productions, and David Goldsmith, with the Goldsmith Company, also attended. The panel of experts included Norma Hotaling with the Sage Project, Laura Rogers Esq., Director, SMART Office, Office of Justice Programs, and Mary Leasure with the Los Angeles Youth Network (LAYN).

Bones Producer Hart Hanson observed that producing an accurate message through film and television is a promising way to reach the majority of Americans and to educate them on the symptoms and dangers of child abuse and exploitation.

Three courageous young men (whose names cannot be released because they are minors) also served on the panel. Each spoke frankly about his own personal experiences, which included molestation, incestuous sexual abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, and homelessness. One young man said he wanted a life like “people [he] saw on television…where he would be able to act like a normal kid.”
Risks: Hidden and Visible

With so many potential risk factors facing young people today, it is important to understand the difference between visible risks and hidden ones.

Visible risks are the most obvious indicators that something is going wrong in a young person's life. Recurring or frequent bruises or scars, constant use of inappropriate language, or uncontrollable behavior are examples of visible risks. These are the things that often cue adults that something needs attention.

Because hidden risks are less frequently observed and usually involve secrets kept by young people, these risks can take longer to become apparent and, therefore, have more time to do lasting damage to a young person. Internet predation has over the past few years become increasingly recognized as a hidden threat to young people. For a much longer time, sexual activity (which very few, if any, young people are likely to discuss with their elders) and substance abuse, as well as depression, suicidality and other mental health concerns have presented significant threats to children, adolescents, and teens.

In many cases, hidden risks are recognized within the young person's home, but are hidden to the outside world. Parents may be perpetrators of abuse, or they may not disclose abuse of their children if they associate shame or embarrassment with the abuse.

It may seem obvious that young people's personal lives may involve secrets that could cause them harm due to their lack of life experience and underdeveloped judgment. And yet it may be valuable to consciously consider both

### Adverse Childhood Experiences Are Common

#### Household dysfunction:

- Substance abuse: 27%
- Parental sep/divorce: 23%
- Mental illness: 17%
- Battered mother: 13%
- Criminal behavior: 6%

#### Abuse:

- Psychological: 11%
- Physical: 28%
- Sexual: 21%

#### Neglect:

- Emotional: 15%
- Physical: 10%

Source: Division of Adult and Community Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
hidden and visible risks when developing storylines and characters in order to create a more complex, realistic, and suspenseful atmosphere.

As illustrated by the above pyramid, adverse childhood experiences (risk factors for young people) do not simply go away, even if the immediate threat is removed from the child’s life. Adverse experiences in childhood can cause physical and psychological trauma that bring about many other, and greater, problems throughout the life of the adult who lived through the adverse experiences. A major study performed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed that adverse childhood experiences can be significant contributors to the early death of a person.

In 1945, psychologist Abraham Maslow developed a pyramid-shaped hierarchy of human needs that has since been widely debated. But while scientists continue to debate the application of Maslow’s theories to medicine, a quick look at his pyramid shows that basic human needs—breathing, food and water, sleep, sex, and safety—are the foundation for everything else in life. This foundation often is the common ground among young people who put themselves in harm’s way. People who have fewer financial, social, or emotional resources often lose self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect for others, and the respect of others. In other words, paying attention to what basic needs have not been met can be the best way to get to the bottom of emotional and behavioral problems—and the best way to take away the risk-seeking behaviors of young people.
Internet Sex Crimes Against Minors

Teen Girl Lured on Internet: Suspect Drugged, Bound Teen, Police Say

A 16-year-old girl from Winnipeg, Manitoba was allegedly lured from her home by a man she met on the Internet. The man drugged her, drove her outside city limits, and then videotaped himself sexually assaulting her. Experts say she will probably suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder for the rest of her life.

Internet Sex Crimes Against Minors: The Response of Law Enforcement

A study conducted by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Crimes Against Children Research Center, and the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Program, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention divides Internet sex crimes against minors among three categories: Internet Crimes Against Identified Victims, Internet Solicitations to Undercover Law Enforcement, and Internet Child Pornography.

Internet Crimes Against Identified Victims
- Is the only category in which victims are identified and contacted in the course of the investigation.
- Are more diverse than the public might imagine based on media accounts.
- Include Internet-initiated crimes in which an offender uses the Internet to begin a relationship with a victim.
- Also include sex crimes committed by a victim's family members or by prior acquaintances who used the Internet as a means by which to commit the crime.

Crimes include:
- Sexual abuse and molestation.
- Production of child pornography.
- Illegal use of the Internet to solicit and transmit adult and child pornography to minors.
- Child prostitution.

According to the study, “it is important not to promote an overly narrow or stereotyped image of Internet sex crimes against minors. Law enforcement and the public need to be attuned to the possibility of Internet connections in a wide variety of sex-crime and sexual-exploitation incidents.”

Internet Solicitations to Undercover Law Enforcement
- 25 percent of arrests were of offenders who solicited undercover law-enforcement agents online for sex—but who could not be linked with identified victims of Internet-related crimes.
- Undercover investigations in which agents impersonate youth are a new facet of law-enforcement activity in the sex-against-minors field, because investigators could not easily deploy decoy targets until the advent of the Internet.
- The study shows that these undercover investigations now comprise a fairly large part of the law-enforcement activity in the sex-against-minors field and one that results in many convictions.

Depiction Suggestion: Consider showing how technologically adept children and youth can work around their parents’ or guardians’ knowledge of computers and the Internet, including an illustration of how curiosity can sometimes lead to dangerous situations for young people, even those under the close supervision of an adult.
**FBI TRUE-TO-LIFE CASE**

**Gary Evans: Sex Tourism Company Owner**

On August 26, 2005, Gary Evans unwittingly e-mailed the FBI through one of the Bureau’s undercover Web sites, suggesting a partnership in a promotion of sex tourism to Honduras and Costa Rica. Sex tourism is the common industry name used by U.S. citizens who travel abroad to have sex with children. An undercover FBI agent established a “business relationship” with Evans, in which the agent acted as the owner of a travel company. Over the next several months, the undercover agent was contacted by Evans via telephone six times. During these calls, the price, type, and ages of underage girls, and the mechanism for facilitating sex tourism in partnership with Evans were finalized. The undercover agent and Evans arranged for “clients” (who were, in fact, undercover agents) to travel to Honduras to engage in sex with two underage girls, ages 16 and 14. The agreed-upon price for the hotel, expenses, and sex was one thousand dollars.

The undercover agents traveled to Honduras and obtained photographic evidence verifying that Evans was indeed capable of providing trips for U.S. citizens to travel to a foreign country with intent to engage in sexual conduct with minors. They met with Evans and his co-conspirators at a Honduran hotel on May 5, 2006. Shortly thereafter, two underage girls were brought to the hotel room. The undercover agents then made an excuse to leave the room without raising suspicion. The FBI and other law enforcement executed an arrest warrant for Gary Evans and a search warrant for his residence in Cocoa Beach, Florida, on May 11, 2006. Evans pleaded guilty on October 23, 2006, to one count of conspiracy to arrange, induce, procure, and facilitate the travel of a person, knowing that such person was traveling in interstate and foreign commerce for the purpose of engaging in illicit sexual conduct, in violation of Title 18, U.S.C. 2423 (e), as well as forfeiture of assets to include all of the computer equipment seized during the search and to include property in Florida.

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**Internet Child Pornography**

- Possession of child pornography was an element in two-thirds (67 percent) of all Internet sex crimes against minors.
- 83 percent of those who possessed child pornography possessed images of children between the ages of 6 and 12, and 80 percent possessed images that depicted the sexual penetration of minors.

**Internet Sex Crimes Against Minors: Convictions**

**Olympian Gymnast Marian Penev**

Marian Asenov Penev is a former member of the Bulgarian National Gymnastic Team, a 1998 Bulgarian Olympian, and co-owner of Penev Gymnastics in East Rochester, New York. Penev operates this state-of-the-art facility with his wife, Youlia Penev, also a former Bulgarian National Gymnastics Team member. Penev Gymnastics trains approximately 70 gymnasts for team competition and another 500 to 600 are involved in recreational programs. The facility is regionally known for gymnastic excellence, has trained several regional champions, and has sponsored several championship teams.

On January 19, 2006, Penev was arrested by the FBI in Rochester, New York, after an investigation indicated he had used his computer to entice a minor to have sex with him. The investigation was initiated when the East Rochester Police Department and Monroe County Sheriff’s Department received complaints from the parents of a 13-year-old gymnast alleging that Penev had participated in several explicit instant messaging sessions with their daughter. Information from subsequent interviews with the victim and retrieved from electronic messages...
indicated that Penev, in his capacity as the victim’s gymnastic coach, progressed from improper touching to oral and vaginal sex. The victim had been a Penev gymnastic student for eight years.

Penev was charged locally with two counts of second-degree rape, three counts of second-degree criminal sexual act, and one count of second-degree sexual abuse. Due to the large, elite clientele of Penev Gymnastics, there has been significant regional press coverage and a public outcry over the allegations. Another Penev employee was charged locally with third-degree sexual abuse stemming from a separate incident involving improper touching of a minor at the gym.

Penev was indicted on January 26 and 27, 2006, after pleading guilty on December 4 to one count of Title 18 U.S.C. Section 2422 (b), enticing a minor to engage in sexual activity via computer.

Depiction Suggestion: Consider using a real-life case of Internet child pornography as the basis for a storyline or episode that might inform parents about the ways in which young people can be lured into the hands of exploitative adults.

Runaway Youth

The following statistical information is from RunawayTeens.org and is derived from the National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Throwaway Children, published by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.7

Overall Runaway Statistics

- One in seven kids between the ages of 10 and 18 will run away at some point.
- 1 million to 3 million runaway and homeless kids live on the streets in the United States.
- In 1999, an estimated 1,682,900 youth had a runaway/throwaway episode.
- Youths age 15-17 made up two-thirds of the youth with runaway/throwaway episodes during the study year.
- Of the total runaway/throwaway youth, an estimated 1,190,900 (71 percent) could have been endangered during their runaway/throwaway episode by virtue of factors such as substance dependency, use of hard drugs, sexual or physical abuse, presence in a place where criminal activity was occurring, or because of their extremely young age (13 years old or younger).
- Most runaway/throwaway youth (68 percent) were older teens, ages 15-17. At these ages, youth are often more independent, tend to resist parental authority, are more likely to become involved in activities that bring them into conflict with their caretakers, and are often viewed by their caretakers as being capable of living on their own. All these things may increase the likelihood of runaway/throwaway episodes.
- A somewhat larger number occurred during summer, a time when young people are more mobile and less constrained by weather and school activities.
- Approximately 23 percent traveled a distance of 50 miles or more from home, and 9 percent left the state in the course of an episode.
- Most youth were gone less than 1 week (77 percent), and only 7 percent were away more than 1 month.
More About Missing or Runaway/Thrownaway Teens

Runaways have sometimes been referred to as the voluntary missing, to distinguish them from abducted and lost children. However, this term misstates the nature and complexity of the problem. It is generally recognized that children who leave home prematurely often do so as a result of intense family conflict or even physical, sexual, or psychological abuse. Children may leave to protect themselves or because they are no longer wanted in the home. The term “voluntary” does not properly apply to such situations.

An estimated 38,600 runaways/thrownaways were at risk of sexual endangerment or exploitation by one or more of the following characteristics or behaviors during the episode: the youth was sexually assaulted, there was an attempted sexual assault of the youth, the youth was in the company of someone known to be sexually abusive, or the youth engaged in sexual activity in exchange for money, drugs, food, or shelter during the episode.

Endangered Runaway Teens and the Circumstances

• 21 percent had been physically or sexually abused at home in the year prior to the episode or were afraid of abuse upon return.
• 19 percent were substance dependent.
• 18 percent were 13 years old or younger.
• 18 percent were in the company of someone known to be abusing drugs.
• 17 percent used hard drugs.
• 12 percent spent time in a place where criminal activity was known to occur.
• 11 percent engaged in criminal activity during the course of the episode.

Depiction Suggestion: When depicting runaway youth characters, make an effort to show as many dimensions of the story as possible, including more than one factor that likely drove the young person to choose a life of homelessness to staying with family or friends.

Impaired Driving

Nanette

17-Year-Old Charged as Adult in Drunken Driving Deaths

17-year-old Nanette LaFleur was indicted on two counts of vehicular homicide and two counts of vehicular assault while driving intoxicated and reckless. Samara Stricklen, 17, was killed in the crash. Seth Mutschler, 20, who was driving the car Nanette hit, broke both legs, several ribs, and suffered a crushed ankle and internal injuries. Nanette’s 16-year-old friend Alison Bowen claimed she had been driving, but police found evidence that Nanette had been the driver and Bowen was charged as an adult for driving under the influence and as a juvenile with the charge of attempting to influence a public servant.

Impaired Driving Among Young People—Statistics from SADD

• Motor vehicle crashes remain the number one cause of death among youth ages 15-20. There were 7,460 youth motor vehicle deaths in 2005. (This includes both drivers and passengers.)
• Twenty-eight percent of 15- to 20-year-old drivers who were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2005 had been drinking.
• For young drivers (15-20 years old), alcohol involvement is higher among males than among females. In 2005, 24 percent of the young male drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking at the time of the crash, compared with 12 percent of the young female drivers involved in fatal crashes.
• Drivers are less likely to use seat belts when they have been drinking. In 2005, 64 percent of the young drivers of passenger vehicles involved in fatal crashes who had been drinking were unrestrained. Of the young drivers who had been drinking and were killed in crashes, 74 percent were unrestrained.
• It is estimated that 24,560 lives have been saved by minimum-drinking-age laws since 1975.
• In 2005, an estimated 906 lives were saved by minimum-drinking-age laws.
• During the 30 days prior to the survey, 28.5 percent of high school students nationwide had ridden one or more times in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.
• In 2005, 39 percent of fatal crashes (all age groups) involved alcohol. The rate of alcohol involvement in fatal crashes is more than three times higher at night than during the day (59 percent vs. 18 percent).
• In 2005, 30 percent of all fatal crashes (all age groups) during the week were alcohol-related, compared to 52 percent on weekends.

Depiction Suggestion: When depicting youth-impaired driving onscreen, think not only about the dangers to the young person and the young person’s friends, but also to the danger that the impaired driver poses to innocent drivers on the road. For example, a drunken teenager and her friends may survive a crash intact, but they have to live with the fact that their mistake killed an innocent mother with children their age or younger.

**Cyberbullying**

Sam

*Boy’s Bullying Problems Follow Him Home*

Sam’s parents knew something was wrong. He didn’t seem to have any friends at school, and when he came home, he usually just wanted to have a snack and then to go to bed. After a while, Sam didn’t want to do anything at all and got in trouble at school for not doing any of his homework. Feeling something was terribly wrong with her son, Sam’s mother signed on to his computer to see if there were any hints to his increasingly depressed behavior or, worse, any indications that he was researching anything that might be harmful to himself or others. What she found was unexpected: Within seconds of signing on, Sam received an obscene and vicious instant message. Within minutes, half a dozen instant messages (IMs) were persistently harassing him, calling him names. Her heart racing, Sam’s mother wanted to write back to the people on the other end but realized they were children. She signed off and waited for Sam to get home. When he did, she confronted him and unleashed a tempest of tears. First Sam accused her of violating his privacy and then he confessed that he was being harassed at school and on his computer at home. He said he felt terrorized in his own house and had been thinking about killing himself because he saw no other way out. He (and his mother) had no way to definitively identify who had been harassing him online because of the anonymity that instant messaging programs provide. Sam’s mother changed his online account name and eventually had to move to escape the harassment.

According to a study conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, about one-third (32 percent) of all teenagers say they have been harassed or bullied online. For the full study, go to http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/216/report_display.asp.

According to CDC, 30 percent of sixth to tenth graders in the United States were involved in bullying.
About one-third (32 percent) of all teenagers who use the Internet say they have been targets of a range of annoying and potentially menacing online activities, such as receiving threatening messages, having their private e-mails or text messages forwarded without consent, having an embarrassing picture posted without permission, or having rumors about them spread online.¹¹

Depiction Suggestion: Consider showing how young people today seem to have no escape from bullies, even in their own homes, as computers and the Internet have become necessary tools for homework and recreation.

**Sexual Assault**

**Benji**

*Sexual Abuse and Incest Victim Turned Criminal*

As a child, Benji was reclusive and was often made fun of at school. His classmates made fun of him for a lack of hygiene, and his teachers said he was a difficult student, never doing any homework and always talking back in class. In sixth grade, he was moved to a school for children with behavioral disorders and troubled youth. He dropped out in tenth grade. At age 22, Benji was accused of child endangerment and sexual abuse. Benji, unemployed and living in a shack in western Virginia, confessed to sexually molesting and assaulting several children, ranging in age from 4 to 12, and said that “no one cared when it was happening” to him. Benji was found guilty of three counts of child endangerment and was sentenced to twelve years in a federal penitentiary.

**David A. Kaye**¹²

*Rabbi charged with Attempted Sex with 13-Year-Old Boy*

Kaye, 56, was one of the first “victims” of NBC’s *Dateline: To Catch a Predator* Internet predation series. Producers, working with the nonprofit organization Perverted Justice, caught Kaye on videotape chatting and arranging an attempted meeting for sex with someone who he thought was a 13-year-old boy in Herndon, Virginia. Assistant U.S. Attorney Ed Power said Kaye’s was “a crime of violence in which he essentially tried to rape a 13-year-old boy.” On *Dateline*, before Kaye knew he was being videotaped for television, he told correspondent Chris Hansen that he was there as a rabbi, to help a child in need, but the chat transcript revealed otherwise. U.S. District Judge James C. Cacheris sentenced Kaye to 78 months in prison, plus ten years of supervised release.

**Lucilia**¹³

*13-Year-Old Prostitute in New York City*

*New York* magazine writer Jessica Lustig profiled 13-year-old prostitute “Lucilia” in an astonishing feature article called, “The 13-Year-Old Prostitute: Working Girl or Sex Slave?” Lucilia is “a beautiful half-Dominican, half-Puerto Rican girl from Flatbush…” and, according to Lustig, “In this city, a U.S. citizen like Lucilia is seen by the law as a prostitute. The federal law technically applies, but local law-enforcement follows state law. And according to state law, she is a victim, yes—of statutory rape, since the legal age of consent in New York is 17. But since the rapist paid money for the privilege, she's also a criminal, subject to arrest, prosecution, and incarceration, no matter how young she is.” But as much money as she makes for her pimp, Romeo, who proudly calls himself “The Game,” she doesn’t keep any of it. He tells her the money is for him to take care of her, as he affectionately calls her a “moneymaking ho.”

Lucilia’s prostitution was a tragic natural progression from her family life. After being wounded in a knife fight between her parents, she went to live with her grandmother at age 5, where she was molested by an uncle. She told her grandmother, who called her a liar and a whore and slashed her face with a TV wire. Lucilia then went back to live with her mother, where she was raped by her half-brother, and then ran away from home.
Because Lucilia takes money for sex, Lustig asks, “Is she a ‘moneymaking ho,’ as her pimp called her, who should be prosecuted as a criminal—or is she just like the girls brought here from China, Colombia, or Belarus, a trafficking victim who should be equally protected under the law?”

For the rest of the story, check out the New York article at http://nymag.com/news/features/30018/.

Depiction Suggestion: Consider showing how adults in authoritative roles can exploit their power over young people in order to take advantage of them.

Sexual Assault Statistics\textsuperscript{14,15}

In 2005, there were 191,670 victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assaults according to the 2005 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Of the average annual 200,780 victims in 2004-2005, about 64,080 were victims of completed rape; 51,500 were victims of attempted rape; and 85,210 were victims of sexual assault.

Because of the methodology of the National Crime Victimization Survey, these figures do not include victims 12 or younger. While there are no reliable annual surveys of sexual assaults on children, the Justice Department has estimated that one in six victims is under age 12.

Young Sexual Assault Victims\textsuperscript{16}

• 15 percent of rape victims are under age 12.
• 29 percent are age 12-17.
• 44 percent are under age 18.

(Source: the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network)

Effects of Rape

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)\textsuperscript{17}, it is helpful to receive counseling and treatment after experiencing a sexual assault to start the healing process and avoid dealing with the trauma in unhealthy ways. According to The World Health Organization’s Report on Violence and Health (WHO, 2002), in the absence of trauma counseling, negative psychological effects have been known to persist for at least a year following a rape.

Rape-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder\textsuperscript{18}

Many rape victims experience what is referred to as rape-related post-traumatic stress disorder (also called Rape Trauma Syndrome). The four major symptoms of this are

1. Re-experiencing the Trauma: Rape victims may experience recurrent nightmares about the rape, flashbacks, or may have an inability to stop remembering the rape.
2. Social Withdrawal: This symptom has been called ‘psychic numbing’ and involves not experiencing feelings of any kind.
3. **Avoidance Behaviors and Actions**: Victims may desire to avoid any feelings or thoughts that might call to mind events about the rape.

4. **Increased Physiological Arousal Characteristics**: This symptom can be marked by an exaggerated startle response, hyper-vigilance, sleep disorders, or difficulty concentrating.

It is important to recognize and treat rape-related post-traumatic stress disorder, but it is also necessary to remember that all individuals, and therefore, all victims of sexual assault, deal with trauma in unique ways. Some, especially children and young adults, move through an abnormal event in what seems to be a very normal way, but this does not mean they are not internally experiencing some of the effects.

Other negative consequences of experiencing a sexual assault include the following increased tendencies:

Victims of sexual assault are...

- Three times more likely to suffer from depression.
- Six times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Thirteen times more likely to abuse alcohol.
- Twenty-six times more likely to abuse drugs.
- Four times more likely to contemplate suicide.

Dealing with such severe struggles on one’s own can often be too difficult to bear. That is why it is good for victims of sexual assault to receive treatment and counseling.

**Depiction Suggestion**: Consider the very likely possibility that someone who was sexually abused as a child or teenager will relive the experiences as the result of PTSD, which can cause phobias, rage, and strained relationships.

**FBI TRUE-TO-LIFE CASE**

**North American Man Boy Love Association (NAMBLA)**

NAMBLA was formed in 1978 “to end the extreme oppression of men and boys in mutually consensual relationships.” The association considers itself a political, civil rights, and educational organization. To date, they have been protected by the freedom of speech liberties afforded by the **First Amendment**. An estimated two- to three-hundred individuals comprise NAMBLA’s membership.

In 2004, an undercover FBI agent attended a NAMBLA convention in New York City and quickly became a trusted member of the organization. He established a rapport with a few members in attendance and was invited to become a member of the NAMBLA Steering Committee. Though the FBI agent politely declined this invitation, he remained in good standing with the organization. He learned through his contacts that members of the group are wary of giving out personal information and many of them use only first names or false names.

After the convention, the undercover agent began a regular dialogue with two NAMBLA members whom he had met. An investigation was initiated targeting three members—the two aforementioned and the one who invited him onto the steering committee—who each expressed an interest in traveling to southern California for the purpose of going on a trip to Mexico to have sex with underage boys.

On February 14, 2004, the three NAMBLA members—David Corey—
Mayer (49), Phillip Todd Calvin (43), and Paul Ernest Zipszer (38)—flew to San Diego from Illinois, Texas, and Florida, respectively, with the intent to go to Ensenada, Mexico, to have sex with minor boys. Title 18 U.S.C. § 2423(b)—Travel with Intent to Have Sex with a Juvenile—makes it illegal for any person to travel in interstate commerce, or conspire to do so, or to travel in foreign commerce, or conspire to do so, for the purpose of engaging in any sexual act (as defined in section 2246) with a person under 18 years of age. Simultaneous search warrants were conducted in seven different cities at the residences of those who traveled.

Calvin, a family dentist from Dallas, Texas, pleaded guilty and was sentenced on May 25, 2006, to 24 months in federal custody, 12 years of supervised release, and to lifetime sex offender registration. Zipszer, a construction worker and fitness trainer from Deltona, Florida, was sentenced to the same. Mayer, a licensed psychologist and part-time flight attendant from Chicago, Illinois, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 37 months in custody, 12 years of supervised release, and to lifetime sex offender registration.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles prosecuted four additional subjects who flew to Los Angeles with the same documented intentions for the same trip. Convicted individuals include the following:

- Samuel Lindblad, a registered sex offender and construction worker from New Mexico.
- Gregory Nusca, an office worker from Florida with a prior sex offense against a child.
- Steve Irwin, a Special Education teacher from Pennsylvania.
- Richard Stutsman, an exercise consultant from South Carolina.

Sentences for these individuals ranged from 3 to 14 years in custody and all must register as sex offenders upon their release.

**Physical Child Abuse by Parents and Guardians**

**Michael and Sharon Gravelle**

*Jailed for Caging and Humiliating 11 Adopted Children*

The couple forced some of their 11 children to sleep in caged beds. They also regularly beat the children, who ranged from 1 to 14 years old, and pushed them face-first into toilets in order to humiliate them. The Gravelles argued during their hearing that they had to lock up some of their special-needs children and other children in order to restrain them and make them behave. In December of 2006, the Gravelles were found guilty of child abuse and faced 4 to 20 years in prison. They were ultimately sentenced to two years each in federal prison, but Michael Gravelle insists he did no wrong. “I’m telling you,” he said after the sentencing, “I do not deserve jail.” Experts expect most of the children to suffer long-term psychological damage. The oldest of the children said outside the courtroom, “I hate them. They should have gotten their hands cuffed today.”

But that’s not the end of the story: Elaine Thompson, 64, a licensed independent social worker, who had been aware of the Gravelle's abuses, including keeping their children in wood-and-wire cages, said she had been initially “uneasy” about the situation but accepted the Gravelle's claims that the restraint was necessary. Thompson was placed on probation for five years, was ordered to perform 500 hours of community service, to pay $2,250 in fines, and to surrender her social work license for five years.

**What is Child Abuse**

To many, child abuse is narrowly defined as having only physical implications. In reality, child abuse includes

- Physical abuse; unlawful corporal punishment or injury.
- General and severe neglect.
- Sexual abuse; sexual assault; exploitation.
- Willful harming or endangering a child; emotional maltreatment.
Recognizing Child Abuse

When depicting child abuse onscreen, keep in mind that in many cases, child abuse is observed not as it occurs, but through behavioral changes and other secondary signs. Following are ways in which child abuse is most commonly observed, from Prevent Child Abuse America.²²

Consider the possibility of abuse when...

The Child
- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance.
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents’ attention.
- Has learning problems that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes.
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen.
- Lacks adult supervision.
- Is overly compliant, an overachiever, or too responsible.
- Comes to school early, stays late, and does not want to go home.

The Parent
- Shows little concern for the child, rarely responding to school’s requests for information, for conferences, or for home visits.
- Denies the existence of—or blames the child for—the child’s problems in school or at home.
- Asks the classroom teacher to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
- Sees the child entirely bad, worthless or burdensome.
- Demands perfection or a level of physical or academic performance that the child cannot achieve.
- Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, or satisfaction of emotional needs.

The Parent and Child
- Rarely touch or look at each other.
- Consider their relationship entirely negative.
- State that they do not like each other.

Signs of Physical Abuse

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when...

The Child
- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes.
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school.
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home from school.
- Shrinks at the approach of adults.
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver.

The Parent
- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child’s injury.
- Describes the child as “evil,” or in some other very negative way.
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child.
- Has a history of abuse with the child.
Signs of Neglect

Consider the possibility of neglect when...

The Child
- Is frequently absent from school.
- Begs or steals food or money from classmates.
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses.
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor.
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather.
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs.
- States there is no one at home to provide care.

The Parent
- Appears to be indifferent to the child.
- Seems apathetic or depressed.
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner.
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when...

The Child
- Has difficulty walking or sitting.
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities.
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior.
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14.
- Runs away.
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver.

The Parent
- Is unduly protective of the child, severely limits the child’s contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex.
- Is secretive and isolated.
- Describes marital difficulties involving family struggles or sexual relations.
Signs of Emotional Maltreatment

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when...

The Child

• Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity or aggression.
• Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example).
• Is delayed in physical or emotional development.
• Has attempted suicide.
• Reports a lack of attachment to the parent.

The Parent

• Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child.
• Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's school problems.
• Overtly rejects the child.

Depiction Suggestion: Consider showing how signs of physical abuse may be extremely subtle, from recurring small bruises to no physical signs, but unexplained outrage or fear on the part of a young person toward authority.

Abductions

Debbie

15-Year-Old Girl Abducted from Her Driveway

According to ABC News, teenager Debbie got a call from her friend Bianca, who was coming by Debbie's house for a visit. Bianca arrived in a Cadillac with two older guys, who after chatting for a few minutes, pushed Debbie into the car and demanded, holding Bianca at gunpoint, that Bianca tie Debbie up. Debbie's mother was still inside the house. After being threatened with shooting, and then drugged, Debbie was taken to an apartment 25 miles from her house where she was brutally gang-raped. After the rape, Debbie was forced to eat a dog biscuit and was crammed into a dog crate, where she was kept for several days. She was forced to have sex with over 50 men, not counting the ones who regularly gang-raped her. Her captors kept her from escaping by threatening to kill her family, pointing out that they know where she lives. More than 40 days later, police found Debbie in a trash-filled apartment, bound and crushed into a drawer under a bed, severely traumatized and injured, but alive.

U.S. Abduction & Kidnapping—Statistics

• The increase in missing children since 1982 is 444 percent.
• Most abductions are done by luring children to a vehicle rather than taking them by force, about half of the children abducted are between 4 and 11 years old, and the others are 12 or older.
• 74 percent were girls.
• According to the Vanished Children's Alliance, every 40 seconds another child is missing or abducted.
• According to the FBI’s statistics of children abducted in America, strangers kidnap about 300 children every year.

• The U.S. Department of Justice statistics of abduction in America estimate that 114,600 non-family abductions are attempted each year, approximately 3,200 to 4,600 of which are successful.

• Justice Department statistics of abduction in America indicate that the risk of abduction by a stranger is relatively low for preschoolers but increases through elementary school and peaks at age 15. Teenage girls are considered most vulnerable.

• Justice Department statistics of abduction in America also report 24 percent of all abduction cases are “stranger-abduction,” compared with 49 percent that are family abduction, and 27 percent that are acquaintance abduction.

• According to an article dated September 8, 2002, in the Miami Herald, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports 3,000 to 5,000 child abduction cases by non-family members each year, most of which are sexually motivated cases. About 200 to 300 cases are serious enough to involve murder or ransom.

• In 2001, 840,279 persons (adults and juveniles) were reported missing to the police. The FBI estimates that 85-90 percent of missing persons were cases of kidnapped children (juveniles). Approximately 725,000 cases, or 2,000 per day, regarding the disappearance of a child were serious enough that a parent called the police.

• In 2000, 119,237 cases of missing adults and juveniles were categorized as "endangered," defined as “missing and in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his or her physical safety is in danger.”

• In 2000, 28,765 cases of missing adults and juveniles were categorized as “involuntary,” defined as “missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary (abduction or kidnapping).”

• In 1999, an estimated 1,682,900 youth had a runaway/throwaway episode. Of these youth, 37 percent were missing from their caretakers and 21 percent were reported to authorities for purposes of locating them.

• Of the total runaway/throwaway youth, an estimated 1,190,900 could have been endangered during their runaway/throwaway episode by virtue of factors such as substance dependency, use of hard drugs, sexual or physical abuse, presence in a place where criminal activity was occurring, or extremely young age (13-years-old or younger).

Depiction Suggestion: When depicting abductions of young people, keep in mind that the majority of abduction cases are not children taken for ransom or blackmail, but rather family members who violate child custody orders against them.

Family Abduction

Defining Family Abduction

For the purposes of NISMArt–2, a study performed by the U.S. Department of Justice, family abduction was defined as the taking or keeping of a child by a family member in violation of a custody order, a decree, or other legitimate custodial rights, where the taking or keeping involved some element of concealment, flight, or intent to deprive a lawful custodian indefinitely of custodial privileges.

Some of the specific definitional elements are as follows:

• Taking: Child was taken by a family member in violation of a custody order or decree or other legitimate custodial right.
• **Keeping**: Child was not returned or given over by a family member in violation of a custody order or decree or other legitimate custodial right.

• **Concealment**: Family member attempted to conceal the taking or whereabouts of the child with the intent to prevent return, contact, or visitation.

• **Flight**: Family member transported or had the intent to transport the child from the state for the purpose of making recovery more difficult.

• **Intent to deprive indefinitely**: Family member indicated intent to prevent contact with the child on an indefinite basis or to affect custodial privileges indefinitely.

• **Child**: Person under 18 years of age. For a child 15 or older, there needed to be evidence that the family member used some kind of force or threat to take or to detain the child, unless the child was mentally disabled.

• **Family member**: A biological, adoptive, or foster family member; someone acting on behalf of such a family member; or the romantic partner of a family member.

### Family Abduction Statistics

- An estimated 203,900 children were victims of a family abduction in 1999. Among these, 117,200 were missing from their caretakers, and, of these, an estimated 56,500 were reported to authorities for assistance in locating the children.²⁷
  - 43 percent of the children who were victims of family abduction were not considered missing by their caretakers because the caretakers knew the child’s whereabouts or were not alarmed by the circumstances.²³
  - 44 percent of family abducted children were younger than age six.²³
  - 53 percent of family abducted children were abducted by their biological father, and 25 percent were abducted by their biological mother.²³
  - 46 percent of family abducted children were gone less than 1 week, and 21 percent were gone 1 month or more.²³
  - Only 6 percent of children abducted by a family member had not yet returned at the time of the survey interview.²³

### Characteristics of Child Abduction Perpetrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perpetrator Characteristic</th>
<th>Estimated Number of Family Abducted Children</th>
<th>Percent (n=203,900)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship to child</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child’s father</td>
<td>108,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child’s mother</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child’s stepfather</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Child’s sister</td>
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<td>1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s uncle</td>
<td>6,000*</td>
<td>3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s aunt</td>
<td>3,000*</td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s grandfather</td>
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<td>7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s grandmother</td>
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<td>7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s mother’s boyfriend</td>
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<td>2*</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</table>

Note: All estimates are rounded to the nearest 100. Percents may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

*Estimate is based on too few sample cases to be reliable.
Human Trafficking

Andhra Pradesh, India

*Impoverished Parents Unwittingly Sell Children to International Kidnappers*

A mother and father who lived in extreme poverty borrowed money from a petty-cash lender. They had no collateral and were convinced by the lender to put their children up as collateral. When the parents couldn’t pay, the children were removed to an orphanage—but it was no ordinary orphanage. While the lender told the parents that the children would be taken into temporary custody only as incentive for the parents to repay the loan, the lender received payments from the orphanage to obtain the children, who were then sold illegally to an international trafficker. The orphanage has been implicated in a major international adoption scandal.

Human Trafficking: Statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice

Due to the hidden nature of trafficking activities, gathering statistics on the magnitude of the problem is a complex and difficult task. The following statistics are the most accurate available, given these complexities, but may represent an underestimation of trafficking on a global and national scale.

- Of the 600,000-800,000 people trafficked across international borders each year, 70 percent are female and 50 percent are children. The majority of these victims are forced into the commercial sex trade.
- Each year, an estimated 14,500 to 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States. The number of U.S. citizens trafficked within the country each year is even higher, with an estimated 200,000 American children at risk for trafficking into the sex industry.
- The largest number of people trafficked into the United States come from East Asia and the Pacific (5,000 to 7,000 victims). The next highest numbers come from Latin America and from Europe and Eurasia, with between 3,500 and 5,500 victims from each.

Depiction Suggestion: When depicting human trafficking onscreen, keep in mind the international nature of many instances of human trafficking—victims often are moved illegally among several countries. For detailed information on human trafficking, go to http://eiconline.org/resources/publications/z_spotlighton/trafficking.pdf.

Children of Alcohol- and Drug-Abusing Parents

Vanessa

*Born Into a Home Meth Lab*

Vanessa is a six-year-girl who grew up in suburban Massachusetts. When Vanessa was an infant, a neighbor noticed a lot of cars coming and going from her parents’ house in Nantucket and reported suspicious activity to the police, though the neighbor noticed the family seemed “perfectly normal and very nice.” Because the neighbor noted that the family had a baby, the police contacted child protective services and brought a social worker along for a house visit. The police knocked on the door and, just as the neighbor had noted, the house was remarkably clean, and the people inside seemed normal enough. However, the homeowners acted agitated, which the police deemed suspicious enough to carry out their search warrant. They noticed Vanessa, just over a year old, lying on the kitchen counter and when the social worker picked her up, everyone was shocked to find a loaded handgun underneath her. Vanessa’s parents were arrested and a search of the meticulous home turned up firearms, stockpiled ingredients used to manufacture methamphetamine, and thorough sales records of the couple’s hundreds of customers throughout the neighborhood. Vanessa was removed to protective custody and was moved among several foster homes before she was adopted at the age of four.
Drug-Endangered Children

Background

Innocent children are sometimes found in homes and other environments (hotels, automobiles, apartments, etc.) where methamphetamine and other illegal substances are produced. Around the country, Drug-Endangered Children (DEC) programs have been developed to coordinate the efforts of law enforcement, medical services, and child welfare workers to ensure that children found in these environments receive appropriate attention and care.

Children who live at or visit drug-production sites or are present during drug production face a variety of health and safety risks, including the following:

- Inhalation, absorption, or ingestion of toxic chemicals, drugs, or contaminated foods that may result in nausea, chest pain, eye and tissue irritation, chemical burns, and death.
- Fires and explosions.
- Abuse and neglect.
- Hazardous lifestyle (presence of booby traps, firearms, code violations, poor ventilation).

Prevalence

According to the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Clandestine Laboratory Seizure System, there were 1,660 children affected by or injured or killed at methamphetamine labs during calendar year 2005. A child affected by labs includes children who were residing at the labs but may not have been present at the time of the lab seizure as well as children who were visiting the site.

Number of Children Affected by Meth Labs, 2002–2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child injured</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Killed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children affected</td>
<td>3,660</td>
<td>3,682</td>
<td>3,088</td>
<td>1,647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total injured/killed/affected</td>
<td>3,673</td>
<td>3,708</td>
<td>3,104</td>
<td>1,660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agencies Involved

A variety of agencies are called for response when drug laboratories are identified, including HAZMAT, law enforcement, and fire officials. When children are found at the laboratories, however, additional agencies and officials should be called in to assist, including emergency medical personnel, social services, and physicians.

Although coordination among child welfare services, law enforcement, medical services, and other agencies may vary across jurisdictions, interagency protocols developed to support drug-endangered children should generally address

- Staff training, including safety and cross training.
- Roles and responsibilities of agencies involved.
- Appropriate reporting, cross-reporting, and information sharing.
- Safety procedures for children, families, and responding personnel.
- Interviewing procedures.
- Evidence collection and preservation procedures.
- Medical care procedures.
Actions of the responding agencies should include taking children into protective custody and arranging for child protective services, immediately testing the children for methamphetamine exposure, conducting medical and mental health assessments, and ensuring short- and long-term care.

Legislation
A large number of states have introduced legislation to respond to and address the problems associated with children being found at locations where methamphetamine is either used or produced. See the National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws resource, State Child Endangerment Bill Status Update (PDF), for information about specific legislative bills on this issue that have been introduced as of August 3, 2006. The following examples of enacted and proposed legislation change the way DEC cases are handled:

**Arizona**
A.R.S. 13-3623 (passed in 2000)—created liability when a person places a child in a location where a methamphetamine lab exists.
A.R.S. 12-1000 (passed in 2003)—makes it unlawful for anyone other than the property owner/manager to enter a property where drugs were being manufactured until it is cleaned by a state-approved site remediation firm. This ensures that children will not be returned to a drug laboratory site.

**Georgia**
HB 1131 (introduced January 2004)—will make it an offense to endanger a child through the unlawful manufacture of methamphetamine, amphetamine, or a mixture containing either substance.

**Louisiana**
Revised Statute 14:93.A (2) (amended in 2004)—identifies as an offense the intentional or criminally negligent exposure by anyone age 17 or older of any child under age 17 to a clandestine laboratory operation in a situation where it is foreseeable that the child may be physically harmed. Lack of knowledge of the child’s age cannot be used as a defense.

**North Dakota**
HB 1351 (passed in 2003)—makes it a felony to expose children or vulnerable adults to a controlled substance, precursor, or drug paraphernalia.

**Washington**
HB 2610 (passed in 2002)—establishes as a felony the endangerment of a child by exposure to methamphetamine or its precursors.
RCW 26.44.200 (passed in 2002)—requires the investigating law enforcement officer to contact the Department of Social and Health Services immediately if a child is found at a meth lab.


Alcohol Abuse in the Home Increases the Risk of Childhood Abuse
Alcohol Abuse in the Home Increases the Risk of Other Risk Factors for Young People

![Bar graph showing the risk of alcohol abuse in the home and the risk of other household exposures during childhood.]

Adverse Childhood Experiences Increase Alcohol Abuse Risks Among Young People

![Bar graph showing the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and alcohol use.]

Depiction Suggestion: Alcohol and substance abuse are frequent contributors to risk factors for young people. Consider reflecting this reality in storylines and characterizations that show young people at risk.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Monica—In Her Own Words

15, Acquired HIV from a Friend

I am 15 years old and my best friend who is a male has AIDS, and we were really close, so one night we experimented and after the fact that we “did it” he told me that he had AIDS. I was so angry at him and scared. I told my mom and she took me to get tested right away. Unfortunately I was HIV positive. I went in my room and cried for days. The only other thing I was worried about was my family and father, that they would be so ashamed of me, but I am glad that now I found this site and am able to vent out all my issues.
Dorothy—In Her Own Words

*Talks About Her 17-Year-Old Son’s Life with Hepatitis C*

It is hard telling people your son is infected with the Hepatitis C virus. They look at you like you’re a leper. The only people I share that information with are the doctors. My son is 17 years old. If he tells girls, they all of a sudden do not want to go out with him. The only people at his school who know are the counselors at his college. We are simply too scared to tell anyone else. We have no support group in our area for him to go to. All the groups are adults; there’s no one in his age group. The few people who know just say, “Don’t worry; it will go away.” The doctor my son sees does not want to do any treatments. My insurance will not let me change doctors. So every day I wonder how much longer do I have him before the disease takes over…It seems people do not care or do not want to be bothered. I try hard to look up positive things to tell my son about Hepatitis C, but I can’t answer his questions as to why the doctor refuses treatment. My wish is for people to understand and be willing to listen to our fears, and maybe offer a shoulder to cry on.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Increase HIV Risk

Depiction Suggestion: Since retroviral medications have been developed that effectively control much of the devastation caused by the HIV virus, many people have become complacent and have stopped worrying about HIV and other STDs. In fact, many teens and children today never knew AIDS as the public health crisis that it was in the 1980s and ‘90s. Consider showing how ignorance of, or disinterest in, HIV, Hepatitis C, and other sexually transmitted diseases can have tragic consequences. Also consider showing an older person’s alarmed reaction at realizing how young people today worry little about HIV and other STDs.
Mental Illness

Sean—In the Words of His Father

An 11-Year-Old Boy Hangs Himself

The cataclysm that ended the world—my world, that is—occurred on May 26, 1999. At least I thought that my world had ended as I applied CPR to the lifeless body of my once vibrant 11-year-old son who had just hanged himself. Sean had been such a kind child who would always stop and visit with strangers in wheelchairs, just because he wanted to make them happy. Fifth grade had been a hard year for him at school, and he had come within one week of surviving that school term.

Unfortunately, this normally gregarious child also had an illness that frequently caused him to enter the deepest depths of despair. During these dark periods he was resolutely committed to taking his own life. This mood change often occurred swiftly and without any discernable stimulus. His outpatient psychiatrist was convinced that it was a chemical problem. Sean had multiple syndromes that caused the equivalent of chemical warfare within his own body. In spite of the outpatient medical treatment he received, our little gift from God decided to return to his Maker. I shall always be grateful for the eleven years in which we were able to borrow this little angel from heaven.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Increase Risk of Youth Depression and Suicide Attempts

More Adverse Childhood Experiences Result in Increased Antidepressant Prescriptions
Suicide Prevention for Children

Individuals considering suicide are struggling with a number of personal problems for which they see no solution. Most people who are suicidal truly do not want to die; they simply want their emotional distress to go away and feel able to resolve their dilemma.

Children who are suicidal often feel

- **HELPLESS**—they feel powerless and unable to change their situation.
- **HOPELESS**—they believe their problems and feelings of despair will never go away.
- **ISOLATED**—they feel alone in their pain and believe no one is able to understand.

Suicide Facts and Myths

Youth suicide is such an emotional issue that it has, not surprisingly, remained a taboo subject, not open for discussion or research until recently. The act of suicide was seen as a sin, a crime, or a family disgrace. Parents would carry the brunt of the blame, shame, and guilt. There are still many myths and misinformation about suicide, as family members, relatives, friends, associates, and society as a whole struggle to find an explanation for a suicidal act.

Using the technique of “psychological autopsy” (reviewing past records and interviewing friends and family members of the deceased), several facts have emerged and myths dispelled. However, more research is required if we are going to have better understanding and prevention of youth suicide.

**Facts**

- The suicide rate for young people has been increasing.
- Suicide is uncommon for children under the age of 10, but its incidence increases after the onset of puberty and peaks at young adulthood.
- There are many more attempted suicides than completed suicides.
- Many youths (between 60 and 80 percent) sought help the month before the suicide.
- There is an increased risk if the youth has a history of attempted suicide.
- Many completed suicides had been well planned by the youths intending to kill themselves.
- Suicide has major impact on family members and peers.
- “Copycat” suicides can occur and may follow dramatic portrayals of suicide on television programs or on media items.

**Myths**

- It can't happen to my teenage child.
- Talking about suicidal intent will lead to suicide.
- A suicide attempt is a manipulative behavior and, therefore, should be ignored or even punished.
- Suicides come out of the blue with little or no warning.
- Teenagers will “learn” from their “mistakes,” and they won't try again.
- Depression and other mental disorders do not occur in young people.

Youth Suicide

Many of the symptoms of suicidal feelings are similar to those of depression. Parents should be aware of the following signs of adolescents who may try to kill themselves:

- Change in eating and sleeping habits.
• Withdrawal from friends, family, and regular activities.
• Violent actions, rebellious behavior, or rerunning away.
• Drug and alcohol use.
• Unusual neglect of personal appearance.
• Marked personality change.
• Persistent boredom, difficulty concentrating, or a decline in the quality of schoolwork.
• Frequent complaints about physical symptoms, often related to emotions, such as stomachaches, headaches, fatigue, and so forth.
• Loss of interest in pleasurable activities.
• Not tolerating praise or reward.

A young person who is planning to commit suicide may also
• Complain of being a bad person or feeling “rotten inside.”
• Give verbal hints with statements such as, “I won’t be a problem for you much longer,” “Nothing matters,” “It’s no use,” and “I won’t see you again.”
• Put his or her affairs in order, for example, give away favorite possessions, clean his or her room, throw away important belongings, and so forth.
• Become suddenly cheerful after a period of depression.
• Have signs of psychosis (hallucinations or bizarre thoughts).

If a young person says, “I want to kill myself,” or “I’m going to commit suicide,” always take the statement seriously and seek evaluation from a psychiatrist or psychologist.

People often feel uncomfortable talking about death. However, asking the youth whether he or she is depressed or thinking about suicide can be helpful. Rather than “putting thoughts in the child’s head,” such a question may provide assurance that somebody cares and may give the young person the chance to talk about problems.

If one or more of the above signs occur, parents need to talk to their child about their concerns and seek professional help should the concerns persist. With support from family and professional treatment, children and teenagers who are suicidal can heal and return to a healthier path of development.

Risk factors for suicide among the young include suicidal thoughts, psychiatric disorders (such as depression, impulsive aggressive behavior, bipolar disorder, and certain anxiety disorders), drug and/or alcohol abuse and previous suicide attempts, with the risk increased if there is also situational stress and access to firearms.

Suicide Contagion

Between 1984 and 1987, journalists in Vienna covered the deaths of individuals who jumped in front of subway trains. The coverage was extensive and dramatic. In 1987, a campaign alerted reporters to the possible negative side effects of such reporting and suggested alternate strategies for coverage. In the first six months after the campaign began, subway suicides and non-fatal attempts dropped by more than 80 percent. The total number of suicides throughout Vienna dropped as well.

Research finds an increase in suicide by readers or viewers when
• The number of stories about individual suicides increases.
• A particular death is reported at length or several times.
• The story of an individual death by suicide is placed on the front page or at the beginning of a news broadcast.
• The headlines about specific suicide deaths are dramatic (i.e., “Boy, 10, Kills Himself Over Poor Grades”).
Recommendations for Entertainment Depictions of Suicide

- Certain ways of showing suicide onscreen may contribute to what behavioral scientists call “suicide contagion” or “copycat” suicides.
- Research suggests that romanticizing suicide or idealizing those who take their own lives (i.e., a noble warrior or ritual suicide) as heroic or romantic may encourage others to identify with the victim.
- Exposure to suicide methods can encourage vulnerable people to imitate what they have seen. Clinicians believe the danger is even greater if there is a detailed description of the method. Research indicates that detailed descriptions or pictures of the location or site of a suicide encourage imitation.
- Presenting suicide as the inexplicable act of an otherwise healthy or high-achieving person may encourage identification with the victim.

Questions to Ask of Your Characters and of Storylines Involving Suicide

- Had the victim ever received treatment for depression or any other mental disorder?
- Did the victim have a problem with substance abuse?
- Does the storyline convey that effective treatments for most conditions leading to suicidal thoughts are available (but underutilized)?
- Does the storyline acknowledge the deceased person’s problems and struggles as well as the positive aspects of his or her life to give a more balanced characterization?
- Does the audience see the realistically devastating effects of suicide on surviving relatives and friends?

A Couple of Concerns

- Dramatizing the impact of suicide through descriptions and pictures of grieving relatives, teachers or classmates, or community expressions of grief may encourage potential victims to see suicide as a way of getting attention or as a form of retaliation against others.
- Using adolescents on reality television or in print media to tell the stories of their suicide attempts may be harmful to the adolescents themselves or may encourage other vulnerable young people to seek attention in this way.

Special Language Concerns

- Whenever possible, it is preferable to avoid referring to suicide as a selling point. Unless the suicide death was a true-life, high-profile event, and the death took place in public, the cause of death should be embedded in the story and not in its tag line.
- It is preferable to describe the deceased as “having died by suicide” rather than as “a suicide,” or having “committed suicide.” The latter two expressions reduce the person to the mode of death, or connote criminal or sinful behavior (i.e., “committing” suicide is equated with “committing” a crime).
- Contrasting “suicide deaths” with “non-fatal attempts” is preferable to using terms such as “successful,” “unsuccessful,” or “failed.” Try not to use the terms “successful suicide,” “unsuccessful suicide,” or “failed suicide attempt.”
**MYTH BUSTERS: At-Risk Youth**

Myth: There is nothing you can do to prevent youth crime.
Fact: There are many programs that have been proven to be effective in reducing the conditions that lead young people toward crime. Research has shown children are less likely to engage in risky behaviors when they are connected to parents, family, school, community, and places of worship. The effectiveness of at-risk youth prevention programs depends as much on the quality of implementing the program as much as the strategies behind the program. Studies show that programs that address the children individually as well as their social environments have the highest success rates.

Myth: Just keeping kids in at night would take care of most crime, certainly most violence.
Fact: Contrary to what most people think, most popular time for the commission of crime by young people is between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Every day in the United States as many as 15 million children leave school with no place to go. Everyday after the school bell rings, many of these at risk youth are involved in crimes, join gangs, or experiment with drugs, alcohol, or sex.

Myth: The epidemic of violent behavior by youth that marked the early 1990s is over, and young people are much safer today.
Fact: Key statistical data, such as numbers of youth arrests, show significant reductions in violence since 1993. However, self-reports by youths reveal that involvement in some violent behaviors remains the same as in 1993.

Myth: Most future offenders can be identified in early childhood.
Fact: Exhibiting uncontrolled behavior or being diagnosed with conduct disorder as a child does not predetermine violence in adolescence. A majority of young people who become violent during their adolescent years were not highly aggressive or “out of control” in early childhood. In fact, most of the children diagnosed with mental and behavioral disorders at an early age do not become violent in adolescence.

Myth: African American and Hispanic youths are more likely to become involved in violence than other racial or ethnic groups.
Fact: According to the Surgeon General’s 2006 Report on Youth Violence, data from confidential interviews with youths indicate that race and ethnicity have a minimal effect on the overall proportion of racial and ethnic groups that engage in nonfatal violent behavior. Reports indicate that differences between minority and majority populations and between young men and young women may not be as large as arrest records indicate. Race/ethnicity, considered in isolation from other life circumstances, sheds little light on a given child’s or adolescent’s propensity for engaging in violence. However, there are racial and ethnic differences in homicide rates. There are also differences in the timing and continuity of violence over the life course, which account in part for the overrepresentation of these groups in U.S. jails and prisons.

Myth: Getting tough with juvenile offenders by trying them in adult criminal courts reduces the likelihood that they will commit more crimes.
Fact: Youths transferred to adult criminal court have significantly higher rates of committing future offenses and a greater likelihood of committing subsequent felonies than youths who remain in the juvenile justice system. They are also more likely to be victimized, physically and sexually, in adult prisons.

Myth: Children are more at risk of being victims of violence in schools than they are at home.
Fact: Schools nationwide are relatively safe. Compared to homes and neighborhoods, schools have fewer homicides and nonfatal injuries. Youths at greatest risk of being killed in school-associated violence are those from a racial or ethnic minority, senior high schools, and urban school districts.

Myth: Very few children die by suicide.
Fact: In 1998, among youths age 10 to 19 in the United States, there were 2,054 suicides, and suicide was the third leading cause of death for that age group. Male youth were more than four times more likely than females to die by suicide.

Myth: Most children are abducted by strangers.
Fact: The majority of child abductions are executed by parents or other adult relatives who violate child custody orders. (See “Abductions,” pp. 21-23.)
Endnotes


2 http://www.pcsndreams.com/Pages/Chat04.htm

3 http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV70.pdf

4 Courtesy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

5 http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV70.pdf

6 Courtesy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.


9 http://www.sadd.org/stats.htm#impaired


11 http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/216/report_display.asp

12 http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/01/AR2006120100898.html


14 http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv05.pdf


19 Courtesy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

20 http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061223/NEWS02/612230398/-1/RSS

21 http://www.safestate.org/index.cfm?navId=6


23 http://abcnews.go.com/Primetime/story?id=1596778

24 http://www.eyesofamerica.net/US_abduction_kidnapping_statistics.htm


28 http://law.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3679&context=expresso

29 http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ncvrw/2005/pg5l.html

30 http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/dr_endangered_child.html


33 http://www.avert.org/ypstory.htm

34 http://www.pkids.org/pdf/phr/03-05hcven.pdf

35 http://www.mysonsoan.org/richistory.htm

36 http://www.mysonsoan.org/prevention.htm

37 http://suicideandmentalhealthassociationinternational.org/issuicont.html
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- Homeland Security
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