A modern danger for adolescents: from online flirtation to sexual abuse

# Details

## Year

2018

## DOI

10.5350/dajpn2018310307

## Issued

2018

## Language

English

## Volume

31

## Issue

3

## Start Page

## End Page

## Authors

Kocturk N.;Yuksel F.

## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Dusunen Adam: The Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences

## Publisher

Kare Publishing

## Topics

Risks and harms

## Sample

The study includes 135 children who, according to forensic examination or statements by
witnesses or the victims themselves, had been exposed to sexual abuse and had met their abusers through the Internet. This study population corresponded to 3.9% of the 3429 files. Of this group, 94.8% were girls (n=128) and the remaining 5.2% boys (n=7). The mean age of the
victims was 15.6±2.12 years (range: 9-18 years).

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Other

## Other Stakeholder Implication

Psychological Counselors

# Abstract

A modern danger for adolescents: from online flirtation to sexual abuse Objective: The Internet is an important communication tool facilitating access to information. Use of social media has been rapidly increasing among young people in Turkey. Thus, adolescents could be regarded to be at risk of online sexual abuse. This study evaluates Internet use as a means of child sexual abuse, looking at the reasons and personal and familial characteristics.
Method: The study was performed with 3429 cases that presented to the Child Follow-up Center with the claim of child sexual abuse between January 2011 and December 2015. The case files were reviewed retrospectively and it was determined that 135 children had met with the abuser via Internet.
Results: The vast majority (94.8%) of these 135 cases were female and the victims’ mean age was 15.61 years. It was found that 71.1% of the victims were exposed to penetration, and it was detected that 40.0% of the victims had physical signs of abuse. In addition, 11.1% of the victims were found to be pregnant. Also, low levels of socioeconomic status (97.8%) and of parents’ education (59.3%) were identified as familial risk factors.
Conclusion: Education about safe use of the Internet, dissemination of interventions against
cyberbullying, and conscious Internet use in populations at risk can be useful in preventing potential negative outcomes.

# Outcome

While 71.1% (n=96) of the victims who met on the Internet were exposed to penetration, 28.9% (n=39) had undergone harassment. In addition, 5.2% of the victims (n=7) were used for sex trade, while 94.8% (n=128) of the victims were not involved in the sex trade.
Twenty-one victims (15.7%) stated that their intimate areas had been recorded by the abuser either as photos or videos, and 6.0% of the victims reported that their footage was streamed online; 34.3% declared that they had been threatened by the abuser, 24.4% had been exposed to violence, and 28.9% had been deceived by the abuser in various ways like receiving a promise of marriage. All abusers (100%) of the victims who had been met on the Internet were male. A history of alcohol and substance use was present in 13.2% (n=17) and 11.7% (n=15) of the abusers, respectively. The mean age of the abusers was 21.6±6.0 (range: 15-48 years).