

Internet Watch Foundation – Annual Report 2022

The Internet Watch Foundation have completed their annual report for 2022. Miss Noble has read through the report and collated the key findings and information for staff, governors and parents to be aware of.

The main finding that stands out is the fact that there was a **13 percentage point increase (from 23% to 36%) in sexual abuse imagery of 7-10 year olds**. This shows why teaching our online safety curriculum and PSHE curriculum is so essential.

Some other key findings were:

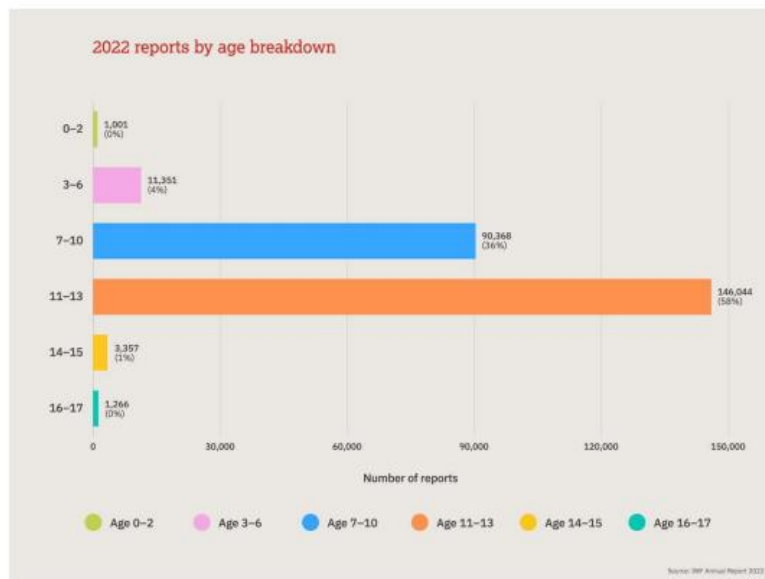
- They found there was a 10 percentage point decrease (68% to 58%) in sexual imagery of 11-13 year olds compared to the year before. However, imagery of 11-13s is still the most prevalent.
- They saw a significant increase in the number of 'self-generated' child sexual abuse images of boys. 'Self-generated' images of boys accounted for 31% (831) of all boys' child sexual abuse images in 2021, while in 2022 this rose to 56% (3,504) – an overall increase of 25%.
- They have been monitoring a steep increase in this imagery featuring 7–10- year-olds. In 2022, 63,057 'self-generated' reports featured a 7–10-yearold, which is a 129% increase on 2021.
 - This is an increase of 1,058% since 2019 when 5,443 reports of 'self-generated' child sexual abuse of this age group were found. This exponential increase coincides with the global COVID-19 pandemic when children were spending m

Report tool to be aware of:

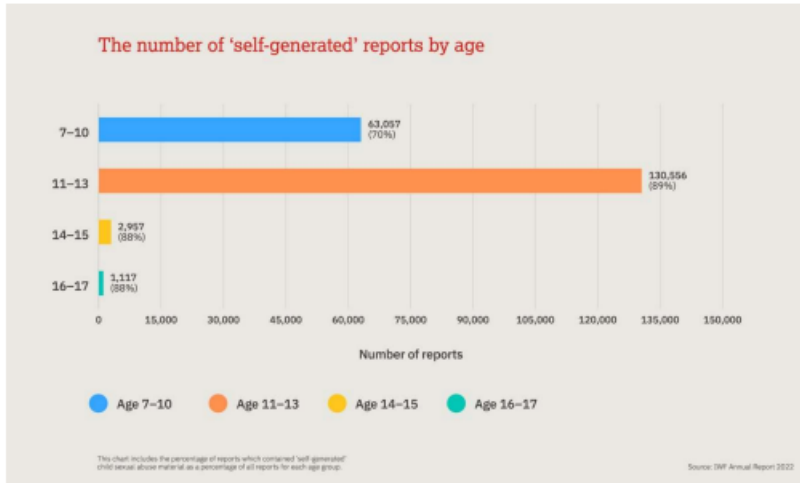
- Report Remove Tool – this is to support young people to remove sexual images or videos of themselves online. Created in June 2021 by IWF and NSPCC.

Key graphs:

charts and

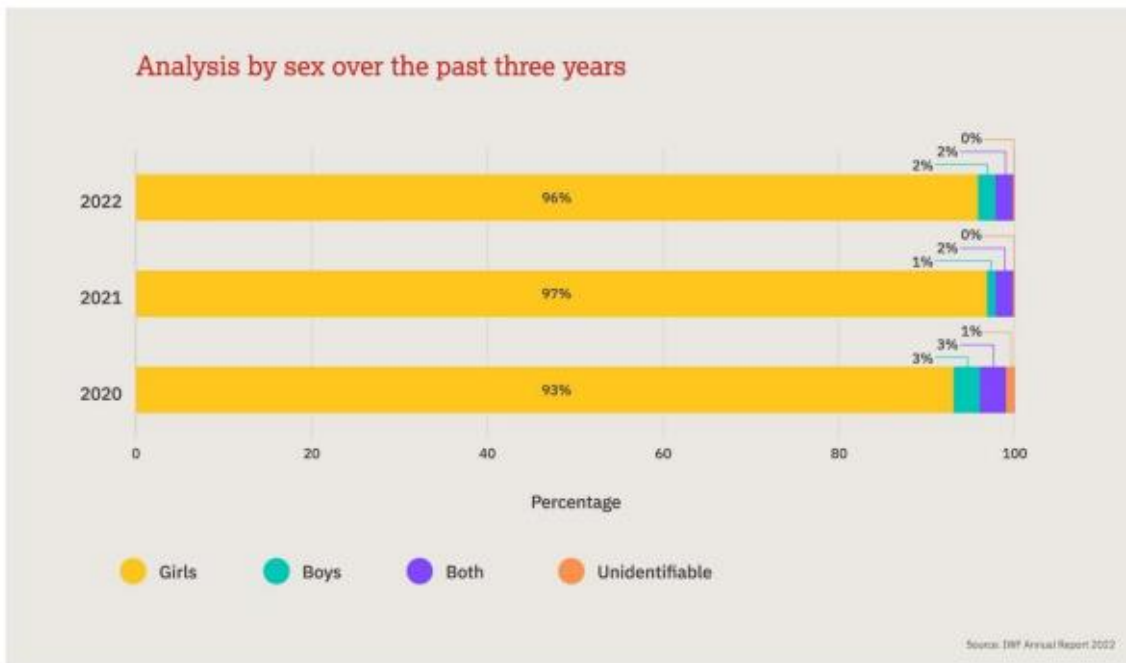


This chart provides a breakdown for all child sexual abuse reports in 2022, by age of the youngest child seen.



This chart shows the total number of reports which included 'self-generated' content split by age of the child depicted.

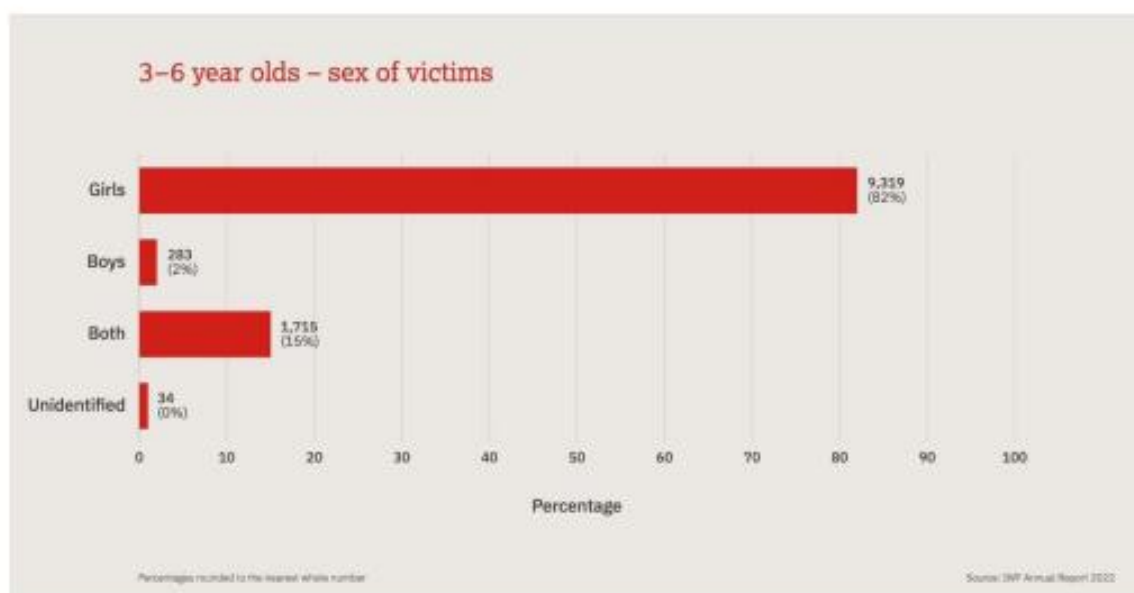
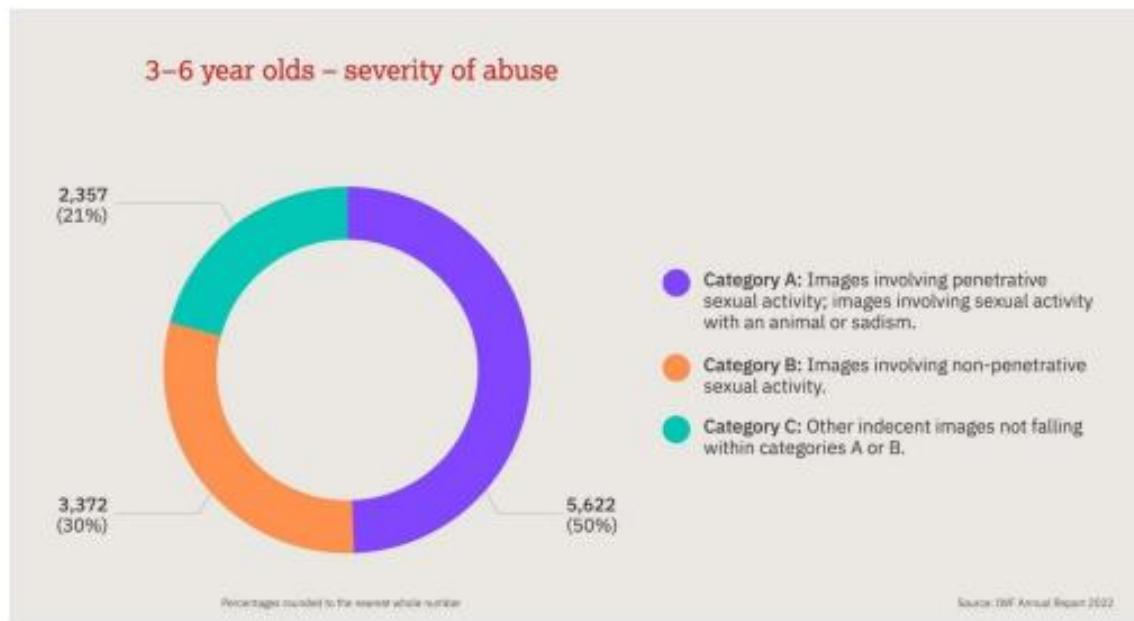
In 2022, as in previous years, most of the child sexual abuse images they saw showed girls only. They did, however, observe an increase in the number of images of boys this year compared to 2021. Images including both girls and boys continued to make up a small proportion of the criminal images they acted on; some of these were commercial in nature, shot in a studio, and others were where children had been groomed and coerced with their siblings or friends in their bedrooms at home. A focused analysis of Report Remove data is available which shows how boys are making the majority of reports to remove sexual imagery of themselves.



3-6 Years old: Young children

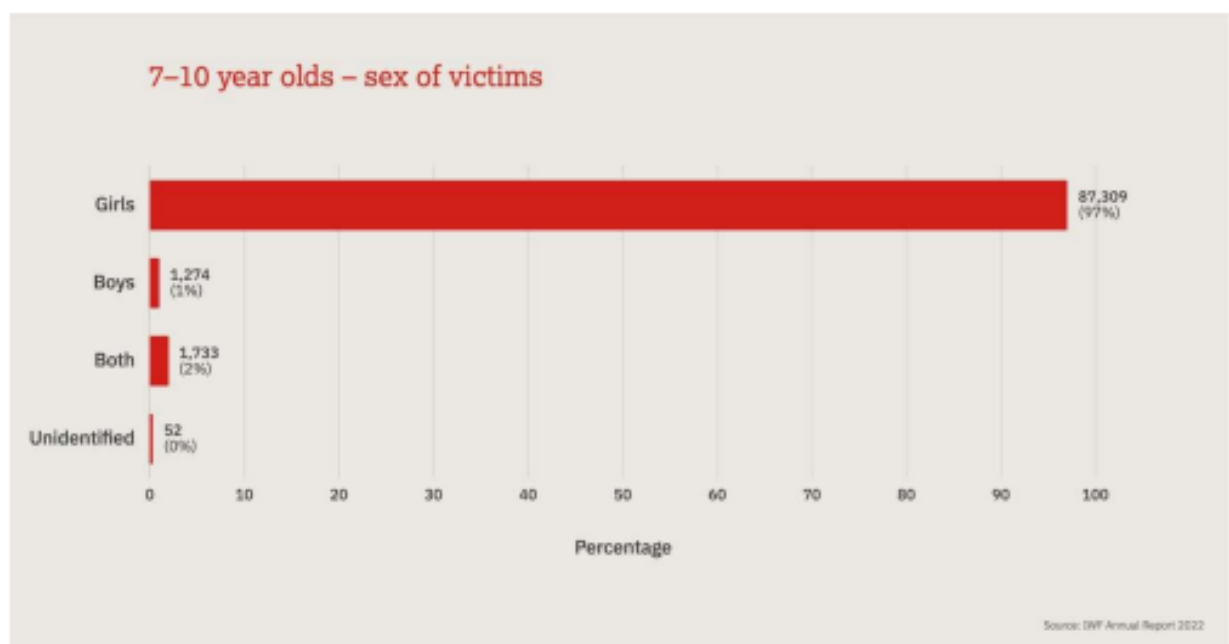
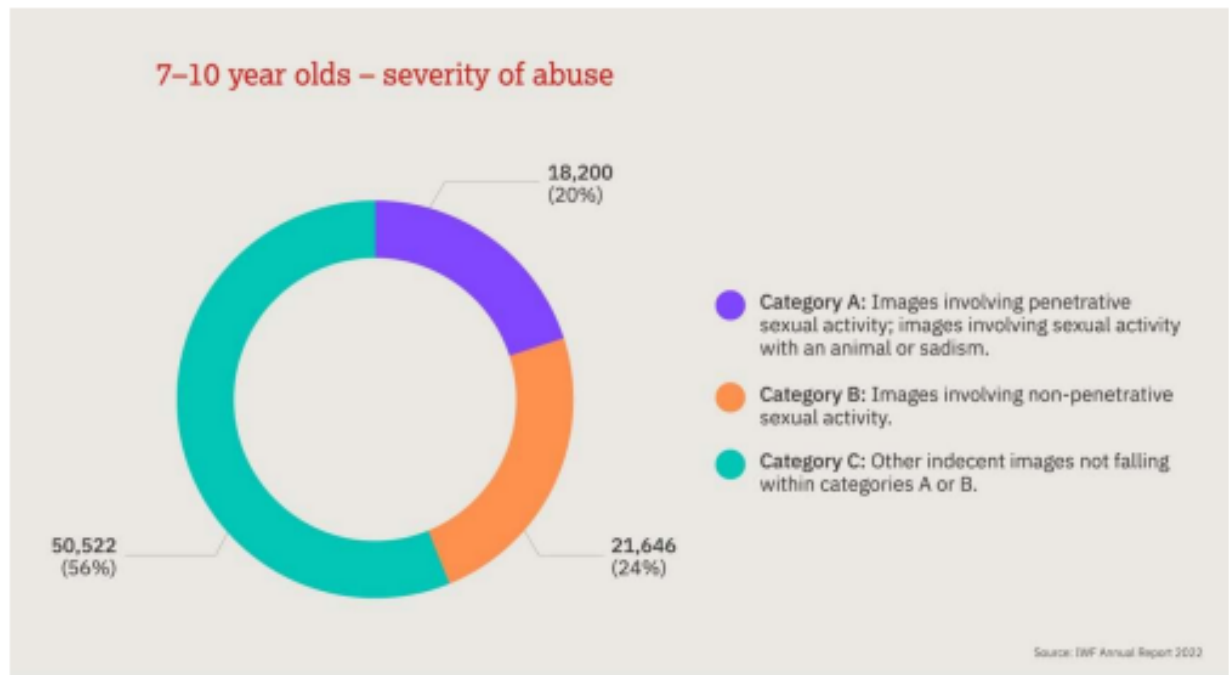
Younger children continue to be abused and exploited by criminals for commercial gain: we saw a high proportion of ICAP websites using videos of 3-6-year-olds to 'advertise' the sale of child sexual abuse images.

ICAP sites represent a new methodology of commercial child sexual abuse websites which we discovered in 2022. You can read more on ICAP sites [here](#).



7-10 Years old: Pre-pubescent children

In 2022, we saw a 60% increase in the number of images including children aged 7-10 years old. As ever-younger children become more tech-aware and active online, they become more vulnerable to grooming and abuse by strangers – even in their own bedrooms.



11-13 Years old: Older children

As in previous years, we saw more sexual abuse images of children aged 11-13 than of any other age group. Older children can be curious about the online world and keen to explore. Unfortunately, adult abusers – sometimes pretending to be children themselves – exploit this by manipulating children into performing sexual acts on camera, via a smartphone, tablet or laptop. In 2022, we saw a 14% decrease in imagery of this age group.

