



There's no such thing as child pornography

November 2019

This week, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) will embark on a campaign to engage with national, regional and local media outlets to address the use of the phrase 'child pornography'.

Survivors of child sexual abuse, who have been groomed, exploited and forced to appear in images and videos, are the victims of horrific crimes. This is not pornography; this is the sexual abuse of children. Through using the phrases 'child pornography' or 'child porn', media outlets are inadvertently trivialising and legitimising the sexual abuse that these children endured. The term pornography refers to a commercialised industry, in which acts are undertaken, filmed, and disseminated with the consent of all adults involved. Children cannot consent to their own abuse.

Despite much work being done to highlight this issue, the use of such inappropriate terms is still in use by both the public and the media - a number of the media outlets are amongst the most read newspapers in the UK. The language they use trickles down into common discourse, shaping how we see the world. Each time a media outlet uses one of these phrases, it reinforces a perception that child sexual abuse can be consensual. It also, in turn, helps to diminish the crime and perpetuate the abuse.

What can be done centrally?

The IWF, alongside Embrace and the Marie Collins Foundation, are calling for:

- An amendment to section 7 of the Editor's Code of Practice to ensure the appropriate language and tone is used by editors across the media.
- The updating of style guides to maintain the highest standards of professional journalism and help protect the victims of the abhorrent crime of child sexual abuse.

What can be done locally?

We can do so much more together.

- Spread the word. Share the campaign content across digital and social channels using the link below:

[#NoSuchThing](#) & Blog: [There's no such thing as child pornography](#)

- Take action. Ensure that this terminology is not used in any of your own communications.

If you would like further information on the campaign, or would like to be involved, then please get in touch with Emma Hardy, Communications Director, by email at emma@iwf.org.uk.