

## Fact Sheet

# Global Threat Assessment 2025

**Launch date:** Thursday 11 December 2025

**Product launch:** Global Threat Assessment 2025 and Prevention Framework

**Launch page url:** [Global Threat Assessment 2025 - WeProtect Global Alliance](#)

### About the Global Threat Assessment

The Global Threat Assessment 2025 is WeProtect Global Alliance's biennial report, bringing together the latest evidence and expert insights on technology-facilitated child sexual abuse and exploitation, providing an updated global picture of its scale and nature since our 2023 report. A key focus of this year's report is prevention, emphasising the urgent need to stop harm before it occurs. The report features our new Prevention Framework, developed in collaboration with an expert steering committee, survivors, and young people, offering practical guidance for all sectors.

The research explores a range of technological developments and threats, including the misuse of generative-AI and encrypted spaces, as well as societal concerns such as the increasing number of children who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour. It also examines the diverse legislative and practical responses emerging worldwide to protect children online.

### Summary of key findings

- The scale and sophistication of technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and abuse are outpacing global safeguards. Understanding societal complexities and technological advances are crucial to an effective response.
- A decisive shift to prevention is required to tackle the technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and abuse crisis.
- The Prevention Framework at the heart of the Global Threat Assessment 2025 provides a roadmap for all sectors to implement proactive, prevention-based responses.
- There has been an explosion in AI-generated child sexual abuse material since 2023.

- Perpetrators are misusing technological shifts including a move to end-to-end encryption to evade detection.
- Societal and behavioural drivers of abuse include an increase in violent and extremist content and a rise in children who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours.
- Financial sexual extortion persists as a major threat to children's safety, disproportionately affecting boys.
- Emerging technologies such as decentralised networks and quantum computing will continue to impact children's experiences of the digital world. Ensuring safety-by-design is at the core of their development is essential.

### Key data points

- There was a 1,325% rise in reports linked to AI-generated child sexual abuse material to NCMEC between 2023 and 2024. (1)
- NCMEC received approximately 100 reports of financial sexual extortion every day in 2024, disproportionately affecting boys (1)
- Reports from Thorn, drawing on NCMEC data, indicates that among the small number of children who are identified from child sexual abuse material, two in three children are abused by someone in their offline communities (2)
- The growing adoption and use of end-to-end encryption likely contributed to a 7 million drop in incidents of child sexual exploitation online reported to NCMEC. (1)
- Every day the number of children around the world at risk of online sexual exploitation and abuse rises. Youth access to the internet outpaces the general population by 13% and the majority of children in a study spanning 55 countries started using a digital device before the age of 10. (3)
- INHOPE received 2.5 million suspected CSAM reports in 2024, more than double the previous year. (4)
- NCMEC received 20.5 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation in 2024. (1)
- 1 in 17 adolescents report being victims of deepfake sexual imagery. (5)
- 60% of the top 50 global content-sharing platforms publish no information on how they address child sexual exploitation. (6)
- Violence against children can cost countries up to 11% of GDP, in some cases exceeding national health expenditure sixfold. (7)

- In the United States, more than \$5 billion is spent annually on incarcerating adults convicted of sex crimes against children – more than 3,000 times the budget for child abuse prevention research. (8)

### Report signposting:

- Executive Summary: p.4-7
- Technological drivers of exploitation and abuse: AI, end-to-end encryption, quantum computing: p.20, p.29
- Societal and behavioural drivers of exploitation and abuse: p.27, p.32-33
- Characteristics and vulnerabilities of victims and/or survivors: p.30
- Financial sexual extortion: p.30, p.34, p.50, p.63, p.73
- Recommendations by sector and the Prevention Framework: p.7-15
- Global legislation and policy: p.6, p.14, p.21, p.66-71
- Funding gap and economic cost of violence against children: p.36-38
- Glossary of terms: p.79-81

### Project partners

The Global Threat Assessment is WeProtect Global Alliance's biennial report on the global scale and nature of child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

The Global Threat Assessment 2025 was researched and written by a team from the CPC Learning Network, Columbia University, with contributions and insights from an Expert Steering Committee and insights from dozens of experts from WeProtect Global Alliance's 350+ member organisations, and consultations with youth and survivor leaders.

Expert Steering Committee:

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- Anil Raghuvanshi, ChildSafeNet
- Beth Hepworth, Protection Group International
- Carolina Piñeros, RedPapaz

- Dan Sexton, Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
- Debra Clelland, DeafKidz International
- Elena Martellozzo, Childlight, Global Child Safety Institute, University of Edinburgh
- Sean Litton, Tech Coalition
- Nina Vaaranen-Valkonen, Protect Children
- Ricardo de Lins e Horta, Ministério da Justiça e Segurança Pública, Brazil Government
- Sambath Sokunthea, Cambodian National Council for Children
- Soyoung Park, Korea Communications Standards Commission KCSC
- Wirawan Boom Mosby, The HUG Project Thailand

Data sources:

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2. Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) [Internet]. Thorn. [cited 2025 Sept 30]. Available from: <https://www.thorn.org/research/child-sexual-abuse-material-csam/>
3. Slater SO, Arundell L, Grøntved A, Salmon J. Age of first digital device use and screen media use at age 15: A cross-sectional analysis of 384,591 participants from 55 countries. Public Health Pract [Internet]. 2025 June 1 [cited 2025 Sept 2];9:100596. Available from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666535225000151>
4. INHOPE Releases Annual Report 2024 [Internet]. [cited 2025 May 5]. Available from: <https://inhope.org/EN/articles/inhope-annual-report-2024>
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6. Transparency reporting on child sexual exploitation and abuse online [Internet]. 2023 Sept [cited 2025 Sept 30]. (OECD Digital Economy Papers; vol. 357). Report No.: 357. Available from: [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/transparency-reporting-on-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuseonline\\_554ad91f-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/transparency-reporting-on-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuseonline_554ad91f-en.html)
7. 2024: A Year of Urgency, Vision, and Partnership in Safeguarding Children Online – Safe Online

[Internet]. [cited 2025 Sept 22]. Available from: <https://safeonline.global/2024-a-year-of-urgencyvision-and-partnership-in-safeguarding-children-online/>

8. Safe Online. Financing a Safe Digital Future: Safer Internet Day 2025 – Safe Online [Internet].

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