FIRST YOUTH INTERNET SAFETY SURVEY (YISS-1)

NDACAN Dataset Number 134
USER'S GUIDE

National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect

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First Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-1)

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PREFACE

The data for *First Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-1)* have been given to the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) for public distribution by David Finkelhor, Kimberly J. Mitchell and Janis Wolak. Funding for the project was provided by National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (Award Number(s): 98MC-CX-K002).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SOURCE

Authors should acknowledge the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) and the original collector(s) of the data when publishing manuscripts that use data provided by the Archive. Users of these data are urged to follow some adaptation of the statement below.

The data used in this publication were made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, and have been used with permission. Data from *First Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-1)* were originally collected by: David Finkelhor, Kimberly J. Mitchell and Janis Wolak. Funding for the project was provided by National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (Award Number(s): 98MC-CX-K002). The collector(s) of the original data, the funder(s), NDACAN, Cornell University and their agents or employees bear no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

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PUBLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

In accordance with the terms of the *Data License* for this dataset, users of these data are required to notify the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect of any published work or report based wholly or in part on these data. A copy of any completed manuscript, thesis abstract, or reprint should be emailed to NDACANsupport@cornell.edu . Such copies will be used to provide our funding agency with essential information about the use of NDACAN resources and to facilitate the exchange of information about research activities among data users and contributors.

ABSTRACT

The First Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-1) is a telephone survey of a national sample of 1,501 youth, ages 10 to 17, and their parents, to assess the incidence, consequences and risk factors related to unwanted or illegal exposure of children and adolescents to sexual solicitation, harassment and pornography on the Internet and to determine children's and parent's knowledge of how to respond to such episodes.

Results indicate that approximately one in five youth (19%) received a sexual solicitation or approach over the Internet in the last year while one in thirty-three (3%) received an aggressive sexual solicitation where a solicitor asked to meet them somewhere, called them on the telephone, sent them mail, money or gifts. One in four (25%) had an unwanted exposure to pornography online in the last year. One in seventeen (6%) youth was threatened or harassed online in the last year. A small percentage of young people who reported these incidents were distressed by them. Only a fraction of all episodes were reported to authorities such as a law enforcement agency, an Internet Service Provider, or a hotline. About one-quarter of the youth who encountered a sexual solicitation or approach told a parent. About 40% of those reporting an unwanted exposure to pornography told a parent.

The survey suggests that youth encounter a substantial quantity of offensive episodes, some of which are distressing and most of which are unreported. A comprehensive strategy to respond to the problem would aim to reduce the qualtity of offensive behavior, better shield young people from its likely occurrence, increase the level of reporting, and provide more help to youth and families to protect them from any consequences.

STUDY OVERVIEW

Study Identification

First Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-1)

Principal Investigator(s):

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Funded By:
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Award Number(s):
98MC-CX-K002

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess the incidence, consequences and risk factors related to unwanted or illegal exposure of children and adolescents to sexual solicitation, harassment and pornography on the Internet and to determine children's and parent's knowledge of how to respond to such episodes.

Study Design

The study is a telephone survey of a sub-sample for light to heavy Internet users from the Second National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART 2).

Date(s) of Data Collection

August 1, 1999 to February 1, 2000

Geographic Area

United States

Unit of Observation

Child and one caregiver

Sample

The Youth Internet Safety Survey used telephone interviews to gather information from a national sample of 1,501 young people, ages 10 through 17, who were regular Internet users. "Regular Internet use" was defined as using the Internet at least once a month for the past six months on a computer at home, a school, a library, someone else's home, or some other place. This definition was chosen to exclude occasional Internet users, while including a range of both "heavy" and "light" users. Prior to the youth interview, a short interview was conducted with a parent or guardian in the household. Regular Internet use by a youth was determined initially by questions to the parent or guardian, and confirmed during the youth interview. Households with youth in the target age group were identified through another large household survey, the Second National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART 2), which was conducted by the Institute for Survey Research at Temple University between February and December 1999. NISMART 2 interviewers screened more than 180,000 telephone numbers to identify more than 16,000 households with children aged 18 and younger. Telephone numbers for households including young people aged 9 through 17 were forwarded to and dialed by interviewers for the Youth Internet Safety Survey. All participants of the YISS-1 survey were English-speaking.

The final sample consisted of 796 boys and 705 girls. This is not a representative sample of all youth within the United States because Internet use is not evenly distributed among the population. Internet users tend to have higher incomes and more education than non-Internet users, and, among lower income groups, Internet users are more likely to be white - although this racial difference disappears at higher income levels (NPR Report, 2000). While boys are somewhat more likely than girls to use the Internet, the difference is small and attributable to boys' propensity to play computer games (Roberts, 1999). The sample for the Youth Internet Safety Survey generally matches other representative samples of youth Internet users.

Data Collection Procedures

The interviews for the Youth Internet Safety Survey were conducted by the staff of an experienced national survey research firm, Schulman, Ronca, and Bucuvalas, Inc. (SRBI). Upon reaching a household, interviewers screened for regular Internet use by a child in the household age 10 through 17. Internet use was defined as "connecting a computer or a TV to a phone or cable line to use things like the world wide web and E-mail." Interviewers, speaking with an adult, identified the child in the household who used the Internet most often. They then conducted a short interview with the parent who knew the most about the child's Internet use. The interview included questions about household rules and parental concerns about Internet use, as well as demographic characteristics. At the close of the parent interview, the interviewer requested permission to speak with the previously identified youth. Parents were assured of the confidentiality of the interview, told that young participants would receive checks for $10, and

informed the interview would include questions about "sexual material your child may have seen."

With parental consent, interviewers described the survey to the youth and obtained his or her oral consent. Youth interviews lasted from about 15 to 30 minutes. They were scheduled at the convenience of youth participants and arranged for times when they could talk freely and confidentially. Questions were constructed so youth responses were mostly short, one-word answers that would not reveal anything meaningful to persons overhearing any portion of the conversation. Where longer answers were requested, questions were phrased, "This may be something private. If you feel you can talk freely, or move to a place where you can talk freely, please tell me what happened." Youth were not pressed for answers. They were promised complete confidentiality and told they could skip any questions they did not want to answer and stop the interview at any time. The survey was conducted under the supervision of the University of New Hampshire Institutional Review Board, and conformed to the rules mandated by research projects funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. Youth respondents received brochures about Internet safety as well as checks for $10.

Response Rates

Based on standard calculations of participation rate, 75% of the households approached completed the screening necessary to determine eligibility for participation in the survey. The completion rate among households with eligible respondents was 82%. Five percent of parents in eligible households refused the adult interview. Another 11% of parents completed the adult interview but refused permission for their child to participate in the youth interview. In 2% of eligible households, parents consented to the youth interview, but youth refused to participate. An additional 1% of eligible households were in "call-back" status when 1,501 interviews were completed. (Because of rounding, the completion rate numbers add up to more than 100%.)

Sources of Information

Telephone interview

Type of Data Collected

Telephone survey

Measures

First Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-1)

The survey consists of a parent and a child questionnaire. All questions were designed for this specific project. Included are two instrument documents: Parentq_YISS1.pdf and Youthq_YISS1.pdf. In data file DS_134v2, variables 8 (haccessp) through 114 (demo09) pertain to Parentq_YISS1.pdf , and the remaining variables pertain to Youthq_YISS1.pdf The incidence rates for sexual solicitation, unwanted exposure to sexual material, and harassment were estimated based on a series of screener questions about unwanted experiences while using the

Internet. Two of the screeners concerned harassment, four involved unwanted exposure to sexual material, three focused on sexual solicitation, and one question asked if anyone online had encouraged the youth to run away from home. (Episodes reported in response to the screeners were not counted as "incidents" unless they met additional definitional criteria.) More extensive follow-up questions were asked about the unwanted incidents and used to further classify the reported episodes into the categories reported on in this paper. Follow-up questions were limited to only two reported incidents because of time constraints. Consequently, some incidents reported by young people were not the subject of follow-up questions, and these incidents were omitted from incidence rates. If a youth reported incidents in more than two categories, run-away incidents were given first priority for follow-up questions, harassment incidents second priority, sexual solicitation incidents third priority, and unwanted exposure incidents fourth priority. If a youth reported more than one incident in a particular category, the follow-up questions referred to the "most bothersome" incident or, if none was "most bothersome," the most recent incident. The limits on follow-up questions probably led to some undercounting of incidents, particularly episodes of unwanted exposure to sexual material. Variables fup3 and fup4 identify the incidents used for follow-up.

Crimes Against Children Research Center (n.d.). First youth internet safety survey (YISS-1). Retrieved 2/23/2009, Web site: http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/projects/youth_internet_safety_survey.html

Finkelhor, D., Mitchell, K. J., & Wolak, J. (1999). *First youth internet safety survey (YISS-1)*. Unpublished Instrument, NH: University of New Hampshire.

National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-2)

A subset of the NISMART 2 is the sample for this study. See the Study Design and Sample sections of this User's Guide for a more detailed description of this use. See the citation for more information on the study.

Sedlak, A. J., Finkelhor, D., Hammer, H., & Shultz, D. J. (2002). *National estimates of missing children: An overview* (pp. 12). Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from: http://www.ncjrs.gov/html/ojjdp/nismart/01/index.html

YISS-2 Online Risky Behavior

This set of nine core questions was designed for the First Youth Internet Safety Study and also used in the current study. Questions query whether or not youth had engaged in a variety of different online behaviors that are deemed risky in current prevention messages in the past year - sexual behavior, viewing pornography, posting and sending a picture of oneself, and aggressive behavior.

Finkelhor, D., Wolak, J., & Mitchell, K. (2005). *YISS-2 Risky Behavior [Measure]*. Durham, NH: UNH.

Related Publications and Final Reports

Users are strongly encouraged to review published works, based upon these data, before doing analyses. To view a complete list of publications for this dataset, please visit our online citations collection called "canDL" at: https://www.zotero.org/groups/421939/candl/tags/134-YISS1/library or go to the child abuse and neglect Digital Library (canDL) NDACAN webpage.

Analytic Considerations

Missing data is coded as such on a variable by variable basis either in the value labels field, or as system missing.

Confidentiality Protection

The contributor has removed all identifiers from the data. The contributor removed some variables and some verbatim responses.

Extent of Collection

The collection consists of the NDACAN User's Guide; the NDACAN Codebook; one data file DS_134v2 (provided as import program files for SAS (.sas), SPSS (.sps), and Stata (.do), text (.dat) and tab-delimited data files(.tab), and files native to SPSS (.sav), Stata (.dta), and SAS(.sas7bdat); two instrument files; and a final report.

Extent of Processing

NDACAN produced the User's Guide and Codebook. Modifications were made to some labels in the data file. Verbatim data from a separate file was incorporated into DS_134, and data cleaning was done to ensure indicator variables correctly point to verbatim responses. Some variables and cases were removed. Import files were created.

Version two, DS_134v2, was created in January 2011. The differences between versions 1 and 2 are listed below. The value labels for the following 11 values on 10 variables were designated "unspecified":

- value 0 for variable anydep
- value 2 for variables cuse03, cuse04a, cuse05, and useaol1
- value 3 for variables s3, conln2a, cperp03a, cperp03b, and cuse04
- and value 4 for variable cuse03.

This was done because these were discovered to be unlabeled values in the dataset and are believed to be coding errors.

Additionally, some of the longer verbatim responses are truncated due to software limitations on string length. Using SPSS and SAS, in one case (id_1=1318), the text for the variable is

truncated to meet the 540 SPSS string limit. NDACAN does not have the full-text archived. In Stata, the verbatim responses have been shortened to 244 characters for 24 cases of variable vcdscr1a, 10 cases of variable cdescr1b, one case of variable cris13a, and one case of variable ctalk1d1. The user will need to access the .dat file with software or open the SPSS file to view full text.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following abbreviations and acronyms are used in this document:

Acronym/abbreviation	Definition/meaning
AOL	America Online; AOL, Inc.; web portal; online service provider
canDL	child abuse and neglect Digital Library
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
ISP	Internet Service Provider
NDACAN	National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect
NISMART-2	Second National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrown-away Children
NPR	National Public Radio
Perp	Perpetrator
P/g	Parent or guardian
Py	Past year –time reference for survey questions
SAS	SAS statistical software program
SPSS	IBM SPSS Statistics - software program
SRBI	Schulman, Ronca, and Bucuvalas, Inc.- A national survey research firm
Stata	Stata statistical software program
US	United States
YISS-1	First Youth Internet Safety Study
YISS-2	Second Youth Internet Safety Study

DATA FILE INFORMATION

File Specifications

The data file, DS_134, has 1501 records and 821 variables. There is one record per respondent.

Data File Notes

In data file DS_134v2, variables 8 (haccessp) through 114 (demo09) pertain to the first section of the instrument found in document Parentq_YISS1.pdf , and the remaining variables pertain to section two, document Youthq_YISS1.pdf. The variable name in the data file and instrument file may not be identical, but through the order of variables and the names and labels given one may readily discern which variable or variables match an instrument question.

Variables fup3 and fup4 identify the incidents used for follow-up questions. See the instrument document Youthq_YISS1.pdf SECTION 2: INTERNET UNWANTED SEXUAL EXPOSURE AND SOLICITATION (USES) and SECTION 3: USES FOLLOW-UP for a description of how incidents were chosen for follow-up. Also, see the measures section of this User's Guide for a description.

The ellipse (…) in the label of the four variables, cperp01a, cperp01b, ctalk1d1, and ctalk1d2, refers to the term to be read-in from a prior response. See pages 12 and 21 of the Youthq_YISS1.pdf instrument file for a full description.

In instances where a label is written in a form similar to "More than 2 to 3 hours", this should be interpreted as "More than two hours, up to and including three hours".

Technical support for this dataset is provided by NDACAN.
Please send your inquiries to NDACANsupport@cornell.edu

Visit the User Support page of the NDACAN website for help documents and videos
((https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/user-support/user-support.cfm).