



Building Knowledge



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Research and Statistics Division

Child Pornography and Internet Use

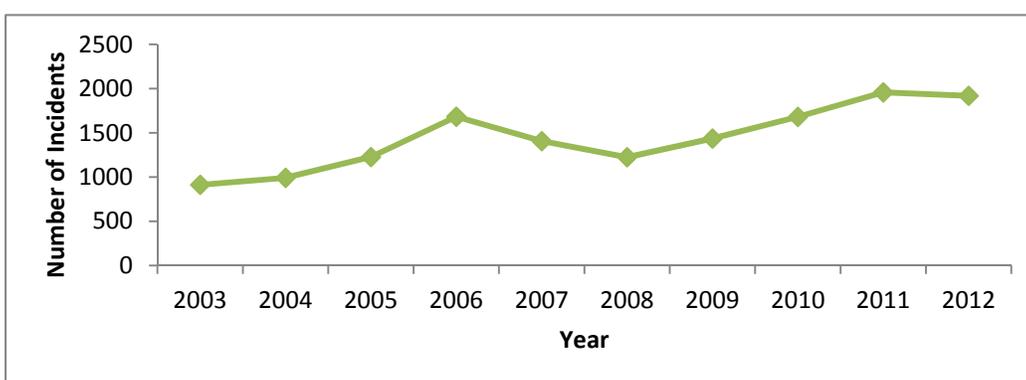
Child pornography is included under Section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

As can be seen in [Figure 1](#) below, the number of incidents of police-reported child pornography increased between 2003 and 2012. In 2003, there were 913 incidents of police-reported child pornography, at a rate of 2.89 per 100,000 population and in 2012, there were 1,919 incidents with a rate of 5.5 per 100,000. This is a 91% increase in the rate.¹

There are a number of possible reasons for the increase in child pornography incidents and rates, such as greater awareness of the issues, initiatives such as Cybertip and police-based programs, all of which may result in increased reporting. Although the child pornography data in the UCR2 do not distinguish between offences that occurred online or through other forms, another possible reason for the increase in incidents and rate is the ease of accessing the Internet and the

continued rise in the use of Internet in Canada. The percentage of Canadians 16 and over who used the Internet for personal use rose from 80% in 2010 to 83% in 2012.² The Internet is also accessible through different media, including computers and wireless handheld devices such as cellular phones and tablets. In 2012, 58% of those who used the Internet indicated that they accessed the Internet through a wireless handheld device. This is an increase from 33% in 2010. Another factor that could be considered is that the majority of children have access to the Internet, including through different means, which may increase their vulnerability to being victimized. A 2013 survey of students in Grades 4 to 11 across Canada discovered that 99% of youth have access to the Internet outside of school.³ The survey also found that portable devices are used more often to access the Internet in comparison to desktop computers. All of these factors would benefit from further research and monitoring.

Figure 1: Number of incidents of police-reported child pornography, 2003 to 2012



Source: Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR2) 2012

The views expressed herein are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice Canada.

¹ Perreault, S. 2013. Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2012. *Juristat*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 85-002-X.

² Statistics Canada. 2013. Individual Internet use and e-commerce, 2012. *The Daily*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-001-X.

³ Steeves, V. 2014. *Young Canadians in a wired world, Phase III: Life online*. Ottawa, ON: MediaSmarts.

