

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Children's Rights

<https://www.missingkids.org/content/ncmec/en/blog/2020/open-letter-entertainment-industry.html>

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At the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), protecting the most vulnerable from sexual victimization is a critical part of our mission. For more than three decades, NCMEC has witnessed the shocking and appalling sexual abuse of countless children. Sadly, there are people among us who prey upon children for sexual purposes. When film, television, media and other content creators present children in overtly sexual ways, they are inadvertently normalizing this deviant sexual interest in children.

The Netflix film, *Cuties*, has created controversy and shocked the public with its hyper sexualization of children. This type of sensationalized content, no matter how it is presented, serves to sexualize children and desensitizes society to the true harm it causes.

Dr. Sharon Cooper, a member of NCMEC's Board of Directors and a developmental and forensic pediatrician, has studied and written extensively on this topic for many years. Media such as this produced with preteen minors promotes sexually inappropriate and unhealthy behaviors that could ultimately result in their sexual victimization and/or exploitation, she commented on the film. We would advocate for media that provides healthy messages that would never place any children at risk for sexual victimization.

On many occasions, the entertainment industry has played a valuable role by offering constructive social commentary and highlighting the many threats facing our children. However, regardless of intent, any portrayal of a child that objectifies them or depicts them in an indecent or exploitative way is cause for great concern. We encourage people to learn more about the true harm of child sexual exploitation from NCMEC and other organizations dedicated to the protection of children.

We stand against any form of child sexual exploitation and will fight to stop it wherever it is discovered.

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About the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)

Since 1984, NCMEC has served as the leading private, nonprofit organization helping to find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation and prevent future victimization. As part of its work as the clearinghouse and resource center on issues relating to missing and exploited children, NCMEC operates a hot-line, 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) and has assisted in the recovery of more than 319,000 missing children. NCMEC also operates the CyberTipline, a mechanism for reporting suspected child sexual exploitation, which has received more than 65 million reports.

Topics in this article

News

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