

Behind every image or video is a child who has been raped, molested or tortured, and frequently all three.

Wednesday 6 October, 2021

London, October 2021; The National Network to End Child Abuse, NNECA, the child sexual abuse prevention charity specialising in prevention education, raising awareness of child sexual abuse in the UK, Europe, and wider world are pleased to see the recent conviction of Eric Eoin Marques for distribution of child pornography. However, they also believe that the world has become too desensitised to what those 8.5 million (8,500,000) child pornography images actually mean, and they are seeking to raise awareness of the devastation of young lives those images represent.

Marques, 36 years old, was sentenced to 27 years in federal prison on the 16th of September 2021, for the distribution of over 8.5 million illegal images depicting the rape and torture of children of all ages including infants and toddlers. He created and operated servers on the dark web to host these images and videos between 2008 and 2013, the time of his initial arrest in Ireland.

Law enforcement have stated that this was the most prolific purveyor of such material they have ever encountered. However, while this sentencing, which includes damages payable to some of the victims of the child abuse images that he helped distribute, public outcry has been minimal.

NNECA have long campaigned for improved education about child abuse, and they believe that this is yet more evidence that all over the world, the public has become desensitised to the problem. While journalists focus on the sheer number of images, NNECA want to focus on what they mean. Behind every image or video is a child who has been raped, molested or tortured, and frequently all three.

NNECA, through its ongoing programs, not only to educate children, parents and teachers to spot early warning signs, raise awareness of prevention programs and help children remain safe, is dedicated to protecting children from sexual abuse. Now it also wants to raise awareness of the nature of these crimes, to force society to stop turning a blind eye and recognise the horror of a conviction like that of Marques.

When journalists or the public see the numbers involved, it is easy to just focus on the volume, ignoring that each one is a tragedy in a young life. By reminding the world that there is a ruined life behind every image, NNECA hopes to encourage protective parenting and schooling to prevent any more victims, and for children themselves to be able to see danger and importantly, tell someone.

Suhail Hanif, Chairman of NNECA reminds us, "It is easy to hear a horror story such as Eric Eoin Marques and think that is the end of the issue because he has been imprisoned. But the people he was supplying are not, they are still out there," continuing, "Most importantly, for the children caught up in this, the innocent life lost to every single image, it is likely never going to be over. That is why we cannot just look the other way but continue to ensure that the public understands what truly is behind a figure like 8.5 million child pornography images."

NNECA continues its valued work in the UK and around the world in helping to prevent more children falling victim to sexual abuse, and encourages everyone to learn the early warning signs, always be aware, and protect all our children. They would like to see mandatory age-appropriate abuse prevention curriculums to be taught in every school in the UK, and believe up to 90% of sexual abuse is preventable through better education and awareness.

You can find out more about NNECA and the work they do to prevent child abuse at <https://nneca.org.uk/>, and join them in their mission to ensure no child has to endure the devastation that abuse causes. Link to Child Sexual Abuse Signs We Must Know Infographic - bit.ly/3uTY5RF

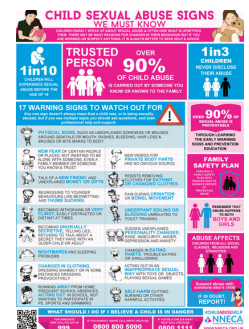
National Network to End Child Abuse

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NNECA believe 90% of child sexual abuse is preventable through better education and awareness. We currently operate in the UK, Europe, US and India, and share our awareness material in over 50 countries across multiple languages.

Media:



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EDUCATION - We seek to ensure that every child has the tools necessary to be the first line of defence against his or her own abuse through our abuse prevention material. The curriculum contains educationally sound content for children, parents, teachers, and carers.

AWARENESS -We raise awareness about the prevention of child sexual abuse through public awareness campaigns and by harnessing the power of technology. Our opportunity is driven by the huge growth of social and digital media platforms. Recent studies show that over 94% of young people who use a mobile to go online, do so daily. Social media is the GOAT (greatest of all time) communication tool for younger generations and an incredible opportunity to scale, reach, and start conversations.

CYBERPROTECT – Child sexual exploitation techniques are changing drastically due to ever-evolving online and mobile technologies. Children today have unhindered access to the Internet via smartphones and tablets – which has also led to an alarming increase in how quickly children are being groomed online. The online world is found everywhere, and it is growing even more ubiquitous; and sex offenders believe that they can remain anonymous, which is what has led to an explosion of crimes that threaten all our children.

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