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**Juristat**

# **Online child sexual exploitation: A statistical profile of police-reported incidents in Canada, 2024**

by Laura Savage

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## Online child sexual exploitation: A statistical profile of police-reported incidents in Canada, 2024: Highlights

- Online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) is addressed by a wide range of *Criminal Code* offences that are grouped into two distinct categories: **online sexual offences against children** (e.g., luring, the non-consensual distribution of intimate images involving a victim aged 17 years or younger, and invitation to sexual touching offences) and **online child sexual abuse and exploitation material** (OCSAEM) offences (i.e., possessing, accessing, making, and distributing such material). OCSE incidents involve child and youth victims aged 17 years or younger on the first known date of the incident.
- The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of OCSE to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, the numbers presented in this *Juristat* article reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada.
- Police services across Canada reported 16,905 OCSE incidents in 2024, most (77%) of which were for OCSAEM offences.
- The rate of police-reported OCSE decreased by 16% between 2023 and 2024, driven by a large decrease in the number of OCSAEM incidents reported in 2024.
- Despite the decline in 2024, the rate of OCSE was almost three times higher than in 2018 (223 versus 77 incidents per 100,000 population aged 17 years and younger) and more than four times higher than in 2014 (223 versus 50 incidents).
- There was a 43% increase in the rate of online sexual offences against children from 2023 to 2024 (+1,230 incidents), driven by a sharp increase (+65%) in the rate of luring.
- Reflective of the challenges involved in investigating cybercrime, 94% of OCSAEM incidents and 76% of online sexual offences against children incidents were not cleared by police in 2024, meaning that an accused had not been identified in connection to the incident or there was not enough evidence to proceed with laying or recommending charges.

# Online child sexual exploitation: A statistical profile of police-reported incidents in Canada, 2024

by Laura Savage

The Internet is an integral part of daily life, with many Canadians depending on it for work, commerce, entertainment, shopping, and social connection. While the benefits cannot be understated, the Internet has also transformed the landscape of criminal activity, facilitating certain types of crime such as identity theft, extortion, and the online sexual exploitation of children and youth.

Ongoing technological advancements continue to create new opportunities for perpetrators to access potential victims, while also making it easier for children and youth to meet and interact with strangers online (Europol, 2024; Internet Watch Foundation, 2024; WeProtect Global Alliance, 2023). Online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) has become—and continues to be—a global public health problem with serious and potentially life-long consequences for victims. OCSE is addressed by a wide range of *Criminal Code* offences, including luring, invitation to sexual touching, non-consensual distribution of intimate images where the victim is under the age of 18 years, and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material<sup>1</sup> (see Text box 1).

In 2004, Public Safety Canada—in partnership with Justice Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police—announced *Canada's National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet* (National Strategy) as a commitment to combat child sexual exploitation online. The National Strategy highlights the prevention efforts taken to better protect children and youth online, including increasing investigational capacity,<sup>2</sup> enhancing public education and awareness, and providing support for further research on OCSE. Several updates have been made to the National Strategy since 2004, and the federal government continues to work in partnership with countries across the globe to address OCSE at an international level.<sup>3</sup>

Using data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey and the Integrated Criminal Court Survey, this *Juristat* presents an update to the article “Online child sexual exploitation: A statistical profile of police-reported incidents in Canada, 2014 to 2022,” released in 2024. The current article presents the latest available data on police-reported OCSE incidents, including victim, accused and incident characteristics, as well as the most recent data on court outcomes and sentencing decisions.

This article was produced with funding support from Public Safety Canada.

## Text box 1

### Defining police-reported online child sexual exploitation

In the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey, an incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT) or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones, and network systems. Criminal acts committed via text messaging or through social media platforms are also recognized as forms of cybercrime.

Since this analysis focuses on online incidents of child sexual exploitation, it includes only those incidents in which a cyber violation was reported by police.<sup>4,5</sup> Police can report up to four violations per incident to the UCR Survey, and the cyber violation may not be the most serious. In 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation in 99% of OCSE incidents.

A range of different *Criminal Code* offences apply to OCSE. This analysis includes incidents involving the following *Criminal Code* offences, provided that at least one violation within the incident was identified by police as being cyber-related:

- **Online sexual offences against children**, which include:
  - **Sexual violations against children**, which include the following *Criminal Code* offences: sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, sexual exploitation, parent or guardian procuring sexual activity, householder permitting prohibited sexual activity, luring a child, agreement or arrangement (sexual offences against a child), making sexually explicit material available to children, and bestiality (in presence of, or inciting, a child).

- **Other online sexual offences**, which are *Criminal Code* sexual offences not specific to children. These include non-consensual distribution of intimate images, sexual assault (levels 1, 2 and 3), sexual exploitation of a person with disability, bestiality (commits, compels another person), voyeurism, incest, and other sexual crimes. Because these offences are not child-specific, only incidents involving a victim aged 17 years or younger on the first known date of the incident are included in the analysis.
- **Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material**, which includes offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code* making it illegal to make, distribute, possess, or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material. The UCR Survey does not collect victim records for these incidents.

Throughout this *Juristat* article, the term “children” generally refers to victims aged 17 years and younger, unless otherwise specified further as child victims (aged 0 to 11 years) or youth victims (aged 12 to 17 years). OCSE serves as an umbrella concept encompassing all in-scope violations, including online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.

## Text box 2

### Challenges around measuring police-reported online child sexual exploitation

It is important to note that variations in rates between years may reflect differences in the recognition, reporting, and investigation of OCSE incidents, and not necessarily lower or higher rates of occurrence. Year-over-year differences in reporting may be influenced by a variety of factors, such as the presence or absence of public awareness campaigns (community engagement) and the willingness of the public to report incidents to police.

The number of investigative resources allocated to Internet child exploitation policing units can also influence the number of incidents reported to the UCR Survey.<sup>6</sup> The Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of OCSE to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation.<sup>7</sup> However, a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases—including an increase in Generative Artificial Intelligence content—has placed significant strain on the NCECC and police services, limiting their ability to respond to growing investigative demands.

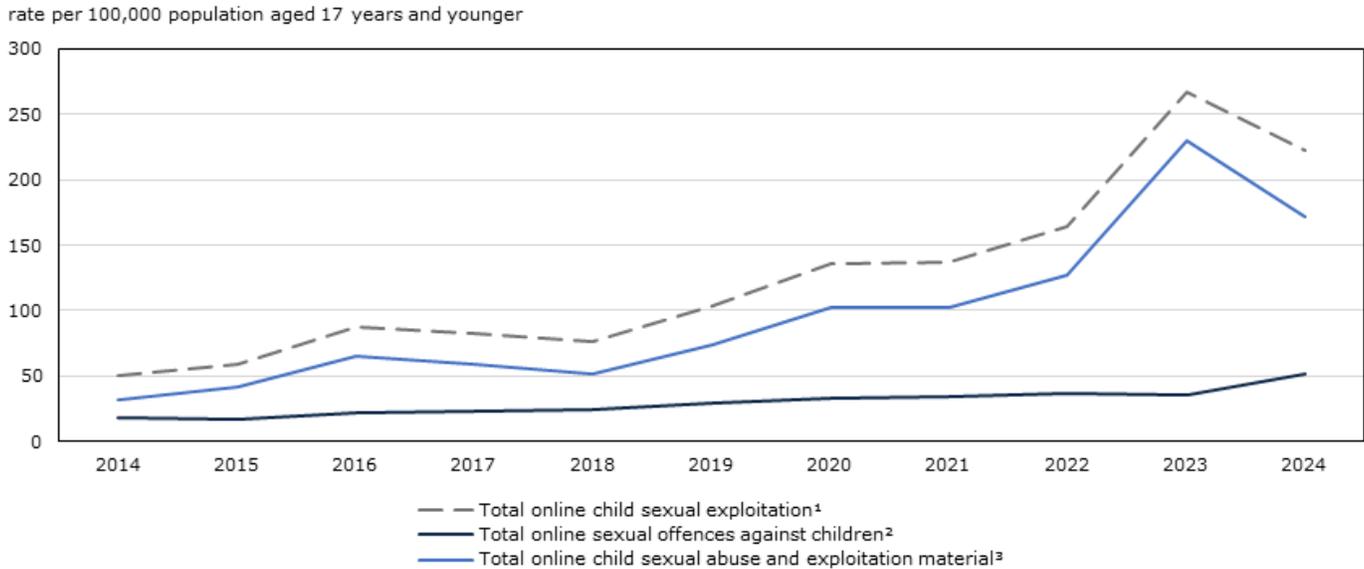
The Supreme Court of Canada’s recent decision in *R. v. Bykovets* (2024 SCC 6)—which held that there is a reasonable expectation of privacy attached to IP addresses under section 8 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*—may have impacted cybercrime investigations, where IP address information is often the only known identifier. As a result of this decision, police are required to obtain prior judicial authorization (i.e., a warrant or production order) before they can ask third parties (i.e., Internet Service Providers) for subscriber information linking the IP address to an individual. This requirement can hinder or halt investigations, meaning that the number of incidents recorded in police Records Management Systems—and subsequently reported to the UCR Survey— may underestimate the true prevalence of this crime.

Only cases entered into a police Records Management System are captured by the UCR Survey, meaning that all other cases—including those waiting to be actioned by the NCECC and police of jurisdiction—are excluded from the numbers presented in this *Juristat* article. That said, the numbers presented in this *Juristat* article reflect the number of police investigations for the year and not the true extent of this crime.

**Police-reported incidents of online child sexual exploitation decreased 16% from 2023 to 2024, driven by fewer online child sexual abuse and exploitation material incidents**

In 2024, police reported 16,905 incidents where there was at least one OCSE offence, 2,952 fewer than the previous year (Table 1-A).<sup>8</sup> This number translates to a rate of 223 incidents per 100,000 children and youth in Canada, down 16% from 2023 (266 incidents per 100,000 children and youth) (Table 1-B). This decrease was driven by a sharp decline (-24%) in the number of online child sexual abuse and exploitation material (OCSAEM) incidents reported by police in 2024 (from 17,160 incidents in 2023 to 12,978 incidents in 2024) (Chart 1).<sup>9</sup> Consistent with previous years, OCSAEM offences represented the large majority (77%) of all OCSE incidents in 2024.

**Chart 1**  
**Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, Canada, 2014 to 2024**



1. Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.  
 2. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.  
 3. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.  
**Note:** An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT) or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Prior to 2020, the number of cybercrimes is an undercount as some police services were unable to report the cybercrime indicator for all years. The data exclude the Quebec City Police in 2014 and 2015, the municipal police service of Calgary from 2014 to 2016, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) from 2014 to 2017, both the Saint John Police Force and the Canadian Forces Military Police from 2014 to 2019 and Dryden, a detachment of the OPP in 2022. For 2023 and 2024, the data exclude Saint John Police Force. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. Between 2014 and 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation in 98% of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) incidents. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of OCSE to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recoded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population. Populations are based on July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada’s Centre for Demography.  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

The rest of this section presents the two OCSE categories (online sexual offences against children and online sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) separately.

## Online sexual offences against children

Despite the overall decrease in the rate of police-reported OCSE incidents from 2023 to 2024 (-16%), there was a 43% increase in the rate of online sexual offences against children, from 36 to 52 incidents per 100,000 children and youth (Table 1-B). This increase was driven by a sharp increase (+65%) in the rate of luring.

The rate of police-reported online sexual offences against children was 110% higher in 2024 compared to 2018 (when revisions to the definition of a founded incident were implemented to the UCR Survey) and 182% higher than a decade prior in 2014.

### Large increase in the number and rate of luring incidents from 2023 to 2024

Consistent with previous years, luring—the offence of communicating with a child or youth online for the purpose of committing a sexual offence—accounted for the majority (74%) of all police-reported online sexual offences against children in 2024 (Table 1-A).

There were 2,903 luring incidents reported by police in 2024, 1,173 more than in 2023. Following a slight decline (-3%) in 2023, the rate of luring increased in 2024 (+65%) from 23 to 38 incidents per 100,000 population aged 17 years and younger, the highest rate on record since comparable data became available in 2014.

Between 2018 and 2024, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection noted a 1,135% increase in the number of online luring reports received by Cybertip.ca, Canada's national tipline for reporting the abuse and exploitation of children online—rising from 220 reports in 2018 to 2,717 in 2024.<sup>10</sup> Police-reported data show a 137% increase in the number of luring incidents during the same period. While the number of reports received by Cybertip.ca is a useful point of comparison, it should not be interpreted as a proxy for the number of luring victims, nor does it reflect the number of cases investigated by police services, for a given year.

### Small decrease in the rate of non-consensual distribution of intimate images in 2024, following a large increase in 2023

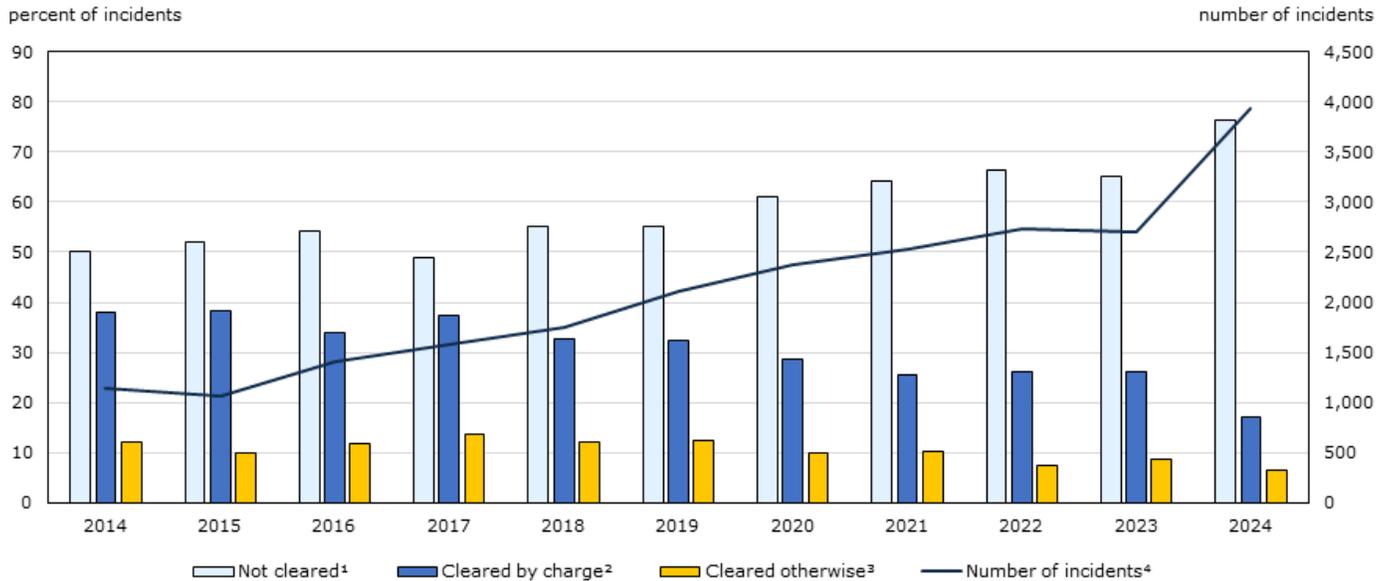
Non-consensual distribution of intimate images (NCDII) involves forwarding or sharing intimate images of an individual without their consent. In December 2014, the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act* made NCDII a criminal offence in Canada. Since then, most provinces have also adopted a legal framework for addressing NCDII, providing victims with a civil avenue to seek protection orders, damages, and other legal remedies.<sup>11</sup>

In 2024, police reported 488 incidents of NCDII involving a victim aged 17 years or younger, 8 fewer than in 2023.<sup>12</sup> The rate of NCDII declined 3%, from 6.7 incidents per 100,000 children and youth in 2023 to 6.4 in 2024. This slight decrease followed a 36% rate increase from 2022 to 2023 (from 4.9 to 6.7 incidents per 100,000).

### A growing proportion of online sexual offences against children are not cleared by police

In general, as the number of police-reported online sexual offences against children has increased since 2014, so has the proportion of incidents not cleared by police (Chart 2).

**Chart 2**  
**Police-reported incidents of online sexual offences against children, by incident clearance status, Canada, 2014 to 2024**



1. Includes incidents still under investigation, incidents where there was insufficient evidence to proceed, and incidents where the victim or complainant declined to proceed (where no accused had been identified).
2. Includes charges laid or recommended.
3. An incident is considered to be "cleared otherwise" when an accused person is identified by police but charges are not laid or recommended. Examples of reasons for which incidents are cleared otherwise include departmental discretion, the victim requesting that no further action is taken, or reasons beyond the control of the department.
4. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.

**Note:** An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Prior to 2020, the number of cybercrimes is an undercount as some police services were unable to report the cybercrime indicator for all years. The data exclude the Quebec City Police in 2014 and 2015, the municipal police service of Calgary from 2014 to 2016, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) from 2014 to 2017, both the Canadian Forces Military Police from 2014 to 2019 and Dryden, a detachment of the OPP in 2022. For 2023 and 2024, the data exclude Saint John Police Force. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. Between 2014 and 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation in 98% of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) incidents. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of OCSE to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recorded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

This trend may be partially attributed to a change in the definition of founded crime in 2018. Prior to this update, police classified an incident as founded if, following an investigation, it was determined that a crime had occurred, even if no accused had been identified (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2018). In January 2018, the definition of founded crime was updated to better reflect a victim-centred approach: "an incident is founded if, after police investigation, it has been determined that the reported offence did occur or was attempted (even if the charged/suspect chargeable (CSC) is unknown) or there is no credible evidence to confirm that the reported incident did not take place. This includes third party reports that fit these criteria." In other words, an incident is considered founded unless there is clear evidence to refute it.

More incidents are now captured in police-reported data as a result of this change. In general, while the number of unfounded incidents has decreased since 2018, many are now classified as not cleared by police—either because there is insufficient evidence to proceed with laying or recommending a charge, the incident is still open and under investigation, or the victim declines to proceed (no accused identified).

## **An accused was identified in around one in four online sexual offences against children incidents reported by police in 2024**

As digital technologies continue to evolve at a rapid pace, police services face increasingly complex challenges when investigating cybercrime. The inherently “borderless” nature of the Internet has created new opportunities for perpetrators to access potential victims (WeProtect Global Alliance, 2023). Further, data are often purposely stored in jurisdictions with strict privacy laws, complicating access for investigators who may need to rely on international cooperation during the investigation (Horan & Saiedian, 2021; Rakha, 2023). The Internet also provides perpetrators with a high degree of anonymity—especially when content is hosted or shared on end-to-end encrypted platforms—making it easier for them to evade detection. For example, social media platforms like Snapchat—a widely used messaging application—retain data only for a limited time, as images and messages are designed to disappear once viewed.

In 2024, approximately one in four (24%) incidents of online sexual offences against children were cleared by police, meaning that an accused person had been identified in connection to the incident (Table 2). The clearance rate was much higher than the clearance rate for all cybercrime incidents reported by police in 2024 (10%).<sup>13</sup>

The proportion of incidents cleared by police varied by offence type. While around three-quarters (76%) of invitation to sexual touching incidents were cleared by police in 2024, a smaller proportion of luring (16%) and non-consensual distribution of intimate images (34%) incidents were cleared.

## **Smaller proportion of online sexual offences against children incidents resulted in charges being laid or recommended against an accused in 2024 compared with previous years**

In 2024, 17% of incidents of online sexual offences against children resulted in charges being laid or recommended against an accused—a larger proportion than of cybercrime incidents overall (7%).

In 2024, the proportion of online sexual offences against children incidents cleared by charge was considerably lower than in 2023 (26% of incidents) and 2018 (33% of incidents), which may be partially attributed to the increase in the number of incidents in 2024. The proportion of incidents of online sexual offences against children cleared by the laying or recommendation of charges varied by offence type, ranging from 9% of NCDII incidents to 74% of invitation to sexual touching incidents (Table 2).

Notably, 26% of NCDII incidents involving children and youth were cleared otherwise, meaning that an accused had been identified but no charges were laid or recommended by police. Reasons for an incident being cleared otherwise may include, for example, the accused being directed to a formal diversionary program, which is common when the accused falls under the purview of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA). The YCJA is designed to divert youth accused of criminal offences away from the traditional criminal justice system using alternative measures, depending on the severity of the offence.<sup>14</sup> In cleared incidents where the age of the accused was recorded by police, the median age of accused persons for this offence type was 14 years, meaning that most accused were youth and, as such, eligible for diversion programs.

## **The majority of online sexual offences against children are reported to police the same or next day following the incident**

In 2024, more than 7 in 10 (72%) online sexual offences against children were reported to police either the same or next day (Table 3). A small (14%) proportion of incidents were reported more than one month after the recorded end date of the incident.

There may be a delay between the occurrence of an offence and the date it is reported to—or comes to the attention of—police. For instance, young children may not recognize online sexual abuse or may lack the knowledge or resources needed to report it.

## **Almost four in five victims of online sexual offences against children are girls**

In 2024, similar to most other police-reported and self-reported sexual offences (Burczycka, 2020; Cotter, 2021; Perreault, 2020), the majority (78%) of victims of police-reported online sexual offences against children were girls (Table 4). The rate was almost four times higher among girls (35 victims per 100,000 girls aged 17 years and younger) compared with boys (9 victims

per 100,000 boys aged 17 years and younger). While girls were much more likely than boys to be victims of these types of crime, the gender gap was smaller than for most other police-reported sexual offences, like sexual assault (Conroy, 2024).

Youth aged 12 to 17 years accounted for the large majority (85%) of victims of online sexual offences against children. This may be partly influenced by the greater likelihood of youth having access to the Internet, technology-enabled devices, and their own social media accounts compared to children aged 11 years and younger. Additionally, sexual experimentation and an increase in risk-taking behaviours during these years may increase the risk of online victimization (Finkelhor et al., 2024).

Overall, victims of online sexual offences against children were most likely to be victimized by a stranger (32%), followed by a casual acquaintance (25%) (Table 4). More specifically, a stranger was the accused for over two in five victims of luring (42%). For non-consensual distribution of intimate images, victims were most often targeted by a casual acquaintance (32%) or current or former spouse, common-law, dating or other intimate partner (29%).<sup>15</sup>

### Text box 3

#### Measuring sexually coerced extortion using police-reported data from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey

Sexually coerced extortion—hereinafter referred to as sexual extortion—is a form of image-based sexual abuse in which a perpetrator threatens to distribute sexually explicit or intimate images, messages or videos of a victim without consent unless the victim engages in further unwanted actions, such as providing additional content or sending the perpetrator money in an attempt to prevent distribution of the content (Canadian Centre for Child Protection, 2024; Edwards & Hollely, 2023; Internet Watch Foundation, 2024; Patchin & Hinduja, 2020; Ray & Henry, 2024; Wolak et al., 2018). Research shows that victims are often targeted through online platforms, such as social media applications and gaming websites (Canadian Centre for Child Protection, 2024; Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development, 2025; WeProtect Global Alliance, 2023). Growing access to generative artificial intelligence (AI) technology is a rising concern, as perpetrators are able to create credible intimate images without needing to obtain them from the victim (Krishna et al., 2024; WeProtect Global Alliance, 2024). Data from Cybertip.ca—Canada’s national tipline for reporting the online sexual exploitation of children—received an average of six reports per day in 2024, totaling more than 2,300 incidents for the year (Canadian Centre for Child Protection, 2024).<sup>16</sup>

Victims of sexual extortion have cited experiencing significant emotional and psychological distress stemming from their victimization, including feelings of shame, fear, depression, isolation and anxiety (Henry & Umbach, 2024; Kelley, 2019; Patchin & Hinduja, 2020; WeProtect Global Alliance, 2024).

Sexual extortion is not a distinct offence in the *Criminal Code*, therefore there is no dedicated violation code within the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey for this type of crime. However, these incidents may be recorded by police using a combination of relevant violation codes (e.g., extortion, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) and, as such, some information on this type of offending can be derived by looking at these violations. For the purpose of this analysis, incidents involving an extortion violation plus at least one OCSE violation are considered to be sexual extortion. All sexual extortion incidents presented in this analysis refer to cyber-related sexual extortion, meaning that at least one violation (i.e., the extortion violation and/or the OCSE-related violation) in the incident must have been flagged as a cybercrime to be considered in-scope. The data presented in this text box likely underestimate the true prevalence of this crime. Research suggests that this type of crime heavily exploits the shame and fear of victims, resulting in a large under-reporting bias (Edwards & Hollely, 2023; Ray & Henry, 2024). Further, police services can—but are not required to—report up to four violations per incident to the UCR Survey. This analysis relies on the reporting of secondary violations to identify an incident as sexual extortion.

#### Drop in the number of sexual extortion incidents reported by police from 2023 to 2024

Police reported 368 incidents of sexual extortion involving victims aged 17 years and younger in 2024—65 fewer than in 2023—corresponding to a rate of 5 incidents per 100,000 children and youth. There were a total of 1,777 sexual extortion incidents reported by police between 2018 and 2024.

### An accused was identified in one in five sexual extortion incidents reported by police from 2018 to 2024

From 2018 to 2024, four in five (79%) sexual extortion incidents were not cleared by police, with 75% of uncleared incidents classified as having insufficient evidence to lay or recommend charges. Of the one in five (21%) cleared sexual extortion incidents, most (77%) resulted in charges being laid or recommended against an accused.

### Gender gap narrower for sexual extortion compared to other sexual offences

There were 235 child and youth victims of sexual extortion identified by police from 2018 to 2024. Almost all (94%) victims were youth aged 12 to 17 years, with the median age of victims being 14 for girls and 15 for boys.

Although girls were overrepresented (66%) as victims in police-reported sexual extortion incidents, the gender gap was smaller compared to other sexual offences where girls and women account for the vast majority of victims (Conroy, 2024; Savage, 2024; Sutton & Burczykca, 2024). Girls represented a larger proportion of victims up until age 16, but boys made up a larger proportion of victims at age 17.

Notably, data from Cybertip.ca show that, when the gender of the victim was known, the large majority (83%) of sexual extortion victims involved in incidents reported to the tipline in 2024 were male (Canadian Centre for Child Protection, 2024). It is possible that this discrepancy reflects differences in reporting patterns between boys and girls following experiences of sexual extortion. Research shows that boys are less likely than girls to report experiences of sexual violence to police, perhaps because of gender norms, stigma, and societal expectations around masculinity that discourage disclosure and help-seeking (Carlisle & Schmitz, 2023; Donne et al., 2018; Patterson et al., 2024).

## Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material

Child sexual abuse and exploitation material is defined in the *Criminal Code* as any photograph, film, video, or other visual representation, along with written or audio material, that (1) depicts a person under the age of 18 (or represented as being under 18) years engaged in explicit sexual activity or (2) the dominant characteristic is the depiction for a sexual purpose of a sexual organ or the anal region of a person under the age of 18 years. It is a criminal offence to produce, distribute, possess, and access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

The harmful consequences of online child sexual abuse and exploitation material (OCSAEM) are well-documented, with research showing that victims of this crime can endure profound and lasting harm extending far beyond the initial abuse (Hanson, 2017; Insoll et al., 2022; Joleby et al., 2020; Martínez-Bacaicoa et al., 2024). Victims report living with the fear that images or recordings of their abuse and exploitation may exist and could be circulating online, leading to recurring feelings of guilt, embarrassment, helplessness, shame, and vulnerability (Canadian Centre for Child Protection, 2017; Gewirtz-Meydan et al., 2018; McGlynn et al., 2021; Mitchell et al., 2025).

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) is the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. In collaboration with both national and international policing partners, the NCECC works to identify and assist child victims of online child sexual exploitation living in Canada, and to identify and prosecute those responsible for these crimes (see Text box 2 for more information).

As previously noted, police-reported data can be influenced by reporting practices. The presence or absence of public awareness campaigns and digital safety initiatives targeted towards children and youth can impact the decision to report OCSE, as well as mandatory reporting of OCSAEM by Internet service providers (Public Safety Canada, 2022).

### Sharp drop in the number of online child sexual abuse and exploitation material incidents reported by police in 2024

Overall, there were 12,978 OCSAEM incidents reported by police in 2024, corresponding to a rate of 171 incidents per 100,000 children and youth (Table 1-B). Following a large (+81%) increase from 2022 to 2023, the rate of OCSAEM incidents decreased 26% from 2023 to 2024. The previous increase was partially the result of more cases—both current and

historical—being brought forward to local police services by specialized provincial Internet Child Exploitation police units and the NCECC. That being said, the rate in 2024 was 35% higher than in 2022 (171 versus 127 incidents per 100,000 children and youth). Making or distributing OCSAEM incidents accounted for almost two-thirds (64%) of all OCSE incidents in 2024.

### **Making or distributing offences account for most incidents of online child sexual abuse and exploitation material**

In 2024, incidents of making or distributing OCSAEM accounted for more than four in five (83%) OCSAEM incidents. While the number of incidents dropped 27% from 2023 to 2024 (-4,076 incidents), the number of incidents reported by police in 2024 was 42% higher than in 2022. Incidents of possessing or accessing OCSAEM accounted for the remaining 17% of OCSAEM incidents in 2024.

Each year since 2016, making or distributing OCSAEM has accounted for the majority of OCSAEM incidents.

### **Most online child sexual abuse and exploitation material incidents are not cleared by police**

In 2024, 94% of OCSAEM incidents were not cleared by police, with the large majority (82%) of these incidents being classified as having insufficient evidence to proceed with the laying or recommendation of charges against an accused (Table 2). Possessing or accessing offences were more than twice as likely to be cleared by police compared with making or distributing offences (12% and 5%, respectively).

### **Youth aged 12 to 17 years account for almost two in five persons accused of online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences**

In 2024, there were 816 persons accused in incidents of OCSAEM, and the large majority (87%) of accused were men and boys (Table 5). The median age of those accused of OCSAEM was much higher among men and boys than women and girls (29 versus 14 years), and almost two in five (37%) of those accused of OCSAEM were youth aged 12 to 17 years. Among youth accused, just over 7 in 10 (73%) were boys.

#### **Text box 4**

#### **Previous contacts with police among persons accused of committing an online child sexual exploitation offence in 2024**

Using police-reported data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey, this text box provides an overview of the prevalence and nature of previous contacts with police among persons who had contact with police in 2024 for an online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) offence.

For this analysis, a unique person identifier was created for each person who came into contact with police—as an accused—for an OCSE offence between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. If a person was accused of more than one OCSE offence in 2024, the most recent contact was used for the cohort incident. All previous contacts with police (as an accused person<sup>17</sup>) for a criminal offence<sup>18</sup> from January 1, 2018, up until the date of the OCSE contact in 2024 were included in the analysis. It is important to note that administrative data sources like the UCR Survey only capture official contacts with police and likely underestimate the true prevalence of re-offending as not all crime comes to the attention of police. An accused person may have had previous police contact prior to January 1, 2018.

#### **Approximately two in five persons accused of committing an online child sexual exploitation offence in 2024 were aged 12 to 17 years**

Among the 1,797 persons accused of committing an OCSE offence in 2024, more than half (55%) had contact with police for online sexual offences against children (OSOAC), while the remaining 45% were accused of committing an online child sexual abuse and exploitation material (OCSAEM) offence.

Men and boys accounted for the large majority (87%) of the cohort (Table 6). When the age of the accused was known, approximately two in five (38%) were youth aged 12 to 17 years at the time of the incident. The median age of accused persons was 24 years. Across offence types, the median age of accused persons ranged from 14 years for non-consensual distribution of intimate images (NCDII) offences to 33 years for possessing or accessing OCSAEM.

Youth were most often accused of making or distributing OCSAEM (36%), followed by NCDII (30%). In contrast, adults were most often accused of luring (33%), followed by making or distributing OCSAEM (27%) and possessing or accessing OCSAEM (17%).

#### **Nine in ten youth accused of online sexual offences against children in 2024 knew the victim**

Analysis of the relationship between the victim and the accused is limited to incidents involving a single victim and single accused to ensure that each victim file is linked with the correct accused file and that each accused is counted only once. In 2024, there were 552 police-reported OSOAC incidents in which there was a single victim and a single accused person.

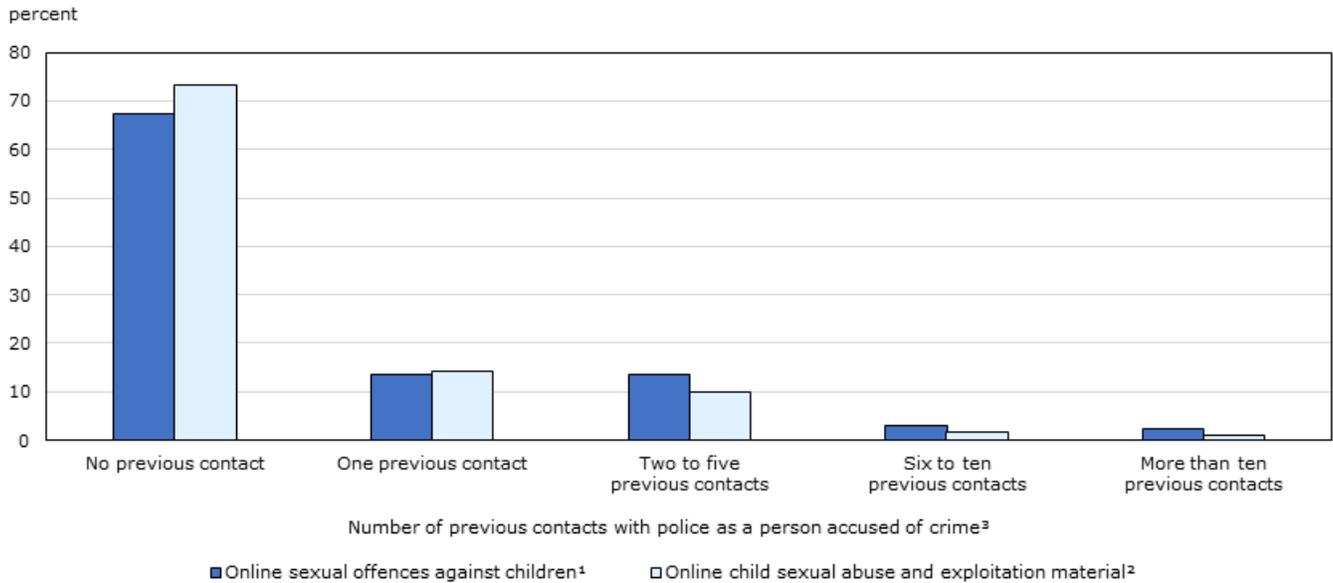
Overall, when the relationship between the victim and accused was known, around four in five (81%) persons accused of OSOAC knew the victim. The most commonly reported relationship was casual acquaintance (26%), followed by intimate partner (19%) and stranger (19%).

Notably, the proportion of accused persons who knew the victim varied by age. Almost all (91%) youth accused of OSOAC knew the victim, compared with 75% of adult accused. Youth most often victimized a casual acquaintance (30%) or an intimate partner (30%), followed by a friend (26%). Only a small (9%) proportion of youth accused did not know the victim.

#### **Most persons accused of online child sexual exploitation in 2024 did not have previous contact with police**

The large majority (70%) of persons accused of committing an OCSE offence did not have previous contact with police from 2018 to 2024 (Chart 3). This may be partially attributed to the relatively large proportion of the cohort that were youth at the time of the offence in 2024 (38%). Youth accused were much less likely than adult accused to have a previous contact with police during the reference period (22% versus 37%).

**Chart 3**  
**Number of previous contacts with police as an accused person, by cohort offence type, Canada, 2018 to 2024**



1. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.  
 2. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.  
 3. A previous contact with police (i.e., an incident resulting in a new charge being laid or recommended, or an incident that was cleared by other means) for a *Criminal Code* violation or other federal statute offence reported by police between January 1, 2018, and the date of the cohort incident in 2024.

**Note:** This analysis is based on those who had contact with police as an accused person for a cohort (online child sexual exploitation) incident in 2024. If a person had more than one contact with police for an OCSE offence in 2024, the most recent contact was used as the cohort incident. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. In Canada, children under the age of 12 years cannot be held criminally responsible and are excluded. Includes accused persons aged 12 years and older. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children and the Canadian Forces Military Police Group, as well as Saint John Police Force for 2024. Accused persons may have had additional previous contacts with police in other years or may have come into contact with police for another reason (e.g., as a victim of crime, or related to an incident for which they were not formally identified as an accused person). Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recoded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Among those who had at least one contact with police prior to the OCSE offence in 2024, the most common offences were failure to comply with an order (11%), level 1 assault (8%), and mischief (8%).

A small (8%) proportion of the cohort had a previous contact with police for an OCSE offence from 2018 to 2024, and this was similar regardless of the type of OCSE offence they were accused of in 2024. In all, 7% of persons accused of committing an OSOAC offence and 9% of persons accused of committing an OCSAEM offence had a prior contact with police for an OCSE-related offence during the reference period. Among those who had a previous OCSE contact with police, three-quarters (76%) had one previous contact, 22% had between two and five previous contacts, and the remaining 2% had more than five previous contacts for OCSE offences.

## **Court cases related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online, 2014/2015 to 2023/2024**

The Integrated Criminal Court Survey collects information on adult criminal and youth court cases involving *Criminal Code* and other federal statute offences. This section of the analysis presents a brief overview of court and sentencing outcomes for adult criminal and youth court cases completed between 2014/2015 and 2023/2024 related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online.<sup>19</sup>

Previous analysis shows that attrition—the difference between the number of incidents reported by police and the number resulting in a completed court case—is particularly high for OCSE: for every 1,000 incidents reported by police between 2014 and 2021, 82 resulted in a completed court case by the end of 2022/2023 (Savage, 2025).<sup>20</sup>

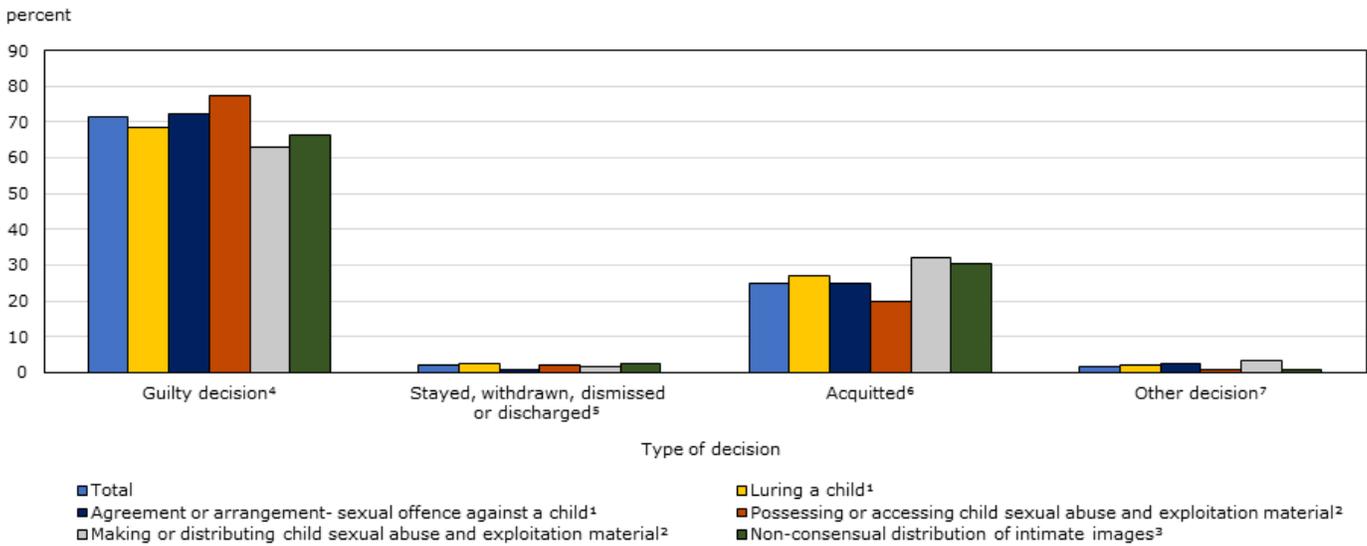
From April 1, 2014, to March 31, 2024, criminal courts in Canada processed 44,489 charges related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online. These charges were processed as part of 15,112 completed cases with 99,243 total charges.<sup>21</sup> Based on the number of total charges and cases completed during this time frame, adult cases averaged 6.9 charges per case, while youth cases averaged 4.8 charges per case.

A single court case can involve multiple charges. Between 2014/2015 and 2023/2024, there were 11,253 completed court cases where a child sexual offence likely committed or facilitated online was the most serious charge in the case. The rest of the analysis is based on these cases.

### **Seven in ten online child sexual exploitation cases completed in adult criminal court resulted in a guilty decision**

In adult criminal court, 7 in 10 (71%) cases resulted in a finding of guilt (Table 7). This proportion varied by offence type, ranging from 63% of cases where making or distributing child sexual abuse and exploitation material was the most serious offence to 77% of possessing or accessing child sexual abuse material cases (Chart 4).

**Chart 4**  
**Cases completed in adult criminal court related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online, by type of offence and type of decision, Canada, 2014/2015 to 2023/2024**



1. An offence specific to child victims and defined in the *Criminal Code* by the use of telecommunications, and is therefore assumed to have occurred online.  
 2. An offence specific to child victims but not defined in the *Criminal Code* by the use of telecommunications, however, police data show are likely committed or facilitated online.  
 3. Non-consensual distribution of intimate images became an offence in 2015 under the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act*. This is an offence not specific to child victims and is not defined in the *Criminal Code* by the use of telecommunication. However, police data show that this offence most often involves youth, and a large proportion are likely committed or facilitated online.  
 4. Guilty findings include guilty of the charged offence, of an included offence, of an attempt of the charged offence, or of an attempt of an included offence. This category also includes guilty pleas and cases where an absolute or conditional discharge has been imposed.  
 5. This category includes stays, withdrawals, dismissals and discharges at preliminary inquiry as well as court referrals to alternative or extrajudicial measures and restorative justice programs. These decisions all refer to the court stopping criminal proceedings against the accused.  
 6. Acquitted means that the accused has been found not guilty of the charges presented before the court.  
 7. Other decisions include final decisions of found not criminally responsible and waived out of province or territory. This category also includes any order where a guilty decision was not recorded, the court's acceptance of a special plea, cases which raise *Charter* arguments and cases where the accused was found unfit to stand trial.  
**Note:** A case is one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence. Includes cases where a child sexual offence likely committed or facilitated online was the most serious offence in the case. Data exclude information from superior courts in Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as municipal courts in Quebec due to the unavailability of data. Superior court information for Prince Edward Island was also unavailable until 2018/2019. Data for Quebec were not available for 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

In adult criminal court, custody was the most serious sentence for 80% of cases (Table 7).

**More than half of cases completed in youth court resulted in a finding of guilt**

In Canada, adult criminal and youth courts are separate, recognizing that youth accused of committing a criminal offence should be handled differently by the criminal justice system, with a greater focus on early and effective community-based intervention, rehabilitation and reintegration (Howell et al., 2013). The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) (2003) governs the youth justice system and applies to youth aged 12 to 17 years who have committed, or are alleged to have committed, a criminal offence.<sup>22</sup> Almost two in five (36%) persons accused by police of committing an OCSE offence in 2024 were youth between the ages of 12 and 17 years, and slightly more than one-quarter (26%) of youth accused had charges laid or recommended against them.

From 2014/2015 to 2023/2024, more than half (56%) of cases completed in youth court resulted in a finding of guilt. This proportion likely reflects the most serious cases, since less serious cases involving youth accused are often diverted from the court system under the YCJA. During this period, the most serious sentence handed down by youth courts was probation (69%) (Table 7).

## Summary

In 2024, there were 16,905 incidents of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) reported by police, with most (77%) being for online child sexual abuse and exploitation material (OCSAEM) offences. The remaining 23% of OCSE offences were online sexual offences against children (OSOAC), which include offences such as luring, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, invitation to sexual touching, and other online sexual offences against children.

The rate of OCSE was 16% lower in 2024 than in 2023 (223 versus 266 incidents per 100,000 children and youth), and this decline was attributed to the decrease in the rate of OCSAEM incidents (-26%). However, despite the overall decline in the rate of OCSE, there was a 43% increase in the rate of OSOAC incidents, which was driven by a sharp increase in the rate of luring (+65%) incidents during the same period.

Once an OCSE incident has been reported, police services must identify an accused and obtain enough evidence to proceed with laying or recommending charges. Continuous advancements in digital technologies (e.g., the development of more sophisticated privacy-enhancing features and the increased availability of, and accessibility to, generative artificial intelligence) are making cybercrime investigations increasingly more challenging. In 2024, 10% of all OCSE incidents were cleared by police, with 7% of all incidents (68% of cleared incidents) resulting in charges against an accused.

From April 1, 2014, to March 31, 2024, criminal courts in Canada processed 44,489 charges related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online. These charges were processed as part of 15,112 completed cases with 99,243 total charges. There were 11,253 completed adult and youth court cases where an OCSE offence was the most serious charge in the case. Of the cases completed in adult criminal court, 7 in 10 (71%) resulted in a finding of guilt. In youth court, more than half (56%) of cases completed in youth court resulted in a finding of guilt. This proportion likely reflects the most serious cases, since less serious cases involving youth accused are often diverted from the court system under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

## Data sources

### Uniform Crime Reporting Survey

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey was established in 1962 with the co-operation and assistance of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. The UCR was designed to measure criminal incidents that have been reported to federal, provincial/territorial and municipal police services in Canada. One incident can involve multiple offences. Counts presented in this article are based on the most serious cyber offence in the incident as determined by a standard classification rule used by all police services. The cyber violation is not necessarily the most serious violation in the incident.

Each year, the UCR database is frozen at the end of May for the production of crime statistics for the preceding calendar year. However, police services continue to send updated data to Statistics Canada after this date for incidents that occurred in previous years. Generally, these revisions constitute new accused records, as incidents are cleared and accused persons are identified by police. Some new incidents, however, may be added and previously reported incidents may be deleted as new information becomes known. Revisions are accepted for a one-year period after the data are initially released. The data are revised only once and are then permanently frozen.

The option for police to code victims and accused persons as non-binary in the UCR Survey was implemented in 2018. In the context of the UCR Survey, the term “non-binary” refers to a person who publicly expresses themselves as neither exclusively male nor exclusively female. Given that small counts of non-binary victims and accused persons may exist, the UCR Survey data available to the public have been recoded with these victims and accused persons distributed in the “men and boys” or “women and girls” categories based on the regional distribution of victims’ and accused persons’ gender. This recoding ensures the protection of the confidentiality and privacy of victims and accused persons.

## Integrated Criminal Court Survey

The Integrated Criminal Court Survey collects statistical information on adult and youth court cases involving *Criminal Code* and other federal statute offences.

All adult courts have reported to the adult component of the survey since the 2006/2007 fiscal year. Information from superior courts in Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan as well as municipal courts in Quebec was not available for extraction from their electronic reporting systems and was therefore not reported to the survey. Superior court information for Prince Edward Island was unavailable until 2018/2019.

A completed charge refers to a formal accusation against an accused person or company involving a federal statute offence that was processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. A case is defined as one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts and received a final decision. A case combines all charges against the same person having one or more key overlapping dates (date of offence, date of initiation, date of first appearance, date of decision, or date of sentencing) into a single case.

## Note to readers

Because of the complexity of cyber incidents, these data likely reflect the number of active or closed investigations for the year rather than the total number of incidents reported by police. Data are based on police-reported incidents that are recorded in police services' records management systems.

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## Notes

1. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material was referred to as online child pornography in previous releases. This updated term reflects an amendment in terminology which came into force in the *Criminal Code* in October 2025 and better describes the full scope and scale of these offences, the exploitative nature of the material, and aligns with international best practices.
2. As part of *Canada's National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet*, Public Safety Canada provides funding to enhance capacity for seven provincial and municipal Internet child exploitation police units. These units are integral in the investigation and prosecution of online child sexual exploitation cases and in rescuing child victims.
3. Public Safety Canada actively engages with international partners to combat online child sexual exploitation. These international partners include the Five Country Ministerial, the G7, WeProtect Global Alliance and the Virtual Global Taskforce.
4. Nationally representative cybercrime data in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey first became available in 2014. The UCR Survey collected information related to online crime using a cybercrime flag prior to 2014 as a pilot project involving select police services but was rolled out to most police services beginning in 2014. Prior to 2020, the number of cybercrimes is an undercount as some police services were unable to report the cybercrime indicator for all years. The data exclude the Quebec City Police in 2014 and 2015, the municipal police service of Calgary from 2014 to 2016, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) from 2014 to 2017, both the Canadian Forces Military Police from 2014 to 2019 and Dryden, a detachment of the OPP in 2022. For 2023 and 2024, the data exclude Saint John Police Force.
5. Because of the complexity of cyber incidents, these data likely reflect the number of active or closed investigations for the year rather than the total number of incidents reported by police. Data are based on police-reported incidents that are recorded in police services' records management systems.
6. Large-scale police operations often lead to a significant number of charges for online child sexual exploitation offences. For example, in 2024, the Ontario Provincial Police led Project Aquatic, a multi-jurisdictional investigation involving 27 police services across Ontario, which resulted in 348 charges being laid against 64 individuals.
7. The National Child Exploitation Crime Centre is not the only source of reports. In 2011, Canada enacted an *Act respecting the mandatory reporting of Internet child pornography by persons who provide an Internet service (the Mandatory Reporting Act or MRA)*, which requires that persons or entities providing an Internet service to the public must report known or suspected online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences to police. In addition, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection also forwards cases received by Cypertip.ca to police of jurisdiction for investigation.
8. In 2024, online child sexual exploitation incidents accounted for 19% of all police-reported cybercrime incidents.
9. Despite the 24% decrease from 2023, the rate of online child sexual abuse and exploitation material incidents reported by police in 2024 is 35% higher than in 2022. The drop from 2023 to 2024 follows a large increase from 2022 to 2023 which was partially the result of more cases—both current and historical—being brought forward to local police services by specialized provincial Internet Child Exploitation police units and the National Child Exploitation Crime Centre.
10. Cybertip.ca receives reports from around the world, meaning that not all reports involve incidents that occurred in, or involves child victims living in, Canada.
11. For more information, see Alberta's *Protecting Victims of Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Act*, British Columbia's *Intimate Images Protection Act*, Manitoba's *The Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Act*, Newfoundland and Labrador's *Intimate Images Protection Act*, New Brunswick's *Intimate Images Unlawful Distribution Act*, Nova Scotia's *Intimate Images and Cyber-protection Act*, Prince Edward Island's *Intimate Images Protection Act*, Quebec's *Act to Counter Non-Consensual Sharing of Intimate Images*, and Saskatchewan's *The Privacy Act - Privacy of Intimate Images*.
12. Victim age is based on the age of the victim on the date of an incident or on the last date of an incident that spanned a time period. Of all non-consensual distribution of intimate images incidents reported by police in 2024 (including incidents involving victims aged 18 years and older and non-cyber incidents), 41% of victims identified by police were aged 17 years or younger.
13. This calculation is based on the total number of incidents reported by police in 2024 that had a cyber component, including offences such as extortion and criminal harassment, regardless of victim age.

14. Alternative measures include issuing a written caution, giving a verbal warning, or referring the accused to an appropriate program or agency instead of laying or recommending charges.

15. Includes current and former legally married spouses, common-law partners and dating partners (i.e., boyfriends and girlfriends), and other intimate partners (e.g., one-night stands). Victims of spousal violence include those aged 15 years and older, and victims of dating violence include those aged 12 years and older.

16. It is important to note that Cybertip.ca receives reports of sexual extortion from individuals worldwide, meaning that not all reports necessarily involve incidents that occurred in Canada nor child victims living in Canada. While research shows that, in general, sexual offences are largely underreported to police, the larger reporting base may partially explain why the data collected by Cybertip.ca differs from data reported by police services in Canada.

17. Any interactions with police for other reasons (e.g., welfare checks, mental health support, community outreach) were out of scope for this analysis.

18. Includes all *Criminal Code* violations and other federal statute offences.

19. The Integrated Criminal Court Survey (ICCS) only captures data on completed court cases, meaning that cases still active in the court system (or completed after March 31, 2024) are not included in this analysis. The ICCS does not have cybercrime flag, so it is not possible to know whether the offence was committed online. As such, this analysis is limited to certain offences that are likely to have been committed or facilitated online. The ICCS collects data on a fiscal year basis. See Data sources for coverage gaps and data limitations.

20. For comprehensive data on court charges and outcomes related to online child sexual exploitation incidents reported by police between 2014 and 2021 using linked data from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the Integrated Criminal Court Survey, see Savage, 2025.

21. A completed case is one or more charges against an accused person or company, which were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. A case is not deemed complete until all charges in that case have received a final decision. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence. Includes cases where a child sexual offence likely committed or facilitated online was the most serious offence in the case. Data exclude information from superior courts in Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan as well as municipal courts in Quebec due to the unavailability of data. Superior court information for Prince Edward Island was also unavailable until 2018/2019. Data for Quebec were not available for 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

22. In Canada, children under the age of 12 years cannot be held criminally responsible.

## Detailed Data Tables

**Table 1-A**  
**Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, by type of offence and year, Canada, 2014 to 2024**

Year	Online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>						Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences <sup>2</sup>		
	Total online child sexual exploitation <sup>3</sup>	Total online sexual offences against children	Luring a child	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images <sup>4</sup>	Invitation to sexual touching	Other online sexual offences against children <sup>5</sup>	Total online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Possessing or accessing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Making or distributing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material
2014	3,110	1,144	932	..	160	52	1,966	1,966	..
2015	3,672	1,066	851	33	109	73	2,606	1,756	850
2016	5,576	1,412	1,081	115	77	139	4,164	1,278	2,886
2017	5,482	1,573	1,087	211	101	174	3,909	1,041	2,868
2018	5,493	1,759	1,226	206	104	223	3,734	621	3,113
2019	7,479	2,104	1,394	323	121	266	5,375	1,133	4,242
2020	9,875	2,378	1,724	264	143	247	7,497	1,598	5,899
2021	9,966	2,532	1,798	280	157	297	7,434	1,903	5,531
2022	12,076	2,734	1,922	359	168	285	9,342	1,755	7,587
2023	19,857	2,697	1,730	496	166	305	17,160	2,298	14,862
2024	16,905	3,927	2,903	488	156	380	12,978	2,192	10,786
<b>Total</b>	<b>99,491</b>	<b>23,326</b>	<b>16,648</b>	<b>2,775</b>	<b>1,462</b>	<b>2,441</b>	<b>76,165</b>	<b>17,541</b>	<b>58,624</b>

.. not available for reference period

1. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.

2. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

3. Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.

4. Non-consensual distribution of intimate images became a *Criminal Code* (s. 162.1(1)) offence in 2015 under the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act*.

5. Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.

**Note:** An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Prior to 2020, the number of cybercrimes is an undercount as some police services were unable to report the cybercrime indicator for all years. The data exclude the Quebec City Police in 2014 and 2015, the municipal police service of Calgary from 2014 to 2016, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) from 2014 to 2017, both the Canadian Forces Military Police from 2014 to 2019 and Dryden, a detachment of the OPP in 2022. For 2023 and 2024, the data exclude Saint John Police Force. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. Between 2014 and 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation in 98% of online child sexual exploitation incidents. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recorded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 1-B**  
**Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, by type of offence and year, Canada, 2014 to 2024**

Year	Online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>						Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences <sup>2</sup>			
	Total online child sexual exploitation <sup>3</sup>	Total online sexual offences against children	Luring a child	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images <sup>4</sup>	Invitation to sexual touching	Other online sexual offences against children <sup>5</sup>	Total online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Possessing or accessing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Making or distributing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	
	rate per 100,000 population aged 17 years and younger									
2014	49.9	18.4	15.0	..	2.6	0.8	31.5	31.5	..	
2015	58.6	17.0	13.6	0.5	1.7	1.2	41.6	28.0	13.6	
2016	88.1	22.3	17.1	1.8	1.2	2.2	65.8	20.2	45.6	
2017	82.5	23.7	16.3	3.2	1.5	2.6	58.8	15.7	43.1	
2018	76.9	24.6	17.2	2.9	1.5	3.1	52.3	8.7	43.6	
2019	103.8	29.2	19.3	4.5	1.7	3.7	74.6	15.7	58.9	
2020	135.6	32.7	23.7	3.6	2.0	3.4	103.0	21.9	81.0	
2021	136.9	34.8	24.7	3.8	2.2	4.1	102.1	26.1	76.0	
2022	164.3	37.2	26.1	4.9	2.3	3.9	127.1	23.9	103.2	
2023	266.5	36.2	23.2	6.7	2.2	4.1	230.3	30.8	199.4	
2024	223.0	51.8	38.3	6.4	2.1	5.0	171.2	28.9	142.3	

.. not available for reference period

1. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.

2. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

3. Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.

4. Non-consensual distribution of intimate images became a *Criminal Code* (s. 162.1(1)) offence in 2015 under the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act*.

5. Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.

**Note:** An incident is considered to be an online incident if it was flagged as a cybercrime. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Prior to 2020, the number of cybercrimes is an undercount as some police services were unable to report the cybercrime indicator for all years. The data exclude the Quebec City Police in 2014 and 2015, the municipal police service of Calgary from 2014 to 2016, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) from 2014 to 2017, both the Canadian Forces Military Police from 2014 to 2019 and Dryden, a detachment of the OPP in 2022. For 2023 and 2024, the data exclude Saint John Police Force. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. Between 2014 and 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation in 98% of online child sexual exploitation incidents. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recorded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population and population counts are based on July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Centre for Demography.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 2**  
**Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, by incident clearance status, Canada, 2024**

Incident clearance status	Total online child sexual exploitation <sup>1</sup>	Total online sexual offences against children <sup>2</sup>	Luring a child	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images	Invitation to sexual touching	Other online sexual offences against children <sup>3</sup>	Total online child sexual abuse and exploitation material <sup>4</sup>	Possessing or accessing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Making or distributing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material
	percent								
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Not cleared</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>95</b>
Not cleared <sup>5</sup>	1	1	1	X	X	1	1	1	1
Open, still under investigation	10	9	9	X	4	8	11	23	8
Insufficient evidence to proceed	77	60	69	41	18	36	82	63	86
Victim or complainant declined to proceed (no accused identified)	2	6	5	14	X	4	1	1	0
<b>Cleared</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>
Cleared by charge	7	17	12	9	74	42	4	8	3
Cleared otherwise	3	7	4	26	2	8	2	4	2

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0 true zero or value rounded to zero

1. Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.

2. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.

3. Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.

4. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

5. Unsolved incidents were previously classified simply as “not cleared.” In 2018, more detailed options were added to better reflect the reasons why incidents may remain uncleared.

**Note:** An incident is considered to be an online incident if it was flagged as a cybercrime. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. In 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation for 99% of online child sexual exploitation incidents. The data exclude Saint John Police Force. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. Includes a small proportion of online sexual offences against children incidents where victim age was recoded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 3**  
**Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, by offence type and incident characteristic, Canada, 2024**

Selected incident characteristic	Online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>						Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences <sup>2</sup>		
	Total online child sexual exploitation <sup>3</sup>	Total online sexual offences against children	Luring a child	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images	Invitation to sexual touching	Other online sexual offences against children <sup>4</sup>	Total online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences	Possessing or accessing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Making or distributing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,905</b>	<b>3,927</b>	<b>2,903</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>12,978</b>	<b>2,192</b>	<b>10,786</b>
<b>Number of violations within the incident</b>									
Single violation	8,141	2,892	2,343	360	18	171	5,249	2,151	3,098
Multiple violations	8,764	1,035	560	128	138	209	7,729	41	7,688
<b>Length of incident</b>									
Isolated or single-day incident <sup>5</sup>	15,085	3,096	2,362	382	86	266	11,989	2,021	9,968
2 to 7 days	244	138	97	20	9	12	106	25	81
8 to 30 days	329	201	140	28	13	20	128	36	92
31 to 365 days	1,044	376	244	40	35	57	668	83	585
More than 365 days	203	116	60	18	13	25	87	27	60
<b>Median duration in days<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>113</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>364</b>
<b>Delay in reporting to police<sup>7</sup></b>									
Reported same or next day	10,684	2,817	2,153	361	86	217	7,867	1,356	6,511
Reported same day as incident	10,314	2,603	2,026	318	77	182	7,711	1,331	6,380
Reported next day after incident	370	214	127	43	9	35	156	25	131
Reported 2 to 7 days after incident	678	290	183	55	16	36	388	80	308
Reported 8 to 30 days after incident	1,438	210	137	30	13	30	1,228	211	1,017

See notes at the end of the table.

**Table 3**  
**Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, by offence type and incident characteristic, Canada, 2024**

Selected incident characteristic	Online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>						Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences <sup>2</sup>		
	Total online child sexual exploitation <sup>3</sup>	Total online sexual offences against children	Luring a child	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images	Invitation to sexual touching	Other online sexual offences against children <sup>4</sup>	Total online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences	Possessing or accessing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	Making or distributing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material
Reported 31 to 365 days after incident	2,966	445	331	28	24	62	2,521	475	2,046
Reported more than one year after incident	1,012	108	63	X	X	24	904	48	856
Reported while the incident was ongoing	127	57	36	X	X	11	70	22	48
<b>Median reporting delay in days<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>50</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>61</b>

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- Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.
- Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.
- Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.
- Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.
- Includes incidents that had the same start and end date, as well as incidents that had no start date.
- Excludes isolated incidents.
- Based on the recorded end date of an incident and the date it was reported to police.
- Excludes incidents that were reported the same day the incident occurred and incidents that were reported before the recorded end date.

**Note:** An incident is considered to be an online incident if it was flagged as a cybercrime. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. In 2024, the cyber violation was the most serious violation for 99% of online child sexual exploitation incidents. The data exclude Saint John Police Force. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recoded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 4**  
**Victims of police-reported online sexual offences against children, by type of offence and victim characteristics, Canada, 2024**

Victim characteristics <sup>3</sup>	Total online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>		Luring a child		Non-consensual distribution of intimate images		Other online sexual offences against children <sup>2</sup>	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total number of victims</b>	<b>1,649</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender of victim<sup>4</sup></b>								
Victim was a girl	1,288	78	770	79	341	74	177	80
Victim was a boy	361	22	199	21	118	26	44	20
<b>Age group of victim<sup>5</sup></b>								
Victim was a child (aged 0 to 11 years)	241	15	167	17	23	5	51	23
Victim was a youth (aged 12 to 17 years)	1,408	85	802	83	436	95	170	77
<b>Accused-victim relationship</b>								
Family (parent, sibling, other family) <sup>6</sup>	186	11	139	14	11	2	36	16
Spouse, common-law, dating or other intimate partner <sup>7</sup>	233	14	66	7	135	29	32	14
Friend	193	12	62	6	108	24	23	10
Casual acquaintance	411	25	219	23	149	32	43	19
Authority figure	74	4	61	6	X	X	X	X
Stranger	529	32	410	42	54	12	65	29
Other <sup>8</sup>	21	1	10	1	X	X	X	X

X suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

1. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.
2. Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.
3. Includes incidents with a single victim, where victim gender was known and victim age was 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident. Excludes online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences because these incidents do not have victim files.
4. Excludes victims whose gender was recorded as unknown.
5. Based on the victim's age on the first recorded date of the incident. Excludes victims whose age was recorded as unknown.
6. Includes biological, step, adoptive and foster parents. Includes all other family members related by blood, marriage (including common-law) or adoption (e.g., siblings, children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and in-laws).
7. Includes current and former legally married spouses, common-law partners and dating partners (i.e., boyfriends and girlfriends), and other intimate partners (e.g., one-night stands). Victims of spousal violence include those aged 15 years and older, and victims of dating violence include those aged 12 years and older.
8. Includes neighbours, roommates, reverse authority figures (i.e., student-to-teacher, patient-to-doctor), business relationships and criminal relationships (i.e., relationships based on illegal activities).

**Note:** An incident is considered to be an online incident if it was flagged as a cybercrime. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. The data exclude Saint John Police Force. Counts are based on victim records, where the most serious violation against the victim was identified as the cyber violation. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. The option for police to code victims as "non-binary" in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey was implemented in 2018. In the context of the UCR Survey, the term "non-binary" refers to a person who publicly expresses themselves as neither exclusively male nor exclusively female. Given that small counts of non-binary victims and accused persons may exist, the UCR Survey data available to the public have been recoded with these victims distributed in the "men and boys" or "women and girls" categories based on the regional distribution of victims' gender. This recoding ensures the protection of the confidentiality and privacy of victims. In some incidents, the victim was 17 years or younger when the victimization began, but was an adult when the victimization ended. Victim age was recoded to the age when the victimization began. Percent calculations exclude incidents where victim gender, victim age or the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 5**  
**Persons accused in police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents, by type of offence and gender of the accused, Canada, 2024**

Offence	Women and girls		Men and boys		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total online child sexual exploitation<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>213</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1,634</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total online sexual offences against children<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>106</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>100</b>
Luring a child	33	7	446	93	479	100
Non-consensual distribution of intimate images	51	23	169	77	220	100
Invitation to sexual touching	5	4	114	96	119	100
Other online sexual offences against children <sup>3</sup>	17	8	196	92	213	100
<b>Total online child sexual abuse and exploitation material<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>107</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>816</b>	<b>100</b>
Possessing or accessing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	23	9	244	91	267	100
Making or distributing online child sexual abuse and exploitation material	84	15	465	85	549	100

1. Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.

2. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.

3. Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.

4. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

**Note:** An incident is considered to be an online incident if it was flagged as a cybercrime. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. The data exclude the Saint John Police Force. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. In Canada, children under the age of 12 years cannot be held criminally responsible and are excluded. Excludes accused persons whose gender or age was recorded as unknown. Given that small counts of accused persons identified as gender diverse may exist, the Uniform Crime Reporting data available to the public has been recoded to assign these counts to either female or male to ensure the protection of confidentiality and privacy. Accused persons identified as gender diverse have been assigned to either female or male based on the regional distribution of the person's gender. Counts are based on the cyber violation which may not be the most serious violation in the incident. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 6**  
**Incident and accused characteristics of persons who had contact with police as an accused person for an online child sexual exploitation offence in 2024, by selected characteristics, Canada, 2024**

Selected accused and incident characteristics	Online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>		Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences <sup>2</sup>		Total <sup>3</sup>	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total accused</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,797</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender of accused</b>						
Women and girls	111	11	128	16	239	13
Men and boys	868	89	686	84	1,554	87
Unknown	1	...	3	...	4	...
<b>Age of accused</b>						
12 to 17 years	359	37	296	39	655	38
18 to 29 years	239	25	136	18	375	22
30 to 44 years	231	24	182	24	413	24
45 to 64 years	111	12	112	15	223	13
65 to 110 years	24	2	31	4	55	3
Unknown	16	...	60	...	76	...
<b>Type of offence</b>						
Luring a child	446	46	...	...	446	46
Non-consensual distribution of intimate images	226	23	...	...	226	23
Invitation to sexual touching	109	11	...	...	109	11
Other online sexual offences against children <sup>4</sup>	199	20	...	...	199	20
Making or distributing online sexual abuse and exploitation material	...	...	574	70	574	70
Possessing or accessing online sexual abuse and exploitation material	...	...	243	30	243	30
<b>Clearance status</b>						
Cleared by charge	649	66	466	57	1,115	62
Cleared otherwise	331	34	351	43	682	38

See notes at the end of the table.

**Table 6**  
**Incident and accused characteristics of persons who had contact with police as an accused person for an online child sexual exploitation offence in 2024, by selected characteristics, Canada, 2024**

Selected accused and incident characteristics	Online sexual offences against children <sup>1</sup>		Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences <sup>2</sup>		Total <sup>3</sup>	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Number of violations within the incident</b>						
Single violation	367	37	426	52	793	44
Multiple violations	613	63	391	48	1,004	56

... not applicable

1. Includes online sexual violations against children and other online sexual offences where the victim was identified as being aged 17 years or younger on the first recorded date of the incident.

2. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences are cybercrime incidents involving offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to make, distribute, possess or access child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

3. Includes online sexual offences against children and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences.

4. Other online sexual offences against children is a catch all category that encompasses all other sexual violations against children (excluding online child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences) which were facilitated by, or involved the use of, technology.

**Note:** Counts are based on individuals who had contact with police as an accused person for a cohort (OCSE) incident in 2024. If a person was accused of more than one cohort incident during the year, the most recent cohort incident was used. An incident is considered to be an online incident if it was flagged as a cybercrime. An incident is flagged as a cybercrime when the crime targets information and communication technology (ICT), or when the crime used ICT to commit the offence. ICT includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, computers, servers, digital technology, digital telecommunications devices, phones and networks. Crimes committed over text and through messages using social media platforms are also considered cybercrime activity. Counts are based on accused persons identified in connection with an incident where an online child sexual exploitation and abuse offence was identified as the cyber violation. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC) serves as the primary point of contact in Canada for investigations related to the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. Working in partnership with specialized provincial Internet child exploitation policing units, police services across Canada and internationally, the NCECC forwards suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) to the appropriate police of jurisdiction for investigation. Due to a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of these cases (many of which involve Generative Artificial Intelligence), many police services do not have the resources to investigate all cases forwarded by the NCECC. As a result, these data reflect the number of police-reported investigations for the year, accounting for only a subset of suspected OCSE cases within Canada. In Canada, children under 12 years of age cannot be held criminally responsible and are excluded. Percent calculations exclude incidents where the gender or age of the accused person was unknown. The option for police to code accused persons as "non-binary" in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey was implemented in 2018. In the context of the UCR Survey, the term "non-binary" refers to a person who publicly expresses themselves as neither exclusively male nor exclusively female. Given that small counts of non-binary accused persons may exist, the UCR Survey data available to the public have been recoded with these accused persons distributed in the "men and boys" or "women and girls" categories based on the regional distribution of accused persons' gender. This recoding ensures the protection of the confidentiality and privacy of accused persons. The data exclude the Saint John Police Force, as well as data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children and the Canadian Forces Military Police Group. Includes a small proportion of incidents where victim age was recoded. In some incidents, the victim was aged 17 years or younger at the time of the offence, but was aged 18 years or older when the incident was reported by police. Victim age was recoded to the age of the victim on the first recorded date of the incident. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

**Table 7**  
**Cases completed in adult criminal and youth courts related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online, by type of offence, case and accused characteristics, type of decision and most serious sentence, Canada, 2014/2015 to 2023/2024**

Case characteristics	Luring a child <sup>1</sup>	Agreement or arrangement—sexual offence against a child <sup>1</sup>	Possessing or accessing child sexual abuse and exploitation material <sup>2</sup>	Making or distributing child sexual abuse and exploitation material <sup>2</sup>	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images <sup>3</sup>	Total cases
	number					
<b>Cases related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online</b>						
Youth courts	339	15	551	429	619	1,953
Adult criminal courts	1,850	133	4,279	1,402	1,636	9,300
<b>Type of decision—youth courts</b>						
Guilty <sup>4</sup>	223	14	331	193	327	1,088
Aquitted <sup>5</sup>	6	0	4	11	9	30
Stayed, withdrawn, dismissed or discharged <sup>6</sup>	110	0	215	224	283	832
Other <sup>7</sup>	0	1	1	1	0	3
<b>Type of decision—adult criminal courts</b>						
Guilty <sup>4</sup>	1,269	96	3,305	885	1,084	6,639
Aquitted <sup>5</sup>	47	1	83	22	40	193
Stayed, withdrawn, dismissed or discharged <sup>6</sup>	496	33	851	448	500	2,328
Other <sup>7</sup>	38	3	40	47	12	140
<b>Age group of adults found guilty<sup>8</sup></b>						
18 to 24 years	344	8	480	135	344	1,311
25 to 34 years	394	30	878	260	380	1,942
35 to 44 years	262	36	713	209	225	1,445
45 to 54 years	148	7	578	172	89	994
55 years and older	97	14	603	98	31	843
<b>Sex of persons found guilty<sup>9</sup></b>						
Female	23	8	48	47	157	283
Male	1,374	94	3,388	945	1,183	6,984
<b>Most serious sentence—youth courts<sup>10</sup></b>						
Custody and supervision	13	0	5	11	6	35
Probation <sup>11</sup>	143	10	214	132	191	690
Deferred custody and supervision	12	0	20	15	6	53
Community service	4	0	10	6	24	44
Other sentence <sup>12</sup>	29	2	49	17	87	184
Not available (guilty but no sentencing detail)	22	2	33	12	13	82

See notes at the end of the table.

**Table 7**

**Cases completed in adult criminal and youth courts related to child sexual offences likely committed or facilitated online, by type of offence, case and accused characteristics, type of decision and most serious sentence, Canada, 2014/2015 to 2023/2024**

Case characteristics	Luring a child <sup>1</sup>	Agreement or arrangement—sexual offence against a child <sup>1</sup>	Possessing or accessing child sexual abuse and exploitation material <sup>2</sup>	Making or distributing child sexual abuse and exploitation material <sup>2</sup>	Non-consensual distribution of intimate images <sup>3</sup>	Total cases
	number					
<b>Most serious sentence—adult criminal courts<sup>10</sup></b>						
Custody	1,043	87	2,619	730	297	4,776
Probation <sup>11</sup>	34	1	97	18	462	612
Conditional sentence	50	2	213	16	239	520
Other sentence <sup>13</sup>	14	0	16	7	41	78
Not available (guilty but no sentencing detail)	128	6	360	114	45	653

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. An offence specific to child victims and defined in the *Criminal Code* by the use of telecommunications, and is therefore assumed to have occurred online.
2. An offence specific to child victims but not defined in the *Criminal Code* by the use of telecommunications, however, police data indicates are likely committed or facilitated online.
3. Non-consensual distribution of intimate images became an offence in 2015 under the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act*. This is an offence not specific to child victims only and is not defined in the *Criminal Code* by the use of telecommunication. However, police data indicates this offence most often involved youth, and a large proportion are likely committed or facilitated online.
4. Guilty findings include guilty of the charged offence, of an included offence, of an attempt of the charged offence, or of an attempt of an included offence. This category also includes guilty pleas, and cases where an absolute or conditional discharge has been imposed.
5. Acquitted means that the accused has been found not guilty of the charges presented before the court.
6. This category includes stays, withdrawals, dismissals and discharges at preliminary inquiry as well as court referrals to alternative or extrajudicial measures and restorative justice programs. These decisions all refer to the court stopping criminal proceedings against the accused.
7. Other decisions include final decisions of found not criminally responsible and waived out of province or territory. This category also includes any order where a guilty decision was not recorded, the court's acceptance of a special plea, cases which raise *Charter* arguments and cases where the accused was found unfit to stand trial.
8. Age is the age of the accused at the time of the offence. Excludes accused persons whose age was coded as unknown.
9. Includes both adult and youth accused. Data exclude cases where the gender of the accused was unknown or where the accused was a company. Information on the gender of the accused is not available from Manitoba. For Quebec, gender is determined on the basis of the accused's name, producing a relatively higher rate of unknown gender.
10. Information on sentencing reflects the most serious sentence handed down by the courts related to a guilty finding for a child sexual offence likely committed online. There can be multiple sentences related to the same charge or case (e.g., a sentence of custody followed by a period of probation). While this does not impact information on sentences of custody, which is always the most serious sentence, it means that percentages for other types of sentence may be underestimated.
11. Probation is mandatory in cases where the accused is given a conditional discharge or a suspended sentence.
12. The category 'other sentences' includes, for example, absolute discharge, restitution, prohibition, seizure, forfeiture, compensation, pay purchaser and conditional discharge, as well as other court imposed conditions such as apologies and essays. Other sentences also includes deferred custody and supervision, intensive support and supervision, attendance at non-residential program and reprimand where sentencing data under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* are not available. Figures for 'other sentences' as the most serious sentence are low since they are among the least serious sentence types, and are often used in combination with other more serious sentences.
13. Other most serious sentences include fines, restitution, absolute and conditional discharge, suspended sentence, community service order and prohibition orders, among others. Figures for 'other sentences' as the most serious sentence are low since they are among the least serious sentence types, and are often used in combination with other more serious sentences.

**Note:** A case is one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence. Includes cases where a child sexual offence likely committed or facilitated online was the most serious offence in the case. Data exclude information from superior courts in Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as municipal courts in Quebec due to the unavailability of data. Superior court information for Prince Edward Island was also unavailable until 2018/2019. Data for Quebec were not available for 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.