



2025

NCOSE MID-YEAR REPORT

More than
a Victory...

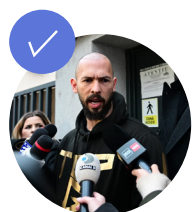
A VOW.

NATIONAL
CENTER ON
SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WIN?

At the National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE), a “victory” isn’t just a headline or a passed bill. It’s a signpost on a longer road - a vow that we are not here for small change. We’re building something much bigger: a world where every person can live and love free from sexual abuse and exploitation.

So yes, we celebrate each step forward. But we also stay in the fight when it’s hard, when it’s slow, and when the opposition is loud and well-funded. Because this isn’t just a campaign. It’s a commitment.



We filed a groundbreaking countersuit against influencers and brothers Andrew and Tristan Tate, who sued and harassed a survivor of their alleged global sex trafficking operation in order to silence her. Jane Doe’s counterclaim is comprised of over 100 pages of evidence — including the brothers’ own self-incriminating statements.



We’re challenging the pornography industry directly, suing major platforms for allowing a minor access to their sites through a first-of-its-kind lawsuit brought under a state age verification law which shines a light on the way Big Porn preys on children.



Our president, Marcel van der Watt, testified as an expert witness in the South African case of Joshlin Smith, a child trafficked by her parents.

Corporate Accountability — The Year Section 230 Took Center Stage

Tech companies want you to think they’re too big to be moved. But you’ve proven otherwise.

This year’s Dirty Dozen List wasn’t about twelve companies. It was about one law that protects them all: Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act.

For too long, Section 230 has shielded Big Tech from accountability when children are exploited, when survivors are silenced, when explicit images are shared without consent.

Justice That Transcends Headlines

Some battles make the news. Others quietly change the world.

Achieving justice is often slow, but we will never be silent. That’s why the NCOSE Law Center is committed to representing survivors, challenging exploitative systems, and filing cutting edge legal actions to hold exploiters accountable, radically change systems, and influence law and culture.



These legal fights are complex. They take time. But we pursue them because justice isn’t a single moment; it’s an enduring promise. And we offer all of our survivor clients pro bono (free) legal representation—because no survivor should face their abuser alone or go bankrupt to secure justice. Each case is a battle, but we are committed not just to headlines, but to outcomes.

So, in 2025, we changed course. We named Section 230 itself to the Dirty Dozen List.

We highlighted twelve survivor stories, each showing how a real individual suffered irreparable damage because tech companies facilitated and profited from their harm with impunity. Their stories exposed just how dangerous blanket immunity can be when profit is prioritized over people.





A Dating App Matched a Child with Nearby Adult Predators ... and Escaped Accountability

At 15 years old, John Doe downloaded and created an account on Grindr. He was lonely and often bullied at school for being on the autism spectrum. He thought he could find some companionship on Grindr.

Despite being younger than the platform's professed age limit, there was **no robust age verification** process in place to keep him from moving forward. All he had to do was check a box to claim that he was over 18.

Almost immediately upon downloading the app, **Grindr matched John with four unknown adult males.** When he met up with the men in person, they raped him several times.

Undoubtedly, those four adult men shoulder the blame for John's rape. But so does Grindr. Grindr claimed to be an 18+ dating app, **yet it is aggressively marketed to children.** It did not verify John's age when he signed up for an account. Instead, it welcomed the child onto the app, **geolocated him, and matched him with nearby adult predators.**

But when John and his family filed a lawsuit against Grindr for facilitating this child sexual abuse, the court dismissed the case under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. Section 230 has been interpreted to protect tech companies from facing repercussions when their platforms harm their users, even when the company clearly took an active role in causing that harm.

This is exactly the reason it's time to reform Section 230, so it protects children from abuse, rather than enables it!

PUBLIC POLICY: FROM PROTEST TO POLICY



The TAKE IT DOWN Act has been signed into law! This is a landmark **and overwhelming bipartisan** win in the fight to curb image-based sexual abuse (IBSA). For the first time, uploading or distributing sexually explicit images without the consent of the person depicted is a federal crime—and platforms are required to take swift action to remove these images when a survivor or their representative reports them.



Utah and Texas became the first states to pass the App Store Accountability Act, requiring app marketplaces to verify users' ages before exposing them to adult content.



The Safer Devices for Kids Act has been signed into law in Alabama, the second state to enact this important law after Utah in 2024! This bill requires that filters for sexually explicit content automatically be turned ON when a smartphone or tablet is activated for use by a minor.



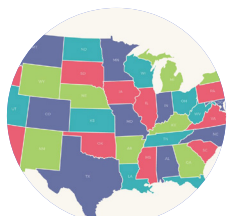
A Senate Judiciary Committee hearing in February featured experts highlighting how Section 230 shields those who profit from exploitation — showing growing consensus for reform. Two NCOSE advisors were invited to testify.



Our team helped defeat a dangerous Senate proposal that would have blocked states from regulating AI for 10 years, threatening efforts to protect kids from AI-generated abuse. **This AI moratorium would have undermined protections against tools like nudifying apps, AI-facilitated abuse material, and chatbots grooming minors.** Thanks to swift advocacy, including NCOSE's leadership, the provision was rejected 99-1.



Christen Price, Senior Legal Counsel at NCOSE, and Dawn Hawkins, Senior Advisor to NCOSE, recently testified before Congress—**Christen on deepfake pornography and the NO FAKES Act in the Senate, and Dawn on protecting children online in the House.**



In the first half of 2025, **NCOSE supported legislation in 15 states.**



In a landmark decision, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld that states can legally require pornography websites to verify users' ages to keep kids off their sites! NCOSE filed an Amicus Brief on behalf of 15 Texas State Senators supporting the Texas age verification law before the Supreme Court and continues to lead a multi-layered effort to protect kids from pornography.

These victories didn't appear overnight. They're the result of years of steady, strategic advocacy made possible by NCOSE supporters. And they're just the beginning.

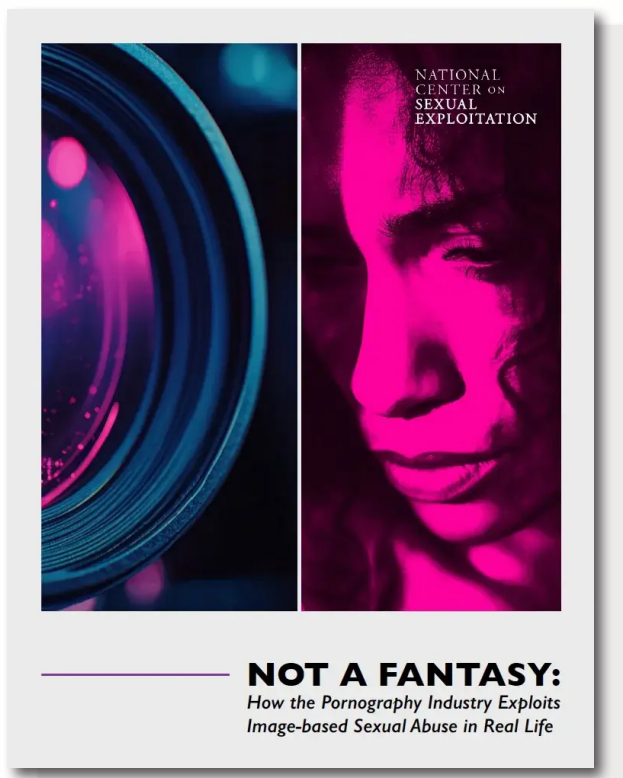
RESEARCH & EDUCATION: EXPOSING EXPLOITATION IN ALL ITS FORMS

This year, we released a powerful new report: “Not a Fantasy: How the Pornography Industry Exploits Image-Based Sexual Abuse in Real Life.”

While AI-generated content, deepfakes, and revenge porn dominate headlines, our research proves that the pornography industry is not a bystander - it's often the vehicle for these violations. The event at our DC office brought together lawmakers, advocates, and survivors to drive home one message: this is not entertainment...it's abuse. We're building something much bigger: a world where every person can live and love free from sexual abuse and exploitation.



From left to right: Survivor-Leaders and Advocates Jewell Baraka and Joshua Broome, and NCOSE Senior Attorney Christen Price.



**This Fight Is Long,
We Are Unshakable!**

These aren't just victories. They're vows - to keep showing up, to keep fighting, to keep believing in a world where human dignity is non-negotiable. And we're not stopping. We're here for the long haul. And we're here with you.

Dear Friends,

What you've read in this report isn't just what we have done. It's what you have made possible. Every legal breakthrough, policy win, and survivor empowered is a direct result of your choice to stand up and say: sexual exploitation has no place in our world.

At the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, we believe real change doesn't come from headlines. It comes from long-term commitment. Because of you, that commitment is stronger than ever. You have fueled action in courtrooms, in Congress, and in communities. We are still standing and still fighting because of your steady support.

This work is not easy. But it is filled with hope. And we are so grateful to be in it with you.

Onward together,



Marcel Van Der Watt,
President



Dani Pinter,
Senior Vice President and
Director of the NCOSE Law Center



Haley McNamara,
Senior Vice President of Strategic
Initiatives and Programs



Thank you for your steadfast support and your hope that change is possible! Your partnership fuels the fight for a world free from sexual abuse and exploitation, and the impact made is a testament to your commitment.

The journey is not without its challenges—the work addresses some of the toughest issues of our time, especially in the rapidly changing digital landscape. The rise of online sexual exploitation requires us to adapt, respond with urgency, and continue innovating in this new era.

The need for action is as urgent as ever. With your ongoing support, we continue to push forward, ensuring that every person can live and love free from harm. Will you share this with your friends and invite them to join this movement?!

OUR PROMISE!

NATIONAL CENTER ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation - We believe every human being deserves the opportunity to live life to its fullest potential; to pursue dreams and ambitions; express creativity and hone talents; seek beauty, truth, and faith; experience hope, joy, and love with family and friends—to thrive. Such a vision requires not only individuals and institutions that work towards its realization but also a culture that embraces its responsibility to preserve and protect human flourishing. We aspire to create that culture.

