



NATIONAL CENTER ON
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

2023 MID-YEAR REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM DAWN HAWKINS

Dear Friends:

The issue of sexual abuse and exploitation, and the harm it causes to all aspects of society, can be overwhelming. Because of that, it is often tempting to just deal with the symptoms of the problem, rather than addressing it at its source. But if we do not stop it at its source, while we might win little battles that save a few individuals, we can find ourselves in danger of losing a greater war that will create even more casualties from sexual exploitation.

That is why the National Center on Sexual Exploitation focuses on primary prevention – to stop the problem at its source. And we are doing just that!

The NCOSE “Dirty Dozen List” – now 10 years old – has many corporations shaking in their boots! After receiving our letter informing them of the inclusion of the Apple App Store on the list, Apple reached out to us immediately to discuss our concerns!

Other corporate advocacy efforts have also resulted in a massive sea change at Google – the Goliath of Big Tech – which has now instituted major changes to protect children online and protect survivors of sexual exploitation from having to relive their trauma every day on the internet.

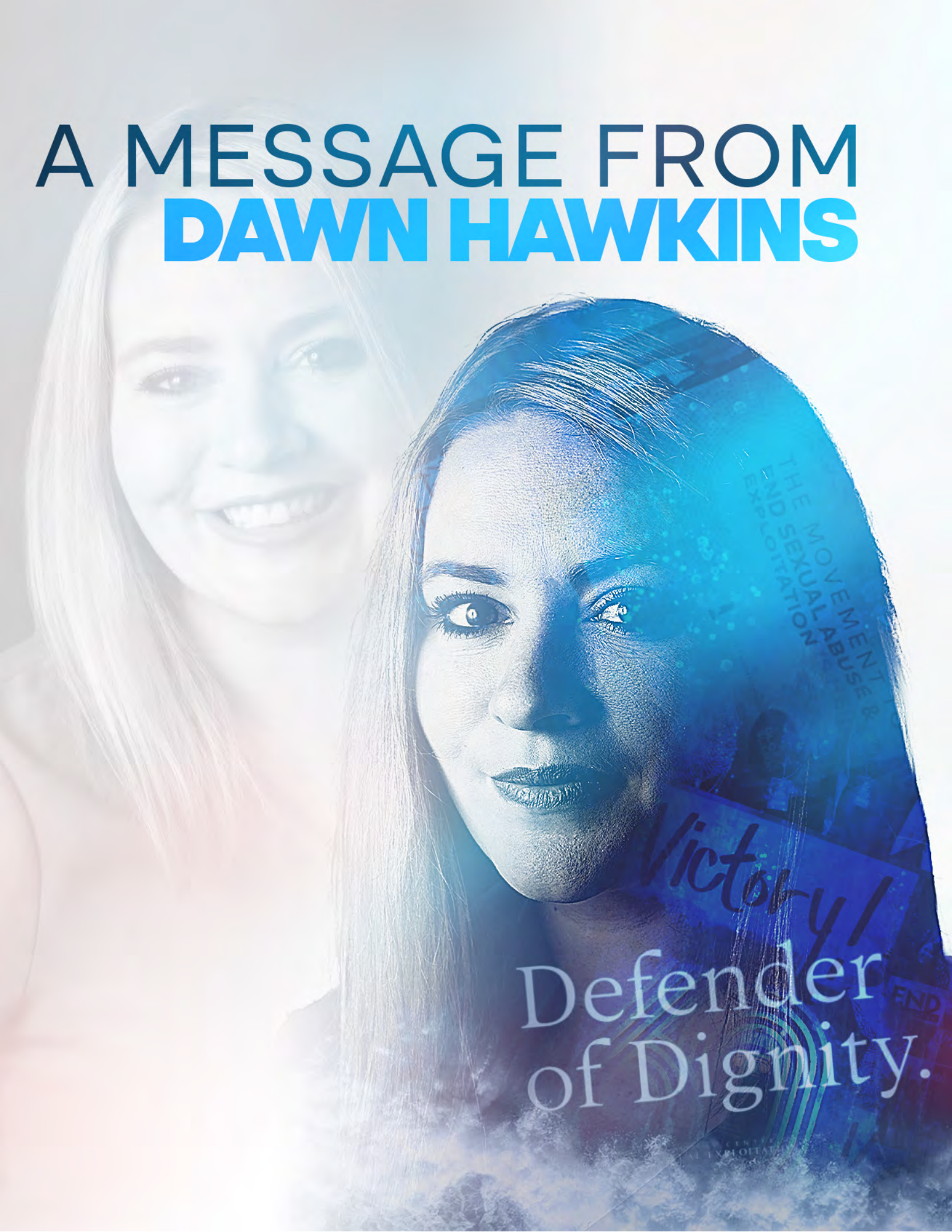
Lawmakers are taking action! The NCOSE Policy team is working with both parties at the state level on numerous bills that address the concerns parents have about their onslaught of threats their children are facing on the internet. At the federal level, this has become the “Child Protection Congress” with NCOSE-backed or supported bills targeting Big Tech’s blatant disregard for online safety.

And if corporate and public policy advocacy does not get the attention of those who facilitate and profit from sexual exploitation, lawsuits will! Our Law Center goes right to heart of the problem – suing the worst exploiters such as Pornhub and XVideos – as well as suing or participating in lawsuits against the companies that have turned a blind eye to sexual abuse like Twitter, Roblox, Snap, and Meta.

In the following pages, you will read about how your support and partnership has played a critical role in not only these victories, but in our overall strategy to stop exploitation before it occurs. We hope you will continue to join with us in this effort in the days and months ahead – so all can live free of sexual abuse and exploitation! With your partnership, we are confident of even more victories ahead!



DAWN HAWKINS,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER





On May 2, NCOSE released our annual “Dirty Dozen List” – targeting 12 of the worst facilitators of sexual exploitation. This year’s targets include:



To illustrate the power of the Dirty Dozen List, Apple reached out to NCOSE after receiving our notification letter and asked for a meeting to discuss the problems with their app store that led to their inclusion on the list!

In addition, thanks to our advocacy efforts, Apple’s nudity detection and blurring feature will now apply to videos as well as stills and will be on default for child accounts age 12 and under.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS AND VICTORIES....THUS FAR!

2023 is only at the mid-year point, but thanks to your partnership, NCOSE has already made major strides in curbing sexual exploitation.

TAKING ON GOLIATH ... AND WINNING!

Google is the Goliath of the Big Tech industry – and NCOSE has gotten their attention! Over the first six months, in response to our concerns, Google will now automatically blur explicit images in search results – a request that NCOSE has been making for a decade. They are also listening to survivors, by removing previously commercialized sexually explicit content if someone revokes consent for it (so long as it wasn’t contracted to a host platform). Google thanked NCOSE for our extensive input on these issues, and referenced specific changes made at our recommendation, as well as by survivors that NCOSE introduced to Google directly or supported through the removal process.

OUR TWITTER CASE MOVES FORWARD

Despite an unfortunate decision by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, the NCOSE Law Center, along with the Haba Law Firm, are moving forward with our plan for this case – involving two 13-year-old boys who were sexually exploited and trafficked on Twitter – to go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. This is where we will ultimately receive justice for these two young men and their families, as well as set a national precedent that could remove the shield Big Tech and social media companies presently hide behind to facilitate and profit from child sex abuse material.

THANKS IN PART TO NCOSE – IT’S THE CHILD PROTECTION CONGRESS!

In the first six months of 2023, Congress has introduced several NCOSE-backed or supported bills to force Big Tech and social media companies to take action to protect children on the internet.

- **Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA)** – This bipartisan bill requires social media companies to provide safeguards and tools for minors and parents, and enable the strongest safety settings by default, while creating a duty of care for online platforms to prevent and mitigate harms to children. It also creates a transparency standard for providing academic and public interest groups access to data on online platforms to review the harms identified and the response from these platforms.
- **EARN-IT Act** – Introduced in the House and Senate in April, this bipartisan bill gives survivors of child sexual abuse material a path to justice by holding tech companies accountable for knowingly facilitating child sexual abuse material. It also renames “child pornography” as “child sexual abuse material” in federal statute. Finally, it clarifies that Congress never intended Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 to give internet service providers blanket immunity for facilitating child sexual abuse material.
- **PROTECT SAFE CHILDHOOD ACT** – This bipartisan bill modernizes the Department of Justice’s Safe Childhood Program to address child sexual exploitation, including providing funding for an additional 20 full-time federal prosecutors at the Department of Justice dedicated to these cases.
- **REPORT ACT** – This is a bipartisan bill requiring platforms to report child sex trafficking and enticement, two crimes that are not currently required and are underreported. It also increases penalties for failure to report exploitive content as platforms currently have no incentive to report, and extends the retention period of online platforms from 90 days to one year to allow for adequate time for law enforcement to conduct investigations.



NCOSE FINISHES GROUNDBREAKING FEDERAL GRANT ON SEX BUYING

On April 12, NCOSE finished work on our current grant from the Department of Justice and National Institute of Justice to document the demand reduction tactics used in more than 2,500 U.S. cities and counties in all 50 states. Our findings have been uploaded to Demand-Forum.org and we are in the midst of publishing a range of papers related to it. NCOSE is presenting findings at national conferences for law enforcement. We are using this grant as the way to open doors with federal agencies and national law enforcement groups. We are now submitting requests to brief them on our findings and have been met with affirmative interest to learn more

RACHEL MORAN JOINS THE ICOSE TEAM

Renowned global leader and bestselling author Rachel Moran joined NCOSE’s international division, the International Centre on Sexual Exploitation (ICOSE), as the Director of International Policy and Advocacy. With ICOSE, she will be working to advance international progress in policy and collaborative advocacy with NGOs on key projects. Her international expertise and presence will elevate ICOSE’s work to fight sexual abuse and exploitation and bolster the global abolitionist movement. Prior to joining ICOSE, Rachel’s international accomplishments include founding and leading SPACE International. She is a globally sought-after speaker, having presented to the United Nations, the European Parliament, Westminster Parliament and many other global institutions and prominent places of learning.

PORNHUB CAN NO LONGER TARGET CHILDREN IN UTAH AND LOUISIANA

Louisiana and Utah both passed NCOSE-supported legislation requiring verification that a user is over the age of 18 before they can access Pornhub and other sites hosting child sex abuse material. In Utah, rather than comply with the law, Pornhub chose to ban all users from its site, indicating that it stands to lose revenue if children are blocked from accessing pornography.

MAINE BECOMES FIRST STATE TO PASS PARTIAL DECRIMINALIZATION BILL

The Maine Senate passed LD 1435, “A Bill to Reduce Commercial Sexual Exploitation” that NCOSE helped draft -- it is first partial decrim bill to be approved by a state legislature!



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