



PERCEPTIONS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN SLOVENIA

Summary report of key facts of qualitative
and quantitative research

Joint EU DG Reform – Council of Europe project
Supporting the implementation of Barnahus in Slovenia
Phase II, 2019-2021

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



Implemented
by the Council of Europe



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA PRAVOSODJE



BUILDING A EUROPE FOR AND WITH CHILDREN



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BACKGROUND



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BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES



BACKGROUND

The joint EU DG Reform-Council of Europe project on Supporting the Implementation of Barnahus (Children's House) in Slovenia, phase II, is currently being implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia and co-financed by the European Union Structural Reform Support Programme.

Barnahus is a leading European model for a child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response to child sexual exploitation and abuse. Amongst its expected results, the joint EU DG Reform-Council of Europe project aims to increase awareness of professionals and the wider public on child sexual abuse in Slovenia.

In the framework of the project, a quantitative and qualitative research among adults and children in Slovenia was carried out by IPSOS in June-September 2020. The main aim was to establish a baseline on how children, parents and the general public perceive child sexual abuse in Slovenia as well as to get insights for developing communication tools and materials to promote general awareness raising, encourage reporting of suspected cases, identify gaps and improve practices by professionals working with child victims of violence.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

- To better understand how the residents of Slovenia perceive violence (including sexual abuse) against children and the level of awareness on available support services for victims of child sexual abuse in Slovenia.
- Over 1000 face-to-face interviews were carried out with adult respondents from all over Slovenia, of which over 200 had been victims of some form of sexual abuse during their childhood.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- To further explore insights into cultural aspects related to the understanding and awareness of child sexual abuse by children and parents. Focus group discussions were organized for children and parents separately.

RESEARCH APPROACH



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RESEARCH APPROACH



QUALITATIVE STUDY FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

METHODOLOGY

- 4 focus groups in Ljubljana
- 6-8 participants per group
- Length = 2 hours

TARGET GROUP

- Children (boys and girls), 12-17 years old
- A total of 16 children of which 50% girls and 50% boys
- Parents with children under 18 living at home - not related to the children identified for the focus groups mentioned above
- A total of 14 parents of which 36% men and 64% women

STRUCTURE

- 1st FGD: Girls in the age frame of 12-17 years old
- 2nd FGD: Boys in the age frame of 12-17 years old
- 3rd FGD: Parents with children under 18 years old
- 4th FGD: Parents with children under 18 years old

RESEARCH APPROACH



QUANTITATIVE STUDY FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWING

METHODOLOGY

- CAPI – Computer assisted personal interviewing
- A total of 1,128 interviews conducted
- Length of the interview: 10 min for the general population and 15 min for victims of child sexual exploitation and abuse (205 of the respondents)

TARGET GROUP

- A representative sample of residents of the Republic of Slovenia in terms of gender, age (18–75), region and area (urban or rural)
- In total of 1.128 interviews of which 51% men and 49% women.

AGE:

- 18 – 24 years old: 9%
- 25 – 34 years old: 16%
- 35 – 44 years old: 20%
- 45 – 54 years old: 20%
- 55 – 64 years old: 19%
- 65 – 75 years old: 16%

REGIONS:

- Drava: 16%
- Mura: 6%
- Carinthia: 3%
- Savinja: 12%
- Central Sava: 3%
- Southeast Slovenia: 7%
- Lower Sava: 4%
- Central Slovenia: 26%
- Upper Carniola: 10%
- Littoral-Inner Carniola: 2%
- Coastal-Karst: 6%
- Gorizia: 6%

- Within the representative sample, adults who were victims of sexual violence during their childhood have also been included

How to read?



SYMBOLS IN THE REPORT – QUALITATIVE STUDY



Children: this symbol refers to content and results related to children in general (not girls or boys separately)



Boys: this symbol refers to content and results related to boys only



Girls: this symbol refers to content and results related to girls only



Parents: this symbol refers to content and results related to parents in general

SYMBOLS IN THE REPORT – QUANTITATIVE STUDY



General population: this symbol refers to content and results related to the general population in the quantitative study

KEY RESULTS



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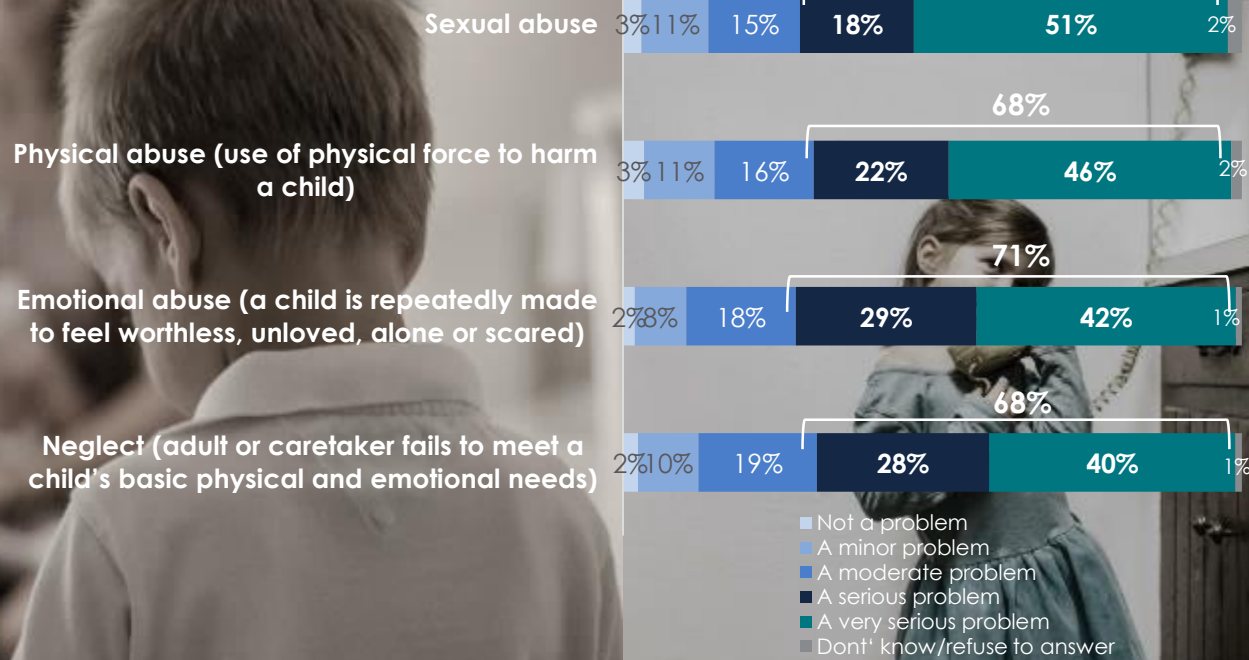
Ipsos

KEY RESULTS: GENERAL PERCEPTIONS



MAJORITY OF SLOVENIANS THINK VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM

SERIOUS / VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM IN SLOVENIA

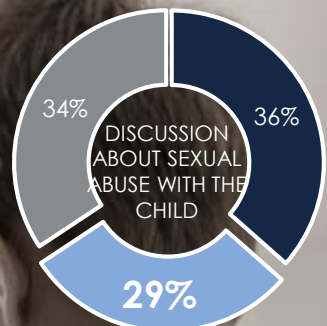


KEY RESULTS: GENERAL PERCEPTIONS



BUT AWARENESS IS LOW:
47% OF RESPONDENTS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECOGNISE SIGNS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

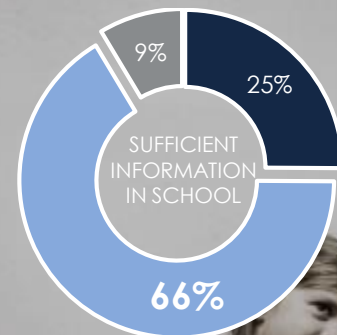
PARENTS ARE **NOT COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE;** ONLY 29% HAVE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT IT WITH THEIR CHILDREN



BECAUSE ...

Yes
 No
 No, not yet

2/3 BELIEVE SCHOOLS DO NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH PREVENTIVE EDUCATION, 90% THINK IT SHOULD BE PART OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM



Yes
 No
 Don't know/refuse to answer

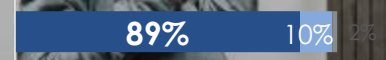
ALARMING FACTS:

- **29% OF SLOVENIANS BELIEVE THAT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ALWAYS INVOLVES THE USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE**
- **17% BELIEVE CHILDREN CANNOT SEXUALLY ABUSE OTHER CHILDREN**
- **24% BELIEVE THAT CHILDREN (INTENTIONALLY) EXPOSED TO SEXUAL ACTIVITIES OR PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIALS IS NOT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

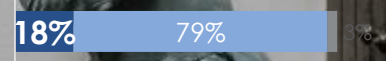
Educating children on sexual abuse is necessary to prevent child sexual abuse



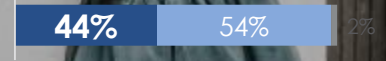
Child sexual abuse prevention education should be part of the school curriculum



Child abuse prevention education may expose the children to too much information about sex



It is embarrassing to discuss issues related to sex



I agree
 I don't agree
 Don't know/refuse to answer

KEY RESULTS: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

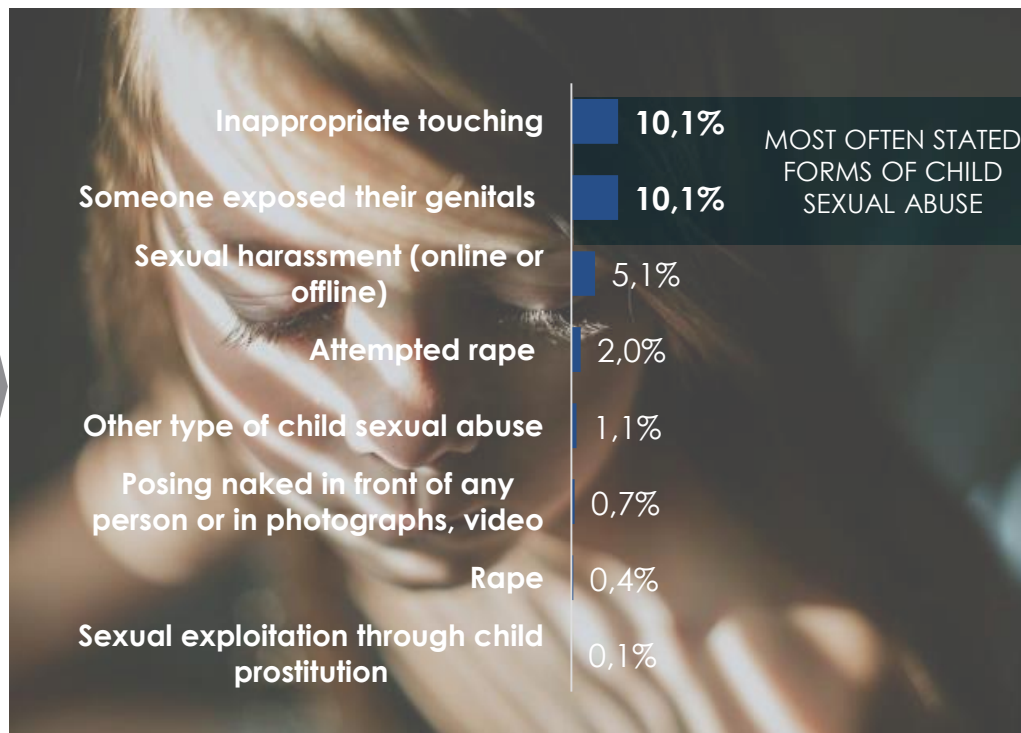


**ONE IN FIVE
(18%)**

EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**ONE IN SEVEN
(13%)**

EXPERIENCED TWO OR MORE FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE



ONLY 6%
FILED A LEGAL COMPLAINT

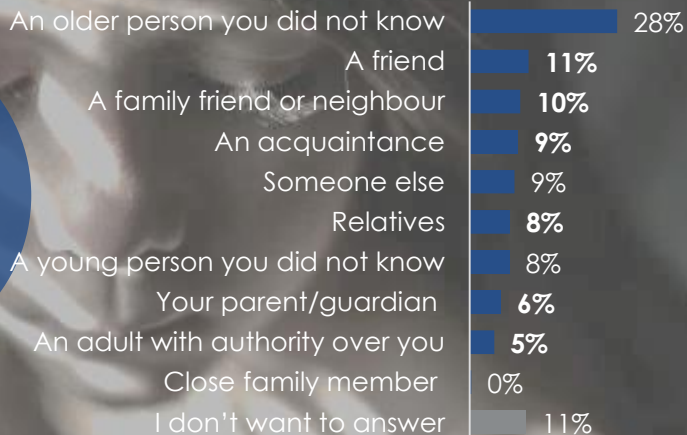
KEY RESULTS: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



PERPETRATOR

MOST ACTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN WERE PERPETRATED BY ONE MALE WHO WAS KNOWN TO THE VICTIM (FRIEND, FAMILY FRIEND/NEIGHBOR, ACQUAINTANCE, RELATIVE,...).

IN **87%** OF CASES THE PERPETRATOR WAS **A MAN**



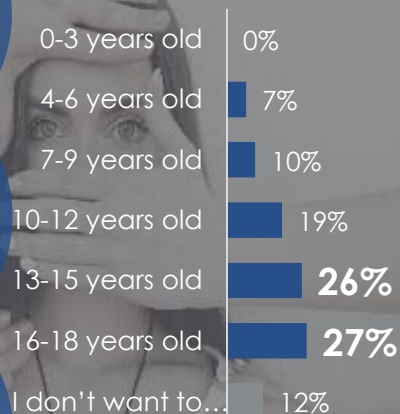
VICTIM

OF THE RESPONDENTS, VICTIMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE WERE MOST OFTEN **GIRLS FROM 13 TO 18 YEARS OLD**.

MOST OFTEN AN **ADOLESCENT GIRL**

IN **66%** THE ACT WAS A **ONE TIME OCCURENCE**

53% OF THE VICTIMS DISCLOSED THE CHILD ABUSE



Quantitative research; Individuals who experienced any form of sexual violence as children; n=205



MAIN FINDINGS



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Children's rights and perceptions of child sexual abuse

COMBINED RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE STUDY



THE UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: CHILDREN AND PARENTS



Children define their rights as **things that all children are entitled to, things they are allowed to do and things others are not allowed to do to them.** The includes **basic** needs and rights: the right...

...to **live**

...to be provided with a **home, food, family, health and education**

...to **freedom of choice, socializing, doing things they want** and **expressing their own opinion.**



Parents understand children's rights to include in addition **the right to safety, respect, expression and sexual integrity.** Respecting these rights is understood as the foundation for a child's well-rounded upbringing that will ensure his/her proper development.

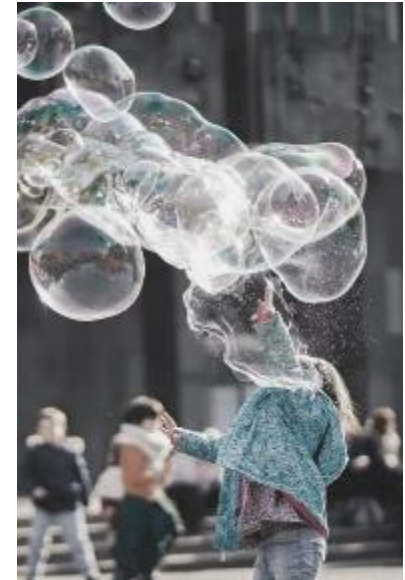
"If these rights are violated, it influences every part of your being." (parents)

"That something belongs to you. That it's taken for granted." (girls)

"What every child is entitled to." (boys)

"What he can do and what others cannot do to him." (boys)

"To give them everything needed to grow up as a normal being." (parents)



WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: PERCEPTIONS FROM CHILDREN, PARENTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC



A sexual act that is not consensual. Most often children mentioned **inappropriate touching** and **rape**. Some children also mentioned “blackmail for private/naked images”. Child sexual abuse is also **defined by the victim’s age** (up to 18 years old). It **can be committed by a child or an adult**.

“Immediately when there is no consent. If you do not agree.” (girls)
“To do something sexual with them without their consent.” (boys)



For parents, sexual abuse **does not require a physical act**. They consider child sexual abuse to include: **addressing a child with sexually offensive and inappropriate words** (e.g. commenting on body parts), **exposure to pornography**, photography, the distribution of photos and even **observing** a child’s body.

“Something a child finds uncomfortable.” (parents)
“Family environment. If you are lost. Suitable target. If you don’t stand up for yourself.” (parents)

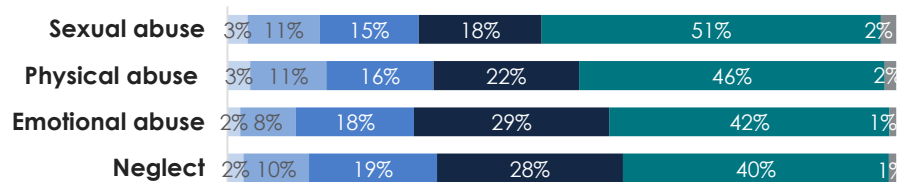


SPONTANEOUSLY MENTIONED – TOP 10

Inappropriate touching	20%
Rape, sexual interaction with a child	17%
Sexual persuasion	15%
Groping	10%
Unacceptable acts	8%
An act of coercion of a child	7%
Disgusting/awful act	5%
The worst act	5%
Physical violence	5%
Crime/offense	5%

Inappropriate touching, rape and sexual persuasion are, spontaneously, the most commonly mentioned forms of sexual violence against children.

All forms of violence against children are considered to be a serious problem in Slovenia.



■ Not a problem
 ■ A minor problem
 ■ A moderate problem
■ A serious problem
 ■ A very serious problem
 ■ Don't know/refuse to answer

AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE



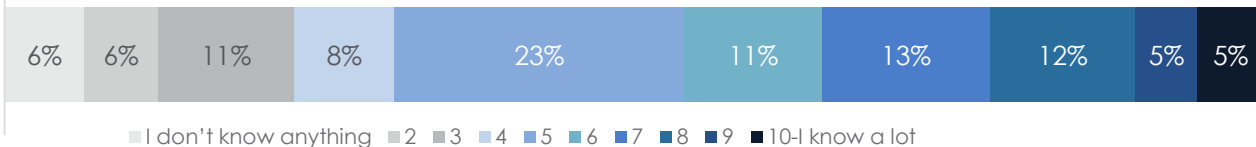
Slovenians estimate that they are **relatively unfamiliar with the topic of sexual violence against children**. It is alarming that **nearly a third of Slovenians believe that child sexual abuse always involves the use of physical force**, while **nearly a fourth believe that children cannot sexually abuse other children**.

MEAN SCORE

5.5

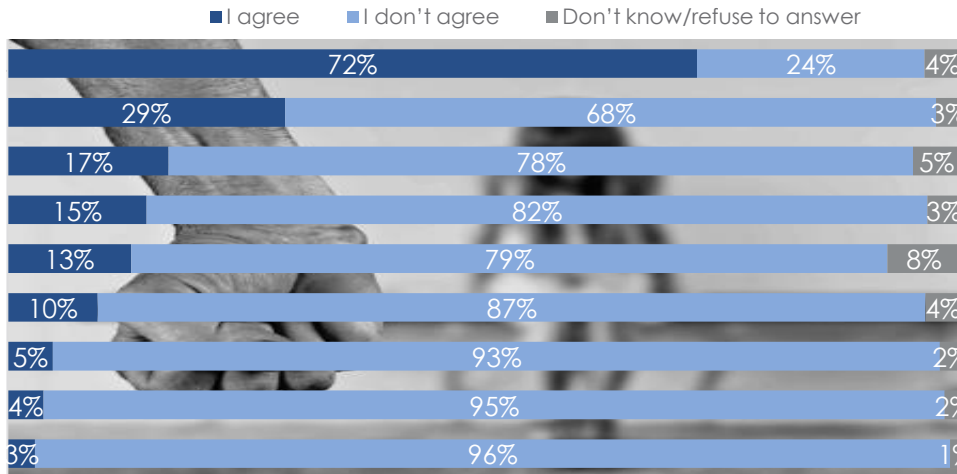


AWARENESS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IS...

- Children (intentionally) exposed to sexual activities or pornographic materials is child sexual abuse
- Child sexual abuse always involves the use of physical force
- Children cannot sexually abuse other children
- Most perpetrators of CSA are someone the child does not know
- Child sexual abuse always involves penetration
- It is not child sexual abuse if the child does not feel abused
- Child sexual abuse only occurs if a child is physically harmed
- Child sexual abuse only occurs in low income families
- Only girls are victims of sexual abuse



Basis: Total sample; n=1,128

AWARENESS ON PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



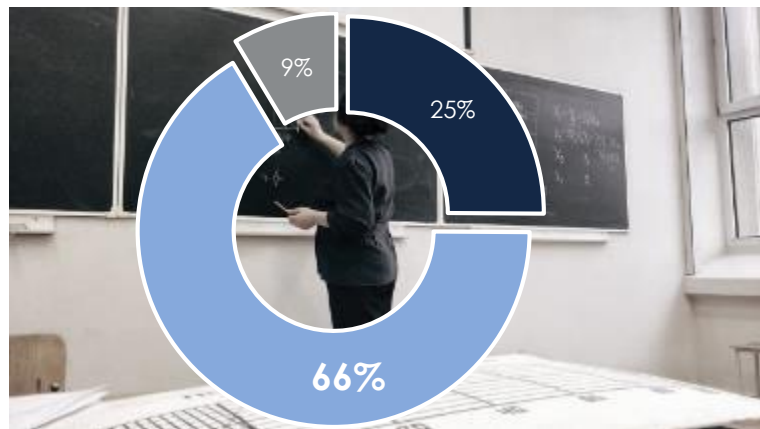
Nearly half of Slovenians would NOT be able to recognise signs of sexual violence against children.

Two thirds of the respondents believe that schools do not provide sufficient information to prevent sexual violence.

Nearly 90% believe that such education should be part of the curriculum and nearly half of parents find it awkward to talk about this topic with their children.

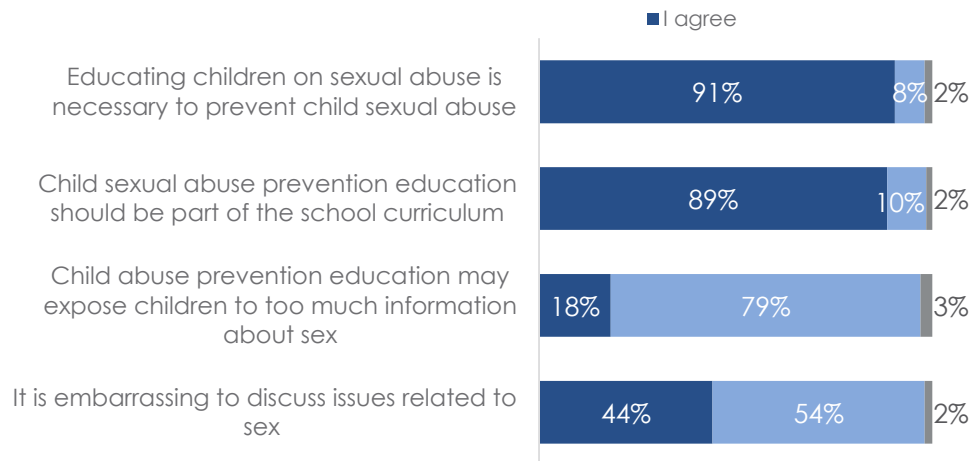
47% WOULD NOT RECOGNISE A POTENTIALLY SEXUALLY ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARDS A CHILD

SCHOOLS PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know/refuse to answer

THE PERCEPTION OF SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION



Basis: Total sample; n=1,128

AWARENESS RAISING AND EDUCATION TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN: EXISTING MATERIALS AND EDUCATION

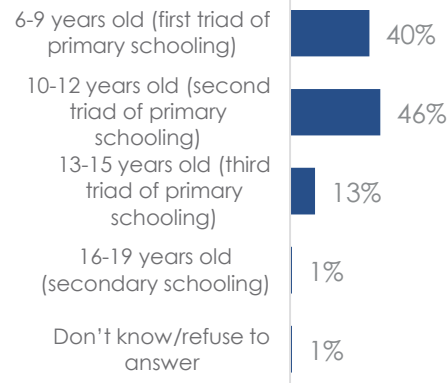


Currently, the **main source** providing **information** on child sexual abuse are **primary schools**. However, **preventive education is not systematically included in the school curriculum**. Many children **do not remember the exact moment** when they received information about child sexual abuse at school. Moreover, **children** (especially girls), **do not consider teachers as the most reliable and trusted adults** to talk about this topic or to turn to for help if they are victims of abuse.

Parents think **schools should remain the primary source** of information for children and parents, because it is a **formal and reliable environment**. A general recommendation from the participants was that this topic has to be **discussed continuously and repeatedly at schools**.



AGE OF THE CHILD WHEN HE/SHE SHOULD RECEIVE PREVENTIVE INFORMATION ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE



Most respondents believe that **children should have been informed about the risks of sexual abuse in the first or second triad of elementary school**.

TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE: PARENTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC



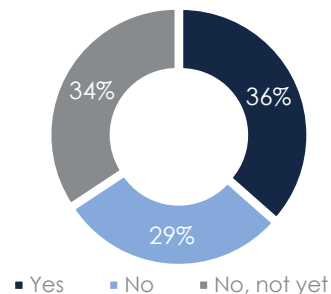
Many parents admitted that the topic of child sexual abuse was not discussed in the family. The risk of sexual abuse was sometimes addressed in the context of violence against children in general. For example, when children were warned about having contact with people they do not know personally. Or when children mentioned that sexual abuse was discussed in school. The parents think the **topic is extremely important** and that preventive information needs to be disseminated and **discussed** not just with children **but also within a wider audience.**

"We discussed it because a van was circling around the school and I had to warn them what could happen." (parents)

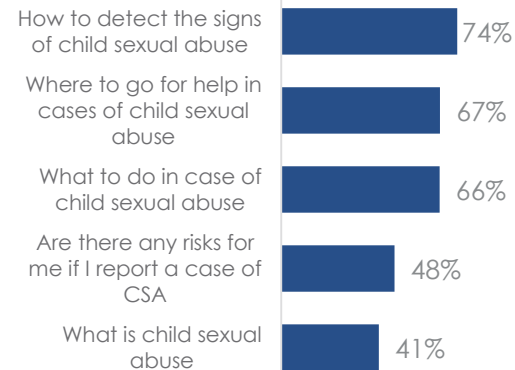
"I am not very comfortable about it but I had to do it regardless." (parents)



DISCUSSION WITH THE CHILD ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE



USEFUL INFORMATION TO UNDERSTAND AND PREVENT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE



Only a little over one third of parents with children younger than 18 years old **have already had a discussion** with them **about sexual abuse**, while one third of such parents plan to do so in the future. In order to better understand the topic of child sexual abuse, **parents want more information on how to recognise such abuse** and what to do, or **exactly where to go for help** in case of a suspicion of sexual abuse.

PERCEPTIONS OF WHO MAY FALL VICTIM OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: CHILDREN AND PARENTS



Children believe that there are many factors which could make a child an “**easier victim**”:

- **gender** - girls more than boys because they are physically weaker
- **age** - younger children are **weaker** and do not **necessarily understand** the situation
- **self-confidence** - children with lower confidence in themselves, children who do not stand up for themselves
- **the choice of clothes** - the way children dress. Wearing seductive clothes could make a child more noticeable. It could be used as an excuse by the potential perpetrator to claim that a child seemed willing and open towards an encounter of a sexual nature.
- **social status** – it is generally believed that children coming from more affluent families are more knowledgeable about the risks of child sexual abuse.

“Those that are dressed more appealingly as they look more attractive to others.” (boys)

“Girls are an easier target. There are not that many cases where a girl rapes a boy.” (girls)



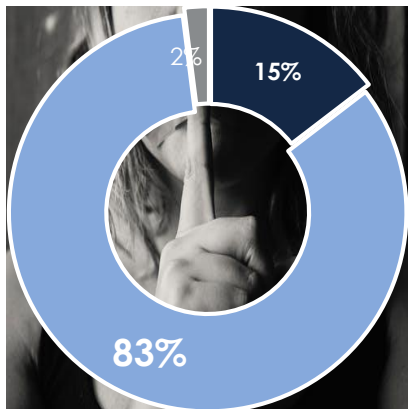
According to parents, children's **knowledge** about the risks of sexual abuse and their **social networks** (with the perception that those who have strong social networks are less at risk) are important to prevent child sexual abuse. Parents think that children coming from families of a **lower socio-economic background** (especially if combined with a lack of information provided to children about sexual abuse) are at **a higher risk** of falling victims of sexual abuse. However, all parents agree that **this is not always the case** (all children regardless of their education or background may be at risk).

PERCEPTIONS OF WHO MAY FALL VICTIM OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: GENERAL PUBLIC



**AGE OF
THE
VICTIM: 6
TO 10
YEARS
OLD (46%)**

CAN A VICTIM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE BE
GUILTY/RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACT?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know/refuse to answer

WHY?

The victim/child can never be guilty	28%
Because the child does not recognize/understand	17%
The helplessness of the child/cannot defend themselves	9%
Child's age/youth/age difference	7%
Because the child did not want/encourage it	6%
Seeking attention/provoking	6%
Because it's about a child	5%
Because it has to be seen and recognized by an adult	3%
Provocative clothing	3%
Provocative behaviour	3%

Most Slovenians believe that the **victim cannot be responsible for acts of sexual abuse**. They support this opinion with the argument that children cannot recognize sexual violence or do not understand it.

PERCEPTIONS OF WHO MAY BE A PERPETRATOR OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: CHILDREN AND PARENTS



Children describe the **perpetrators as “not normal”**. A few children define the perpetrators as pedophiles, but the majority describes them as **mentally disturbed, psychopaths, insane, weird, damaged, and miserable** individuals. Children see perpetrators as individuals who are **either attracted to children**, or choose to abuse children because they are **“easier targets”**.

“Older, weird men.” (girls)

“They survived dramatic experiences and something shifted in their head.”



Like children, parents believe that perpetrators are **more frequently men** (physical strength enables them to subordinate a victim easier), who come from an **inappropriate family environment** or who were also **victims** of such abuse.

Parents' views are, however, **wider**. Parents point out that perpetrators may often be **people that are close to the child** (trusted by them), either family members, friends or those working with minors (e.g. priests, teachers). In addition, parents assume that potential perpetrators are **good manipulators** who know how to hide their actions.



“Mostly men. From a family environment.” (parents)

“A child trusts them.” (parents)

REACTIONS IN CASE OF A SUSPICION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE



When asked what to do when faced with a suspicion of child sexual abuse, children would be inclined to **immediately report it**. They **would try to convince the victim** to report it him/herself and they would not wait too long. Children understand that sometimes victims do not report the abuse because they are **ashamed** and/or **afraid**.



Most of the girls would confide in their parents because they would know what to do and how to proceed. Girls generally felt that **teachers are not the best options to report to**, because they might not believe the child or know how to help or even not care.



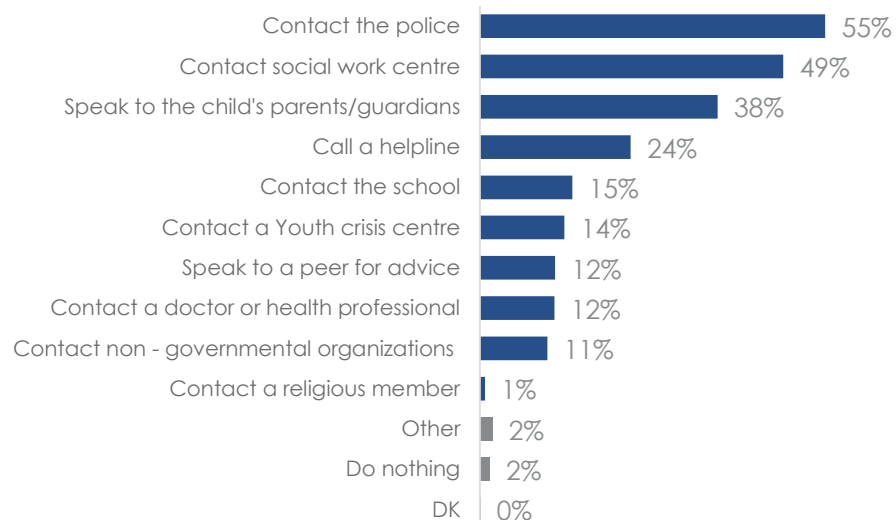
Boys on the other hand **mentioned teachers and social workers** as trusted adults to report to in the first place.



The **majority of parents would be more careful**. Many of them **do not feel competent to interact with the victim** (the interaction should be established by a child psychologist). Parents mentioned the **police**, a **centre for social work** or the **school** (social worker, teacher or psychologist) amongst the first contact points to report suspected cases. Some parents felt that social services do not have a good reputation; whereas others had reservations towards the police.



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECTED THAT A CHILD WAS AT RISK OF BEING SEXUALLY ABUSED?



Almost all respondents would have done something if they suspected that a child was being sexually abused. Respondents would most often **turn to the police** or **initiate contact with a department of social services**.

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a woman's face, looking down and slightly to the right. Her hair is blonde and falls across her forehead. The lighting is soft and directional, highlighting the contours of her face. The background is dark and out of focus.

Personal experience

RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE STUDY (205 RESPONDENTS WHO WERE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE IN THEIR CHILDHOOD)



EXPERIENCE OF CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Nearly one in 5 Slovenians (18% of the Slovenian population from 18 to 75 years old) **have experienced one form of child sexual violence** (up to the age of 18 years old). **Inappropriate touching** and **indecent exposure** were the most commonly mentioned forms of sexual violence against children.

INCIDENCE RATE OF CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE

ONE IN FIVE (18%)

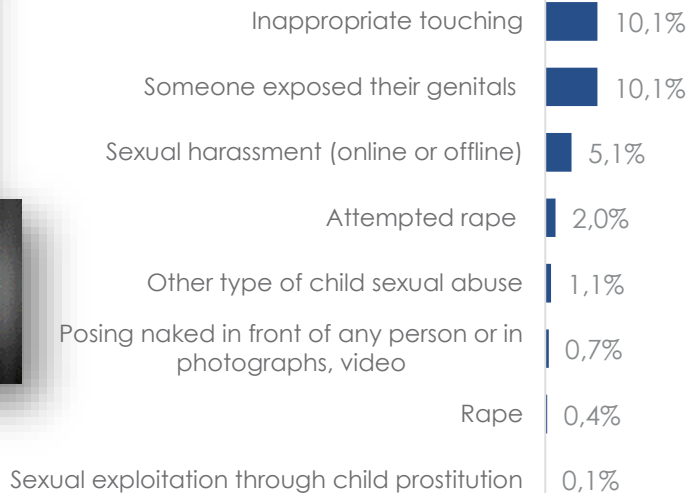
EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

ONE IN SEVEN

(13%) EXPERIENCED TWO OR MORE FORMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

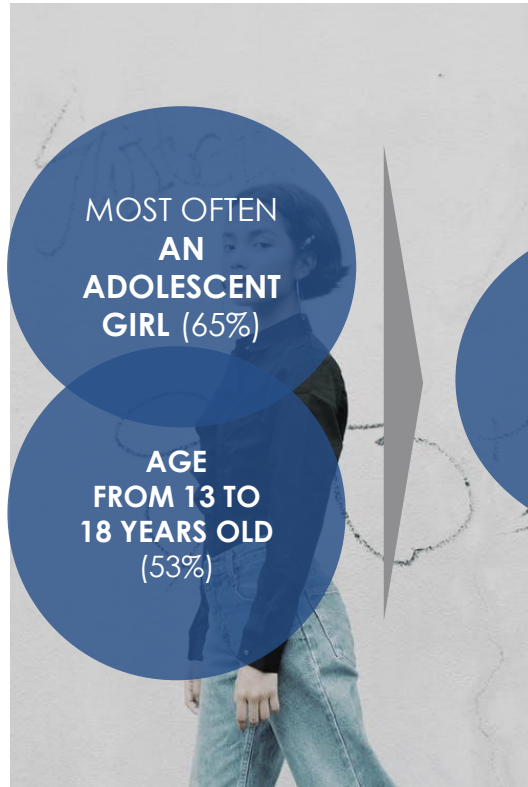


TYPE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Individuals who experienced any form of sexual violence as children; n=205

VICTIMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH



MOST OFTEN
**AN
ADOLESCENT
GIRL** (65%)

**AGE
FROM 13 TO
18 YEARS OLD**
(53%)



MOST
COMMONLY:
**IN-
APPROPRIATE
TOUCHING**
(10%)

USUALLY A
ONE-TIME ACT
BUT **ONLY
HALF ARE
DISCLOSED**
(CONFIDANT:
FRIEND)

REASONS FOR
NON-DISCLOSURE:
PERCEPTION OF
THE ACT BEING
**“NOTHING
SPECIAL”** OR **“NOT
SEXUAL VIOLENCE”**
OR **FEELING OF
HUMILIATION**

Individuals who experienced any form of sexual violence as children; n=205

PERPETRATORS: RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH



Individuals who experienced any form of sexual violence as children; n=205



Concept of Barnahus (Children' House)

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE STUDY (FOCUS GROUP
DISCUSSIONS WITH CHILDREN AND PARENTS)



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INTRODUCTION



The concept of Barnahus (Children's House) was introduced and tested only by the qualitative research and its focus group discussions with children and parents.

A general video about Barnahus was shown to the participants of the focus groups discussions and they were shortly explained the concept:

“Barnahus is a child-friendly place that coordinates the criminal investigation and child welfare assessment processes when there is a suspected case of child sexual abuse. The child is at the centre of the proceedings and the aim is to avoid re-traumatisation of the child by multiple interviews and questions by different people in different locations. A Barnahus is described as having four ‘rooms’ and each contains a particular operation. These are: criminal investigation, collaboration/protection, physical health and mental health. Moreover, Barnahus is a place where social services, the police, the public prosecutor’s office, forensic medicine, paediatricians and child and adolescent psychiatrists can confer and collaborate during criminal and social investigation processes.”

The group discussions included:

- Participants' first impressions
- Imaginary creations of such centres in Slovenia
 - What would the process look like?
 - What kind of environment: surrounding, exterior, interior?
 - People who would be working in such a child house: professions, their experiences, characters, attitudes?
 - Activities in the house: medical examination, interview with the police/other professional, therapies, spare time activities, etc.?
- Key communication messages to the public in order to raise awareness to combat child sexual abuse and promote Barnahus in Slovenia

BARNAHUS - IDEAL ENVIRONMENT



The majority of participants, both children and parents, **imagine that Barnahus would not be a typical “institution-like” building**, but rather a building with a **similar architecture to kindergartens or schools** (unusual, vivid colours with many pictures). The venue should be **pleasant, cosy, relaxed and homely** (with music they like, objects that reminds them of home), and located in **nature** or surrounded by it. Children should feel both **safe** and **completely free** to move and do whatever they want. Children should also be **listened to** rather than questioned, **individually treated** (whenever and wherever they need) by a **highly experienced, coordinated and aligned team** of professionals with **one guardian** who would accompany the child/victim and their families throughout the process.

“Colourful. Kind and happy.” (girls)

“That there are no high fences.” (girls)

“So you do not feel as though you are in a cage.” (girls)

“I would not like it to resemble a prison.” (girls)

“A big house with many rooms and children's pictures.

To prevent children from thinking about it.” (boys)

“In a way, a child would feel safe like home.” (boys)

“Equipped like home.” (boys)

“Isolation rooms – to be able to be alone.” (boys)

“Sofas instead of chairs.” (boys)



Boys mentioned **toys, games** and **cartoons** suitable for different age groups as **children need to do other activities to forget** and feel comfortable.



Many parents think that it would be great if children were surrounded by **animals**, and if there was even a possibility to access **therapy with animals**. Only some parents think the location and exterior has to be **as neutral as possible** to prevent victims' identities from being disclosed.

“It shouldn't be different from other buildings from the outside.” (parents)



A picture that one of the boys drew in the collage



Both children and parents recommended that, once the child is referred to Barnahus, **conversations about the abuse should be initiated by the victim. The child should not be questioned but listened to.** Services provided by Barnahus should not be conducted in one day, but over a longer period of time.

Parents think it would be ideal if **one guardian was assigned to every child at the moment the presumed victim enters the house.** This same person should **accompany the child throughout the process,** from indictment to recovery. It is very important for the parents that the whole process starting from reception to therapy, **from indictment to the end of the procedure** is completed **as quickly as possible.** The **process of recovery should be adjusted to the needs of each child** (in terms of place, time and team).

"It shouldn't be too similar to an interview. That it would be like a conversation."

"Police officers shouldn't be dressed in uniforms."

"That the checkups are not immediate. That they leave you alone for some time."

"A child probably goes through this experience only once. The focus has to be on treatment. Not on repeating the thing over and over again."

"The family has to be educated as well – to help the child."



Children think that **psychological help is crucial.** Therefore, an experienced psychologist or psychiatrist should be the first person the child meets in Barnahus. Victims should be made to feel **free from fear, feel safe, trusted and respected. What is important, they should be confident about the process** and understand that they did not do anything wrong.

"I would like to talk to someone who has already experienced that. And she (he) tells you that it is ok in the end."



Parents pointed out that the **safety and isolation** of the victim from the environment and perpetrator should be the first steps in the whole process. They also added that **psychological help should also be provided to the family.** They noted the importance of **protecting the privacy of the victim. Support** should be **provided as long as necessary and in a form that is suitable for the child and the family,** either only in Barnahus, on an ad hoc basis whenever necessary, at home or in other premises.



Children think that the following **main messages** are important when presenting Barnahus:

- **“There are people there that understand you and will help you.”**
- **“It is a safe place where you can confide your experience and nobody will blame you or think you did something wrong.”**



Regarding communication, **parents** would focus on:

- **safety**
- **immediate help**
- **expertise**
- **trust** and
- **confidentiality.**

“They said that you should tell someone.” (girls)
“That it is not your fault.”
“That no one will judge you.”





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