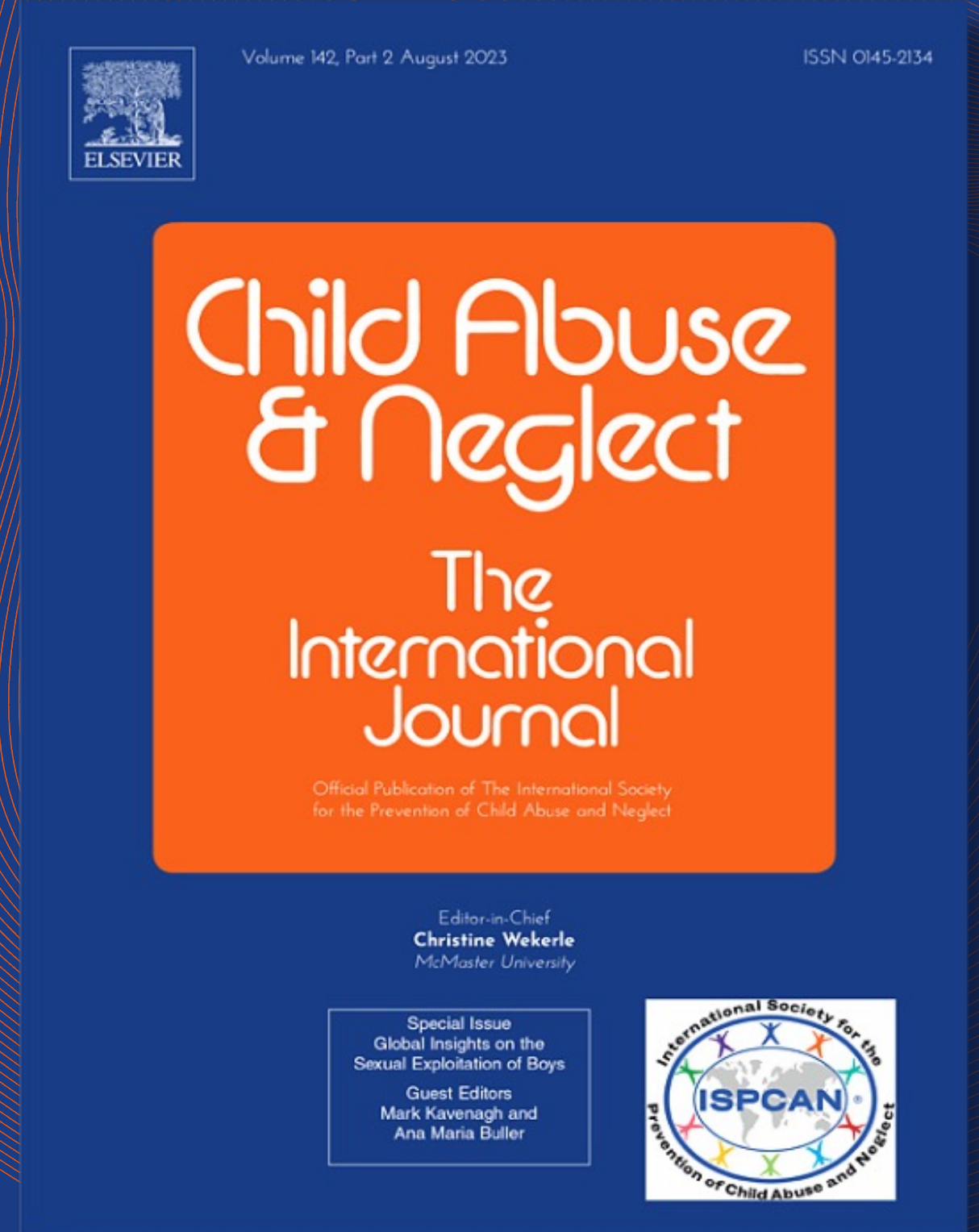


Launch of the Special Issue: Global Insights on the Sexual Exploitation of Boys



27 June 2023

Agenda

1

Introduction

2

Systematic Scoping Review of Global Research

3

Intrafamilial CSEA of boys

4

Survivor-centred healthcare in Afghanistan

5

Frontline support services for boys who have experienced CSEA

6

Which groups are most affected by sexual violence?

7

Q&A

8

Closing

Literature on sexual exploitation of boys

Typically, from English-speaking high-income countries.

Formal literature skews towards academic over applied.

We sought papers that:

- Showcased programming on active prevention and response
- Reported on empirical research from the Global South
- Shed light on the way vulnerable children are identified
- Explore the influence of gender on access and the lived experience of abuse
- Amplified practitioner perspectives

Global Insights on the Sexual Exploitation of Boys

A decorative graphic on the right side of the slide. It features a series of concentric, wavy lines in a lighter blue shade against a dark blue background. A white line starts from a dot on the left, extends horizontally to the right, and then turns vertically upwards to end at another dot, pointing towards the title text.

We sought papers that:

- Showcased programming on active prevention and response
- Reported on empirical research from the Global South
- Shed light on the way vulnerable children are identified
- Explore the influence of gender on access and the lived experience of abuse
- Amplified practitioner perspectives

We found:

- **Five empirical research papers**, including one systematic review, conducted in settings across the globe
- A comprehensive **overview of the state of the evidence** on this under researched issue
- Focus on the **role of gender norms** in shaping the experience of abuse and access to services for boys
- They bring both the **boys survivors and providers' perspectives** to the fore

A global systematic scoping review of literature on the sexual exploitation of boys

Moss, C., Smith, S., Kim, K., Hua, N., Noronha, N., Kavenagh, M., & Wekerle, C. (2023). A global systematic scoping review of literature on the sexual exploitation of boys. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. <https://authors.elsevier.com/a/1h8MQX18YVgAJ>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33570969/>

Dr. Christine Wekerle.
Pediatrics, Psychiatry & Behavioural Neuroscience,
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

SEC single item:

(1) “Have you ever received anything, such as money, gifts, help with schoolwork or something else, which was given to you so you would have sex with him/her?”

[\[Thurman et al., 2006\]](#))

SEC 3 Questions

[1] “Asked you for sex to get a better grade?” [Y/N];

[2] “Asked you for sex to give you money or help?” [Y/N];

[3] “Asked you for sex to give you uniforms or food or something similar?” [Y/N]

[\[Steiner et al., 2021a, Steiner et al., 2021b\]](#)).

There was no standard questionnaire used for measuring SEC.

"Sometimes I ask myself how
I got this far as I wish I
had not been doing it."
(Adolescent male) (Sabin et
al., 2018)

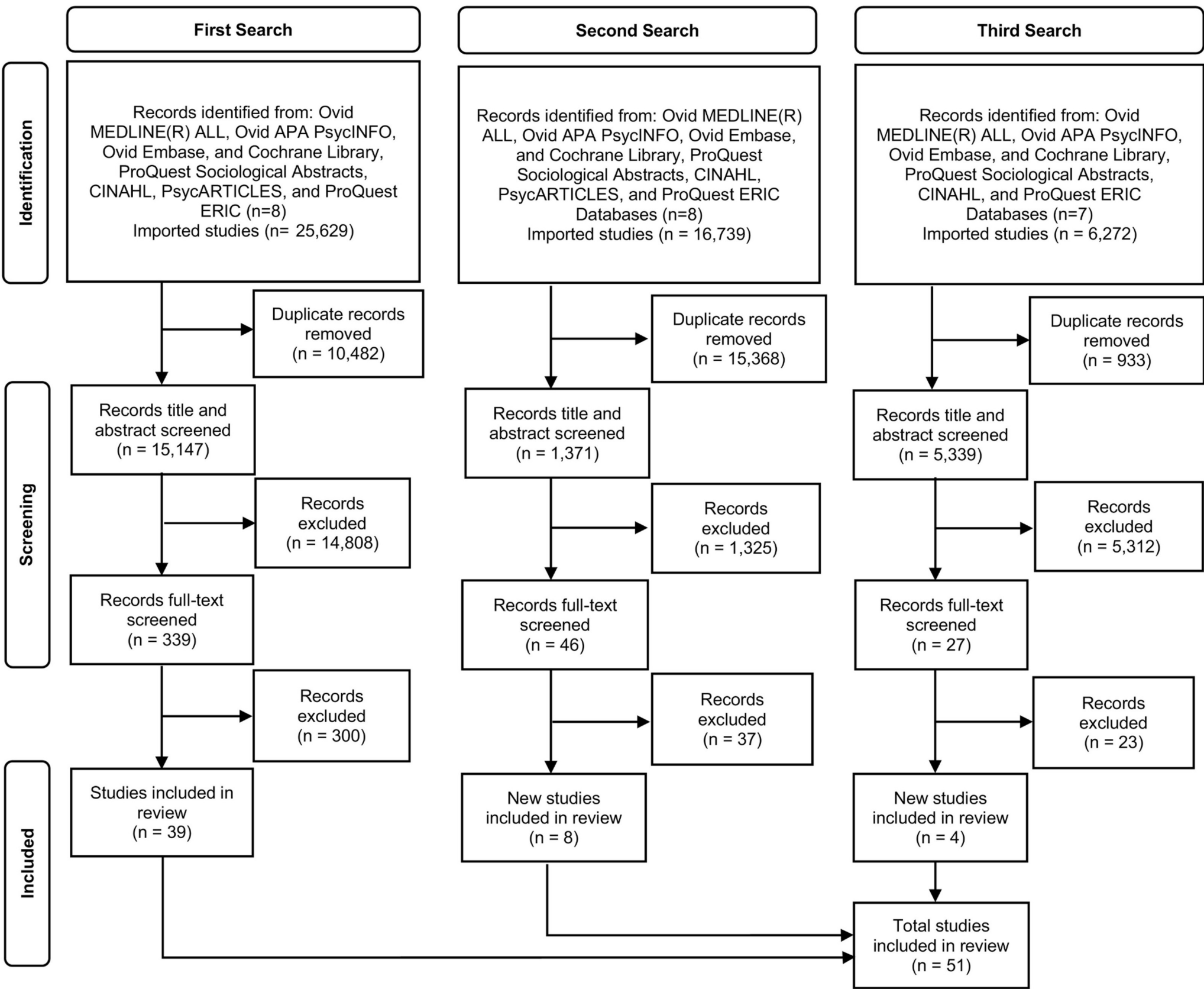
"My family is very poor, my
brother was sick, so I want to
help my mother. I was only 8
years old." (Boy, Age
12) (Nguyen, H.Y., & Nguyen,
H.G., 2012)



Sharma, S. (2018). Male child sexual abuse | racolb legal. *RACOLB LEGAL*. <http://racolblegal.com/male-child-sexual-abuse/>

Thaver, M., Modak, S., & Barnagarwala, T. (2017, August 8). Sexual abuse of boys: Shame, poor awareness behind under-reporting. *The Indian Express*.
<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/sexual-abuse-of-boys-shame-poor-awareness-behind-under-reporting-4786889>

PRISMA Peer Reviewed Studies

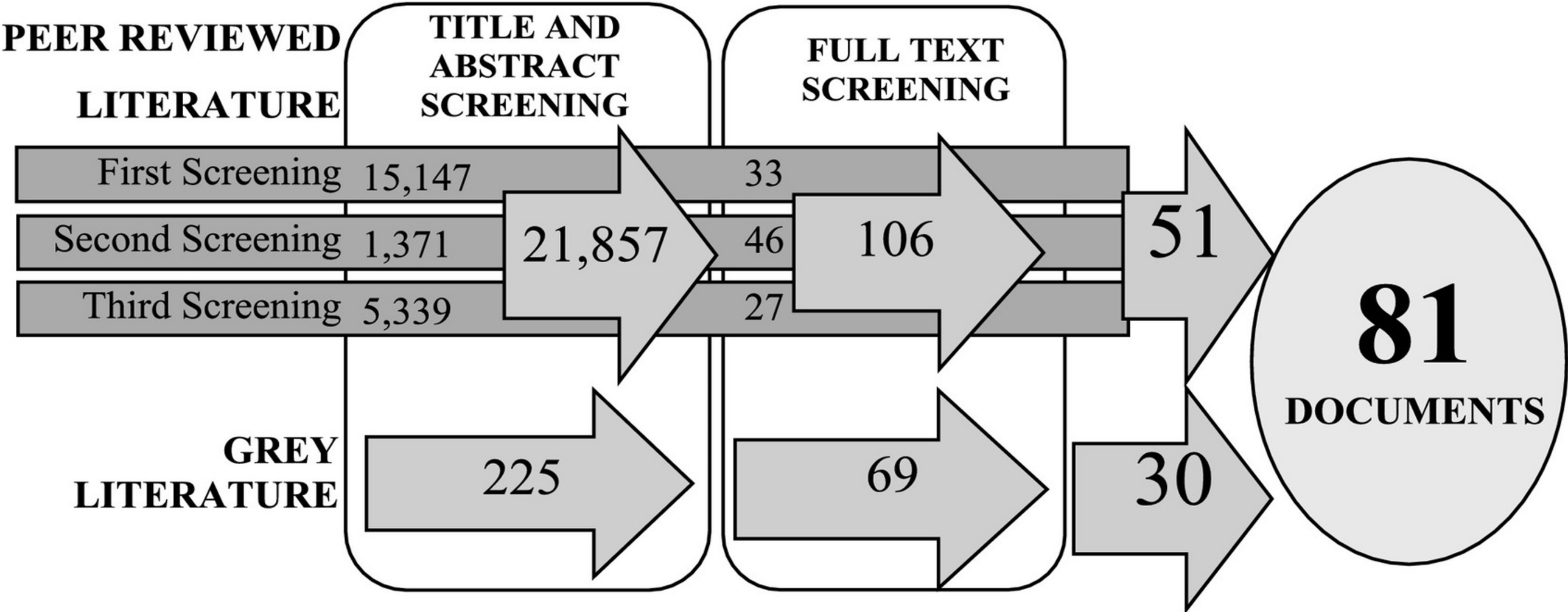


38 unique countries

However, our research on 38 countries highlights that....

- Nearly all countries of the world signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**196 countries**, except United States)
 - California – a populous border state with Mexico is one of the nation's top destination states for trafficking human beings.
Nearly 9 in 10 human trafficking involved sex trafficking
 - US had most research with 19 studies
- The optional protocol (child sex trafficking) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000 and entered into force on 25 December 2003. As of November 2022, it has been ratified by **180 parties**.
- According to the UNODC's 2022 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, which compiled the experiences of 51,675 victims of trafficking in 2020 across **166 countries**
- **Nonetheless**, 254,744 boys were represented across 81 studies.

PRISMA Grey Literature



Key Findings:	Ecological model of levels of factors of individual, family, community levels
Individual Factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youngest participant ages in both peer-reviewed and gray literature 6- to 7-year-old range. Onset at age 12 years or older was most common. 2. Sexual orientation was not often queried. Only six peer-reviewed studies included homosexual and hetero-sexual categorizations. 3. A greater percentage of boys with severe physical disabilities experienced exploitation (4x increased risk odds) (Franchino-Olsen, Silverstein, et al., 2022) 4. Significantly more males (4.19 %) reported SEC, as compared to females (2.09 %) (Edwards et al., 2006; Franchino-Olsen, Martin, et al., 2022)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. INDIVIDUAL X FAMILY X COMMUNITY → GREATER RISK FROM INTERSECTIONALITY
Family/ Relationship Factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 95 % of SEC victims in a Canadian study had a history of homelessness because of fear of family violence and abuse (Saewyc et al., 2021; McIntyre, 2005) 2. In the US, more than a third of youth with SEC experiences already had a child welfare case worker (Gibbs et al., 2015) 3. Trans youth who had CSA experiences were 20 times more likely to experience SEC (Coronel-Villalobos & Saewyc, 2019) 4. Family circumstances played the most important role in creating vulnerability to SEC (Van Den Borne and Kloosterboer, 2005) 5. Recurring characteristics included household financial strain, family dysfunction, child maltreatment, and parental substance abuse/misuse. 6. A US population-based study found that 6.87 % of exploited boys experienced romantic partner violence (Franchino-Olsen, Martin, et al., 2022)
Community and Society-level Factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 53.81% sexually exploited males also reported exposure to community violence (Franchino-Olsen,Martin, et al., 2022) 2. Online platforms were more discreet and easier for offenders to access victims (Chynoweth, 2017; Gruber et al., 2018; Nicholls, Paskell, & Harvey, 2014) 3. Boys were told that their exploiter would assist them in obtaining permanent immigration status (Chynoweth, 2017) 4. Boys have been subjected to professional and societal perceptions that their sexual exploitation was not serious or harmful (Cole & Sprang, 2015).
Victim Correlates/ Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Negative emotionality (hopelessness, loneliness, depression, anxiety, shame, suicidal ideation) was most noted among male SEC victims 2. Danish survey found that 18.4 % of boys drank alcohol at least twice per week, (7 % higher than girls) (Helweg-Larsen et al., 2011) 3. Discrimination from healthcare providers further exacerbated the difficulties in obtaining STI testing, treatment, and/or referrals (Sabin et al., 2018)
SEC Offender and Facilitator Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Various studies described familial offenders, educators, religious persons, employers, peers, neighbors, and someone they trusted, taxi or minibus driver, shop-owner, or police. 2. Three peer-reviewed and five gray literature publications reported the involvement of a third-party facilitator 3. Control strategies include promising money, deception, bribery, providing food, foster independence, playing video games, access to drugs, gifts, and perceived pleasure opportunities

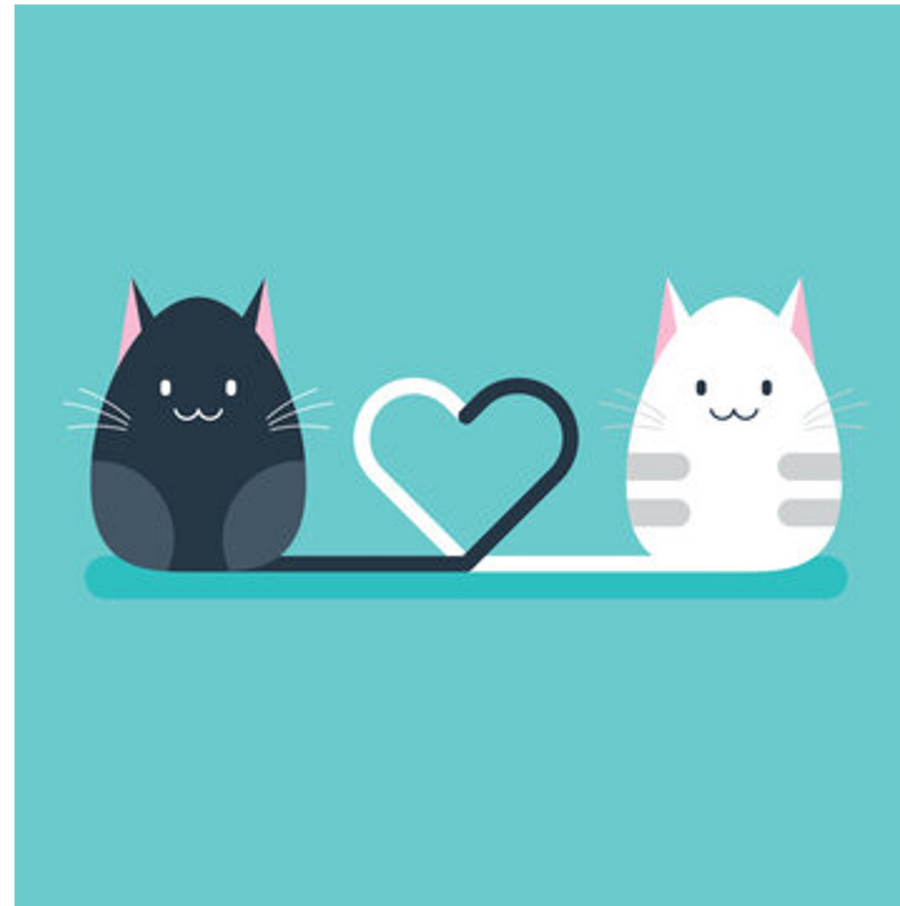
Implications

A disaster is defined as “A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts.”

CSE is our unnatural disaster

- Ongoing surveillance and deterrence of child sex exploitation activity – facilitation by laws
- More resourced rescue and rehabilitation initiatives
- Parenting education and alternative income streams for vulnerable families
- More active attention to child sex exploitation facilitators, purchasers and purveyors
- Boy-specific services that welcome diversity
- Greater attention to trauma, including study of post-traumatic stress symptomatology and involvement in adolescent dating violence
- Articulation of the management of the central government and local administrations in the design and implementation of public policies informed by trauma.
- Governmental inclusion of a Child Commissioner
- Increased services resourcing with a gender-sensitive, trauma-informed approach – and ongoing trauma training as staff care supports

Thank you!



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“She was willing to send me there”: **Intrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Trafficking of Boys**

Global Insights on the Sexual Exploitation of Boys

Ena Lucia Mariaca Pacheco

ISPCAN Webinar

27 June 2023



The Research Team



Ena Lucia Mariaca Pacheco



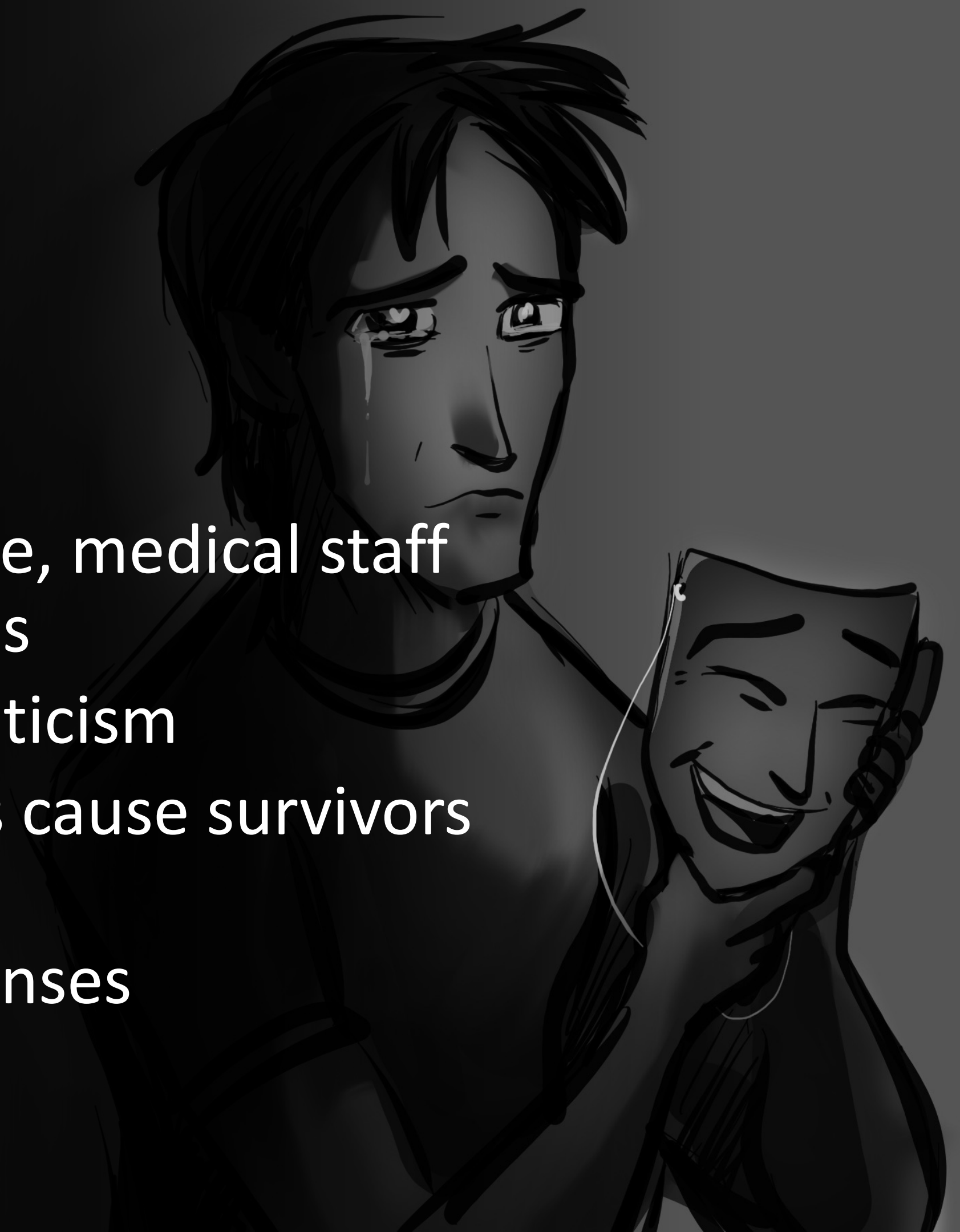
Andrés Eduardo Buenaventura



Dr. Glenn Miles

Institutional Failures for Male Survivors

- Negative encounters with police, medical staff and mental health professionals
- Gender bias, disbelief and skepticism
- Repeated negative experiences cause survivors to fear service providers
- Lack of trauma-informed responses





Women as Perpetrators

- Present in 9 out of 10 cases
- Mothers were both sexual abusers and traffickers
- Woman-to-boy sex abuse > barrier to disclosure
- Both non-violent and sadistic abusers

“Women on the other hand were absolutely relentless. It seemed the more I cried and tried to plead with them the more it would turn them on and the more abuse I would suffer”- Lived-Expert / Survivor Participant.

Familial Perpetrators

- “Family outings” = plausible, reusable cover stories
- Family members have very early access to child, so grooming begins early with manipulation and coercion
- Sex acts with family seen as “normal” way to express “love”
- Easier to explain visible markings and indicators
- Misleading terminology: “bad dreams,” “playtime,” “love”



Non-verbal CSEA indicators reported by participants:

PHYSICAL

n =

Constant throat and mouth infections / bruising in the mouth

10

Pain in the genital area

10

Bruising on the throat

10

Pain on neck, back, arms

10

Significant blood alcohol levels

9

Needle marks around arm injection sites

9

Drugs in bloodstream

9

Non-verbal CSEA indicators reported by participants:

EMOTIONAL

Complex PTSD

Fear of flashing lights and cameras

Fear of male children, male teenagers, and male adults

Internalized denial of CSEA or trafficking, and/or the extent and severity of CSEA

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Strong trauma bond

Presence of dissociative disorders

Excessive deference and compliance when being given instructions

Toolkit for victim identification

- Patrick Carnes Post Traumatic Stress Index (PTSI) Test
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Questionnaire
- Philadelphia Adverse Childhood Experiences (PHL ACEs) Survey

ACEs questionnaire scores as reported by participants * :

Nick	Joe	Lucas	Fernando	Daphenne	Darren	William	Wayson	Kabili	Colin
5	7	8	8	8	8	8	9	10	10

* Pseudonyms chosen by participants; no real names used



Recommendations for frontline professionals

- Trauma-Informed Support is Crucial
- Awareness of Gender Biases
- More Training for Frontline Professionals and Service Providers

Enhancing a Survivor-Centred Approach to Healthcare Provision in Afghanistan: Understanding and Addressing the Barriers faced by Male Victims / Survivors of Sexual Violence

**ALL SURVIVORS
PROJECT**

A study conducted by All Survivors Project and
Youth Health & Development Organization

Enhancing a Survivor-Centred Approach to Healthcare Provision in Afghanistan: Understanding and Addressing the Barriers Faced by Male Victims/ Survivors of Sexual Violence

Methodology

1) Desk review

Literature on sexual violence against men and boys and health sector response, with a focus on evidence from Afghanistan.

2) Stakeholder mapping

To identify existing systems of healthcare response that include coverage of male victims/ survivors of sexual violence.

3) Stakeholder interviews

10 interviews with key stakeholders, including individuals from government, national and international NGOs, and UN agencies.

4) In-depth interviews

97 IDIs: 27 male victims/ survivors, 44 healthcare providers, 26 community health workers, in Kabul, Balkh & Kandahar.

A study conducted by All Survivors Project and Youth Health & Development Organization

Julienne Corboz, Laura Pasquero, Charu Lata Hogg, Abdul Rasheed

Vignette approach

Draws on the story of a hypothetical character, a young man, who experiences sexual violence.



Conclusion

- Survivor-centred healthcare response to male victims/survivors of sexual violence should address barriers at multiple levels of the social ecological framework.
- This response also needs to respond to the needs of victims/survivors from different vulnerable groups, including those with diverse SOGIESC, something which is increasingly challenging in the current political climate in Afghanistan.
- Targeted interventions should be developed to enhance healthcare providers' knowledge, skills and capacity to deliver survivor-centred care, including raising awareness about no mandatory reporting requirements for health personnel.



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FRONTLINE SUPPORT SERVICES FOR BOYS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: A THEMATIC REVIEW OF SURVEY DATA FROM SEVEN COUNTRIES

Marie Nodzenski (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*)

Jarrett Davis (*up! International*)

About the study

■ Where is the data from?

- ECPAT's Global Boys Initiative
- Mixed-methods online surveys conducted with 404 frontline support workers across 7 countries
- Survey covers workers' views on factors that increase boys' vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse and on barriers to disclosure of abuse for boys

■ What is the objective of this paper?

- Explore perspectives and experiences of support workers working with survivors to identify broad trends, themes and implications for boys.

Key finding #1 – Broad similarities among boys who have experienced sexual exploitation and abuse

Frontline workers' insights on boys' experiences of sexual exploitation and abuse indicate that:

- Over a third of male children reported they had experienced sexual abuse
- Extreme poverty is seen as a key socio-economic vulnerability for boys (46%), except in South Korea
- Boys tend to be younger than girls at the time of first abuse: between 11 to 15 years old (40%) or between 6 and 10 years old (30%)
- Offenders were mostly perceived to be males either from the family or the community, but rarely strangers

Key finding #2 – Gender norms as a vulnerability factor and a barrier to disclosure

- Top traditional beliefs and practices which increase boys' vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse:

- Stigma & shame (64%)
- Taboos around sex and sexuality (54%)
- Belief that boys are not vulnerable and can protect themselves (53%)

- Top perceived barriers to disclosing abuse and to seeking help:

- Stigma & shame (47%)
- Taboos about sex and sexuality (40%)
- Beliefs related to masculinity (26%)
- Fears about how others will respond (25%)
- Boys are reluctant to view themselves as victims (22%)
- Negative attitudes to or difficulties asking for help (20%)

Key implications for practice and research

- It is urgent to recognize and understand that rigid gender norms not only affect girls. They affect boys too by:
 - Increasing their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse
 - Hindering disclosure and help-seeking
 - Affecting how support services respond to sexual exploitation and abuse of boys
- Gendered assumptions about boys and men must be challenged:
 - The specific learning and support needs of support workers working with male victims should be addressed in order to move beyond the passive inclusion of boys under services' mandates to serve "all children"
 - Sexual exploitation and abuse awareness messaging should normalize the vulnerability of boys and young men and normalize reaching out for support when in need, framing help-seeking behaviors accurately, as a sign of strength

Which adolescent groups are most affected by SV?

A disaggregated analysis of sex, age, and HIV-status among adolescents living in South Africa

Nontokozo Langwenya, Elona Toska, Heidi Stöckl Lucie Cluver



PEPFAR
U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief



MZANTSI WAKHO STUDY (N=1519)



Wave 1
(2014)

Wave 2
(2016)

Wave 3
(2018)

Female Adolescents
(n=865, 57%)

Male Adolescents
(n=655, 43%)

Forms of sexual violence

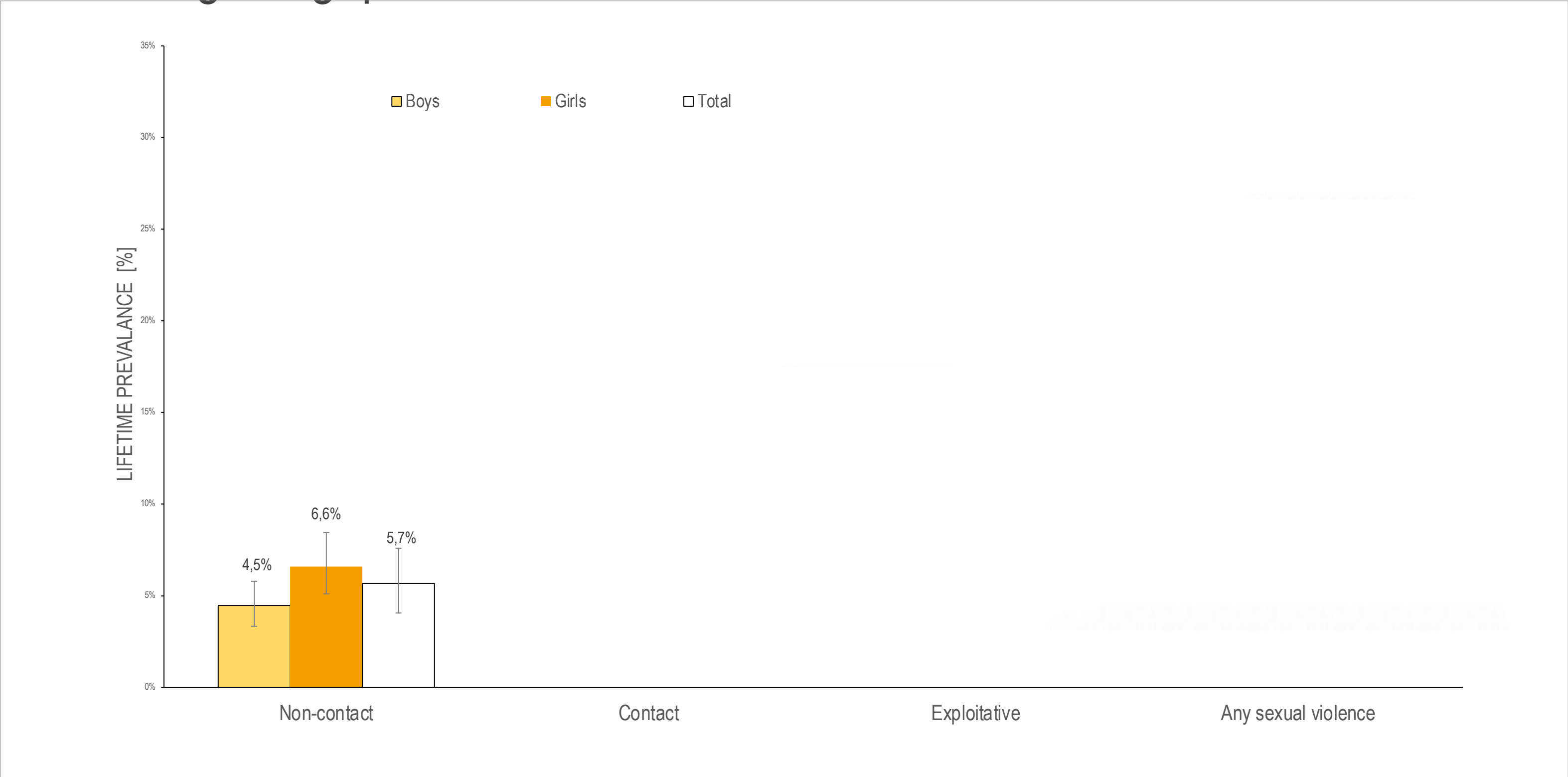
- **Non-contact:** unwanted showing of private parts
- **Contact:** coerced sexual debut, attempted and completed forced penetrative or oral sex, attempted or completed forced/coerced touching of private parts
- **Exploitative:** sex in exchange for goods/money



MZANTSI WAKHO



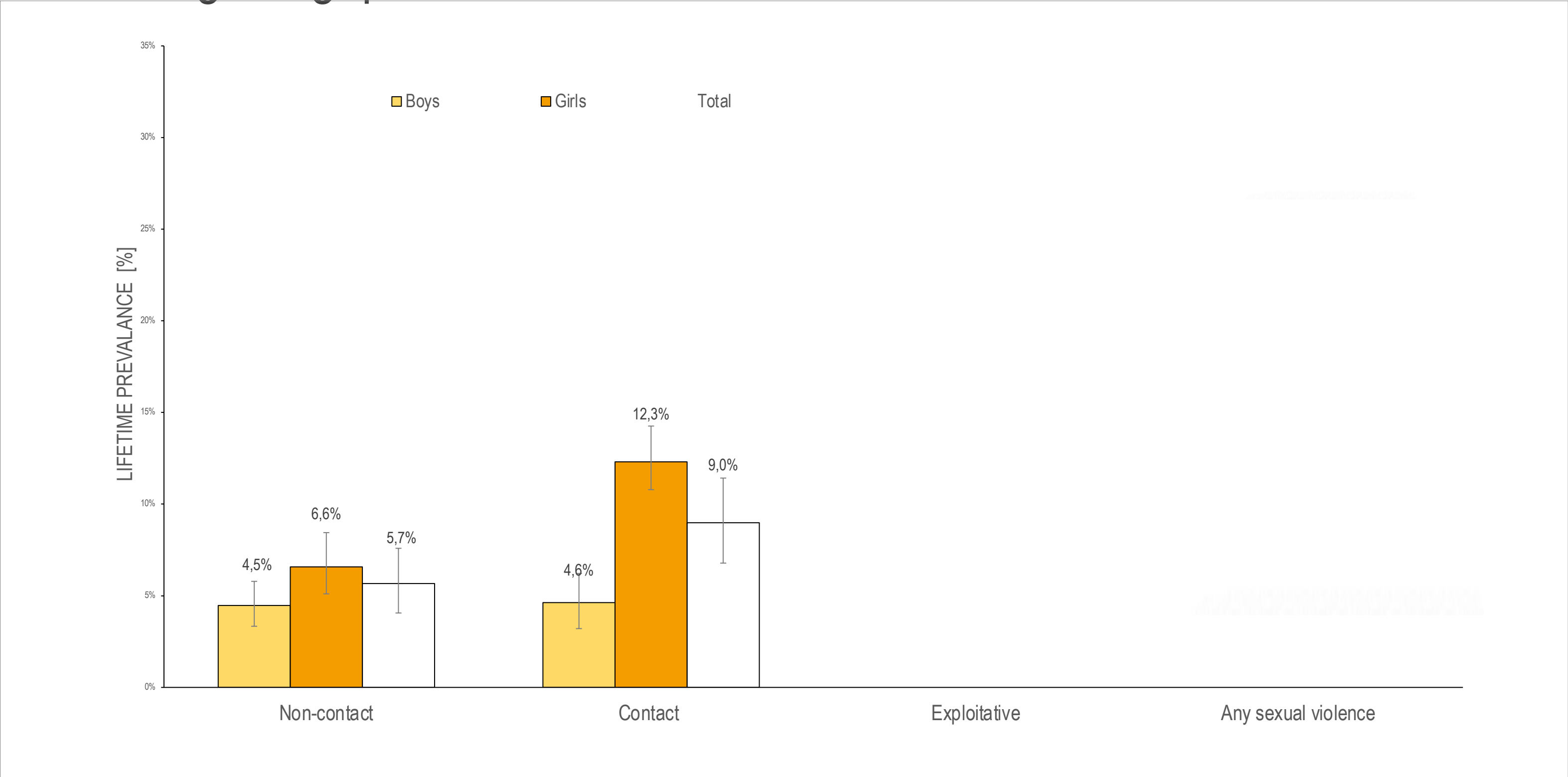
By sex - “Closing the gap”



MZANTSI WAKHO



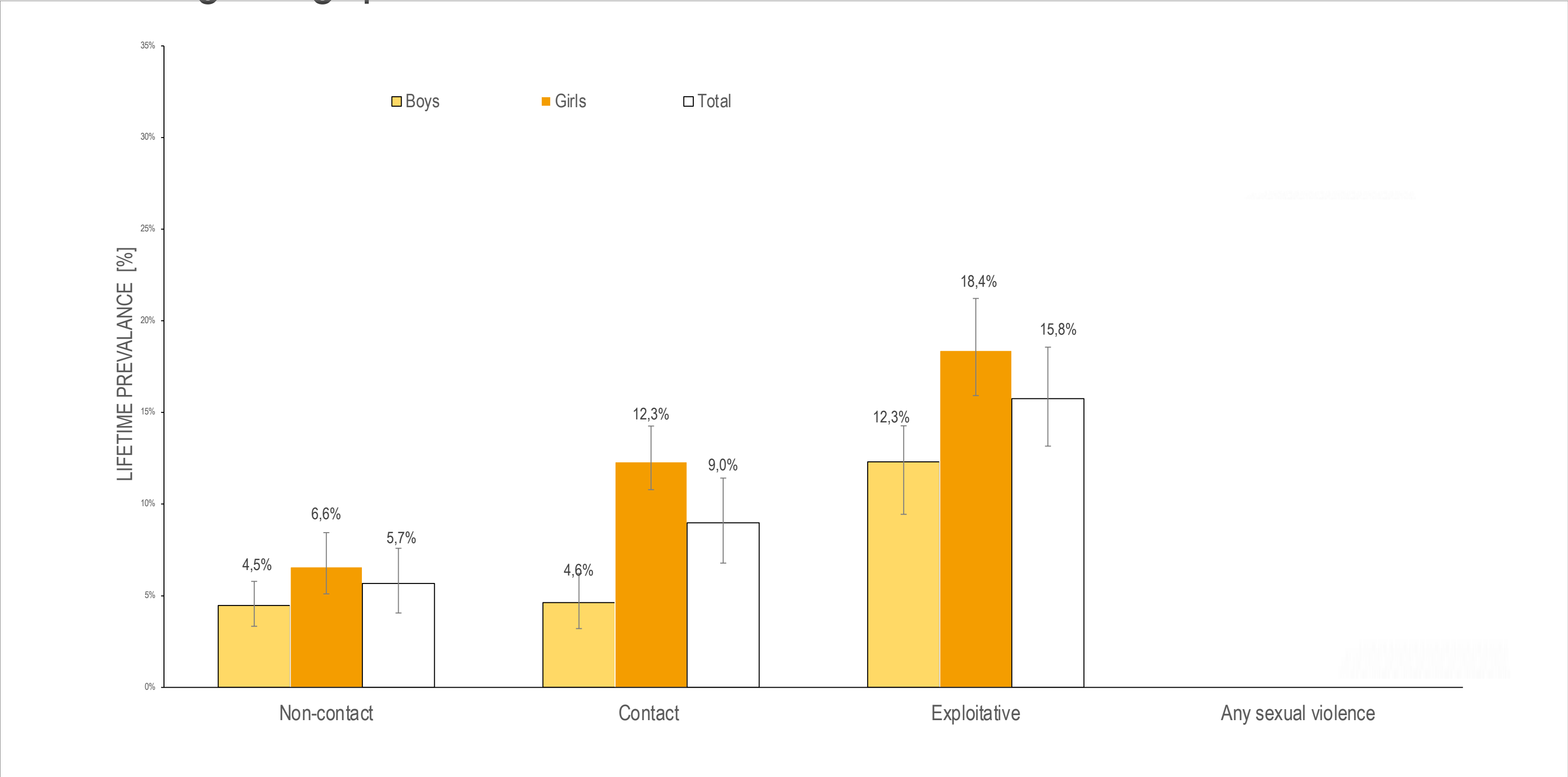
By sex - “Closing the gap”



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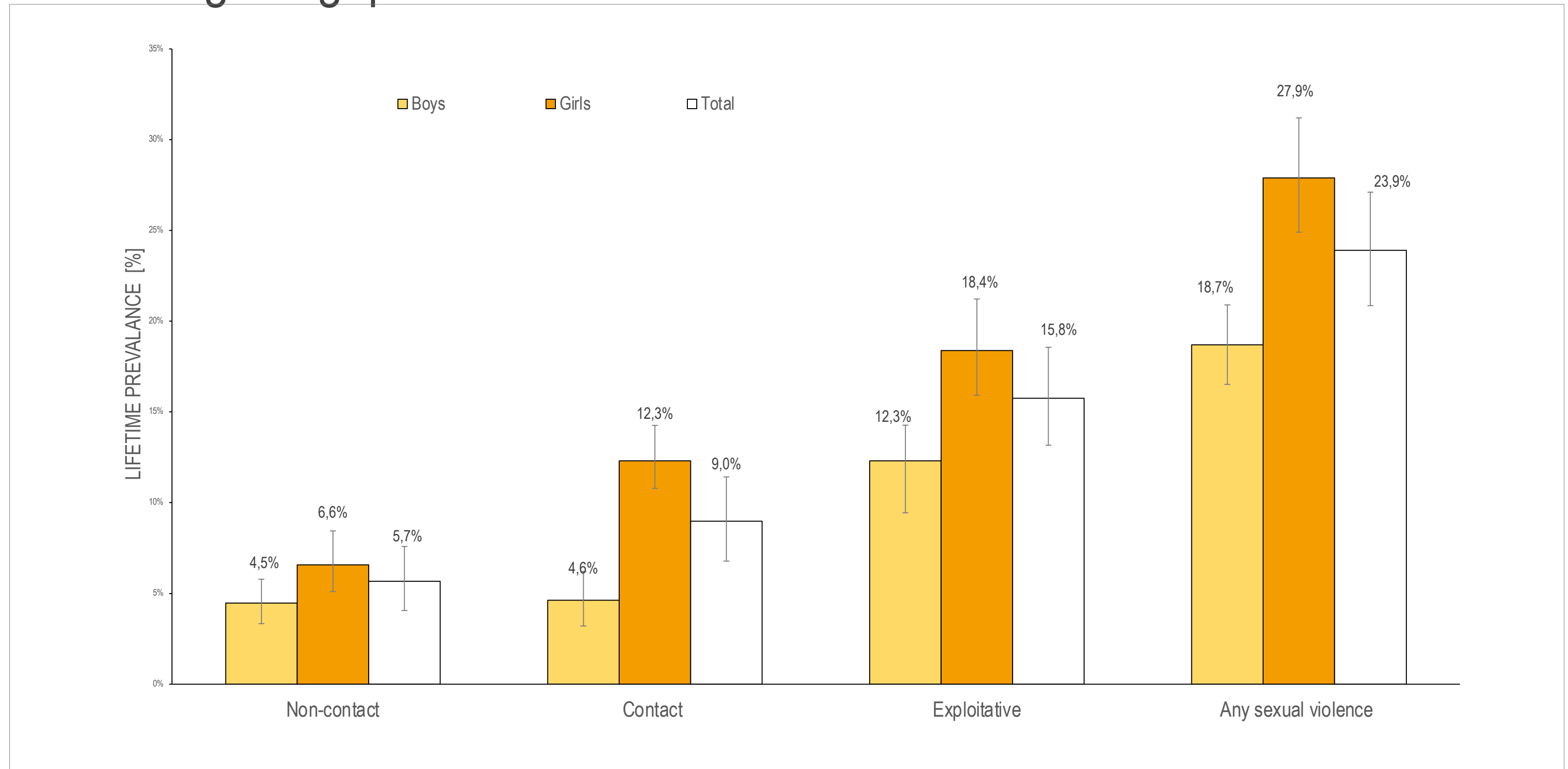
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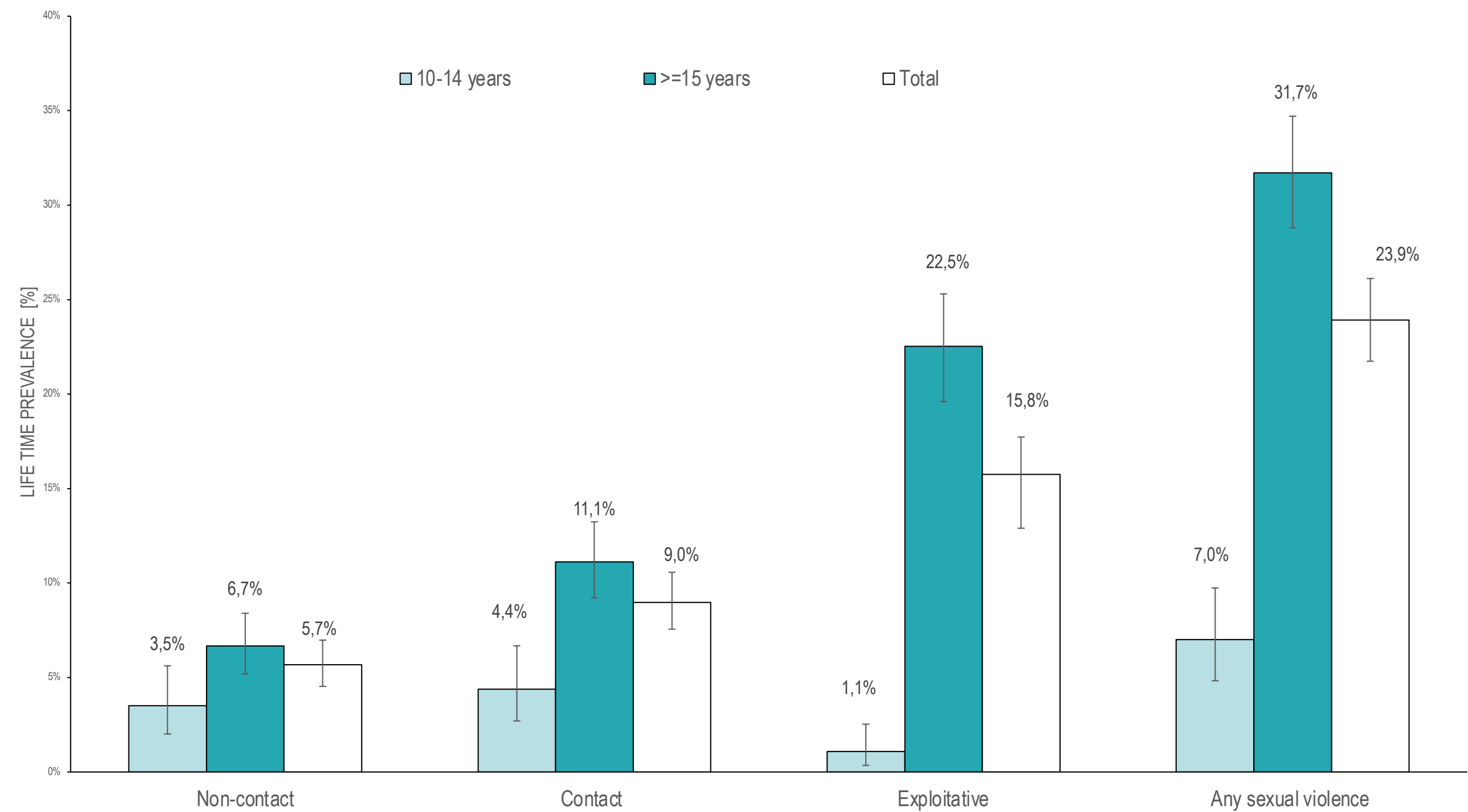
By sex - “Closing the gap”



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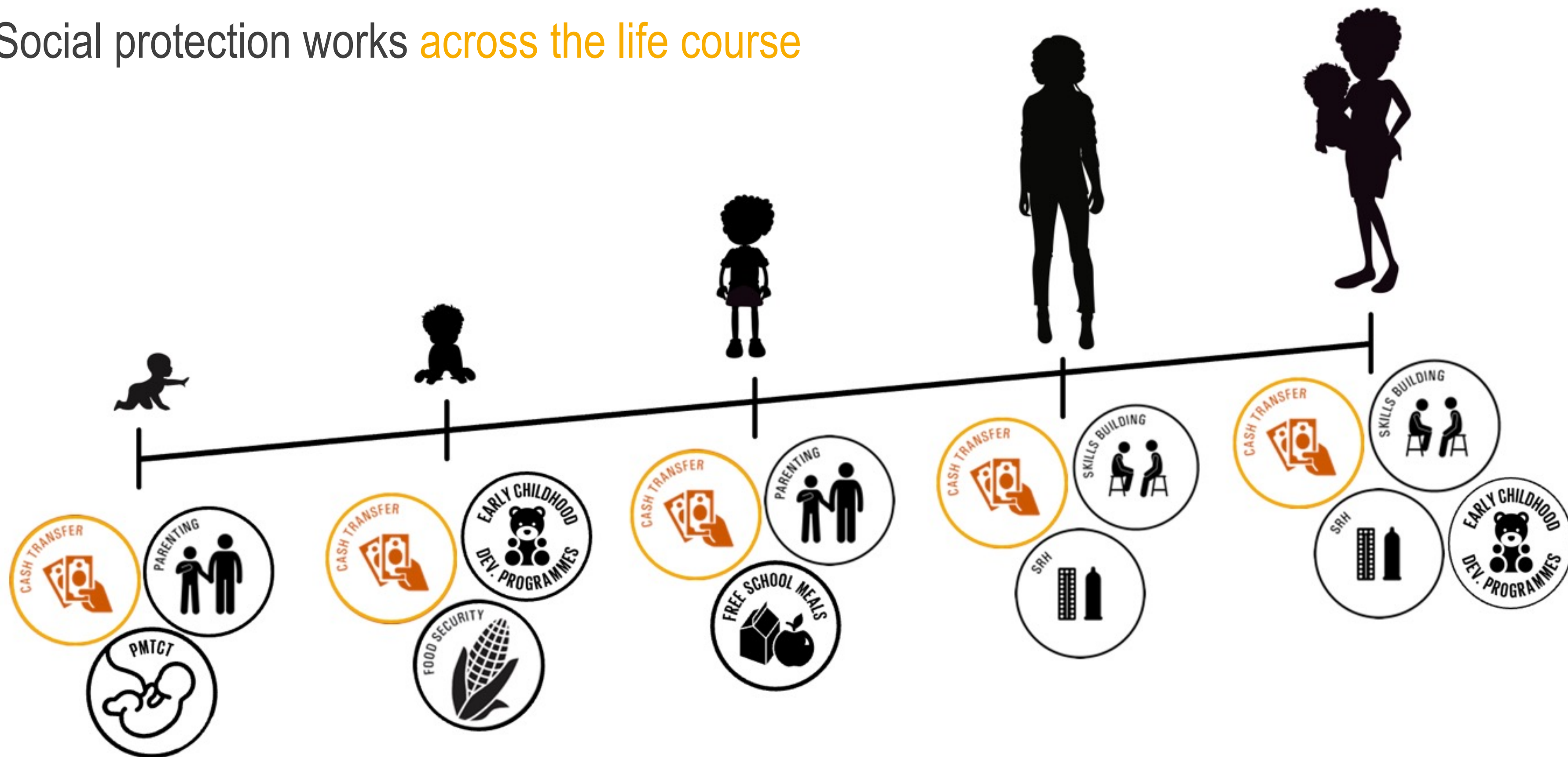


By age groups - “Closing the gap”



NEXT STEP:

Social protection works **across the life course**





THANK YOU

African youth are the world's fastest growing population according to UN DESA.

By 2050, it's estimated there will be

435 million African adolescents



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UK Research
and Innovation



Q&A



Global Insights on the Sexual Exploitation of Boys

*How the evidence produced informs the activities of
the ECPAT International Global Boys Initiative.*

27th of June 2023



The research conducted helped – and continues – shaping the Global Boys Initiative at different levels:

- 1) Defining **programmatic priorities** and construct actions that are in line with the recommendations of research;
- 2) Basing our **advocacy actions** on strong evidence and data;
- 3) Constructing **campaign** and communication activities that are based on the voices of survivors.



ENDING THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN



Contact:

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THANK YOU!



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Child Abuse & Neglect

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for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

Editor-in-Chief
Christine Wekerle
McMaster University

Special Issue
Global Insights on the
Sexual Exploitation of Boys
Guest Editors
Mark Kavenagh and
Ana Maria Buller

