

1-in-25 kids are asked for sex pics on Web

by UPI

DURHAM, N.H. -- A new U.S. study revealed that 4 percent of children who go online are asked to transmit sexually explicit photos of themselves, USA Today reported Friday. Youths who oblige could become both victims and perpetrators of child pornography, warned Kimberly Mitchell, co-author of the study and a psychology professor at the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center. "They're being asked to produce child pornography," which is a felony, Mitchell told USA Today. "We think most children don't fully understand the stakes here. They may just see it as rudeness or sometimes even flattery." Completed in 2005, the nationally representative survey included replies from 1,500 youths ages 10 to 17. Nearly 10 percent were asked to send photos of themselves, while about 4 percent were asked for sexual pictures. Only one child actually sent sexual images, USA Today said. Most likely to be asked for pictures were girls, black youths, those with a close online relationship and victims of previous physical and sexual abuse, Mitchell told the USA Today, adding that 12 percent of the 65 instances in her study, involving requests for sexual pictures, were reported to authorities.

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