

# **Second Round Cognitive Pretesting on the Proposed Internet Predation Questions for the National Crime Victimization Survey: Results and Recommendations**

## **FINAL REPORT**

**Prepared by**

**Jennifer Beck  
Theresa DeMaio**

**Center for Survey Methods Research  
Statistical Research Division  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Washington, D.C.**

**Submitted: June 19, 2008**

*Disclaimer: This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

---

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in conjunction with the Census Bureau's Demographic Surveys Division (DSD), requested that the Statistical Research Division (SRD) conduct pretesting activities on the addition of Internet predation questions to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). These additional questions are intended to collect data on any contacts that children between the ages of 12 and 17 might have from people they initially met through online channels.

In the fall of 2006 we conducted an initial round of cognitive interviews with children in the target age group. These interviews revealed that the questions were quite problematic, and we recommended additional pretesting before implementing them (Beck & DeMaio, 2007). The sponsors agreed to additional pretesting, and in the spring of 2007 we conducted two focus groups with kids in the target age group to find out more information about their Internet activities that would help us revise the questions (Beck, 2007).

The current report summarizes the results of the final pretesting activities on the proposed questions. Based on the results from the first round of cognitive interviews and the focus groups, we revised the questions and conducted a final round of cognitive interviews with children who were from the Washington DC metropolitan area.

### **Results and Recommendations**

Overall, our cognitive pretesting revealed few problems with the questions. Below we have summarized our key findings from the cognitive pretesting:

- ❖ Overall, these revised questions seemed to be working well. For the most part, the revisions to the questions seem to have solved the major problems we observed with the first round of cognitive interviews.
- ❖ We observed a few problems with the revised questions, particularly for respondents who were online gamers. Due to the interactive and complex nature of gaming, some respondents were misreporting their online communications.
- ❖ We still observed that some respondents might not consider friendships with online strangers when answering these questions.

## Background

---

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in conjunction with the Census Bureau's Demographic Surveys Division (DSD), requested that the Statistical Research Division (SRD) conduct additional pretesting activities on proposed Internet predation questions for the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). These questions will collect data on any contacts that children between the ages of 12 and 17 might have from people they initially met through online channels.

In the Fall of 2006, we pretested the proposed questions in an initial round of cognitive interviews with children in the target age group who were from the Washington DC metropolitan area. These interviews revealed that the questions were quite problematic, creating the potential for misinterpretation and response errors (Beck & DeMaio, 2006). Based on these results, we recommended revisions and additional pretesting before fielding these survey questions. The sponsors agreed with our recommendation, and we proposed conducting focus groups and an additional round of cognitive interviews. In the spring of 2007 we conducted two focus groups with kids in the target age group to find out more information about their Internet activities that would help us revise the questions (Beck, 2007).

Based on the results from the first round of cognitive interviews and the focus groups, we revised the questions and conducted a final round of cognitive interviews with children who were from the Washington DC metropolitan area. Like the first round of pretesting, we administered a paper-based version of the automated instrument that included the individual respondent screening and employment sections of the full NCVS questionnaire (excluding follow-up questions for any reported victimization incidents), followed by the proposed Internet predation questions.

This report presents the results of the final pretesting activities on the Internet predation questions. In the following sections of this report, we will discuss the method and results of the second round of cognitive interviews.

## Method

---

### *Participants*

We interviewed 12 children between the ages of 12 and 17 who lived and attended school in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Table 1 summarizes some demographic descriptions of the respondents.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Cognitive Interview Respondents

Age		Sex		Race and Ethnicity			
<u>12-14</u>	<u>15-17</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>African American</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
6	6	6	6	4	0	6	2

### *Questionnaire*

As in the first round of cognitive interviews, preceding the Internet predation questions, we administered an abbreviated version of the automated NCVS questionnaire that included the individual respondent screening and employment sections of the full NCVS questionnaire and excluded the Crime Incident Report. To further reduce respondent burden, we also abbreviated the individual screening questions on crime to include only the first two response options. These response options contain lengthy lists of potential crimes. Reading all of parts of these non-tested questions greatly increased the length of the interviews, and we wanted to keep respondents engaged during the critical questions we were testing later in the interview.

If a household respondent reports experiencing a crime in the Individual Screener, he or she answers a series of detailed questions (the Crime Incident Report) about each crime. These questions would immediately precede the proposed internet predation question series. Because some of these questions ask about crimes of a sexual nature, there is potential for respondents to report incidents in the Individual Screener that are relevant to the new question series. Because we did not include these potentially overlapping questions in our pretesting, it is not possible to generalize the results of this cognitive pretesting beyond the understanding and workability of the proposed questions.

### *Cognitive Interviews*

Interviews took place during February and March of 2008. SRD staff trained in cognitive interviewing techniques conducted these interviews at Census Bureau headquarters, and at locations more convenient to respondents.

Because we made significant changes to the questionnaire after the first round of cognitive interviews, we did two sets of cognitive interviews in this round. After we conducted the first six interviews, we met with the sponsors to discuss recommendations for changes. We incorporated revisions the sponsor accepted and conducted the final set of six interviews. Appendix A contains the revised Internet predation questions we started with for this round of pretesting. Appendix B contains the final version of the Internet predation questions, which incorporates the sponsor-accepted recommendations across both sets of cognitive interviews.

The interviews followed a standard think-aloud procedure. We asked respondents to think out loud while answering the survey questions and to talk about how they came up with their answers. After some of the questions, we asked respondents concurrent probes to make sure we understood their responses and to gauge their understanding of the question and key terms in it. We then presented respondents with a series of vignettes (see the categorization task described below) to learn what kinds of activities they thought were in-scope for the survey. At the end of the questionnaire, we asked respondents a series of retrospective probes about online activities, and their overall thoughts and impressions of the questions.

### *Categorization Task*

Based on the initial round of cognitive interviews on these questions (Beck & DeMaio, 2006), we were concerned that too few respondents would have in-scope experiences. Recruiting respondents with in-scope contacts was not possible without potentially biasing respondents' pre-interview impressions of the questions. We also assumed these contacts would be rare, and that potential respondents might be reluctant to volunteer information about them. We attempted to recruit respondents who were

relatively frequent online users because we assumed that increased online activity mostly likely would be associated with the increased potential for online stranger contact.

Because of our concern that we would be unable to test the questions related to in-scope contacts, we used a categorization task to expand the information we could collect on different types of online contacts. We developed a series of vignettes that depicted different types of online contacts that were either in-scope or out-of-scope for this survey. We handed the respondent a stack of cards, where each card contained one vignette. For each vignette, we asked the respondent to read the scenario, indicate whether they thought it depicted an in-scope contact or out-of-scope contact, and why he or she felt that way.

After reading through all of the vignettes and sorting them into in-scope and out-of-scope piles, respondents focused on the vignettes they thought were in-scope. We asked the respondent to place each vignette that he or she thought was in-scope in the category that best described the type of online contact, and explain why he or she felt that way. The categories into which the respondents sorted the vignettes were taken from the response options Q7 through Q7d of the survey, describing “predatory” contact with online strangers. These categories also appeared on note cards, and the respondent placed the scenario under the category they felt best described the situation. Appendix C lists the categories.

In the first set of interviews some of the respondents had trouble with the categorization task. These respondents had not experienced any online encounters and may have had difficulty understanding the content of the survey and the types of experiences that would be in-scope. Some respondents seemed confused about the judgment task, thinking they were deciding if these contacts should be reported to the police rather than reported in a survey. For the second set of interviews we changed how we introduced the task, making sure that respondents understood that they were judging if these contacts should be included (that respondents should report them) in the survey.

We tape-recorded all interviews to help with the analysis of the results. Because the respondents were under the age of 18, we required parents or legal guardians to sign a consent form authorizing their child’s participation and the tape-recording of the interview. Children gave assent to participate and be recorded at the start of the interview. We paid respondents \$40 for their participation in the cognitive interview.

## **Overall Results**

---

Overall, these revised questions seemed to be working well. The revisions to the questions seem to have solved the major problems we observed with the first round of cognitive interviews. We discuss the few issues that we uncovered and our recommended changes in the question-by-question results.

Additionally, the categorization task seemed to be effective at opening up respondents and getting them to talk about their reactions to potential in-scope contacts. We were able to collect some information on respondents’ schematic perceptions of what is or is not an online stranger contact. We would not have otherwise been able to elicit this information unless the respondent had experienced in-scope contacts. We discuss respondents’ reactions to the vignettes in the categorization task results.

## Question-by-Question Results

---

### Question 1

**Introduction: The next set of questions is about YOUR Internet activities during the past 6 months.**

**Q1. During the last 6 months, how often were you online, for example using email, instant messaging, visiting chat rooms, blogging, or doing other Internet activities ...**

*(Read answer categories until respondent answers yes.)*

1. More than once per day?
2. Once per day?
3. At least once a week?
4. At least once a month?
5. Less often?
6. Never - *END*

### *Summary of Results:*

- Four respondents reported going online more than once per day, four respondents reported going online once per day, and four respondents reported going online at least once a week.
- Most respondents understood the concept of being online and included visiting social networking sites, emailing, IMing, and looking up information for school projects (i.e., “Googling”) in their definitions.

However, some respondents did not consider their gaming to be “online.” As a result of this exclusion, these respondents did not report in-scope gaming contacts in subsequent questions. The fact that the question does not mention gaming, a common online activity for kids in this age group, may have contributed to this exclusion.

- Respondents had different definitions of online sessions that affected their estimates of online frequency.

Most respondents defined their online sessions by their number of “log-ins.” Logging into e-mail, IM, a game, or a social networking site would begin an online session and logging out would end this session, regardless of what else the respondent might be doing (i.e., IMing with friends while doing homework).

However, three respondents included intermittently being online in between doing other activities, such as homework, eating dinner, or watching TV, despite “logging-out,” as a single online session.

One of these respondents applied this definition only to his gaming, because although he logged out of the game, he did not log out of his character when taking breaks. The other two respondents defined this type of intermittent activity as multiple online sessions, regardless of the activity.

This inconsistency among respondents in their definition of online sessions will translate into inaccuracies in the estimates of online frequency and may not portray an accurate picture of “online vulnerability.” However, we do not feel that this issue warrants changes to the questionnaire. Adding a more precise definition of online sessions would make the question difficult to parse, potentially confusing respondents and making responding more difficult. We bring this issue up as a caveat to data-users when interpreting the data.

*Recommendation:*

To encourage respondents to consider gaming in their definition of online activities we recommend removing “blogging” from this question (because few respondents seem to know what this term means) and placing gaming in the examples. The sponsor adopted this recommended change.

The revised will read:

*Q1. During the last 6 months, how often were you online, for example **gaming**, using email, instant messaging, visiting chat rooms, or doing other Internet activities ...*

**Question 2 and 2a**

**Next, I have some questions about contacts you may have had with individuals you know or first met ONLY online. Some of these questions may be hard to answer. However, anything you say will be kept strictly confidential. Your answers to these questions will not be shared with anyone.**

**Q2. Thinking back during the last 6 months, during any of the times you were online, were you contacted by anyone that you didn't know, meaning they had no connection at all to you, your friends, or your family? Please do NOT include SPAM or pop-up ads when answering.**

Yes – Ask 2a

No – *END*

**Q2a. How many times has this happened to you in the last 6 months?**

*Number of times \_\_\_\_\_*

*If Q2a = 1, then autofill “this person”*

*If Q2a > 1, then autofill “these people”*

*Summary of Results:*

- Six of our twelve respondents experienced in-scope contacts.

Only three respondents reported their contacts correctly. The remaining three respondents omitted some of their in-scope contacts. We did not discover these omissions until later in the cognitive interviews.

The in-scope contacts of our respondents included the following:

- One girl received numerous “friend” requests on her MySpace page from boys she did not know (although she later found out one of these boys went to her school, she did not know him). She answered yes to Q2, estimating that she has received approximately 10-12 requests in the last six months.
- One boy was an avid gamer who estimated that he has interacted more than 100 times with “online strangers.” He played computer games that use online platforms for several hours a day. The game (World of Warcraft) requires interacting and communicating with other players through an IM-like platform. With the exception of his friends, who also play the game, the majority of the people this respondent interacts with are “strangers.”
- One boy, who was also an online gamer and frequently interacted with online strangers while playing, answered no to this question. This respondent talked with other unknown players over a web microphone during the course of the game, but he did not characterize gaming as being online.
- Perhaps this exclusion is due to the fact that many games are not online only, meaning that players do not have to visit a website to start playing. These games are computer software that the user must purchase and load onto his or her computer. Because these games are complex, they require storing many features and functions on an online server that the user must access in order to play the game. The games are a new generation of technology that previously did not require online access. For some respondents this idea of playing a “computer game” may skew their perceptions of their online vulnerability.
- Two boys had contacts through an online gaming console (*Xbox 360*). Neither respondent initially considered these contacts when answering Q2 because these games are not played on



the computer. Players use the game console to connect to the online components of the game, and the game is displayed on the television.

One of these respondents eventually changed his answer to Q2 to be a yes response. He subsequently reported 20 to 30 contacts with online strangers. The other respondent did not report his gaming contacts. He had contact with “online strangers” through both his gaming and through his Facebook page. When answering Q2, he only reported his contact through the social networking site. He reported getting one message from someone he did not know. At the end of the cognitive interview, the interviewer asked this respondent if he was a gamer. The respondent mentioned playing online games through his *Xbox 360* but thought that he should not include it in his answers to these questions because it is not gaming on the computer.

Mentioning gaming in Q1 most likely would not have changed how the latter respondent answered Q2, because his error was based on a different conceptual interpretation of gaming activities. However, use of these online-capable games and game consoles is probably going to be quite common with this age group, and we want to bring attention to gaming as an online activity. Mentioning gaming in Q1 (per our recommendation) might have prevented a response error from two respondents, because they did not consider this gaming to be “online.”

- One girl had boys contact her through her MySpace page.

Boys whom this respondent did not know left messages on her MySpace page, “just saying ‘Hi’,” or expressing interest in wanting to get to know her. Some of these boys claim to have seen her before around her school. However, the respondent has included a school that she does not attend in her profile.

- An additional respondent may have had in-scope contacts with online strangers that he did not report.

This respondent, a boy, may have had in-scope contacts through a social networking site. During Q2, he interrupted the interviewer to say he does not talk to people he does not know. He has a Facebook page, and mentioned reading the comments people post to his page and deleting them. It was unclear if these comments were from people he did not know. Given the nature of these types of sites, some of these most likely were in-scope.

- In general, respondents did not have any problems understanding this question.

Respondents seemed to understand that we were asking if people they did not know had contacted them online. However, one respondent seemed to place a great deal of focus on both the content and direction of the contact. This respondent did not think that someone saying “hello” or “how are you” would be important enough to include when answering this question. She also thought that contacts had to be one-sided; they could only come from the online stranger, and the recipient could never be an initiator of additional contact, nor could he or she respond or otherwise participate in the conversation. This strict interpretation of these types of contacts seemed to have a significant effect on how she interpreted the scenarios in the categorization task.

- During the categorization task, we discovered some respondents were not familiar with the term “SPAM.”

One respondent specifically mentioned that she is more familiar with the term “junk-mail” to describe those types of e-mail. Using the term SPAM in this question could be potentially problematic, leading some respondents to include out-of-scope contacts.

### **Skip Point**

---

Only five of our respondents answered Q2 in the affirmative, and only those respondents answered the remaining survey questions. The other seven respondents proceeded to the categorization task. However, after completing that task, we took these respondents back through the questions we initially did not ask them to probe some of the potentially problematic terms. For the remaining questions, we present the answers and results from the five respondents who reported in-scope contacts and the feedback from the all respondents on the relevant terminology in the questions.

### **Questions 3 and 4**

**Q3. I'd like to find out more about how someone you didn't know might have contacted you online. Did [this person/these people] contact you through a social networking site, such as MySpace, Facebook, or Xanga?**

Yes -- if Q2a = 1, then skip to Q5

No

**Q4. Other than contacting you through a social networking site, how else did someone you didn't know contact you online? Did [this person/these people] contact you ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Through a personal web page not on a social networking site? | Yes | No |
| 2. Through instant messaging or a chat room?                    | Yes | No |
| 3. While gaming?  | Yes | No |
| 4. Through e-mail?  | Yes | No |
| 5. Through a blog?  | Yes | No |
| 6. Some other way? (specify)_____                               | Yes | No |

*Summary of results:*

Q3:

- Four of our five respondents indicated that their online stranger contact was through a social networking site.

Three of these respondents were reporting actual social networking site contacts. The other respondent considered *XBox360 Live* to be a social networking site. The latter yes response may or may not have been an error, depending on the intent of this question. Technically, the game console allows users to set up an online gamer profile, add people to his or her list of opponents, and to communicate with other players through limited messaging. However, unlike a traditional, web-based social networking site, this profile and contact is limited only to the gamers playing through the console.

Because of an interviewer error, this respondent was not asked Q4, and therefore it was unclear if he also would have answered yes to the gaming response option.

Q4:

- We did not observe any problems with Q4.

Only one of our five in-scope respondents answered yes to this question. He answered yes for the gaming option and no for all other options.

“Personal webpage” is still a problematic term. Respondents often had a hard time coming up with a definition for this term. Some still tended to view it as identical to a MySpace profile. Separating social networking sites from the remaining sources of contacts seems to be working. However, we still have concern about using “personal webpage” in Q4. Given that few respondents seem to understand the term or have a personal webpage, this activity may not be very common. We want to avoid potential confusion.

- Separating social networking sites from the other online activities questions seems to be working.

The separation of the social networking sites in a separate question and the skip pattern prevented possible double reporting for these respondents if they had experienced in-scope contacts.

*Recommendation:*

Because respondents do not seem familiar with the desired interpretation of “personal webpage,” we recommended deleting this response category from Q4.

The sponsors adopted this recommendation.

### ***Question 5***

We tested two versions of this question.

Version 1:

**Q5. Where were you when [this person/these people] contacted you? Were you online...**

(Mark all that apply if Q2a > 1)

1. At home in your bedroom?	Yes	No
2. At home in a family area?	Yes	No
3. At school?	Yes	No
4. At a friend's or relative's house?	Yes	No
5. At a recreational center?	Yes	No
6. At a public library?	Yes	No
7. At a coffee shop or other public establishment?	Yes	No
8. Somewhere else? (specify) _____	Yes	No

*Summary of results:*

- Two respondents reported in-scope contacts and answered this question.
- One respondent had some trouble with this question.

The respondent made two response errors. She goes online at the public library and at her aunt's house. She said yes to "family area" because that sounded close enough a family member's house. When she heard "at a friend's or relative's house," she changed her answer. "Family area" seemed to be a misleading term for her. She also said yes to "at a recreational facility." She wasn't sure if that included a public library, because reading is recreational. She changed her answer when she heard the library response option.

The other respondent reported that he was "at home in [his] bedroom," and "at a friend's or relative's house." He games at home and at his cousin's house.

*Recommendation:*

After the first set of interviews, we recommended two changes to this question:

1. Re-phrase "at home in a family area" to read:

*"At home, someplace other than your bedroom?"*

2. Reverse the order of "recreational center" and "public library" response options to prevent respondents from misreporting online encounters while at a public library.

The sponsor adopted these recommended changes, and we tested the revised question in the second set of interviews.

Version 2:

**Q5. Where were you when [this person/these people] contacted you? Were you online...**

(Mark all that apply if Q2a > 1)

1. At home in your bedroom?	Yes	No
2. At home, someplace other than your bedroom?	Yes	No
3. At school?	Yes	No
4. At a friend's or relative's house?	Yes	No
5. At a public library?	Yes	No
6. At a recreational center?	Yes	No
7. At a coffee shop or other public establishment?	Yes	No
8. Somewhere else? (specify) _____	Yes	No

*Summary of Results:*

- The three respondents reporting in-scope contacts in this set of interviews reported being online “at home in [his or her] bedroom[s],” “at home someplace other than [his or her] bedroom[s],” and “at a friend's or relative's house.”

The respondent who reported that he was “at home someplace other than [his] bedroom,” was in a family living space. The contact occurred while he was gaming on his *XBox 360* console. The console was hooked up to the TV in this family area. The respondent who reported being “at a friend's or relative's house” was online at her best friend's house.

- We did not observe any problems with this version of the question.

*Recommendation:*

We have no additional recommendations for this question.

***Question 6 series***

We tested two versions of this question series.

Version 1:

**Q6. And how did you respond when [this person/these people] contacted you?  
Did you...**

(Mark all that apply)

1. Ignore the contact?	Yes	No
2. Tell them to leave you alone or block them?	Yes	No
3. Respond and try to find out more information about them?	Yes - ask 6a	No
4. Something else? (specify) _____	Yes	No

**6a. When you responded to [this person/any of these people] to find out more information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

*Summary of results:*

- Two respondents answered this question.

One of these respondents had no problems with the questions. She indicated that she “ignored the contact.” She had received messages on her MySpace page from boys she did not know.

- This version of Q6 and Q6a was problematic for gamers.

The gaming respondent answered Q6 incorrectly. He said yes to the “respond and try to find out more information.” However, he did so in the context of the game. The online game he plays requires finding out if other characters have the resources or information he needs to earn points and get ahead. He does not try to find out more *personal* information about the online stranger. This gamer also said yes to the “something else” option, indicating that he talks with other players to find out game-related information.

The wording of this question also led the respondents to answer Q6a incorrectly. He answered yes, because in the context of the game he continues to communicate with the other characters once the initial interaction begins. However, this communication is not outside of being a character in the game.

Feedback from the sponsor indicated that the intent of this question is to capture non-game-related interactions during the course of a game that may involve trying to find out personal information about the online stranger. Because the intent of this question was not to capture game-related interactions, we proposed a series of revisions to this question that would capture non-game related conversations and other communications with online strangers.

Based on changes made after the first set of interviews, respondents will receive one of three different versions of the Q6 series, based on whether the contacts occurred while gaming or not.

Version 2:

*Non-gaming version:*

**Q6. How did you respond when [this person/these people] contacted you through**

**[your page on a social networking site/autofill from Q4] ? Did you...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |   |               |    |
|---|---------------|----|
| 1. Ignore the contact?  | Yes           | No |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone or block them?                              | Yes           | No |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more <i>personal</i> information about them? | Yes -- ask 6a | No |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____  | Yes           | No |

**6a. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

*Summary of results:*

- All three respondents who reported in-scope contacts answered this version of the question. All three respondents said they “ignored the contact.”
- We did not observe any problems with this version of the question.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

*Gaming and other online contacts version:*

**Q6 You indicated that someone you didn't know contacted you while you were gaming during the last 6 months. During a game, did anyone you didn't know ever talk to you about things NOT related to the game?**

Yes

No -- skip to Q6c

**Q6a. How did you respond when these people talked to you about things not related to the game? Did you...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |  |                |    |
|--|----------------|----|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Yes            | No |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone?                                     | Yes            | No |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Yes -- ask Q6b | No |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Yes            | No |

**6b. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

**Q6c. You also told me that someone you didn't know contacted you through [your page on a social networking site /autofill all other response options to Q4] during the last 6 months. How did you respond when they contacted you? Did you...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |  |                |    |
|--|----------------|----|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Yes            | No |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone or block them?                       | Yes            | No |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Yes -- ask Q6d | No |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Yes            | No |

**6d. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

*Summary of Results:*

Because none of our respondents in the second set of interviews reported online contact through gaming and through some other online activity, we did not administer this version of the Q6 series. We were unable to test it.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.



*Gaming only version:*

**Q6. You indicated that someone you didn't know contacted you while you were gaming during the last 6 months. During a game, did anyone you didn't know ever talk to you about things NOT related to the game?**

Yes

No -- **if Q4 is gaming only, skip to Q7**

**Q6a. How did you respond when these people talked to you about things not related to the game? Did you...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |  |                      |    |
|--|----------------------|----|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Yes                  | No |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone?                                     | Yes                  | No |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Yes -- <b>ask 6b</b> | No |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Yes                  | No |

**6b. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

*Summary of Results:*

Because none of our respondents in the second set of interviews reported online contact through gaming only, we did not administer this version of the Q6 series. We were unable to test it.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

**Question 6b/7**

After making changes to Q6 and 6a, we renumbered this question for the second set of interviews. The dual numbers reflect the numbering for the first set of interviews and the numbering for the second set of interviews, respectively.

**Q6b/Q7. Did your contact with [this person/any of these people] you didn't know happen only online, or did you later have contact with them in person or on the phone?**

1. Online only -- *ask Online Only Contact questions*
2. In-person/phone contact-- *ask Offline Contact questions*
3. Multiple people--both Online only and Offline—*ask Offline Contact questions*

**Summary of results:**

- We did not observe any problems with this question. All five respondents answered “online only.”

**Recommendation:**

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

**Questions 7A/7B****7A: Online Only Contact**

**Q7a. I would like to know the kinds of things [this person/any of these people] you knew only online might have said when talking with you. When [this person was/any of these people were] talking with you, did they ever ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites?	Yes	No
2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex?	Yes	No
3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or send sexual photos of yourself?	Yes	No
4. Tell you sexual information about themselves?	Yes	No

*Summary of results:*

- All five respondents who reported their in-scope contacts answered this question.
- We did not observe any problems with this question. All five respondents said no to all response options.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

## 7B: Offline Contact

**Q7b. I would like to know the kinds of things [this person/any of these people] you first met online might have said when talking with you. When [this person was /any of these people were] talking with you, did they ever ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites?           | Yes | No |
| 2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex?                       | Yes | No |
| 3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or video camera or send sexual photos of yourself? | Yes | No |
| 4. Tell you sexual information about themselves?  | Yes | No |

*Summary of results:*

Because none of our respondents had offline contact with the “online strangers,” we did not administer this question. However, because Q7B is virtually identical to Q7A, for which we did not observe any problems, we do not anticipate any problems with it.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

**Question 7C****Q7c. Did [this person/any of these people] ever ask you to...***(Mark all that apply)*

1. Meet up with them to hang out?	Yes	No
2. Run away from home to be with them?	Yes	No
3. Meet up somewhere to have sex?	Yes	No

*Summary of results:*

- Four of the five respondents who reported in-scope contacts answered no to all response options.
- One respondent said “yes” to “meet up with them to hang out.”

The respondent said that “a friend of a friend” contacted him through a message on his *Xbox 360* gaming profile. This person, who lives out of town, was interested in meeting the respondent when he next comes to town to visit their mutual friend. This yes response was mostly likely an error. The introduction to Q2 defines “online stranger” as someone unknown to the respondent, his or her friends, or his or her family. Because this person knew the respondent’s friend, he was not an “online stranger.”

When answering this question, the respondent was most likely not limiting his focus to online strangers. After Q2, respondents do not hear another reminder of the “online stranger” definition. However, adding a definition to this question would make the question too wordy and could potentially create more problems for respondents. None of the other respondents who had similar contacts misreported those experiences.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

**Question 7D**

**Q7d. Did [this person/any of these people] ask or tell you anything that made you feel uncomfortable?**

Yes (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
No

*Summary of results:*

- Four of the five respondents who reported in-scope contacts answered no to this question. One respondent said yes to this question.

This respondent was a computer gamer. He reported that, while talking back and forth in the context of the game, other gamers sometimes have asked him where he lived (i.e., city or state). The respondent does not like to give out any personal information, and therefore, this request made him feel uncomfortable.

- We did not observe any problems with this question.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

**Question 7E**

This question is a follow-up to the Q7-Q7d series about types of online contacts. Respondents who answer yes to any of the options in this question series answer the Q7e follow-up question. Across both sets of interviews, two respondents reported one of these types of contacts.

*Ask for each “yes” response in Q7 through Q7d:*

**Q7e. You just told me [autofill “yes” responses to Q7a/Q7b through Q7d]. How many times did this happen in the last 6 months?**

*Number of times* \_\_\_\_\_

*Summary of results:*

- Two respondents answered this question.

One respondent, who answered yes to “meet up to hang out” in question Q7c, indicated that this happened one time in the last six months. The other respondent, who answered that someone had asked him something that made him uncomfortable (Q7d), said that this had happened five to ten times in the

last six months. He was reporting the number of times that someone had asked where he lived during an online game. This respondent seemed to be calculating a rough estimate of the frequency of this experience. It is most likely not possible to get precise frequency estimates to this question. However, we do not recommend any changes to this question.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

**Questions 8 and 8A**

**Q8. Did you tell anyone about [this contact/any of these contacts]?**

Yes-Ask 8a  
 No - *END*  
 Don't know - *END*

**Q8a. Whom did you tell? Was it ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Your parents?   | Yes | No |
| 2. Family members under age 18, such as brothers, sisters, or cousins? | Yes | No |
| 3. Adult family members, such as brothers, sisters, aunts, or uncles?  | Yes | No |
| 4. Friends?  | Yes | No |
| 5. A police officer?   | Yes | No |
| 6. A teacher, coach, or school counselor?                              | Yes | No |
| 7. A clergy member such as a minister, priest, or rabbi?               | Yes | No |
| 8. Someone else? (Specify) _____                                       | Yes | No |

*Summary of results:*

- Three of the five respondents who reported in-scope contacts answered yes to Q8. The other two respondents answered no to Q8, and therefore were not asked Q8A. Two respondents only told “friends,” and one respondent told “friends” and “adult family members” (an adult cousin, age 19) about the contacts.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to either question.

***Question 9***

**Q9. I'd like to know more about your contact(s) with anyone you first met online. In your own words, please tell me what happened during the contact(s) and afterwards.**

---

---

---

*Summary of results:*

- We did not observe any problems with this question.

However, respondents gave very short answers to this question. For example, one respondent said, "During the contact it was just a simple message and afterward I ignored it." While the information this question may elicit potentially could be helpful to data analysts, it is unclear how much information respondents will provide when answering this question.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.



### ***Questions 10, 11, and 12***

For the final set of interviews, we added the following three questions. After the first set of interviews, there was still some concern that respondents might not report in-scope contacts if they perceive the relationship to be “harmless.” In other words, respondents might not consider friendships with “strangers” when answering these survey questions, particularly if that person is in the respondent’s age group. Questions 10 and 11 were intended to capture these types of friendships. Question 12 was intended to capture respondents’ sense of their own vulnerability to Internet predators.

**My final questions are about how you may have met some of your friends.**

**Q10. Thinking about the people you consider to be your friends, are any of them people you have NEVER met in person?**

Yes -- ask next question  
No – go to Q12

**Q11. Thinking about these friends that you have NEVER met in person, are any of them people who have a connection to friends you know in person?**

Yes  
No

**Q12. In your opinion, where do you think someone your age is more likely to be approached by someone who is a complete stranger to them? Do you think that’s more likely to happen ONLINE, or more likely to happen OFFLINE, in your daily life?**

Online  
Offline  
Both equally (only if respondents answers “both”)

#### *Summary of Results:*

##### Q10:

- All six respondents in the second set of interviews answered no to this question. We did not observe any problems with this question.

##### Q11:

- Because all of our respondents answered no to Q10, they skipped this question. We were unable to test it.

Q12:

- We did not observe any problems with this question. Most respondents thought they were more likely to encounter “strangers” online.

*Recommendation:*

We have no recommendations for changes to this question.

## **Categorization Task Results**

---

In this section, we present the results of the categorization task from all twelve respondents. For each vignette, we discuss how respondents classified the situation (in-scope or out-of-scope), in which category from Q7a through Q7d (See Appendix C) they felt it belonged, and why.

Although some respondents in the first set of interviews may have had some difficulty understanding the task, overall it worked well. Respondents seemed to like the game-like task and became quite animated during the discussion of the vignettes. We were able to collect information about how respondents think about certain types of online relations that we otherwise would not have been able to elicit from respondents.

**While checking his e-mail Danny notices he had received an email asking if he would like to try Viagra. He opens the e-mail, reads it, and then deletes it.**

*Summary of results:*

- Ten respondents thought that this scenario was out-of-scope.

Four of these respondents focused on the fact that Danny deleted the e-mail. The fact that he deleted it seemed to indicate that the e-mail was harmless. Other respondents focused on the fact that the e-mail seemed like “spam” or that the e-mail did not seem to originate from anyone specific. The e-mail appeared to be without an “actor,” and therefore, similar to spam.

- Two respondents thought that this was an in-scope contact. Both of them thought that this vignette fit into the “Some other type of contact” category.

One of these respondents thought that this contact was in-scope because Danny received an e-mail he did not want. However, this respondent did not know about Viagra and asked the interviewer for clarification. She also was not familiar with the term “spam” and therefore may not have had a complete understanding of the vignette.

The other respondent who categorized this as an in-scope contact did so because Viagra is a drug that is used for sexual purposes. The respondent seemed to be basing his answer on the fact that the e-mail may have sexual content, and not on the fact it may or may not have come from an online stranger.

**While checking her email, Erica notices that she has received an offer to enter and win a dream vacation. She opens the e-mail, reads it, and then deletes it.**

*Summary of results:*

- Ten respondents thought this contact was out-of-scope.

One respondent thought this should not be reported because she thought Erica might actually have been the “initiator” of the contact. She gave the example of signing up to a list-serve from various websites and agreeing to receive periodic e-mails. If this were the case, then Erica technically would have contacted the source of this e-mail first. This respondent seemed to be basing her decision on the initiator of the contact. As long as the person does not initiate or otherwise reciprocate contact with the online stranger, then the contact will be in scope. If the person reciprocates or initiates the contact, then it becomes out-of-scope.

The remaining nine respondents thought that this contact was out-of-scope because the email seemed like spam and Erica deleted it. These respondents were focusing on the apparent harmless and actorless nature of the e-mail.

- Two respondents thought this contact was in-scope.

One respondent was concerned about why Erica had deleted the e-mail. If the e-mail was indeed as harmless as the scenario implied, then she probably would not have deleted it. The respondent’s skepticism about the true content of the e-mail, something not mentioned in the scenario, led him to believe this contact was potentially in scope. He thought that the e-mail most likely contained x-rated material. He thought “some other type of contact” best described the situation.

The other respondent thought that this was an in-scope contact because Erica did not ask for this e-mail and might get in trouble for receiving it. This respondent seemed to focus on the fact that someone might get into trouble, presumably face consequences from parents or other authority figures, for certain types of interactions with people. She was not focusing on the fact that this e-mail may or may not have been spam. This respondent thought “send you links to x-rated websites” best described this contact.

There is some evidence that this respondent may have misunderstood the categorization task. She seemed to struggle with some of the scenarios and tended to group them together based on her previous answers, rather than her actual opinion. For this scenario, the respondent said that it seemed similar enough to another scenario involving x-rated materials, and therefore, she placed it in the “links to x-rated materials” category.

**While doing a Google search to get information for a school project, Beth accidentally misspelled a word and a “pop-up” for an x-rated website appeared on screen. When she clicks on the pop-up to close it, it actually opens up into the x-rated website.**

*Summary of results:*

- Ten respondents thought that this contact was out-of-scope.

One respondent thought the contact was out-of-scope because the survey explicitly says to exclude “pop-ups.” Another respondent indicated that this contact was out-of-scope because the “pop-up” did not seem to originate from anyone specific. The remaining respondents seemed to focus on the fact that Beth did not mean to access the ad. These respondents did not seem to notice that pop-ups were explicitly excluded from the list of in-scope contacts.

- Two respondents thought this contact was in-scope.

One respondent thought this type of experience was very common and felt that we should be collecting data on how frequently it happens. She classified it in the “some other type of contact” category.

The other respondent thought this was in-scope because Beth was not intentionally accessing the site. For this and other scenarios, the respondent seemed to focus on the fact that Beth was not initiating or reciprocating the contact and was not trying to access the site. She thought that “send you links to x-rated websites” best described this vignette.

**Sam is checking his e-mail when he receives an Instant Message alert from “JoshSmith,” someone he met through an online gaming site. “JoshSmith” writes that he just saw a great website that he thinks Sam will really like and copies the link into his message. Sam sees that the link is to a website called “playfulbunnies.com”. Sam clicks on the link and realizes that it is an adult website containing pictures of women without clothing.**

*Summary of results:*

- Eight respondents thought this contact was in-scope.

Respondents gave different reasons for why they thought this contact was in-scope. Some of these respondents focused on the fact that the link was x-rated and that Sam did not know JoshSmith. One respondent felt that because Sam did not mean to access the site and JoshSmith seemed to be tricking Sam into visiting it, the contact was in-scope. Another respondent thought that it was “gross” for someone to send Sam that kind of link and that no one should do that kind of thing. All eight respondents thought that “send you links to x-rated websites” best described this contact.

Interestingly, some of the respondents indicated that this contact was in-scope largely because of the potential for this contact to escalate. They thought that JoshSmith would later try to engage Sam in more inappropriate contact.

- Four respondents thought this contact was out-of-scope.

Three of these respondents thought that the contact was out of scope because the situation seemed relatively harmless, it was not that big of a deal, and Sam did not intentionally access the x-rated site. These respondents seemed to be ignoring the fact that an online stranger sent Sam an X-rated link. The final respondent may have misunderstood the scenario. The respondent thought that, because Sam was not actually interacting with anyone once he accessed the website, the contact was not in-scope. This respondent had some trouble with some of the other scenarios. She may have been misinterpreting the categorization task.

**Jeremy is in a chat room for fans of his favorite TV show, *Lost*. He is talking back and forth with another fan with the screen name “LostRules07.” While chatting with this fellow fan about how attractive some of the cast members are, LostRules07 writes that some of the men have “sexy muscles” and asks Jeremy if he also has “sexy muscles.”**

#### *Summary of results*

- Eight respondents thought that this contact was in-scope.

Most respondents thought that this contact was in-scope because Jeremy did not know LostRules07 and his comments had a sexual connotation. Other respondents thought the comment was “gross” or “creepy” that LostRules07 was making those types of comments to Jeremy.

Most of these respondents categorized this contact as “asking you to tell sexual information about yourself.” However, three respondents categorized it as “telling sexual information about themselves.” One of the respondents might have confused these two response categories. The other two respondents just thought that LostRules07 was talking about his sexual preference in men.

- Three respondents thought this contact was out-of-scope.

Respondents who thought this contact was out-of-scope generally thought that LostRules07’s comments were “harmless flirting.” One of these respondents thought that because LostRules07 was talking about the other cast members that the contact was out-of-scope. These respondents were not focused on the fact that LostRules07 is an “online stranger.”

- One respondent was undecided about this contact.

She wanted to know more about the sex of LostRules07. If LostRules07 was a male, then the contact would be in-scope. She thought the comment would be “weird” if it came from another boy. If LostRules07 was female, then it would be out-of scope because it would be harmless flirting.

**David received a message on his MySpace page from someone named Nicole. Nicole sent out a message saying she was a professor working on a research project at a local University and was looking for kids in his age range to participate in the project. David thought the project sounded interesting so he decided to respond to Nicole's message. The research project involves visiting a website, looking at photos of kids in his age group, and rating how friendly each person looks. Nicole told David he would need to submit a recent photo of himself to participate in the study. She asked David to email her a photo of himself.**

*Summary of results:*

- Eight respondents thought that this contact was in-scope.

Most respondents thought that this contact was in-scope not because Nicole was someone David did not know, but instead because it was odd that an adult would be asking a child for a picture or be asking him to look at other kids' pictures online. Most respondents thought this was "some other kind of contact" because Nicole was not overtly requesting a sexual photo.

One respondent assumed that these pictures must be sexual in nature, although the scenario does not give any details on the types of pictures at which David would be looking. He characterized the scenario as "ask you for sexual information about yourself" because he thought that is where Nicole's request was heading next. One other respondent thought that the contact should be characterized as "ask you for sexual pictures of yourself" because he thought that was the intent of Nicole's request.

- Three respondents thought this contact was out-of-scope.

Two respondents thought that the contact did not seem dangerous. Although these respondents acknowledged that Nicole could be pretending to be a professor and could be dangerous, they still that David's interaction with her was harmless.

One of these three respondents thought that it sounded like David would be surrounded by other kids and therefore would not be in any physical danger. This respondent seemed to have misunderstood the scenario. It seemed like she was interpreting this scenario to mean that David would be meeting Nicole in the presence of other kids. She often struggled when reading the scenarios and seemed quite self-conscious during the cognitive interview. She might not have fully understood the scenarios.

**Sophie received a message on her MySpace page from someone named Frank. He sent out a message saying he was new in town and wanted to meet people. Sophie was curious so she wrote back to him and tried to find out more about him. Frank is 21 and goes to college. He noticed that Sophie had pictures of the beach on her page and asked about them. Sophie told him they were from a recent family vacation to Hawaii. Frank said he bet she looked good in a bathing suit and asked Sophie to send him a photo of herself on the beach in her bathing suit.**

*Summary of results*

- Eleven respondents thought that this experience was in-scope.

These respondents thought that the contact was in-scope because Sophie did not know Frank, and he was asking her for a photo of herself. All but one respondent thought that Sophie in her bathing suit was a sexual photo, and therefore, characterized this contact as “asking you to send sexual photos of yourself” response category. One respondent thought this was “some other type of contact” because he did not think Sophie in her bathing suit would be a sexual photo.

- Only one respondent thought that this contact was out-of-scope.

This respondent thought that the conversation sounded like “flirting” and did not seem serious enough to report. However, he would report this contact if something beyond what was on the card were to happen. In other words, if the contact were to escalate, and Frank were to make additional inappropriate requests, then the contact would be in-scope.

**Courtney is a member of an online message board for runners. She sometimes posts comments back and forth with other members about racing and training techniques. One day, Courtney was talking with another member about how to train for a 5k, who writes that his training has given him enough endurance to “really please the ladies.”**

*Summary of results:*

- Three respondents thought this contact was in-scope.

These respondents thought the contact was in-scope because Courtney did not know this other person and he seemed to be crossing the line with his comments. They thought “really please the ladies” was a sexual comment and that this other runner was talking about his sexual prowess. All three respondents thought that the other runner was “telling you sexual information about themselves.”

- Nine respondents thought this contact was out-of-scope.

Some respondents thought that the conversation was harmless flirting. Other respondents did not think the comment was intentionally meant to be sexual. All of these respondents were focused on the content of the conversation rather than the fact that Courtney potentially is talking to someone she knows only online.

**Chad received a “friend” request on his MySpace page from a girl named Katie. He didn’t know Katie but thought she was “cute” in the pictures on her page and decided to “friend” her. Her page says she attends a private school in the same neighborhood as his public high school. They chatted back and forth for a while over MySpace until one day Katie asked if she could call him. Now Chad and Katie talk on the phone and sometimes hang out together after school.**

*Summary of results:*

- Six respondents thought that this contact was in-scope.

Respondents thought that because Chad does not know Katie, meeting up with her could be dangerous. Meeting Katie in person breaks the “online barrier” of just talking back and forth. Essentially, the real danger in this contact is in the face-to-face meeting, not in the online stranger contact itself. Five respondents categorized the contact in the “meet up to hang out” response category, because Chad and Katie are now hanging out. However, one astute respondent noted that talking back and forth on the phone happened first, and therefore this scenario did not fit into the “meet up to hang out” category. She said this contact belonged in the “some other type of contact” category.

- Six respondents thought that this contact was out-of-scope.

Respondents thought this contact was out-of-scope because the contact did not seem to involve anything sexual, the relationship seemed harmless, and Katie and Chad appeared to be friends now. These respondents were focusing on the innocuous nature of the relationship rather than on the fact that Katie started out as an online stranger.

**Jessica is having a hard time at school. No one seems to like her and she feels alone. One night in her room, Jessica comes across someone’s online blog, “Unhappy Mary”. Mary seems to feel just like her, so Jessica sends her an e-mail. They seem to have a lot in common. They begin regularly writing back and forth. After a few months, Mary says she is so unhappy that she is going to run away to New York and asks Jessica to come with her.**

*Summary of results:*

- Nine respondents thought that this contact was in-scope.

Respondents thought that the contact was in-scope because Jessica does not know Mary, and Mary was asking Jessica to run away, which could be dangerous. These respondents categorized this contact in the “run away from home to be with them” response category.

- Three respondents thought that this contact was out-of-scope.

Respondent thought this contact was out-of-scope because Mary was not forcing Jessica to run away. Jessica was a willing participant. One respondent also noted that there was “nothing sexual” about the contact, and therefore it would be out-of-scope. These respondents seemed to be focusing on the complicit nature of the relationship, rather than on the fact that Mary is an “online stranger.”

**Gary met Anna while in an online chat room on Yahoo. Gary and Anna started exchanging flirty e-mails. In one of these e-mails Anna asked Gary if he would like to meet her at a hotel the following weekend.**



*Summary of results:*

- All twelve respondents thought this contact was in-scope.

Respondents thought that it was suspicious for Anna to be asking to meet in a hotel if she only wanted to “hang out” with Gary. They seemed to think that because there seemed to be the promise of sexual contact, then the contact was in-scope. Eight respondents categorized the contact in the “meet up to have sex” response category. However, three respondents, who were at the lower end of the target age (around 12 years old), thought that this contact belonged in the “meet up to hang out” category. One respondent thought that this contact belonged in the “tell you sexual information about themselves” because the e-mails between Gary and Anna seemed “flirty.”

We added the following two scenarios for the final set of six cognitive interviews.

**Matt recently joined the MySpace page for his favorite group, Danger Kitty. He often visits their page to get news on the band and free music downloads. One day a girl named Carrie posts a message with her e-mail address, saying she has some of their live music. Matt sends an e-mail to Carrie. Matt and Carrie begin writing back and forth. Matt really likes Carrie, so one day he gets up the nerve to ask her out on a date to the upcoming Danger Kitty show. Carrie accepts the invitation.**

*Summary of results*

- Five respondents thought that this contact was in-scope.

Most respondents thought this contact was in-scope because Matt does not know Carrie and she could be dangerous. All of these respondents categorized this contact in the “ask you to meet up to hang out” category.

- One respondent thought this contact was out-of-scope.

This respondent thought that Matt and Carrie seemed to have “common ground” because they liked the same band. Because they had something common, the contact was not dangerous.

**Rick is really into gaming. He often spends hours at a time playing his favorite game, World of Warcraft. During one game, while Rick was planning a move with another character, the player mentions that he lives in Pittsburg and then asks Rick where he lives.**

*Summary of Results:*

- Five respondents thought that this contact was in-scope.

These respondents thought this fellow gamer might be trying to find out where Rick lives. This person might want to harm Rick. Four respondents characterized this contact as “some other type of contact.”

One respondent thought that this gamer might be trying to hang out with Rick and put this contact in the “meet up to hang out” category.

- One respondent thought this contact was out-of-scope.

This respondent thought that someone asking Rick in what city he lives is not necessarily dangerous. It would be really difficult for this gamer to find Rick even if he knows the name of the city.

## **Sensitivity and Willingness to Report**

---

Most respondents indicated that they most likely would be willing to report these types of experiences in a survey interview. However, some respondents felt that their peers might not be as willing. These types of experiences could be potentially traumatic for some kids. One respondent said that she could imagine herself crying during the interview if she had experienced any of the in-scope contacts (in Q7). Having a list of names and telephone numbers for help or counseling resources on hand to give to survey respondents will be important for these interviews.

## **Conclusions**

---

In general, the revised versions of these questions seemed to work well. The additional changes we made during and after this second round of cognitive interviews seemed to have solved the major response errors we observed in the first round of pretesting.

## References

- Beck, J. (2008). NCVS pretesting activities on the proposed Internet predation questions: Focus group results. Study Series (Survey Methodology # 2008-08), Statistical Research Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C.
- Beck, J., & DeMaio, T. (2007.) First round cognitive pretesting on the proposed internet predation questions for the National Crime Victimization Survey: Results and Recommendations. Study Series (Survey Methodology # 2007-20), Statistical Research Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C.

**Appendix A**  
NCVS Internet Predation Questions  
Revised Questions

**Introduction:** The next set of questions is about **YOUR** Internet activities during the past 6 months.

**Q1. During the last 6 months, how often were you online, for example using email, instant messaging, visiting chat rooms, blogging, or doing other Internet activities ... (Read answer categories until respondent answers yes.)**

1. More than once per day?
2. Once per day?
3. At least once a week?
4. At least once a month?
5. Less often?
6. Never - *END*

**Q2. Thinking back during the last 6 months, during any of the times you were online, were you contacted by anyone that you didn't know, meaning they had no connection at all to you, your friends, or your family? Please do NOT include SPAM or pop-up ads when answering.**

Yes -- *ask 2a*

No -- *END*

**Q2a. How many times has this happened to you in the last 6 months?**

*Number of times \_\_\_\_\_*

*If Q2a = 1, then autofill "this person"*

*If Q2a > 1, then autofill "these people"*

**Q3. I'd like to find out more about how someone you didn't know might have contacted you online. Did [this person/these people] contact you through a social networking site, such as MySpace, Facebook, or Xanga?**

Yes -- *if Q2a = 1, then skip to Q5*

No

**Q4. Other than contacting you through a social networking site, how else did someone you didn't know contact you online? Did [this person/these people] contact you ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Through a personal web page not on a social networking site? | Y | N |
| 2. Through instant messaging or a chat room?                    | Y | N |
| 3. While gaming?  | Y | N |
| 4. Through e-mail?  | Y | N |
| 5. Through a blog?  | Y | N |
| 6. Some other way? (specify)_____                               | Y | N |

**Q5. Where were you when [this person/these people] contacted you? Were you online...**

*(Mark all that apply if Q2a > 1)*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. At home in your bedroom?                        | Y | N |
| 2. At home in a family area?                       | Y | N |
| 3. At school?                                      | Y | N |
| 4. At a friend's or relative's house?              | Y | N |
| 5. At a recreational center?                       | Y | N |
| 6. At a public library?                            | Y | N |
| 7. At a coffee shop or other public establishment? | Y | N |
| 8. Somewhere else? (specify) _____                 | Y | N |

**Q6. And how did you respond when [this person/these people] contacted you? Did you...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |   |           |   |
|---|-----------|---|
| 1. Ignore the contact?                                      | Y         | N |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone or block them?              | Y         | N |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more information about them? | Y- ask 6a | N |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                          | Y         | N |

**6a. When you responded to [this person/any of these people] to find out more information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

- Yes  
No

**Q6b. Did your contact with [this person/any of these people] you didn't know happen only online, or did you later have contact with them in person or on the phone?**

1. Online only -- *ask Online Only Contact questions*
2. In-person/phone contact-- *ask Offline Contact questions*
3. Multiple people--both Online only and Offline—*ask Offline Contact questions*

## ONLINE ONLY

**Q7a. I would like to know the kinds of things [this person/any of these people] you knew only online might have said when talking with you. When [this person was/any of these people were] talking with you, did they ever ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites? | Y | N |
| 2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex?             | Y | N |
| 3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or send sexual photos of yourself?       | Y | N |
| 4. Tell you sexual information about themselves?  | Y | N |

## OFFLINE

**Q7b. I would like to know the kinds of things [this person/any of these people] you first met online might have said when talking with you. When [this person was /any of these people were] talking with you, did they ever ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites?           | Y | N |
| 2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex?                       | Y | N |
| 3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or video camera or send sexual photos of yourself? | Y | N |
| 4. Tell you sexual information about themselves?  | Y | N |

**Q7c. Did [this person/any of these people] ever ask you to...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Meet up with them to hang out?      | Y | N |
| 2. Run away from home to be with them? | Y | N |
| 3. Meet up somewhere to have sex?      | Y | N |

**Q7d. Did [this person/any of these people] ask or tell you anything that made you feel uncomfortable?**

Yes (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
No

*Ask for each "yes" response in Q7 through Q7d:*

**Q7e. You just told me [autofill "yes" responses to Q7a/Q7b through Q7d]. How many times did this happen in the last 6 months?**

*Number of times* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q8. Did you tell anyone about [this contact/any of these contacts]?**

Yes -- *ask 8a*  
No -- *END*  
Don't Know - *END*

**Q8a. Whom did you tell? Was it ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Your parents?   | Y | N |
| 2. Family members under age 18, such as brothers, sisters, or cousins? | Y | N |
| 3. Adult family members, such as brothers, sisters, aunts, or uncles?  | Y | N |
| 4. Friends?  | Y | N |
| 5. A police officer?   | Y | N |
| 6. A teacher, coach, or school counselor?                              | Y | N |
| 7. A clergy member such as a minister, priest, or rabbi?               | Y | N |
| 8. Someone else? (Specify) _____                                       | Y | N |

**Q9. I'd like to know more about your contact(s) with anyone you first met online. In your own words, please tell me what happened during the contact(s) and afterwards.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**  
 NCVS Internet Predation Questions  
 Final Question Versions

**Introduction: The next set of questions is about YOUR online activities during the past 6 months.**

**Q1. During the last 6 months, how often were you online, for example, gaming, using email, instant messaging, visiting chat rooms, or doing other online activities ... (Read answer categories until respondent answers yes.)**

1. More than once per day?
2. Once per day?
3. At least once a week?
4. At least once a month?
5. Less often?
6. Never - *END*

**Next, I have some questions about contacts you may have had with individuals you know or first met ONLY online. Some of these questions may be hard to answer. However, anything you say will be kept strictly confidential. Your answers to these questions will not be shared with anyone.**

**Q2. Thinking back during the last 6 months, during any of the times you were online, were you contacted by anyone that you didn't know, meaning they had no connection at all to you, your friends, or your family? Please do NOT include SPAM or pop-up ads when answering.**

Yes -- ask 2a  
 No -- *END*

**Q2a. How many times has this happened to you in the last 6 months?**

*Number of times \_\_\_\_\_*

*If Q2a = 1, then autofill "this person"*  
*If Q2a > 1, then autofill "these people"*

**Q3. I'd like to find out more about how someone you didn't know might have contacted you online. Did [this person/these people] contact you through a social networking site, such as MySpace, Facebook, or Xanga?**

Yes -- if Q2a = 1, then skip to Q5  
 No



**Q4. Other than contacting you through a social networking site, how else did someone you didn't know contact you online? Did [this person/these people] contact you ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Through instant messaging or a chat room? | Y | N |
| 2. While gaming?                             | Y | N |
| 3. Through e-mail?                           | Y | N |
| 4. Through a blog?                           | Y | N |
| 5. Some other way? (specify) _____           | Y | N |

**Q5. Where were you when [this person/these people] contacted you? Were you online...**

*(Mark all that apply if Q2a > 1)*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. At home in your bedroom?                        | Y | N |
| 2. At home, someplace other than your bedroom?     | Y | N |
| 3. At school?                                      | Y | N |
| 4. At a friend's or relative's house?              | Y | N |
| 5. At a public library?                            | Y | N |
| 6. At a recreational center?                       | Y | N |
| 7. At a coffee shop or other public establishment? | Y | N |
| 8. Somewhere else? (specify) _____                 | Y | N |

*Ask if Q3 = yes AND/OR yes to response other than gaming in Q4:*

**Q6. How did you respond when [this person/these people] contacted you through [your page on a social networking site/autofill from Q4] ? Did you...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Y           | N |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone or block them?                       | Y           | N |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Y -- ask 6a | N |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Y           | N |

**6a. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

- Yes
- No

Ask if Q3 = yes **AND/OR** yes to response other than gaming **AND** yes to gaming in Q4:

**Q6 You indicated that someone you didn't know contacted you while you were gaming during the last 6 months. During a game, did anyone you didn't know ever talk to you about things NOT related to the game?**

Yes

No -- skip to Q6c

**Q6a. How did you respond when these people talked to you about things not related to the game? Did you...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Y           | N |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone?                                     | Y           | N |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Y - ask Q6b | N |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Y           | N |

**6b. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

**Q6c. You also told me that someone you didn't know contacted you through [your page on a social networking site /autofill all other response options to Q4] during the last 6 months. How did you respond when they contacted you? Did you...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Y           | N |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone or block them?                       | Y           | N |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Y - ask Q6d | N |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Y           | N |

**6d. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

Ask if Q3 = no **AND ONLY** yes to gaming in Q4:

**Q6. You indicated that someone you didn't know contacted you while you were gaming during the last 6 months. During a game, did anyone you didn't know ever talk to you about things NOT related to the game?**

Yes

No -- if Q4 is gaming only, skip to Q7

**Q6a. How did you respond when these people talked to you about things not related to the game? Did you...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |             |   |   |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Ignore the contact?   | Y           | N |   |
| 2. Tell them to leave you alone?                                     | Y           | N |   |
| 3. Respond and try to find out more personal information about them? | Y -- ask 6b |   | N |
| 4. Something else? (specify) _____                                   | Y           | N |   |

**6b. When you responded to any of these people to find out more personal information, did you start talking with them on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

**Q7. Did your contact with [this person/any of these people] you didn't know happen only online, or did you later have contact with them in person or on the phone?**

1. Online only -- ask Online Only Contact question
2. In-person/phone contact-- ask Offline Contact question
3. Multiple people--both Online only and Offline—ask Offline Contact question

**Check Item: If gaming only contact AND Q6=NO AND Q7=1, skip to Q8**

If Q7 = 1, then ask:

**Q7a. I would like to know the kinds of things [this person/any of these people] you knew only online might have said when talking with you. When [this person was/any of these people were] talking with you, did they ever ...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites? | Y | N |
| 2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex?             | Y | N |
| 3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or send sexual photos of yourself?       | Y | N |
| 4. Tell you sexual information about themselves?  | Y | N |

If Q7 = 2 or 3, then ask:

**Q7b. I would like to know the kinds of things [this person/any of these people] you first met online might have said when talking with you. When [this person was /any of these people were] talking with you, did they ever ...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites?           | Y | N |
| 2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex?                       | Y | N |
| 3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or video camera or send sexual photos of yourself? | Y | N |
| 4. Tell you sexual information about themselves?  | Y | N |

**Q7c. Did [this person/any of these people] ever ask you to...**

(Mark all that apply)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Meet up with them to hang out?      | Y | N |
| 2. Run away from home to be with them? | Y | N |
| 3. Meet up somewhere to have sex?      | Y | N |

**Q7d. Did [this person/any of these people] ask or tell you anything that made you feel uncomfortable?**

Yes (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

*Ask for each “yes” response in Q7 through Q7d:*

**Q7e. You just told me [autofill “yes” responses to Q7a/Q7b through Q7d]. How many times did this happen in the last 6 months?**

*Number of times* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q8. Did you tell anyone about [this contact/any of these contacts]?**

Yes-- ask 8a  
 No  
 Don't Know

**Q8a. Whom did you tell? Was it ...**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Your parents?   | Y | N |
| 2. Family members under age 18, such as brothers, sisters, or cousins? | Y | N |
| 3. Adult family members, such as brothers, sisters, aunts, or uncles?  | Y | N |
| 4. Friends?  | Y | N |
| 5. A police officer?   | Y | N |
| 6. A teacher, coach, or school counselor?                              | Y | N |
| 7. A clergy member such as a minister, priest, or rabbi?               | Y | N |
| 8. Someone else? (Specify) _____                                       | Y | N |

**Q9. I'd like to know more about your contact(s) with anyone you first met online. In your own words, please tell me what happened during the contact(s) and afterwards.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

*Interviewer: Probe with “Anything else?” until respondent answers “no.”*

**My final questions are about how you may have met some of your friends.**

**Q10. Thinking about the people you consider to be your friends, are any of them people you have NEVER met in person?**

Yes

No -- *skip to Q12*

**Q11. Thinking about these friends that you have NEVER met in person, are any of them people who have a connection to friends you know in person?**

Yes

No

**Q12. In your opinion, where do you think someone your age is more likely to be approached by someone who is a complete stranger to them? Do you think that's more likely to happen ONLINE, or more likely to happen OFFLINE, in your daily life?**

Online

Offline

Both equally (only if respondents answers "both")

**Appendix C**  
Vignette Categories

- 1. Send you an email or instant message containing x-rated material or links to x-rated websites**
- 2. Ask you for sexual information about yourself or ask you to talk about having sex**
- 3. Ask you to take off your clothes in front of a webcam or send sexual photos of yourself**
- 4. Tell you sexual information about themselves**
- 5. Meet up with them to hang out**
- 6. Run away from home to be with them**
- 7. Meet up somewhere to have sex**
- 8. Some other type of contact**