

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION

Question No. 33

Senator Siewert asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2008:

Provide a break down of paedophilia issues for Indigenous and non-Indigenous perpetrators, including Indigenous from outside the community.

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

A common finding of the National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force (NIITF) is the prevalence of under-age sexual activity. This behaviour is opportunistic and does not indicate a sexual preference for children. This contrasts with paedophilia which may feature pre-meditated 'grooming' behaviour and demonstrates a distinct sexual preference for children.

NIITF intelligence suggests under-age sexual activity involves abuse of children by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults, from within or outside the community. Under-age sexual activity also involves sexual activity between children.

A complex interaction of issues applies to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perpetrators of under-age sexual activity. These issues relate to poverty; violence; alcohol and substance abuse; environmental factors such as inappropriate housing; low levels of educational attainment; and inter-generational trauma.