MEDIA REPORTING OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN AUSTRALIA

Media reporting of child sexual abuse in Australia: 2020-22: Research Report

Breaking Silences: Media and the Child Abuse Royal Commission

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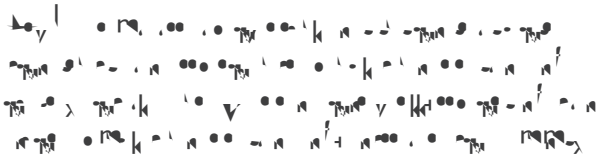


MEDIA ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS

Episodic and thematic framing

Best practice reporting is thematic, victim-centred and trauma-informed

Courts the dominant source of news

News focuses on the perpetrator

Celebrities the focus of news stories

Online/digital the most common location of abuse in media stories

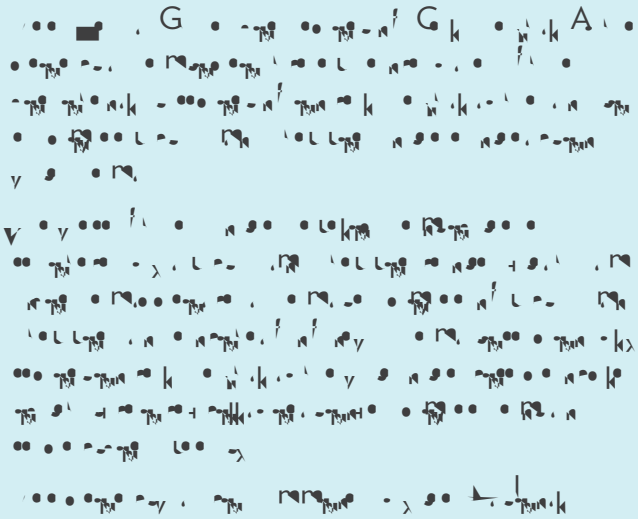
Overshadowing of priority groups

Limited information about support services

Problematic language

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

AIMS OF THE PROJECT



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Qualitative media analysis

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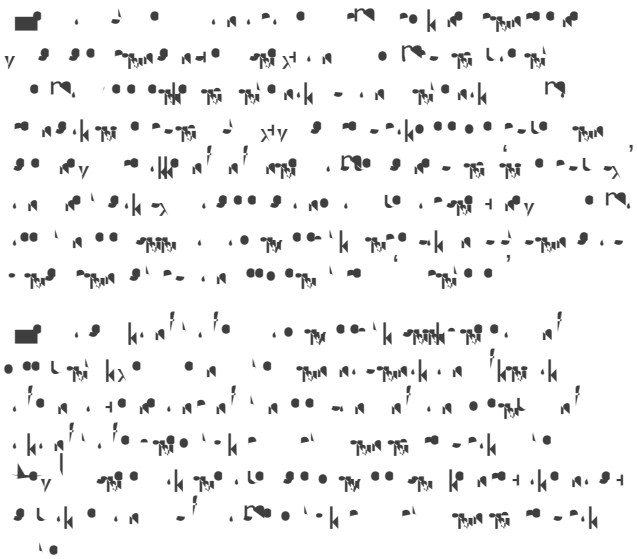
A MEDIA STUDIES APPROACH



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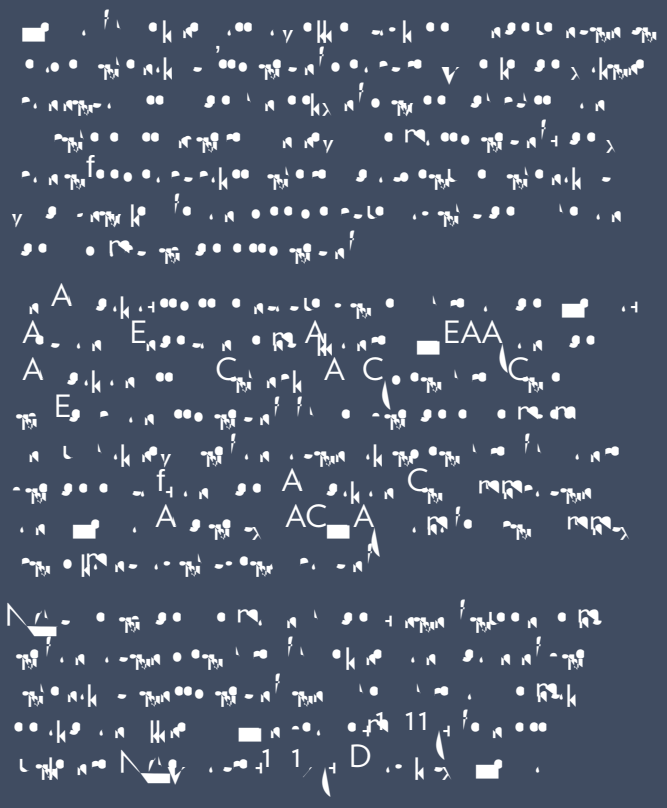
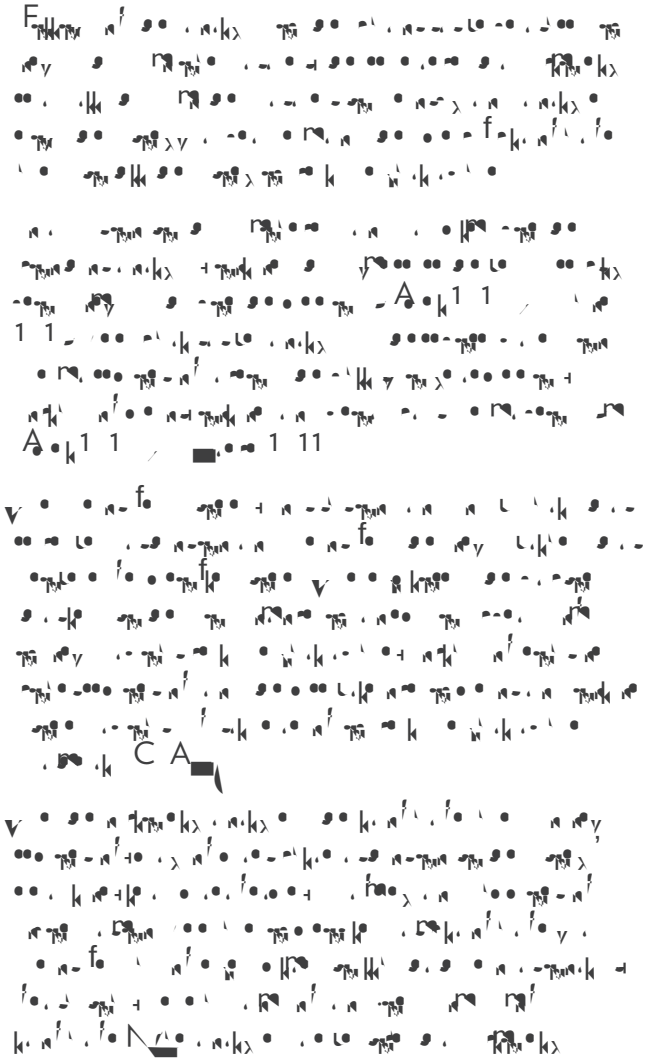
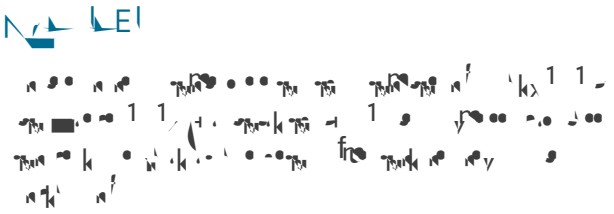
Problematic language, headlines and imagery

Victims and survivors engaging with media



Qualitative textual analysis





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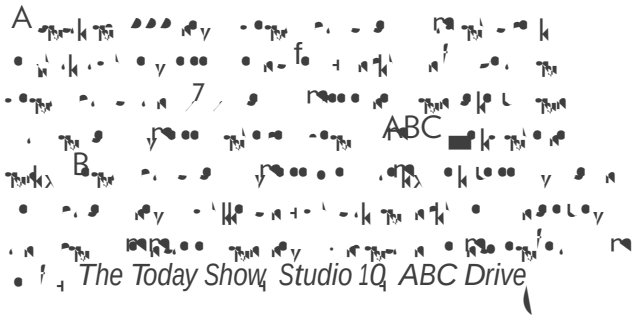

QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Story type

Historical or contemporary abuse

Main actors in stories about child sexual abuse

'Priority' groups in news reporting

What sources of support are included in media reports?

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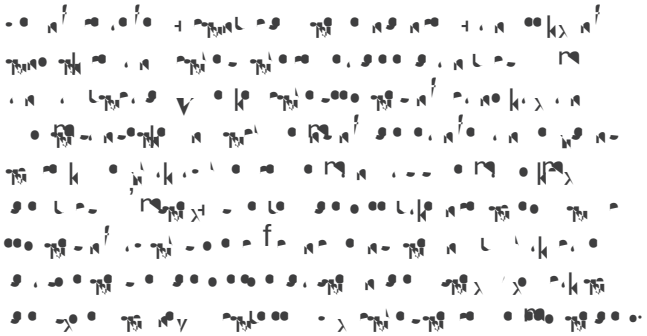
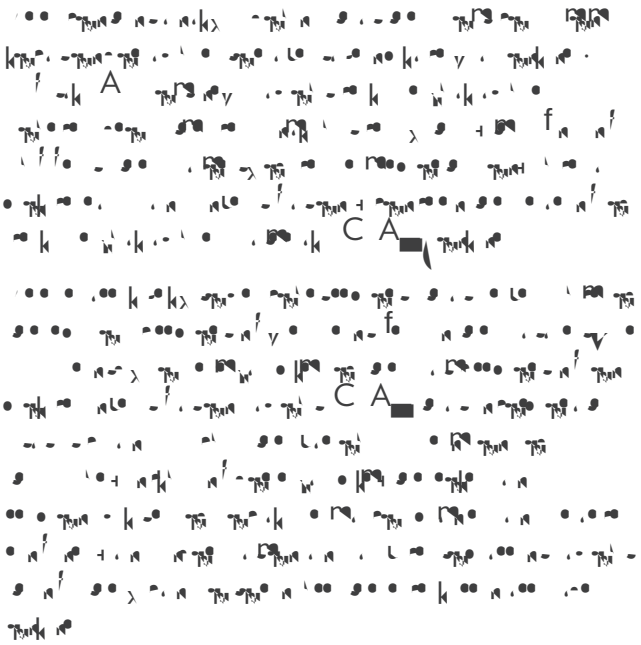


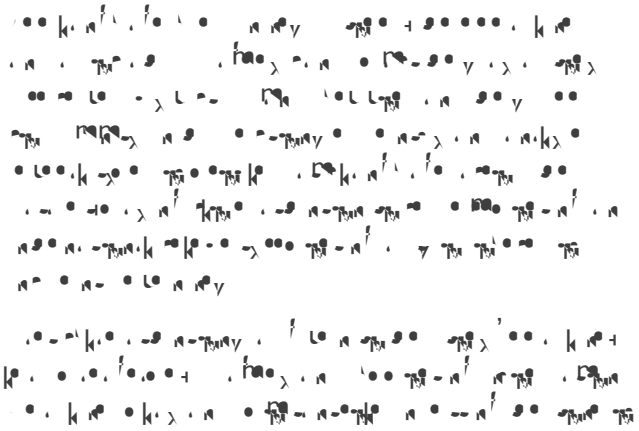
MAN CHARGED OVER ALLEGED CHILD ABUSE (*Newcastle Herald*, 22/12/2021)

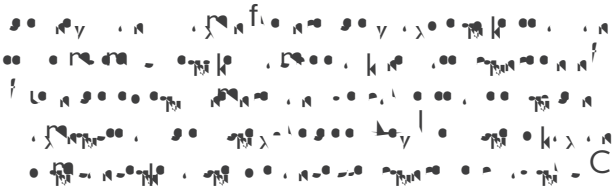
Tasmanian school staf member charged with dozens of child exploitation ofences (*ABC News Online*, 21/09/21)

Rugby Australia executive charged with four child abuse picture ofences amid AFP investigation (*news.com.au*, 19/09/21)



THE POWER OF LANGUAGE AND IMAGERY





ENFRBEAC ALGUAGE

Gratuitous and de-humanising language

MONSTER'S VILE TEXTS (Herald Sun, 27/7/20)

UNMASKED: Monstrous Australian paedophile who created the global online child porn trade and abused underage sex slaves in Asia - and how he was fnally caught after 20-year worldwide manh ة Ş ᵐ ʊ Ş ᴵ wide

"They face a string of charges involving *child rape* and the possession and sharing of images."

The Canberra Times

"A 26-year-old man was charged with two counts of *raping a child under the age of 10 years* and a 21-year-old man was charged with six counts of raping a child under the age of 10 years in the NSW towns of Kendall and Old Bar."

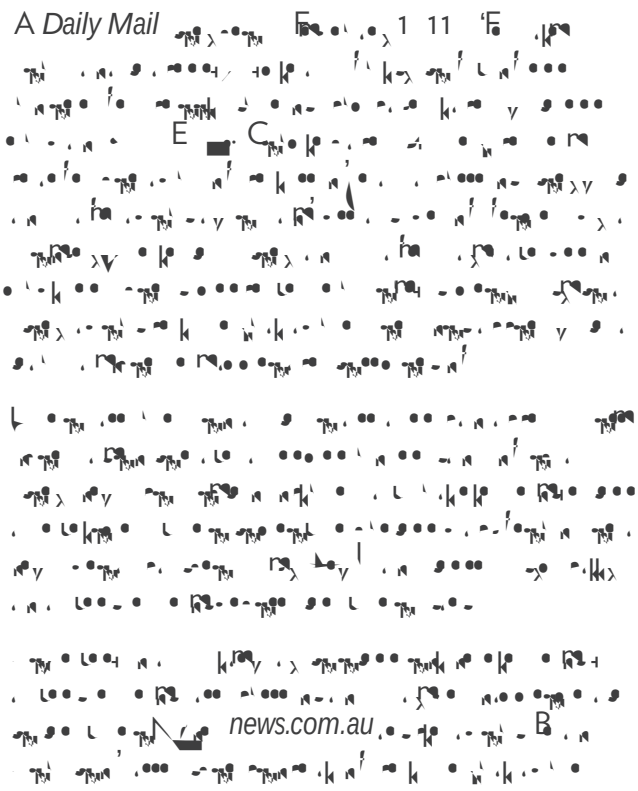
Sydney Morning Herald

Adelaide Advertiser

Daily Telegraph

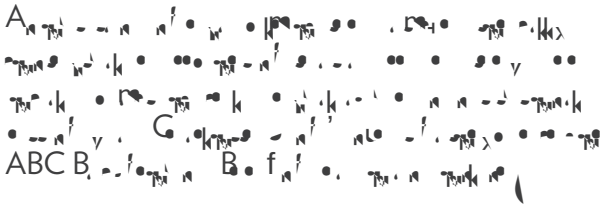
Courier Mail

Herald Sun

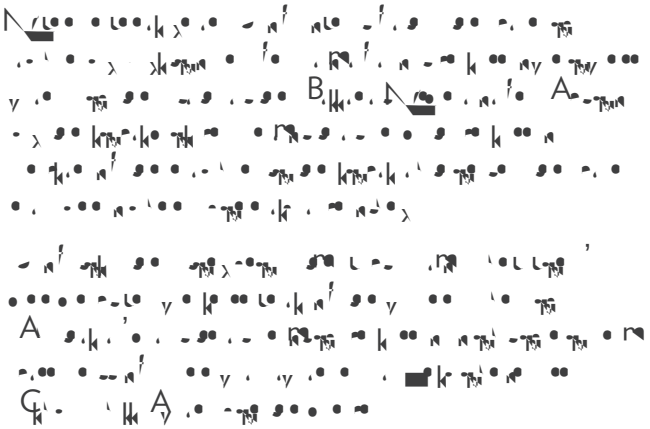


"The shame sits at the feet of perpetrators of child sexual abuse," she says. "We have to eradicate these cultures of victim-blaming and denial and dismissal, because there are so many structures in our society, both in terms of social attitudes and institutions, that enable predatory behaviour. I'm really determined to encourage and normalise the ace shar it ъ m

Historical abuse in orphanages and Out of Home Care settings



The memo that erased a scandal (*ABC Background Briefing*, 24/4/2021)



Sports coaches and institutions

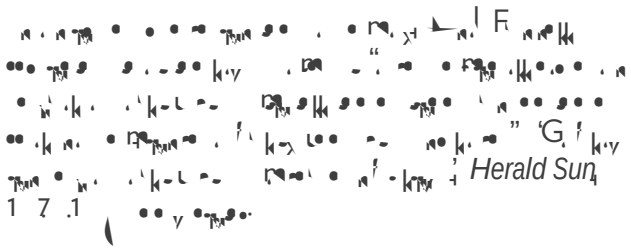
My pseudo father, my coach, my abuser (*[illegible]*)

The Australian

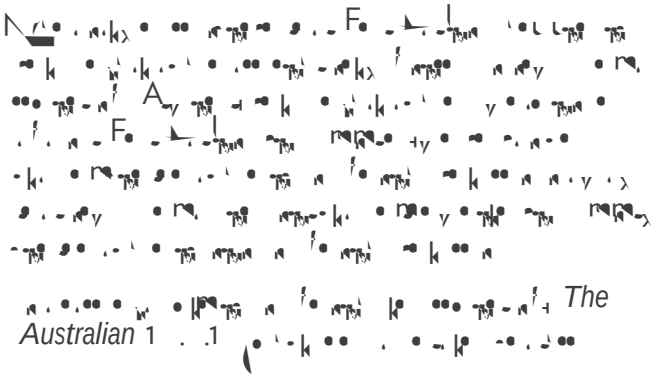
> My sister was abused. So was I. She's dead. I'm speaking up (19/9/20)

> "Please say her name. I need to tell this story, in all its shocking ugliness, to elicit a reaction. I want people to say my dead sister's name and to openly reject the whole spectrum of predatory sexual behaviours. [...]
>
> In doing this, we destigmatise the victim and cultivate a culture where talking openly about sexual abuse becomes acceptable."

Hobart Mercury



First Nations survivors



The Australian 1 . .1

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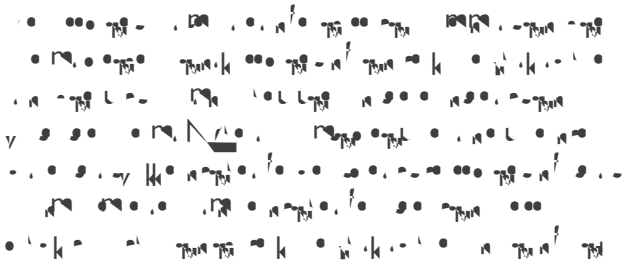

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C [illegible] A 7 [illegible] B [illegible] *Australian Journal of Law and Society* [illegible]

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Child Sexual Abuse and the Media

Dark secrets of childhood: Media power child abuse and public scandals

Child
Research Net

. PROJECT TEAM

P fe Ke McCa

Breaking Silences: Media and the Child Abuse Royal Commission

The Dynamics of News and Indigenous Policy in Australia

D Ka e H a d

P fe Deb a R c d

M E a J

A c a e P fe Ge g a S e a d

D Ja e F

D Ba ba a Wa

D Mega Dea

Breaking Silences: Media and the Child Abuse Royal Commission

Co-developing a new approach to media literacy in the attention economy

APPENDIX : CONTENT ANALYSIS CODING FRAME

TABLE 2: Metadata (iSentia)

CODE	DESCRIPTOR

TABLE 3: Content specific data

CODE				

CODE	DESCRIPTOR	DEFINITION/ EXPLANATION	MENU TYPE	DROP DOWN MENU CATEGORIES

CODE	DESCRIPTOR	DEFINITION/ EXPLANATION	MENU TYPE	DROP DOWN MENU CATEGORIES

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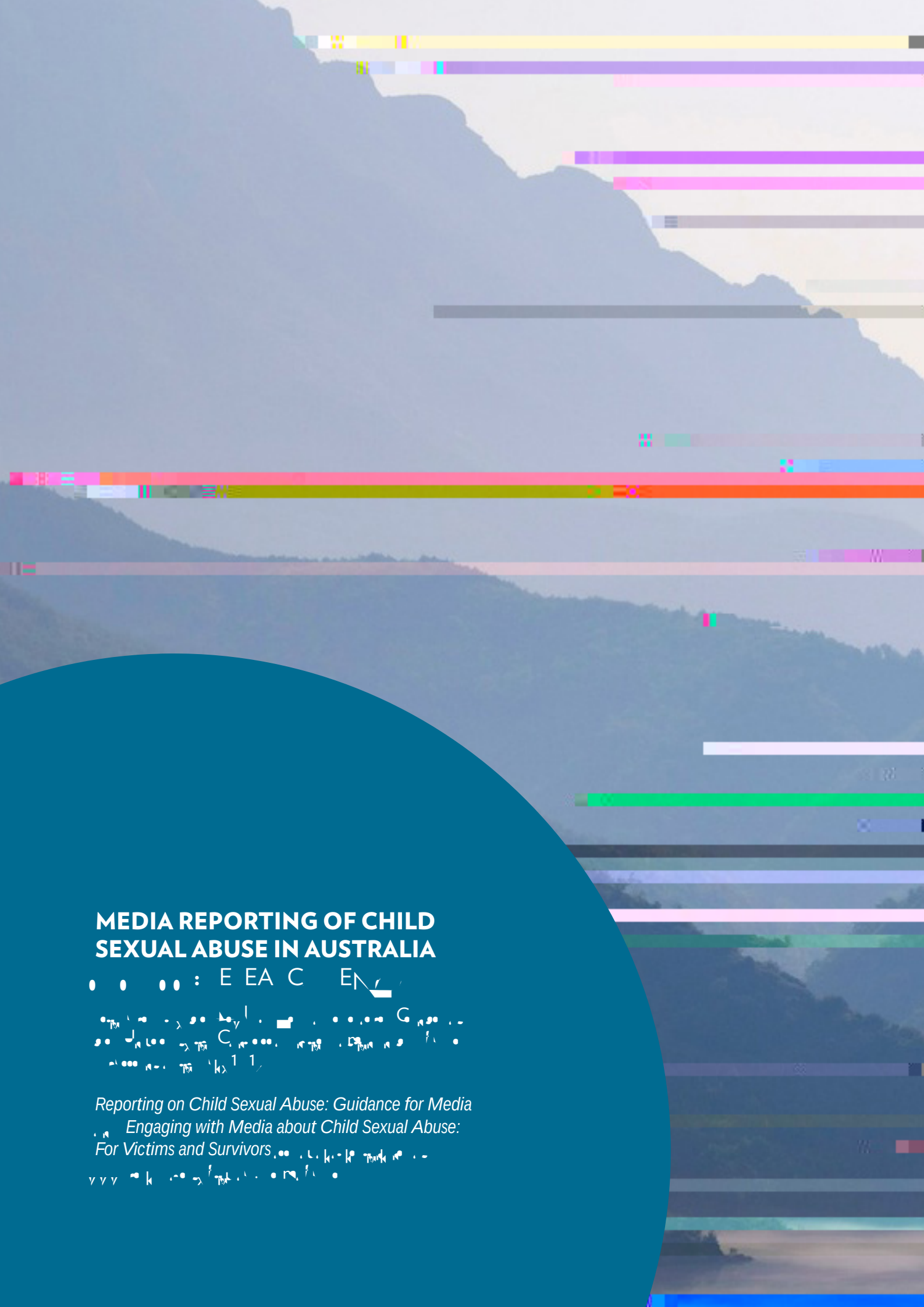

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