

Hampshire County Council

Supporting Children and Young People at Risk of Sexual Exploitation

Rapid Research Review

July 2015

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1 Introduction

The Institute of Public Care (IPC) at Oxford Brookes University has prepared this summary review of evidence for Hampshire County Council. It forms part of their Innovation Fund 'Active Agents for Change' Evaluation.

Hampshire County Council with the Isle of Wight, was successful in its application to the Department for Education (DfE) for a share of the Innovation Fund in order to undertake a major change programme relating to the way in which social care services for children, young people and families are delivered.

The overall objective for the programme is to create the right conditions and capacity for professionals to work more effectively and cost effectively with children and families in order to **get it right first time** and therefore to reduce the demand for more remedial or repeat interventions – in other words, to become 'active agents for change'.

This review has been prepared to inform the activities of the programme work stream concerned with supporting young people at risk of sexual exploitation. It has also been prepared to support lines of enquiry for the evaluation of this work stream.

A number of key assumptions and implications are associated with the prospective outputs and outcomes for the 'child sexual exploitation' work stream and these are summarised within the relevant Theory of Change (Appendix One). This document has also suggested particular lines of enquiry for the review and critical assessment of available evidence.

The source material for this rapid research review has been obtained through a literature search comprising five main strands:

1. Thomson Reuters Web of Science and Google searches using appropriate search terms.

2. A search of the following academic journals (using the same search terms as above) for the period 2005-15: British Journal of Social Work; Child & Family Social Work; Journal of Social Work; Research in Social Work Practice; Child Welfare; and Journal of Children's Services.
3. A search for relevant articles within two practice-focused publications: Community Care and Practice (BASW).
4. A search for relevant materials within the SCIE online resource.
5. An analysis of current and relevant policy and legislation.

The overall picture set out below derives from a mix of academic research-based evidence, government commissioned reviews, and best practice guidance as well as an analysis of current and relevant policy and legislation. It differs from some of the other rapid research reviews produced for this stage of the Innovation Programme in that much of the content derives from national guidance and sites with interesting practice rather than findings from research.

2 Context

2.1 Definitions

The sexual exploitation of children and young people is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can involve physical contact, but may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People developed the following definition of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in 2008, which is utilised in UK Government guidance and policy:

“Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.” (NWG Network)

The recent 'Puppet on a String' report (Barnardo's 2011) defined three broad categories of child sexual exploitation:

- Inappropriate relationships.
- 'Boyfriend' model of exploitation and peer exploitation.
- Organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Sexual exploitation can take many forms, but what marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. The perpetrator holds some kind of power over the victim, usually increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from their peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyber bullying), and supplying drugs or presents or other forms of grooming for sexual activity. There is often a presumption that children and young people are sexually exploited by people they do not know. However, evidence shows that they are more often abused by 'boyfriends' or people with whom they feel they have a relationship. Therefore, professionals need also to be alert to organised familial abuse or abuse within closed community groups (HM Government 2009).

Research also suggests that young people's experience of sexual exploitation is not fixed or static. For example, Harper and Scott (2005) identified how a child or young person can move 'backwards and forwards' between:

- Being at risk of sexual exploitation through running away, truanting and engaging in emotional and sexual relationships with older, abusive and/or violent men.
- Swapping sex for affection, money, accommodation or other returns 'in kind'.
- Selling sex and intermittently identifying as working in 'prostitution'.

Grooming is defined as "*when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation*" (NSPCC). Grooming can include a spectrum of behaviours from inciting a child to perform a sexual act to suspicious online contact with a child.

A key part of the grooming process is that the victim becomes isolated from friends and family and other important relationships. This isolation and the controlling nature of the abusers can lead to the victims trusting no one except the abusers with professionals being considered as not to be trusted or cooperated with (Casey 2015). The child or young person often does not accept they are victims and may want to protect their boyfriend, even though this person is abusing them.

Increasingly the Internet is being used as a tool for the sexual abuse of children and young people, especially in respect of grooming. Children are using computers much more and often unsupervised. Children may also themselves engage in illegal behaviour such as posting or sending explicit images of themselves (known as sexting); in some cases to people they have only known online. A study (Hillmen 2014) found that 15% of respondents aged between 13 and 19 years old who have reportedly sent or posted nude or semi-nude images of themselves claimed they have done so to someone they only knew online.

However, there are many other other physical locations where young people congregate or can be easily accessed and therefore groomed by offenders, including arcades, cafés, take-away food outlets, taxi ranks and public parks (Kirtley 2013).

2.2 Legislation and policy drivers

Over the last 20 years policy, statute and guidance have developed in relation to the issue of CSE. 'Working Together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' was first published in 1999. This statutory guidance has subsequently been revised a number of times (2006, 2010, 2013), the latest of which was published in 2015. The statutory responsibilities of local agencies were originally set out in the supplementary guidance to Working Together' (HM Government 2009). The National Tackling Child Exploitation Action Plan (Department for Education 2011) further clarifies these responsibilities, and also brings together a range of commitments from national and local partners. These include (LGA 2014):

- Mechanisms should be in place to collect prevalence and monitor cases of CSE.
- CSE is assumed to be present, and is prioritised if believed to be a significant issue.
- Preventative activity should be put in place, helping those being exploited and targeting perpetrators.
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) should have specific local procedures to cover CSE.
- Children and young people should be involved in the drafting of CSE strategies.
- Patterns of exploitation should be assessed and identified (problem profiling) and interventions adapted to reflect the local picture.
- Training should include warning signs of CSE, how to report concerns, how to safeguard and how to prevent.
- Training should also include advice on evidence gathering.
- Awareness-raising activities should be aimed at young people and the general public, including where to obtain help and how to report.

- LSCB sub-groups should be established to lead on CSE, with close links to other groups (e.g. trafficking, missing children).
- LSCBs should ensure there is a lead person in each organisation to implement guidance.
- Arrangements should be in place for either a dedicated coordinator or co-located team.
- Arrangements should be in place for cross border working across neighbouring local authority areas.
- There should be periodic audits of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 replaced older sexual offences laws with more specific and explicit wording. It introduced a range of offences that recognised the grooming, coercion and control of children such as non-consensual voyeurism, abuse of position of trust, facilitating or inciting child prostitution or pornography and trafficking for sexual exploitation. The Act includes three broad categories of sexual offences against children:

1. Offences against children under the age of 13. Sexual activity with a child under the age of 13 is an offence regardless of consent or the defendant's belief of the child's age.
2. Offences against children under the age of 16. These offences apply regardless of whether the child consented to the sexual activity but, unlike the offences relating to children under 13, an offence is not committed if the defendant reasonably believed that the victim was 16 years or over. The offences include engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child, and meeting a child following sexual grooming.
3. Offences against children under the age of 18. There are a number of sexual offences in the Act that apply to all children under the age of 18. These include sexual offences where there is abuse of a position of trust (ss16 to 24) and familial child sex offences (ss25 to 29). The Act also provides for offences specifically to tackle the use of children in the sex industry, where a child is under 18 (ss 47 to 50).

Child sexual abuse has remained a prominent feature on the news agenda over the last few years, with details emerging about systemic failures in a range of high profile abuse cases. The cases of Rotherham, Rochdale and Oxford highlighted failures to identify and protect at-risk children. The independent inquiry into CSE in Rotherham (Jay 2014) highlighted the collective failings by the council's leadership, how senior managers had underplayed the scale of the problem, how police had failed to prioritise and fears over racism all prevented people taking action. In 2015, Louise Casey's report revealed: a council in denial about serious and on-going safeguarding failures; an archaic culture of sexism, bullying and discomfort around race; failure to address past weaknesses, in particular in children's social care; weak and ineffective arrangements for taxi licensing which

leave potential victims at risk; ineffective leadership and management, including political leadership; and no shared vision, a partial management team and ineffective liaisons with partners.

In March this year the government announced a number of further measures to tackle child sexual exploitation. The measures are outlined in a short publication *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation* (HM Government 2015), which sets out how the Government proposes to deal with child sexual exploitation and respond to the failures that have been identified by Professor Alexis Jay and Louise Casey. Highlights of which include:

- A new whistleblowing national portal for child abuse related reports and the creation of a new expectation that all organisations that have safeguarding responsibilities must have internal whistleblowing policies in place, which are then integrated into training and codes of conduct.
- A new national taskforce and centre of expertise to help support areas which are struggling with CSE.
- Proposals to consult on extending the new 'wilful neglect' offence to children's social care, education and elected members.
- Giving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) the status of a 'national threat' in the Strategic Policing Requirement.

2.3 Characteristics of children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation

Research undertaken recently by Beckett and Warrington 2014 suggests that most children and young people who experience sexual violence or abuse don't report these experiences to (or have them recognised by) those in authority. The data on prevalence of sexual abuse suggests that there are large numbers of children who suffer some form of sexual abuse during their childhoods. However, there is a large discrepancy between the data on prevalence and the numbers of children with child protection plans or on child protection registers because of sexual abuse. This suggests significant under identification of sexually abused children at a local level.

A recent investigation (Community Care 2015a) revealed that referrals for CSE have increased by 31% in 2014-15, compared to the previous year. The investigation also revealed local authorities across the country are still failing to record referral information consistently therefore the true number of children referred for sexual exploitation is likely to be far higher. Furthermore, although girls are more at risk of CSE than boys, there is evidence to suggest that there are a disproportionate number of referrals concerning girls (83%). This is contrary to recent research that suggests about a third of sexually exploited children are male (Cockbain et al 2014).

Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, though some groups are particularly vulnerable. Research (Harper and Scott 2005) has identified **a range of risk factors associated with being drawn into exploitation** including:

- Violent fathers or stepfathers.
- Physical or sexual abuse within the family.
- Mothers who were victims of domestic violence and/or dependent on alcohol or drugs.
- A history of 'going missing'.
- Drug or alcohol dependence.
- Having already been targeted and sexually exploited by an adult male.
- Being disengaged from education by their early teens.
- Being alienated from their families or communities.
- Being hungry for attention.
- Being keen to 'escape' childhood and be regarded as an adult.

Other research (Berelowitz et al 2012) has identified **typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse**:

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality).
- A history of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour' based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang associated CSE only).
- Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited.
- Learning disabilities.
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families.
- Being friends with young people who are sexually exploited.
- Homelessness.
- Lacking friends from the same age group.
- Living in a gang neighbourhood.
- Living in residential care.
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer.
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence.
- Being a young carer.

Victims of child sexual exploitation can experience severe consequences on their physical and mental health. Sexually exploited children have a range of vulnerabilities with many physical and mental health implications. Some vulnerabilities make children more at risk of exploitation whilst others arise from it. For instance, all the children interviewed for the Children's Commissioners inquiry into CSE in gangs and groups (Berelowitz et al 2012) reported experiencing physical violence, with 48% of them having injuries that required them to visit an accident and emergency department. There is reliable evidence to show that being a victim of sexual violence or abuse is a risk factor for the development of mental health problems and disorders. The Inquiry also reported that 85 per cent of the sexually exploited children who were interviewed had either self-harmed or attempted suicide as a result of sexual exploitation.

Young people themselves spoke about taking risks as their way of coping with feelings of vulnerability (Hallett 2015). Risky activities were a way of asserting themselves and feeling in control. Key risks were:

- 'Hiding away': some young people may isolate themselves from friends, family, school, and feel safer communicating to people through text messages, instant chat and chat rooms online.
- 'Hanging out': some young people may be out in groups and crowds. They may be visible in public spaces, such as on the street and in parks. Hanging out in the crowd can be a way of hiding away how they feel inside.
- Alcohol and drugs: for some young people, the only control they feel they have is over how out of control they can get.
- Sex: for some young people, sex or 'sleeping around' can be a way of regaining power over their bodies. Exchanging sex for things can be a way of finding and replacing value on what they feel has been cheapened.

Although many of the vulnerabilities and risk indicators are common to both male and female victims, research has found that male victims accessing services were 2.6 times more likely to have a recorded disability than female victims (35% compared with 13%). The most common disabilities for boys were learning disabilities, behaviour-based disabilities and autism spectrum disorder. They were also more likely to have a criminal record and were slightly younger than the girl victims referred to services (Barnardo's 2014).

3 Key Findings from Existing Research about Effective Interventions

The needs of children and young people are complex and multi-layered. Intervention is needed at an early stage to prevent children and young people being at risk of exploitation but also harm reduction and exit strategies for those already being sexually exploited. Practical, social and emotional issues that may need to be addressed with young people include (Harper and Scott 2005):

- Financial difficulties.
- Drug addiction.
- Single parenthood.
- Lack of qualifications and training.
- Housing problems.
- Existing social networks.
- Lack of family support.
- Abusive partners /pimps /boyfriends / family members.
- Criminal convictions that prevent people taking on even relatively low skilled work.

Central to an understanding of CSE is the notion that underpinning the exchange of sex is the meeting (and taking advantage) of unmet need(s) (Swartz 2014). Tackling the underlying problems and difficulties experienced by young people is key to responding to CSE. Dealing with sexual exploitation as an isolated issue may, conversely, end up leaving young people more vulnerable if these other problems are not also addressed.

Furthermore, to be able to provide interventions and recovery strategies, young people first need to be engaged with services, yet engagement with those experiencing CSE is difficult. Young people who do not engage are often perceived by professionals as 'uncooperative' or 'bad' and risk not being offered protection, rather than it being seen as a lack of appropriate services or a service failure. The difficulty may also reflect the control the abusers have on the young person. The child or young person may not accept that they are a victim and may want to protect their 'boyfriend' even though they are the abuser. The isolation and controlling nature of CSE can lead to the victims trusting no one except their abuser(s).

3.1 Services

There is limited research on service provision for sexually exploited children and young people. The information that is available mostly focuses on the approach of services rather than on outcomes for service-users, but some

common themes do emerge (Scott and Skidmore 2006 and Barnardo's 2011):

While universal services are there to identify victims and undertake preventative activities, this research suggests that it is through specialist services that the needs of sexually exploited children can usually be met including through:

- **A multi-agency coordinated approach** – It is suggested that, where a young person is identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation or having been exploited, social care services should play the lead role in co-ordinating services, but that these may be delivered via another specialist service including in particular those with which vulnerable young people may more readily engage. The involvement of other relevant services, such as health, education and the police, is likely also to be necessary to meet the needs of the young person as well as to identify their abusers. Multi-agency working is best achieved through the proactive use of specific protocols on sexual exploitation, a dedicated lead officer within social services to co-ordinate services on a strategic level; the active involvement of other services in the multi-agency partnership; and the provision of specialist services.
- **Specialist services** - The provision of specialist services within a multi-agency partnership appears to be the best way to engage with and protect this particularly vulnerable group of young people. Specialist services can provide the flexibility, accessibility and confidentiality that young people require to engage with services.
- **Intensive support** is required to provide young people with a high level of relational security to provide support against the 'pull' of sexually exploitative relationships and circumstances. Both time and persistence in offering intensive support are required to engage with young people at risk. This will involve the use of 'assertive' or 'therapeutic' outreach methods such as daily phone calls and text messages, door-stepping and other ways of maintaining contact, even where this support is initially, or repeatedly, rejected.
- **Continuity of care and safe accommodation** - are vital in building and retaining relationships with young people at risk and should be facilitated through a consistent key-working approach.
- **Local community-based approaches** supporting young people are a valuable way to enable them to stay in contact with, or re-engage with, protective factors such as relationships with carers, friendship networks and education, which are important in providing alternatives for the young person to abusive networks and sexually exploitative relationships. It is necessary for therapeutic approaches to support and build on these protective factors.
- **Avoidance of secure accommodation** where possible including finding alternatives as a crisis response to young people at high risk, including intensive community-based support.

In addition, safe accommodation has a role to play in disrupting exploitation and supporting recovery. Research suggests that foster care is generally more appropriate for those at risk, or victims, of CSE, but that 'chaotic behaviour' often leads to young people being placed in residential units. Young people themselves have raised concerns about the instability and uncertainty of being in care, physical safety, their relationships with carers, restrictions, the suitability of temporary accommodation, and shame and stigma because of living conditions (Shuker 2013).

3.1.1 The Specific Role of Health Services

The role of health professionals may include (Health Working Group 2014):

- Identifying warning signs of risk or indicators of child sexual exploitation.
- Being open to the possibility of disclosure but acting to safeguard the child whether or not there is a disclosure.
- Carrying out a holistic risk assessment.
- Taking advice from internal safeguarding advisors.
- Sharing information with, and making a referral, as appropriate, to other agencies including the police and children's social care.
- Referring a child for immediate treatment for physical and/or psychological health, and provision of longer term recovery treatment.
- Where victims may have learning disabilities or language / communication difficulties, assessing the level of disability / difficulty and then agreeing and implementing the best method of supporting the child.

3.1.2 The Specific Role of Social Services

The role of social services in CSE centres on the identification, protection and support of children and young people. Despite highlighting a 31% increase in referrals to social services for CSE in 2014-2015, the proportion of these children going on to receive social services support is reported to have dropped evidence (Community Care 2015a). Furthermore, the current social care child protection systems and processes are arguably not well-designed for those suffering from sexual exploitation. Children in need, child protection, assessment and intervention processes are set up mainly to address inter-familial situations whereas in cases of sexual exploitation, the significant harm is happening outside of the family (Community Care 2015b).

Identifying young people at risk relies on practitioners' awareness of the issue, their proactive work to identify indicators of risk, their preparedness to work with situations where sexual exploitation is indicated rather than definitely known to be occurring, and the availability of services to support young people. These are linked – for example, practitioners may be

reluctant to proactively identify young people in danger without the availability of services to refer them to.

3.1.3 The Specific Role of the Police

The role of the police is to assess and manage risk to children and young people to prevent harm where possible, and to reduce the likelihood and the impact of any harm. It has been established that the investigation of child sexual exploitation by the Police requires a proactive approach to explore the nature and patterns of sexual exploitation locally, and to share information with partner agencies about those at risk and potential perpetrators. Linking this work to the response to missing young people and other public protection issues can help to identify and manage risk at an early stage. The police service is arguably the prime agency for gathering evidence in connection with criminal cases, and tackling perpetrators.

In the past, Police Officers have reported experiencing difficulties during prosecution and court proceedings including that the CPS solicitors are often reluctant to take up cases of child sexual exploitation because victims are often perceived as unreliable (CEOP 2011).

4 Good Practice

A number of good practice recommendations and 'sites' have emerged in recent years linked to the key issues identified in the many and varied reports into this issue. However, very few of these good practice sites and examples have been thoroughly evaluated.

4.1 Developing and maintaining over-arching multi-agency arrangements and approaches

Multi-agency working clearly underpins the development and implementation of any effective response to child sexual exploitation. Local areas, led by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, are best placed to respond if they acknowledge that such abuse could be occurring and develop a collaborative approach to identifying and tackling the problem. It is suggested that effective responses should include in particular the following (Barnardo's 2012):

- **Raising awareness.** Young people and children, professionals, parents and carers will benefit from being informed about the issue. This will be most effective if it is an ongoing process, and is adapted as information emerges about the local forms and levels of child sexual exploitation.
- **Understanding what is happening.** Information is needed to guide awareness-raising efforts and underpin the strategic response. An initial scoping exercise is important but areas are advised to monitor the levels and character of child sexual exploitation on an ongoing basis.

- **Developing a strategic response.** A strategy will set out how those identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation can be given an appropriate response. Good practice shows that a response is best planned by multiple agencies, even if it is subsequently delivered by only one.
- **Providing victims of exploitation and those at particular risk with appropriate support.** Children at higher risk will benefit most from direct intensive support from agencies or multi-agency teams with specialist expertise. Those at medium or lower risk will benefit from having guidance on keeping safe and being reviewed at least once to check whether they require additional support.
- **Facilitating policing and prosecutions of perpetrators.** Multi-agency information sharing can be improved so evidence can better guide police action. Disruption techniques can also be used more comprehensively to protect young people and children from further abuse.

Government guidance (HM Government 2009) states that multi-agency work to tackle sexual exploitation should also be grounded in the following important principles which inform effective practice in this area:

- **A child-centred approach** – any action or support should be child-centred and focus on the child's needs with those working with children and young people engaging with them and their families throughout the process. The wishes and feelings of children and young people as well as the concerns of parents or carers should be sought and taken into account in reaching any decisions about the provision of services which affect them. However, there is the need to acknowledge that children and young people do not always accept that they may be in an exploitative or abusive situation.
- **A proactive approach** – with a focus on prevention, early identification and intervention, as well as on disrupting activity and prosecuting perpetrators.
- **A focus on supporting parenting and healthy family life** - Local authorities are recommended to have in place comprehensive parenting and family support strategies which set out how a range of support for parents and families will be delivered to meet identified needs.
- **A focus on sharing information at the earliest possible stage** where necessary to enable professionals to consider jointly how to proceed in the best interests of the child and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children more generally.
- **A focus on intervening to prevent harm** to a child or children and young people.
- **A focus on taking action against those who sexually exploit** children and young people to minimise the risk of further exploitation.

- **A tiered approach to safeguarding** including: universal, targeted and responsive.
- **A shared responsibility** - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people depends on effective joint working between different agencies and professionals working with children and young people. This joint working should be underpinned by:
 - A strong commitment from leaders and senior managers.
 - A shared understanding of the problem of sexual exploitation.
 - Effective coordination by the LSCB for the area.

4.2 Good practice in prevention

Preventing sexual exploitation of children and young people means:

- Reducing their vulnerability
- Improving their resilience
- Disrupting and preventing the activities of perpetrators
- Reducing tolerance of exploitative behaviour
- Prosecuting abusers.

This is likely to involve:

- Awareness raising and preventative education
- Targeted prevention
- Police prevention work
- Health prevention work
- Schools prevention work

Schools are well placed to teach pupils how to make positive choices and informed decisions in their relationships so that they can protect themselves from sexual exploitation. Positive relationships with school staff will encourage children to disclose any worries about their own safety or the safety of another pupil (NSPCC 2013). Areas of work include:

- Preventative education – raising awareness and linking the teaching with relevant school policies, including those on sex and relationships education, e-safety, anti-bullying and child protection will help to ensure clear links with the whole school ethos.
- E-safety – teaching children the risks and to be confident to report any concerns about themselves or others to staff in school.
- Partnership working – working with local services who can help school staff to teach lessons or present assemblies and workshops.

- Working with parents – sharing concerns, supporting parents or helping them to access appropriate support.

Recent research (Coy et al 2013) investigating how young people understand sexual consent has recommended that all schools and education providers ensure that there are opportunities for young people to explore the meaning of consent in the context of relationships and sex education. There is a need for “*conversations with, and between, young people about how understandings of consent as mutually negotiated can be developed and applied in their everyday lives*”.

Raising awareness and education in schools – Oxfordshire Kingfisher Team

Oxfordshire is reported (LGA 2013) to have found a very creative way of sharing the message with young people by commissioning a drama production, ‘Chelsea’s Choice’. The production has visited all the county’s secondary schools, reaching 12,000 children in years eight and nine. This has provided an opportunity to explain the issues and involve young people and parents in a conversation around CSE.

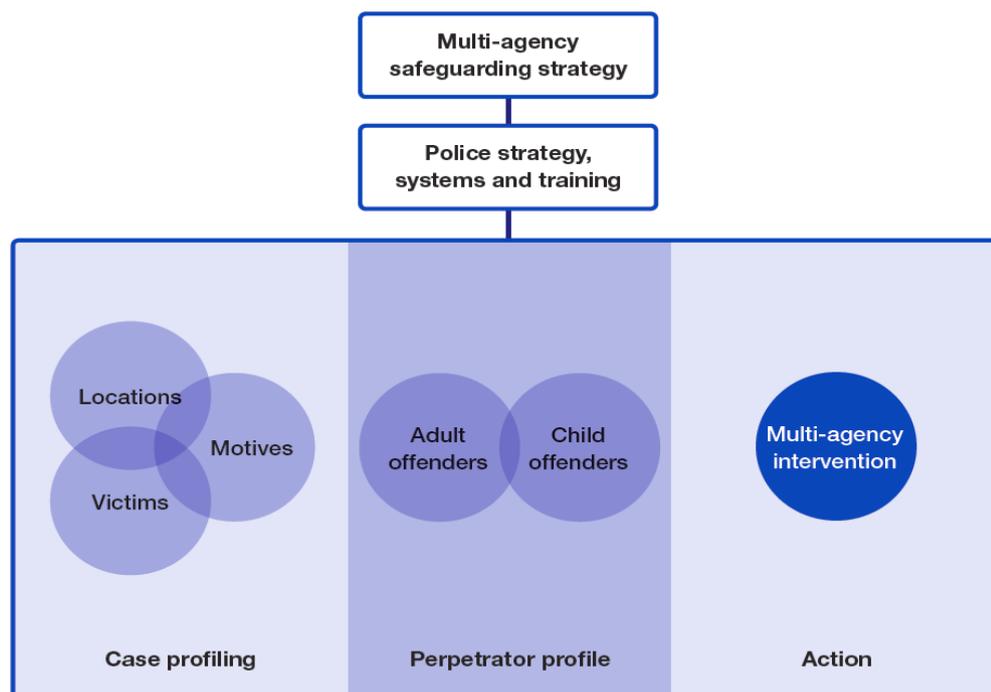
Each pupil is given a leaflet with further information and contacts. A leaflet for parents is distributed with the consent letter before the production visits a school. A social worker is available for children and staff to talk to in confidence following the production.

Schools then continue the discussion in their PHSE (personal, health and social education) lessons. Work is now underway on how to target younger children, aged 10 and 11, with some age-appropriate messages around exploitation. Each secondary school has a linked social worker from the Kingfisher team. They respond to a ‘no names consultation’ process which encourages professionals to seek advice without necessarily committing themselves to making a referral. The team also conducts evening patrols in areas popular with young people, including pubs and clubs, with a social worker present.

Oxfordshire County Council is paying for an additional project worker at a local voluntary sector organisation that provides longer-term support to at-risk girls and young women.

4.2.1 Keeping track of perpetrators

The Children’s Commissioners Inquiry into CSE in Gangs and Groups (Berelowitz et al 2013) offered a model illustrating how to keep track of perpetrators and prevent CSE.



The key features of this approach are:

- Cases are identified through the recognition of victims, their locations, a group's/gang's motive(s) for abusing them.
- A distinct approach to monitoring child offenders.
- Multi-agency action to impede and apprehend perpetrators.
- All activity has strategic direction, delivered by staff who are trained to understand the nature of child sexual exploitation.

4.2.2 Prevention of on-line grooming

Research (Hillmen 2014) suggests a focus on prevention and education as an approach towards protecting children from online exploitation. In 2008 BECTA published a report to help LSCBs develop e-safety strategies for safeguarding children in a digital world stating “*All agencies providing services to children have a duty to understand e-safety issues, recognising their role in helping children to remain safe online while also supporting adults who care for children*” (BECTA, 2008, p. 11). BECTA suggest LSCBs should develop a set of aims and objectives to define their e-safety responsibilities. These might include the following:

- Recognising the importance of e-safety within the context of *Every child matters*.
- Recognising the importance of e-safety within the wider work of the LSCB
- Recognising that e-safety is not a technological issue

- Recognising the importance of education, training and information
- Recognising the need to monitor the impact of the strategy.

E-safety in practice (Dudley)

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) has established an e-safety strategy with the following key objectives:

- Ensuring that all children, young people and parents/carers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to safeguard themselves online.
- Ensuring that all children who have been the subject of indecent images and sexual exploitation are identified, protected and given an appropriate level of support.
- Ensuring that all people who work with children and young people have access to good quality procedures and effective training to safeguard children at risk through online activity.
- Ensuring that systems and services are in place to identify, intervene and divert people from sexually exploiting or abusing children online and offline.

4.2.3 Awareness raising

Recent high profile investigations and reports (Bedford 2015, Jay 2014, Ofsted 2014) all suggest that key services need to engage with all communities including but not exclusively professionals to raise awareness of CSE. This includes people in front line community roles such as school nurses, bus drivers, housing officers, shop keepers, hoteliers and taxi drivers.

Awareness raising in Kent

Kent Safeguarding Children Board has been working with Barnardo's to develop CSE awareness-raising workshops for everyone who works with children and young people, either directly or indirectly (LGA 2013).

Training is being provided to all the relevant agencies including health, police, probation, education, social care, fire and rescue, youth service and the voluntary and community sector. Access to these workshops is free of charge for anyone who wants to take part.

During the workshop, participants are shown a DVD based on the comments of victims of CSE (in conversation with a sexual health outreach nurse) voiced by an actress. 'Chantelle' talks about her background in care and what has happened to her, providing a real-life account of what CSE can look like.

A more intensive one day workshop is now also available for front-line professionals using 'immersive learning' techniques based on real-life scenarios. Participants are given the opportunity to use the Kent and Medway CSE risk assessment toolkit, which has been designed for professionals working with children and young people who are at risk of

being exploited. The toolkit can be used to assess the level of risk, and it also outlines some common intervention strategies.

Input and feedback is being gathered from children and young people on topics including bullying, self-harm and exploitation. A 'How safe do you feel?' survey is used to gauge young people's views and share information on keeping safe, with an emphasis on seeking their views and concerns about CSE. A group of young people has vetted the questions to ensure they are appropriate. Pupils from one secondary school are working with the board to create a DVD on safeguarding which will be shown in schools.

Slough Council: Licensing 'splinter' group (LGA 2014)

Background and Project

In late 2013, Slough LSCB and Thames Valley Police agreed to work together on a CSE awareness raising campaign for licensed premises. A 'licensing splinter' group was established, linked to the CSE sub-group and consisting of representation from Slough Borough Council licensing team, an Engage worker (CSE specialist team) and a Thames Valley Police Inspector. The group continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis; their work is strongly supported by councillors and forms a key part of the overall communications package on CSE awareness raising.

The Results

CSE has consistently featured in subsequent newsletters to re-enforce awareness, and taxi firms and ranks are a key focus for the 'Licensed Premises' working group. CSE is now reported to be mainstreamed into the work of the council licensing team, which has been significant in helping to maintain momentum on issues such as delivery of a CSE presentation to the Pub Watch Scheme members in December 2013. The three teams involved in the working group set about coordinating premises visits in specific areas, and team members unfamiliar with CSE were trained and briefed on the key messages and action to take. A script with consistent messaging was developed to relay to local businesses. Thames Valley Police and the licensing team have now visited all local hotels and B&B's. The Engage team and police community support officers visited other local businesses and the council's food and safety and trading standards officers are also raising awareness at fast food outlets and other retail outlets during routine inspections.

During visits to local businesses, awareness raising packs were distributed. Hotels and B&Bs received a Say Something If You See Something (SSIIYSS) poster, Children's Commissioner CSE indicators, a letter from the Slough LSCB Chair and a Barnardo's leaflet.

Following each 'wave' of visits, the team completed an evaluation detailing exactly which premises were visited and noting the time it took, who they spoke to and comments about the discussions with businesses and any concerns or questions that were mentioned.

- During 2013 there were 24 joint visits to hotels and B&B's, 44 packs were distributed.

- 261 joint visits were made to local businesses.
- Hotels contacted 101 to share concerns about CSE on three occasions.
- The number of visits in the two years up to December 2014 has now risen to 441.

The SIYSS posters and full awareness raising packs that the team put together, including the letter from the Chair of the LSCB, enabled a professional and credible range of information to be presented to the hotel trade. Over the summer of 2014 the team revisited premises in particular 'hotspot' areas, including hotels. The team took out posters and enquired to find out if they hotels had been displaying them and how staff members were being involved in being alert to CSE.

A multi-agency approach, embedded via the 'splinter group', has delivered enormous benefits, enabling a sharing of resources without placing a large capacity strain on a single agency. By visiting premises and hotels, publishing articles and having a better, wider presence across the town, the licensing working group has increased the degree of conversation within the communities about the issue of CSE in Slough. In May 2014 the Engage team at Slough Council received an award from the National Working Group: Tackling Sexual Exploitation Network, for their work to address CSE. The council's licensing team was also recognised in early 2014 with a Berkshire Environmental Health Officers Award for Achievement for their work on raising awareness of CSE.

4.3 Good practice in working with children who have been sexually exploited or who are at particular risk

Barnardo's Recommended Model of Practice

The core features of Barnardo's model of practice can be summarised in the Four A's of Access, Attention, Assertive outreach and Advocacy (Scott and Skidmore 2006).

Access

The majority of young people involved in, or at risk of sexual exploitation have chaotic lives and a history of poor relationships with helping professions. Consequently, accessibility has to be more than simply making a service available. Considerable efforts are made to ensure that services are provided in a safe, attractive environment, flexible and responsive to young people's needs, by staff who take time to build a trusting relationship. Providing support to young people on their own terms is crucial, as is honesty about the boundaries of confidentiality.

Attention

Many sexually exploited young people have few, if any, concerned, attentive adults in their lives. With a history of abuse, family breakdown and poor parental relationships, often with a background of disruption in the looked-after system, Barnardo's CSE services posit that it is hardly surprising young people are attracted to the attention offered by unsafe, abusive adults. Their services aim to provide a different kind of attention;

attention that will 'hook' a young person out of unsafe relationships into safe and positive ones. This entails focusing on the issues that matter to the young person and persistence over time. Consistent and persistent attention from a named worker enables the development of a protective, supportive relationship within which young people feel safe enough to examine their lives and start to make changes.

Assertive outreach

Establishing and maintaining contact is achieved through a range of methods, including regular texting, calls and cards, arranging to meet on the young person's 'home ground' or at venues where they feel comfortable. The steady persistence of workers is eventually understood as being a genuine demonstration of concern and an indication of reliability. Such persistent engagement techniques are particularly important to counteract the influence of, often equally persistent, abusive adults.

Advocacy

Effective support to young people has to involve a range of agencies. Many of the young people receiving a service from Barnardo's have been failed by previous services and a key role of staff is to ensure that they can advocate for the provision they need. This advocacy can give rise to tension between agencies, but an important aspect of Barnardo's work is to establish and maintain effective inter-agency protocols and practices which keep the needs of young people at the centre.

Barnardo's FCASE model

Barnardo's Families and Communities Against Sexual Exploitation (FCASE) model consists of (D'Arcy et al 2015):

- A structured programme of six to eight weeks direct work with young people and families where a risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) has been identified
- Delivery of CSE training with professionals
- Undertaking community awareness raising

The specific aim of FCASE is to embed more effective practice on protecting children and young people, including those in foster care, from sexual exploitation, through harnessing the protective factors within a child's family and/or foster home. The model seeks to achieve this aim by building on existing processes such as the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), the Team Around the Child (TAC) and the principles of Family Group Conferencing (FGC). It emphasises the need for work with parents/carers as well as young people in order for the early signs of child sexual exploitation to be identified, and for preventative strategies to be put in place.

The Relational Safeguarding Model (PACE 2014)

This is a model of working where professionals work in partnership with parents, facilitating and supporting them, in order to maximise the ability and capacity of statutory agencies' and families' to safeguard a child at risk of/being sexually exploited. The relational safeguarding model focuses on:

- Maximising the capacity of parents and carers to safeguard their children and contribute to the prevention of abuse and the disruption and conviction of perpetrators.
- Enabling family involvement in safeguarding processes around the child, including decision making.
- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the family in recognition of the impact of CSE.
- Balancing the child's identity as both an individual and as part of a family unit.

Department for Education Innovation Programme Pilots

Innovation Programme Pilots include (Gov.uk 2015):

Sheffield and South Yorkshire Councils (£1.2 million)

To develop a sub-regional delivery model for young people experiencing or at risk of child sexual exploitation. This will include recruitment, development and support of specialist foster carers to provide safe placements for young people across South Yorkshire. Local authorities involved are Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster. Other partners are LSCBs in these areas and South Yorkshire Police.

Wigan and Rochdale Councils (£956,000)

To find alternatives to high cost and secure accommodation for victims of, or those at risk of, child sexual exploitation, and to improve outcomes for those young people and their families. They plan to develop and deliver a research programme and pilot which involves testing a new hub and bespoke social care service model with 30 young people in Wigan and Rochdale, with the intention of scaling this up across Greater Manchester local authorities.

St Christopher's Fellowship (£1.19 million)

To develop a children's home with wrap-around care in London for looked-after girls at risk of sexual exploitation, gang membership and substance misuse who might otherwise be placed in secure children's homes on welfare grounds.

Durham County Council (£496,000)

To open a new unit at Aycliffe – their Secure Children's Home – to test a new model of support targeting the trauma experienced by young people who have been sexually exploited. They intend to couple this with an extended 'step-down' service to support the young people in making the transition from the secure setting into more independent living.

4.4 Good practice in multi-agency team working covering preventative, investigation and support services

Blackburn with Darwen Council: Engage Team (LGA 2014)

Background

Operation Engage was a police led operation set up in 2005, focusing on an area of Lancashire where there were a large number of missing children. Operation Engage worked with a total of 30 children, all girls, over a period of three years. The team built up ongoing, trusting and supportive relationships with the young people, who over time disclosed a range of sexual and violent abuse. All of the children in this case (bar one) were looked after, and mostly cared for in children's homes.

The Project

In 2008 the Engage Team, a co-located multi-agency response to tackle CSE, was established by Blackburn with Darwen Safeguarding Children Board to continue the work initiated under Project Engage. The team are co-located in one building and key partners are social care, police and health. Voluntary sector service providers are also a key delivery partner. The team consists of: one team manager; six young people's workers (from the council, Barnardo's and Brook); one social worker; one administrator; two nurses; one PACE worker (Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation, parent support worker); one Princes Trust worker; one detective sergeant; four detective constables and one missing from home coordinator (police). Many external partners are also involved in the work of the team, with virtual support for the wider group of partners who have weekly team meetings eg youth offending, schools, the women's centre, drug and alcohol service and licensing services.

The team has developed over time, becoming more specialised in CSE services from 2009 onwards. Understanding of patterns of abuse, risk factors and warning signs of CSE has developed. Since April 2014 the team has additionally been responsible for all interviews when a child returns from a missing episode. The team are independent of the care planning pathway process for 11 -18 year olds, and only involve social workers when there is a clear need, for example where there are cases of neglect at home. CSE demands a non-stigmatising response, so young people's workers are the preferred main point of contact.

The team has access to information on databases from all agencies; the information is shared openly (and legally) in order to protect children. The team reports are always reported up to the LSCB. A work culture where everyone has a genuine voice, where all agencies are equal partners, works well in Blackburn with Darwen; there is no single dominating partner and everyone has ownership of the issues.

The Results

Current key challenges for the team are to ensure that they remain child focussed and non-stigmatising, whilst also aligning processes, such as the recording and evidencing required by social work procedures. Incorporating

processes, without letting services be dictated by that process has been a key challenge, avoiding delays in supporting the child or loss of the sensitive approach.

The team has achieved a number of successful prosecutions, resulting in a total of 700 years in custody for perpetrators. This accounts for sexual offences specifically, and does not include other disruption activity such as prosecution for offences such as drugs related charges or abduction order notices. Prosecutions are led by police staff in the Engage Team. The Engage Team worked with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to assess how they could gain convictions using robust evidence, and consequently the team now looks for evidence which supports the young person's story, rather than identifying the gaps and weaknesses. A young person's key worker will prepare the child for the court process, throughout the case, including post-trial; and a PACE worker provides support for parents. The team have a 98 per cent success rate. Over time the team are now predominantly dealing with grooming offences; concentrating on prevention and disruption activity.

Calderdale Council: Co-located specialist CSE team and daily intelligence sharing meetings (LGA 2014)

Background

In Calderdale, prior to June 2014, children who were identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation were experiencing different levels of service provision across the first response and locality teams. Communication between the key agencies involved in service delivery was sometimes a barrier in ensuring young people received a swift joint approach to address their needs. The agencies delivering relevant services were based in different locations and not always available to respond immediately.

The Project

Since June 2014, police officers and social workers have been co-located in a specialist CSE team at the police station. Other key agencies such as The Children's Society's 'Safe Hands', health, youth services and the youth offending team are also part of a broader virtual team. Daily briefings are held and any intelligence is shared immediately so robust action can take place to ensure children identified at risk of CSE are safeguarded. The roles and responsibilities of the police officers and social workers within the team are clearly set out, as are the responsibilities of the key partner agencies working with the team. The wider operational group of partner agencies now attend a weekly meeting so that all information can be shared in a more timely and effective way.

The Results

The new approach is reported to have led to a number of improvements in local work to protect children and young people from CSE including:

- all new cases are discussed at the next daily briefing and multi-agency decisions are made regarding the appropriate action to be taken
- fewer transfer points are promoting greater consistency in services for

children and young people

- improved communication and joint working between social care, the police and the voluntary sector service provider and an increased number of joint visits between the three key agencies
- continuity of shared intelligence and response delivered by social care staff within the team has improved
- one team provides CSE expertise, support and where required, joint visits to children on the local CSE Matrix who have remained with other social care teams
- CSE social care support and guidance available in respect of thresholds regarding young people who are on the CSE Matrix
- the team ensures that all operational group recordings and intelligence is shared with other social care staff and recorded on the child's electronic file
- social care staff are now a part of the preventative programme delivered to other agencies

Many of the improvements are recent processes. The council and partners acknowledge that there are still areas for further action including the continual review of team, the processes in place and resources available and needed.

4.5 Good practice – other strategic multi-agency approaches

Essex Safeguarding Children Board: CSE champions (LGA 2014)

Background

Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) have formed a strategic group with neighbouring local authorities, Southend and Thurrock, to ensure a joint approach to child sexual exploitation (CSE) across the County. One of the key outcomes from the strategic group was to develop a CSE champion role for each agency.

The Project

The key features of the CSE champion's role are to:

- keep up to date with developments, policy and procedures in relation to CSE
- act as a point of contact for disseminating information from the ESCB
- provide advice and signposting in relation to individual cases.

The CSE champions are also expected to be familiar with the Essex CSE risk assessment toolkit, know how to submit intelligence to Essex Police, cascade the learning from the CSE champions training and provide ongoing updates to their teams.

The Results

There have been about 300 CSE champions trained from various organisations across Essex; some organisations have more than one

champion because of their size.

Currently the format of the champions training comprises a full day, with the first half delivered by local practitioners from the Essex Police child sexual exploitation triage team and the Essex County Council CSE lead. The afternoon session is delivered by a psychotherapist who focuses on brain science, understanding perpetrators and making sense of responses of victims.

Going forward, Essex intends to make this a half day training session facilitated by the police and council with input from a voluntary sector organisation. The training will be more focussed on how to apply the tools available in Essex and will be a practical session using case studies.

One of the biggest outstanding challenges is being able to meet the demand for training, particularly as it is being delivered by operational staff and therefore has to fit in with the demands of their day job.

The champion role is an important mechanism for the ESCB, helping to raise awareness about CSE, the Essex risk assessment toolkit, and the importance of submitting the right intelligence to the police. Champions also act as a key communication route through the agencies to staff teams and the community.

As a way of providing ongoing support, the ESCB has recently completed four CSE Champions networking forums in each quadrant area, which have been well attended. This is part of the ongoing commitment to supporting CSE champions in their workplace.

Greater Manchester: Project Phoenix, It's not okay campaign (LGA 2014)

Background

Project Phoenix emerged from the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership in April 2012, following a scoping exercise into existing practice in relation to child sexual exploitation. The project was partly a response to high profile cases in Rochdale, Stockport and other parts of the country and recognition from all partners that a more effective joined-up approach was needed to tackle CSE. Project Phoenix was Greater Manchester's single, collaborative approach which aimed to improve the response to CSE strategically, operationally and tactically.

The Project

The main objectives of Project Phoenix were to:

- Raise standards across all partners in dealing with CSE
- Improve cross-border working between local authorities in Greater Manchester
- Improve consistency across Greater Manchester
- Achieve buy in from all key partners
- Raise awareness of CSE with the public, professionals, businesses, young people, etc

- Encourage people to report concerns in relation to CSE.

Under Phoenix there are now also specialist CSE teams in place in each of the ten districts of Greater Manchester. Each team works with young people being sexually exploited and offers a joined-up, multi-agency response. Prior to Phoenix, there were only two such CSE teams in the region. Phoenix provides advice, support and guidance to these teams to ensure that all professionals are working to a consistent set of standards and procedures to improve services offered to victims and those at risk of CSE.

The Results

One of the main achievements of Phoenix is reported to have been to develop and roll out a consistent approach to measuring a young person's risk of CSE. Regardless of where a young person lives in Greater Manchester they will receive the same CSE assessment, meaning that all local authorities and key partners are talking about the same thing when it comes to CSE risk. The scoring system of the tool allows for professional judgements to be made and is child focussed. The information can be collated and sent to LSCBs in a consistent way and is used to develop a better picture of the scale of CSE across Greater Manchester. The project has also developed local information sharing protocols, education guidance and guidelines around disruption activity.

Pan-London Operating Protocol for CSE (LGA 2014)

Background

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) first set up a London wide CSE team in 2012, and the Pan-London Operating Protocol to tackle CSE emerged from the work of this regional team.

The Project

The Pan London Operating Protocol brought together a set of procedures on how to tackle CSE for all 32 London Boroughs, to ensure a consistent approach was being taken across the capital. The Protocol was originally trialled in the summer of 2013 to ensure it was fit for purpose and the final version was launched in February 2014. The primary aim of the Protocol is to safeguard children and young people across London from sexual exploitation, and all London boroughs and LSCBs are signed up to the Protocol.

The Protocol has established three categories of CSE. The first category, Level 1, is used when there is suspicion of CSE, but no evidence as to what is happening. This is recorded on the police system, so that if there are further suspicions at a later point in time, then there is more evidence to support the case. The information also helps to identify perpetrators and potential 'hotspots.' Level 1 cases are dealt with by local borough police officers or the appropriate statutory agency who is best placed to provide clarity regarding these suspicions. Details of children and young people and with suspected perpetrators are entered onto the Police National Database (PND). Therefore, if a frontline officer finds a young person in a known 'hotspot' area for CSE, or if they stop a car and have concerns, they will be

able to take the appropriate action to safeguard the child even when no offences have been disclosed. The level 1 category was not previously recorded by the police in London on a crime recording database, as no crime has been known to be committed at this stage. Level 2 and 3 cases are more serious and dealt with by the centralised MPS CSE Team.

The Results

The Protocol is reported to be helping to raise awareness of CSE amongst professionals, particularly amongst frontline police officers. The Protocol has also led to improved awareness of CSE amongst the community, particularly with hoteliers and other local businesses such as taxi firms. For example, the London Borough of Waltham Forest has recently launched 'Operation Makesafe,' a partnership initiative with the local business community to identify potential CSE victims and, where necessary, to deploy police officers to intervene before any harm occurs to a child or young person. Operation Makesafe has involved an awareness raising marketing campaign and training for local hoteliers, off licences and taxi firms, to recognise the CSE warning signs and what action should be taken if CSE is suspected. As a result of the training a local firm agreed to donate marketing materials, such as hotel door adverts, posters and car mirror hangers for taxis, for free.

Portsmouth: CSE strategy and awareness raising campaign (LGA 2014)

Background

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board set up a CSE subcommittee in 2012 and tasked the council in early 2014 with developing the local CSE strategy. The strategy has been implemented across partners alongside a local CSE action plan and risk assessment tool.

The Project/Strategy

In conjunction between the Portsmouth LSCB and the Safer Portsmouth Partnership, a marketing campaign was launched in 2013, using a web based approach and traditional billboard and bus adverts to promote 'Is this Love?' The campaign looked at the aspects of a healthy relationship, highlighting the concerns about both domestic abuse and sexual exploitation of young people. The campaign also tied into the Safer Portsmouth Partnership priority of addressing high rates of domestic abuse in the area, particularly amongst young people. It is important to distinguish CSE from other forms of abuse such as domestic violence, however, there may sometimes be links and similar indicators, so all teams in Portsmouth are joined up to ensure appropriate information sharing and plans are in place to safeguard children and young people identified as at risk of abuse. In addition to the publicity work, a theatre based production for young people, Chelsea's Choice, was run in Portsmouth secondary schools to help young people explore the risks and warning signs of CSE. In early 2014 an awareness campaign was also delivered across local services including GPs and the police, this included a CSE conference for local

agencies.

A risk assessment tool was developed as part of the local action plan, based on the Derby Model, and adapted to the local circumstances. This was recently implemented for local agencies to help identify children at risk of CSE. Spot the signs training was also delivered to professionals across the partner agencies.

In early 2014 a local CSE strategy was developed; the strategy is a short document, used as a practical tool for front line workers, particularly to give local context to the CSE action plan. The CSE sub-committee of the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board has also established a multi-agency operational panel to ensure the coordination of the identification, assessment, and planning for children and young people at risk of or experiencing CSE.

The Results

As a result of the specific local focus and joined up approach to tackling CSE; there are reported to have been huge improvements in identification and support for children and young people at risk of CSE.

A Joint Action Team has now also been developed, with co-located services including social workers, police, health, a domestic abuse worker, targeted youth support worker and Barnardo's, lead on working with young people identified as being at risk of CSE or trafficking, as well as children and young people who have returned from a missing episode. The work of the team feeds directly into the multi-agency CSE operational group comprising health, police and children's services. The group regularly shares information on the age profiles of victims, gender and ethnicity information, as well as whether children are looked after by the local authority and any professional from any team can raise concerns they have about a specific young person. Details of suspected perpetrators, locations of concern and disruption work are also shared within the group. The meetings give the police the opportunity to share 'soft information' of interest, for example where shops may have been selling legal highs.

The Portsmouth CSE strategy is reported to have provided direction and filters down to the front line to give focus on CSE, and has influenced changes in practice, for example the risk assessment toolkit is being updated to reflect recent national level developments in CSE. The CSE action plan and strategy is in the process of being refreshed to ensure that it incorporates the wider approach to missing, exploited and trafficked children and young people. Portsmouth Council, the LSCB and the police have also been working on an improved data gathering process for children who go missing. Incidences of children who go missing are currently under-reported, and the council and key partners are working to understand the levels of need of children who have been trafficked.

The refresh of the CSE strategy and action plan is examining in closer detail the impact and outcomes of the local approach, for example, many local indicators are moving in the right direction but the committee is now evaluating impact to establish whether the improvements are a direct result

of the local action plan, awareness raising and disruption activities.

West Midlands Region: Regional standards, pathways and self-assessment (LGA 2014)

Background

The West Midlands region recognised the cross boundary nature of CSE and the need for a robust response, so in 2011 set up a CSE strategic group. The group was established on a metropolitan area regional level involving the seven local councils and the respective police force in the region, as well as voluntary sector and health representatives. The group focussed on the common challenges of tackling CSE and what could be done together.

The Project

In 2013 a task and finish group, chaired by a local authority chief executive, was set up to create a consistent and child centred approach to responding to CSE across the region.” The group developed 15 regional standards and pathways for tackling CSE. Guidance was also developed for front line practitioners and managers to support the implementation of the regional standards and pathways. It is anticipated that the regional standards will be added to each member LSCB’s safeguarding procedures manual. (The pathways, standards and self-assessment tool can be found online at www.local.gov.uk/cse)

The aim of the approach was to create a consistent and child centred approach to responding to CSE across West Midlands Police Force area, underpinned by the See Me Hear Me framework developed by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner. There are still locally tailored pathways in each council area, dependent on local level circumstances, but a more unified regional level approach is in place, for example through a regional induction pack for the workforce on missing children, trafficking and CSE.

The Results

Implementation of the standards and pathways was managed at the local level, with LSCB Chairs playing a key role in monitoring the progress and impact of the regional standards. A self-assessment framework assisted LSCBs with local implementation, and also enabled the identification of common areas for improvement across the seven LSCB areas; a regional workshop for practitioners and managers was held to support with implementation.

As a result of the common pathways and standards, and self-assessment screening tool, Solihull MBC is reported to have found that they are now much better at identifying victims of CSE. There has been a significant increase in the number of young people identified as at risk of harm from CSE since the screening tool was embedded, with an increase of 104 per cent of children identified at risk between May 2013 and October 2014.

Key learning from the regional approach suggests that:

- effective data collection is critical to the delivery of a robust response

and to regional problem profiling

- a regional response does not replace the need for robust, coordinated action at a local level
- establishing a regional approach needs a commitment to extra resources and capacity to ensure timeliness and understanding and embedding of the approach
- senior buy in is needed for influence and impact
- sound governance arrangements were crucial to embed the standards and pathways when partners were at different stages of implementation.

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Appendix One

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Theory of Change: Sexual Exploitation

What's the problem? What needs to change?	What do we need to do to effect change?	What will look different by November 2016 if we do these things?	What longer term outcomes will result if we succeed?
<p>Our support to children at risk of sexual exploitation has improved significantly in recent years but there is not enough tailored support available for children, once they are identified as being at risk. Currently, support is spot purchased from approved providers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create a dedicated service to be located alongside the MASH including: 1 team manager; 3 qualified social workers; 2 police officers, 2 health practitioners and 2 Voluntary Sector workers from Barnardo's ■ The service will raise awareness of CSE; support young people at risk or victims of CSE including via innovative approaches; share intelligence to prevent CSE; and work closely with partners including the police to effectively disrupt CSE activity in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better identification of young people at risk of CSE. ■ Better support to young people at risk or victims of CSE. ■ Better quality investigations ■ Fewer children going missing ■ Fewer children with repeat episodes of going missing ■ Better awareness of CSE within the professional community ■ More perpetrators of CSE brought to justice ■ More consistent and formalised processes for dealing with CSE that is quality assured on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better outcomes for a range of young people at risk of CSE including but not exclusively children in care; children in need; and other vulnerable children in the community.