

10 things everyone should know about adolescent Harmful Sexual Behaviour Event Report

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1. Introduction

Organised by the Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice (CYCJ), 10 Things Everyone Should Know about Adolescent Harmful Sexual Behaviour took place on the 9th May 2018 at the University of Strathclyde. The lecture was delivered by Stuart Allardyce and Dr Peter Yates in celebration of the publication of their book: *Working with Children and Young People who have displayed Harmful Sexual Behaviour*. The lecture focused on key messages from research about how we should think about working with children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour, what we should do when responding to incidents involving sexual abuse perpetrated by children and young people, and what we can do to prevent such abuse happening in the first place.

There were approximately 70 delegates in attendance who represented several agencies concerned with the field of Youth and Criminal Justice in Scotland, including social work, local authorities, third sector organisations, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, health, education and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. The following report is an accurate representation of responses received from delegates who completed and returned evaluation forms that were provided within delegate conference packs. Over 53% of attendees completed evaluation forms.

2. Evaluation Feedback

2.1 Prior Knowledge

Professionals attending the conference were asked to describe their knowledge on adolescent harmful sexual behaviour prior to attending the lecture. The chart below shows the percentages of those that felt they had good prior knowledge through to those who had little prior knowledge. Over half had existing good knowledge on adolescent harmful sexual behaviour prior to attending the lecture, with 64% of attendees strongly agreeing or agreeing with this statement. 19% of attendees felt they had little knowledge prior to the event.

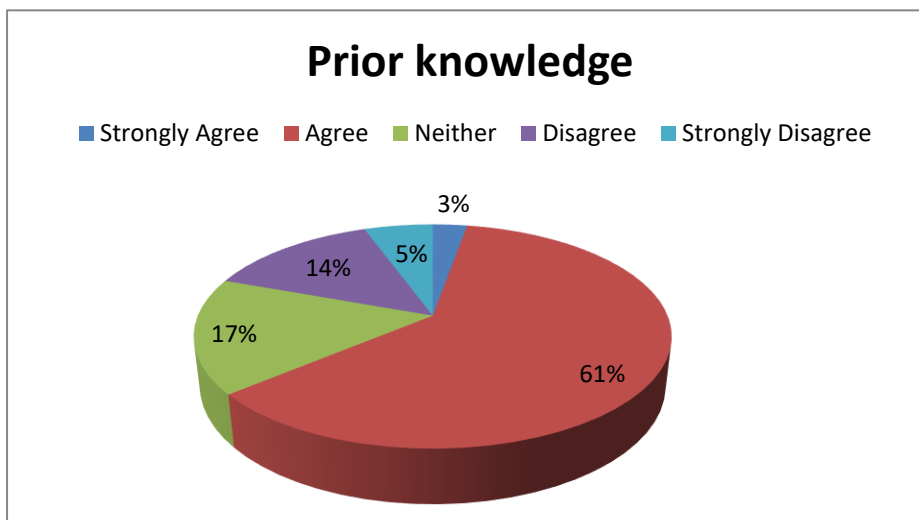


Chart 1, prior knowledge

2.2 Previous Experience

Professionals attending the conference were asked if they had previous experience in working with young people displaying adolescent harmful sexual behaviours. The results, shown below in Chart 2, were in line with our expectations that there would be a large proportion of our attendees that already had previous experience. As shown in the chart 94% of our audience strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

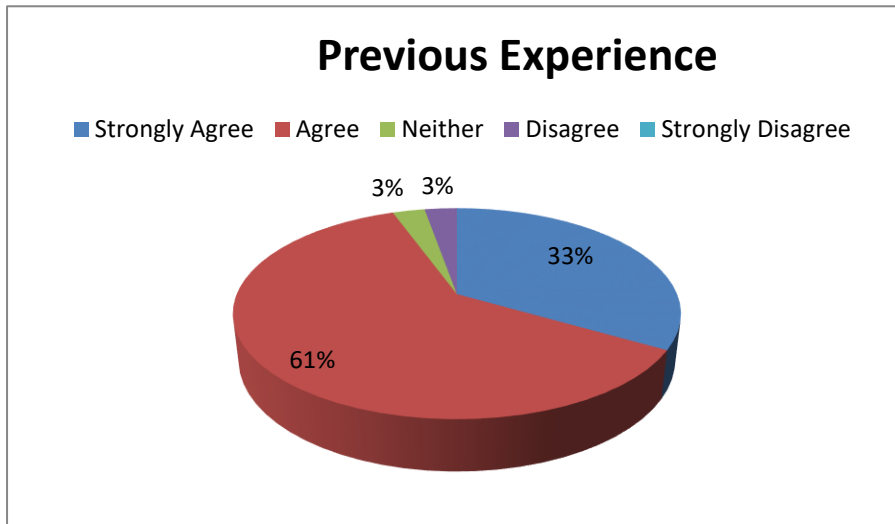


Chart 2, previous experience

2.3 Gained Understanding

Overall attendees were very positive about the understanding gained on adolescent harmful sexual behaviours. 97% of attendees either strongly agreed or agreed that they had gained a better understanding from the conference. No one disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

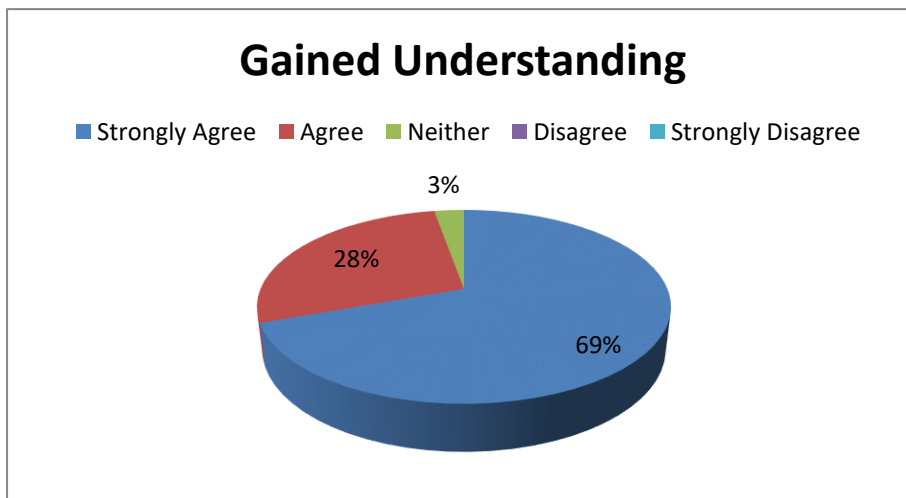


Chart 3, gained understanding

2.4 Gained knowledge

A majority of attendees felt that the knowledge gained from the conference would impact on their own practice, as detailed in Chart 4 below. A total of 89% delegates selected strongly agreed and agreed that their learnings taken away from the event would impact their practice positively.

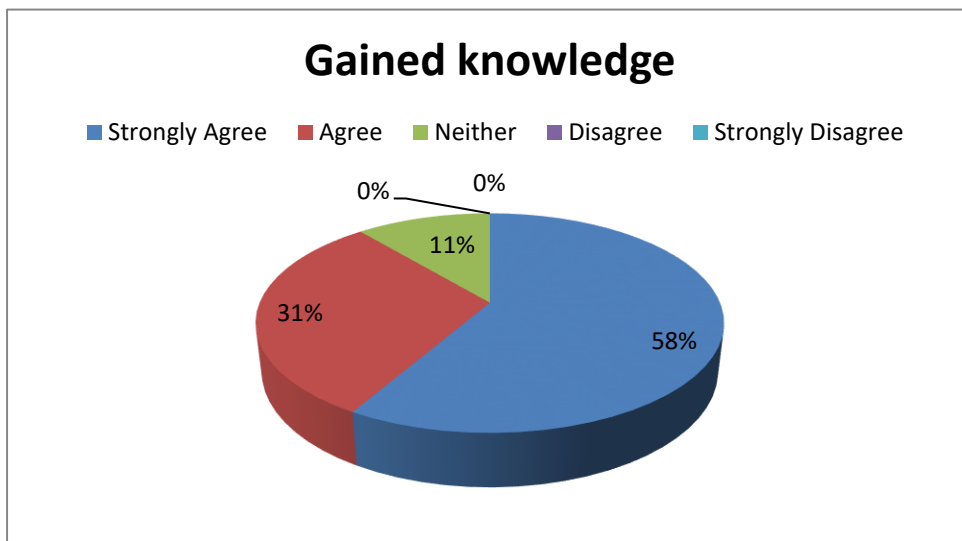


Chart 4, impact on practice

3. Event Impact and Learning

Feedback from respondents was extremely positive, with the overall view being that the knowledge of speakers and quality of the presentations were good and helpfully put adolescent harmful sexual behaviours in context. The majority of the feedback emphasised that the event had underlined the need for support for young people beyond solely focusing on the behaviour, and hope that the right support could improve outcomes:

That young people need to be seen as children and adolescents first and interventions delivered to meet their wider needs not just HSB.

The need not just to look at harmful behaviour but at how to protect children.

Confidence in our capacity to prevent HSB and the importance of the wider needs of our young people and our role in supporting them to become positive contributors to their community by caring about them.

When asked what they felt was the most important thing they had learned as a result of the event, several of the respondent's reported broadened thinking and understanding of harmful sexual behaviours, including in terms of the importance of understanding that children are not mini-adults and the importance of contextual factors:

Adolescents are not mini adult sex offenders-research around future harmful sexual behaviour very interesting.

Put the HSB in context, consider all the variables. Power dynamics/imbances as a key factor in HSB.

The limitations of risk assessment tools and factors that should be considered in assessing risk, including trauma; space, victim and 'perpetrator'; power dynamics; moving away from a child-deficit approach; the need not to judge by our own standards; and to be cognisant of rights, were highlighted as additional important learning points. Similarly respondents reported a greater understanding of approaches to intervention, including the need to adopt a phased and systemic approach, provide therapeutic interventions, the role of restorative approaches, education, and social work support, while reducing the risks of net widening.

One respondent commented everything they had learnt during the event was important.

In terms of what worked well, many respondents commented on the knowledge of the speakers on the topic, with the shared presentation deemed to have worked well and the presentation being described as clear, concise, and based on the most up-to-date research.

Numerous respondents also commented positively on the adoption of the 10 points approach to the presentation, deeming this to be clear, manageable and an effective approach, as summarised:

Good overview-detailed, analytical, constructive.

I liked the 10 things you need to know approach. Gives a good overview of an interesting yet complex subject matter.

Respondents were also asked to make some suggestions of areas of the event that they felt could be improved, with the only comments regarding the availability of the presentation slides and the timing of the event.

4. What next?

Attendees were asked if there were any actions that they would take as a result of the conference or any further training they would like to see provided. The main themes related to the provision of further training on this topic, case examples, tools and resources to utilise with young people, including gender-specific tools and in relation to technology assisted harmful sexual behaviours, and additional support to practitioners working with young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours:

I would like Stuart and Peter to do an input to our next development day for residential staff and Community Police.

Would like to be aware of a case study with an adolescent and what steps should educate and change behaviour.

Support for practitioners to develop skills and tools to use, and young people and families, about harmful and healthy sexual behaviour, making sense of their own trauma and healthy questions to ask about pornography.

More specific interventions to work with.