



## **The Expert Group on Preventing Sexual Offending by Children and Young People**

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The only UK-wide Helpline and Campaign  
dedicated solely to tackling child sexual abuse

## Radford et al. (2017)

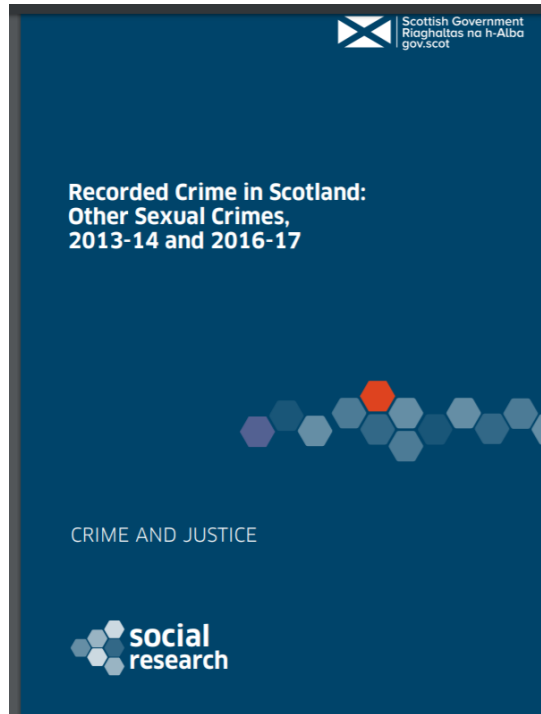
The most recent prevalence research in the UK shows:

- 9.4% (1 in 10) report experiences of sexual victimisation (from an adult or peer) in the past year, 16.5% (1 in 6) experience this at some time during childhood.
- The most frequent victimisations young people (aged 11-17) report are perpetrated by peers

# Context

- Information from the police on perpetrators of sexual offences against children in England and Wales gathered by The Office of the Children's Commissioner (2015) identified 34,241 perpetrators over a two-year period, (April 2012–March 2014). 1/3 of the perpetrators were under the age of 18
- The number of cases reported to the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service in Scotland 2012-16 involving a sexual offence committed against a child by a child rose by 34% (COPFS, 2017).

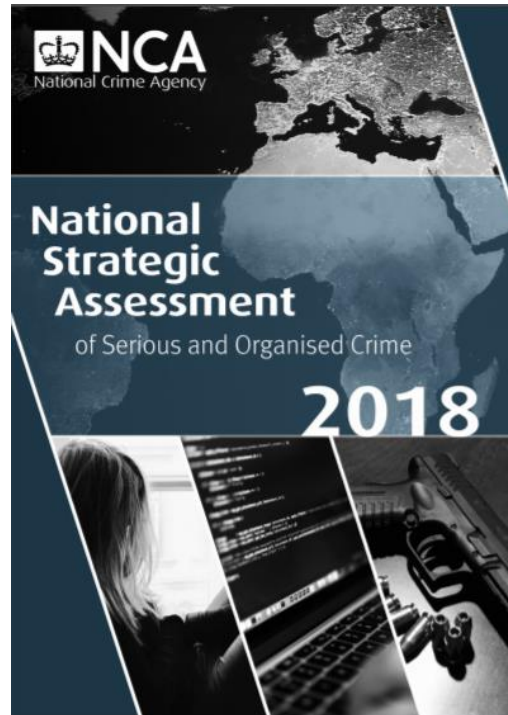
# Changing Nature of Adolescent Harmful Sexual Behaviour



'The crimes of 'Communicating indecently' and 'Cause to view sexual activity or images' now account for half of 'Other sexual crimes'. These crimes can be cyber enabled and generally have identifiable victims and perpetrators...

Perpetrators were ...younger for cyber enabled crimes of this type, with a median age of 18 in 2016-17, and more than half under 20. In contrast, perpetrators of non-cyber enabled crime had a median age of 36.'

# Changing Nature of Adolescent Harmful Sexual Behaviour



'Offending by under 18s forms a rising proportion of reported child sexual exploitation and abuse. Reports of sexual offences on school premises have also increased. This is separate from Self Generated Indecent Imagery (SGII).'

# Changing Nature of Adolescent Harmful Sexual Behaviour



- Adolescent girls are at greatest risk of forced sex within the private sphere, in the context of intimate partner relationships
- Friends/classmates and partners are some of the most common perpetrators of sexual abuse against boys
- Only very few adolescent girls who have experienced forced sex sought professional help

# Scottish Government Expert Group

Expert Group was established by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and the Solicitor General in order to bring together expertise, from across child protection, education, health, justice, and service providers in the third sector in Scotland, to:

- consider the evidence relating to occurrences of harmful sexual behaviours by children and young people which harm other children and young people;
- review current responses; and
- consider potential further actions to better prevent and respond to such behaviours

# Scottish Government Expert Working Group

- Group chaired by Catherine Dyer and met Jan 2018 – April 2019
- Final report being signed off and to be published summer 2019
- Considered the issue as a public health one, examining primary, secondary and tertiary prevention



# Sub groups

- Children and Young People with Intellectual Disabilities
- Collaborative Working
- Data and intelligence
- Intra familial Behaviours
- Internet Pornography
- Involvement of Younger Children
- Use of the NSPCC Audit Tool
- Peer on Peer Abuse
- Risk Assessments and Responses

# NSPCC Framework (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2019)



- Continuum of responses
- Prevention, identification, early intervention
- Effective assessment and referral pathways
- Multi-model approach to intervention
- Workforce development

# Expert Working Group CPC Survey

Scottish Government Expert Group on Preventing  
Sexual Offending by Children and Young People

Self Evaluation Tool  
For Child Protection Committees

To Review Existing Process and Practices in Relation  
to inappropriate and abusive sexual behaviour displayed in childhood and adolescence

October 2018

J:\expert working group\CSE self eval tool for HSB.docx

- Survey of CPCs
- 27 out of Scotland's 32 local authorities provided responses to the survey, which were then analysed.
- Considerable variation in how survey was completed

# Comparative Data – Head Teachers in Scotland



## Online Peer on Peer Abuse

**A national survey of Headteachers and Safeguarding Leads in England and Scotland**

Professor Andy Phippen  
Professor Emma Bond  
Katie Tyrrell

June 2018

- There were 174 responses from head teachers and safeguarding leads in Scotland. Of those:
  - 28% of respondents did not consider that there was sufficient guidance from government and their local authority.
  - Fewer than 1/2 suggested that they have a policy covering online peer on peer abuse (47%).
  - 29% of respondents suggested that all staff receive training around online peer on peer abuse; 37% suggested there is no training and 20% were unaware.

# Policy and Procedures

- All CPC responses indicated they have multi-agency protocols for supporting such children and young people.
- Eight of the CPC responses specifically referred to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) guidance, with one appearing to solely reference this guidance.
- Only 20% of CPCs said they received data about children and young people with concerning sexual behaviour.
- Only 8% stated that they report on multi-agency meetings and outcome. This is surprising as the Scottish Government's 2014 CARM Guidance for local authorities on the assessment of young people who present a risk of harm through HSB outlines that **quantitative and qualitative data should be collected annually in relation to multi-agency decision making concerning young people who present risks to the public because of their sexual behaviours.**
- 38% of CPCs reported procedures and guidance specific to school setting (e.g. guidance on sexting).

# Primary and Secondary Prevention

- Over 95% of the responses indicated the Health and Wellbeing curriculum in schools included topics such as consent, power imbalance, HSB, healthy relationships, online safety, bullying, and CSE.
- 63% of responses indicated they provided multi-agency training in relation to healthy, inappropriate, and problematic sexual behaviours in the context of training on CSE, risk assessment and management, or specifically on children and young people displaying HSB.
- There were no references in the responses to supports for parents and carers of children with higher needs in relation to inappropriate and problematic sexual behaviour.
- it was unclear as to what access staff in all agencies might have to specialist consultation and advice, although 79% reported they do, although there was significant variation on how this was defined

# Tertiary Prevention

- All responses indicated that where a child or young person displays abusive sexual behaviour they will have an identified lead professional and a single child's plan.
- Clear procedures, processes and protocols alongside good collaborative multi-agency working were reported as currently effective in supporting and rehabilitating these children and young people.
- A number of barriers were noted including the divergent thresholds in different professionals' and agencies' understanding of HSB, complexity of cases, lack of capacity across agencies, staff anxiety, lack of training, and inconsistent processes.
- 58% of responses reported specialist service provision for children and young people who display abusive and violent sexual behaviour i.e. social work, Third sector or NHS.
- 46% of responses noted they have quality assurance measures in place with respect to some of the processes relevant to supporting children and young people who display sexually abusive behaviour.

# Conclusions?