

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Lancashire

Introduction

Child Sexual Exploitation is a key concern to all those who are involved with keeping children and young people safe and ensuring their safeguarding. No Local Authority or Service can be complacent around this issue and in Lancashire we have worked in partnership to address CSE issues. Indeed it is only through effective partnership working that this issue can be tackled

Working Partnerships

In Lancashire across the new 3 policing divisions we continue to lead the way nationally in terms of the approach we have taken to tackling these issues. Three multi agency CSE teams have been created (one for each police division), which include police, health, children social care and voluntary agencies work to the following ethos.

- Risk management according to a common framework.
- A shared picture of intelligence of the threats.
- Graded responses to the risks identified to safeguard and support victims.
- Early intervention to reduce harm.
- Investigation, prosecution and disruption of perpetrators.
- A collective watching brief.

Statistics

Accurate statistical analysis is key to understanding trends and patterns around CSE. Lancashire has been collating data on the children referred to police and children's social care for a number of years.

The latest data evidences that 62% of referred young people were aged between 13 and 15 and 95% were white, these are similar levels to previous reports. The majority of young people referred for CSE continue to be female.

Over the past 6 months there has been a notable increase in the number of young males referred as potential victims of CSE. Boys now constitute 22% of referrals over the period compared to 8% previously; this will be monitored to ascertain whether it is a longer term trend.

Below is data relating to sexual offences over the last 3 years and for the period March to August 2014

CSE Related Referrals & Crimes				
	Referrals	Crimes	Positive Outcome	Under Investigation
2011-12	1439	0		
2012-13	1320	85	45	
2013-14	1240	434	202	1
2014 - 31/08/14	536	193	55	60

The number of the referrals relates to the number of cases that have had a multi-agency CSE risk assessment, the number of crimes references the crimes identified from the referrals.

To give you some commentary on the positive outcomes, several options are available.

Sanction meaning that the offender has either been charged or cautioned with an offence.

Police Resolution (PR) Restorative Justice (RJ) and triage are recognised alternative disposals aimed at diverting people from the criminal justice system. Lancashire does NOT use alternative disposals for sexual offences as much as some other forces and it is an area we are looking into.

An example of when an alternative disposal may be used is when it comes to light that two children under the age of 16 are engaging in sexual activity. Dependent upon the circumstances it may not be appropriate to take the matter to court, but it may be prudent to do some work with the children on sexual health and education about risk taking behaviour. We may then go down the Police resolution or Restorative Justice route.

Sexual offences reported against children has decreased since 2011-12, however the proportion of those offences where a positive outcome is achieved has increased.

Response to the Jay report

The LSCB sub group has been tasked with benchmarking Lancashire's position in respect of the 15 recommendations of the Jay report and is reporting to the health and well-being board in November 2014.

Key successes in 2013/14

Increased work with all diverse communities regarding awareness of CSE and confidence in the service provided

The Children's Society continue to provide a service known as 'Respect U & Me' in a Lancashire school where two groups of young men of Asian heritage were identified as displaying demeaning behaviour towards females (both their peers and women in general) and there was evidence of some elements of exploitative behaviour in their personal relationships. The Children's Society worked with the groups on 'respect and healthy relationships' which culminated in the group producing a leaflet on key messages about respecting others this leaflet will be shared with other young men.

Develop approach to targeted organised criminal groups committing CSE

The Constabulary continues to target all those suspected of sexually exploiting children and young people. The publication of the OCC report "if only someone had listened" which was a 2 year inquiry into group and gang activity around CSE has identified best practice and defining principles in tackling OCG activity around CSE. These lessons have been embedded into the new CSE plan and will further enable police and their partners to refine the targeting, investigation and prosecution of organised groups.

Awareness raising activities

September 2013 OP Toledo – The sub-group co-ordinated a week long CSE awareness campaign.

The Constabulary, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and many partner organisations worked closely together through Op. Toledo to achieve a highly effective CSE Week of Action, which commenced on Monday 9th September 2013. The main objectives for Op Toledo were to keep children in Lancashire safe from abusers, provide communities with confidence in the service and protection we provide and focus attention on our commitment and effective, innovative approaches to tackling CSE. A further week is planned in November 2014.

To achieve these objectives during the Awareness Week, we delivered a range of activities focusing on prevention, awareness, enforcement and community engagement. These included a major conference attended by 200+ Partners/Police, at which experts in their field identified and shared best practice. We also engaged with a diverse range of communities to raise awareness about CSE and focused on making sure the information reached young people.

Overall, the many and wide ranging activities highlighted how collaborative working with our partners provides powerful tools with which to successfully tackle CSE across Lancashire. Each dedicated CSE team collated information about their daily core activity.

The materials used to raise awareness amongst children, young people, families and organisations have been shared with other LAs and used in the Greater Manchester awareness week this month.

Undertake activity to obtain feedback from young people who have been exploited regarding the service they received in order to continually seek to develop service improvement

The Lancashire co-located teams include statutory and third sector providers. The co-located model provides an essential hub, in which the partners identify the needs of the victim and their family and work together to safeguard, support, investigate and bring offenders to justice. Our VCFS partners are crucial members of the teams and include Brook, The Children's Society, PACE, and Barnardos.

Intensive outreach workers, in the Children's Society's Street Safe Lancashire (SSL), provide valuable support to children and young people, at risk of or involved in sexual exploitation, from report through to the court process. They are co-located in 5 of our divisional teams, where they provide support to victims as part of an integrated package of multi-agency intervention.

Between April 2013 and March 2014, SSL supported 245 children and young people with interventions which raised awareness of grooming, CSE, healthy relationships and protective behaviours. These continued whilst they were needed by the victim and for varying periods from between 2-3 months and a few years, where young people struggled to cope and build resilience. They have also delivered a large number of group sessions in children's homes, schools, colleges and youth groups. SSL have also now employed a worker to work specifically with boys and young men. The worker has worked with 393 boys and young men over the 12 month period and had 154 one to one sessions with 11-18 year olds.

There are now specialist teams within Early Break who are carrying out early intervention outreach work following a successful lottery fund bid being granted to East Lancashire.

Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE) parent support workers provide independent, non-judgmental and confidential support to parents, they understand the rights of parents and carers. They listen to concerns, give information on statutory agencies, court procedures and pass on advice from other affected parents. PACE workers help find the

best solution for each family. PACE have delivered workshops within Lancashire and have been assisted by parents who themselves have been affected by CSE. Both The Children's Society and PACE are positioned to feedback to the teams the views and opinions of young people and their families of the service they were given and how we, as professionals could improve this experience.

Ofsted Showcase of good practice

Ofsted in November 2013 acknowledged the work undertaken by partner agencies, including The Children's Society in **Listening, learning - influencing our response - Harnessing the views of young people to influence the shape of service to combat child sexual exploitation**. Listening to and involving children and young people in the development of the services they receive is not an 'add-on' but at the heart of what Lancashire does. Although work with victims and perpetrators of child sexual exploitation poses challenges, the views of children and young people who have experienced abuse are being effectively used to influence policy, procedure and practice across Lancashire. The *Street Safe Lancashire* programme is at the forefront of this work.

Review and Develop training for all frontline professionals re awareness of CSE

The Children's Society and police continue to deliver a CSE training package on behalf of the LSCB to practitioners. They have now further developed a training package to be delivered to Managers.

The one day training is delivered by experienced staff who work in the CSE arena on a daily basis. The feedback from participants of the course has been excellent. Further regular inputs to both practitioners and managers are pencilled in for the next 12 months.

Training to children social care workers is embedded into their training programme with bespoke events facilitated linked to local need.

Online e learning has been available since 2013 with 2345 participants having successfully been accredited.

LGA award 2012

Following a successful pilot a recent commission to support prevention and early help for those children and young people that go missing that fall outside of statutory frameworks

Multi-agency Strategic Plan to tackle CSE

Lancashire's child sexual exploitation strategic plan continues to focus of the following areas to manage the risk that this area of work presents:

- greater awareness of CSE leading to greater management of risk and reassurance in communities;
- protection of vulnerable victims with a clear, proactive approach in protecting those at greatest risk;
- more perpetrators brought swiftly to justice with greater support for victims throughout their involvement with criminal justice services;
- greater collaboration amongst multi-agency teams to achieve the best outcomes for victims and those at risk of exploitation;
- good intelligence shared more widely to inform decisions on the targeting of perpetrators and protection of those at risk;
- strong, effective and well informed leadership within all partner organisations;

- a commitment to ongoing learning and development in a multi-agency environment where best practice is widely shared and consistently applied.

Definition

“A form of child abuse (“child” being defined as anyone under 18 years of age). It can manifest itself in different ways but essentially involves children and young people receiving something – for example, accommodation, drugs, gifts, or affection – as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It can occur without physical contact, when children are groomed to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

In all cases those exploiting the child or young person have power over them, perhaps by virtue of their age or physical strength. Exploitative relationships are characterised in the main by the child’s limited availability of choice, compounding their vulnerability. This inequality can take many forms but the most obvious include fear, deception, coercion and violence.”

