



**Child Abuse through  
Sexual Exploitation (CATSE) Learning  
2008 - 2013**

**Prepared by NewStart Networks cic  
Commissioned by Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Board**

**Date: 30 October 2013**



## Index

	<b>Page No</b>
1. Acknowledgements	3
2. Introduction	4-5
3. Background	4-5
4. Methodology	5-10
5. Young People	11-16
6. Families	17-24
7. Staff	25-33
8. Conclusion	34-38
9. References	39
10. Appendices	40



**NewStart Networks would like to acknowledge the following people and agencies without whom this Review would not have been possible:**

- All the Young People who agreed to speak to us
- Parents of Young People
- Helen Morris, CATE Project
- Steve Hoskins, Targeted Youth Support Team
- Helen Gordos, West Mercia Police
- Sophie Wade, West Mercia Police
- Tam Sheen, PACE/CALLA
- Tom Duffin, PACE
- Jo Britton, T&W Children's Services
- Tina Knight, T&W Children's Services
- Debbie Rudd, CARM
- Safeguarding Group
- Education & Health
- West Mercia Police

We would also like to acknowledge the front line staff and managers who first brought CSE to light as a safeguarding issue between 2006 and 2008. These professionals stepped out of their comfort zone, often departed from accepted agency policy and procedures and, at times, their personal safety and professional status was compromised. Without their commitment the progress made by Telford & Wrekin Council and partner agencies would not have been possible.

## **Introduction**

NewStart Networks was established in 2012 following the closure of a local NSPCC service that provided a therapeutic service across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. As practitioners we identified that there remained a considerable need for a specialist service for children and young people and created NewStart Networks. NewStart Networks is a Community Interest Company that consists of four social workers and an office manager. We are independent of Telford & Wrekin LSCB, are based in Shrewsbury, Shropshire and work across Shropshire and the West Midlands.

As Practitioners we have a wealth of experience working with children and families within statutory, private and voluntary sectors. Practitioners all have qualifications in social work and therapeutic work with children (see Appendix 2). NewStart practitioners have worked for many years with children and young people who have experienced trauma and/or displayed harmful sexual behaviour, provide consultation and a wide range of training courses to professionals in children's services.

## **Summary**

From the late 1990's professionals working in Telford and Wrekin had concerns about the nature of some of the child sexual abuse cases presented to them but in the context of understanding and learning at that time could only address concerns using existing child protection procedures. From 2006 professionals in Telford & Wrekin working with young girls as young as twelve began to become increasingly aware of a different form of sexual abuse that was taking place. This in time was to become known as child sexual exploitation and led to the creation of the CATE (Children at Risk from Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation) project in 2008 in Telford. This enabled specialist workers who recognised the complexities of CSE to offer support to young girls who were being sexually exploited. Tackling this issue became a priority for Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Board from 2009 (Appendix 3).

CATE workers passed information to, and worked alongside, West Mercia Police in Operation "Chalice" - The Investigation into the Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Young People in Telford & Wrekin between 2009 and 2012. This operation culminated in a lengthy trial and conviction of a number of Asian men at the end of 2012.

In 2012/13 existing procedures were further developed based on the learning from 2008 onwards. This led to the creation of a model and pathway, ratified by the LSCB, distinct from existing child protection procedures that offered an alternative method of addressing child protection issues linked to Child Sexual exploitation. The Telford & Wrekin "Procedure for Safeguarding Children Abused Through Exploitation" also provided a consistent and agreed multi agency response for use when responding to concerns relating to Child Sexual Exploitation. The CATE Care Pathway enabled agencies to work together to:

- Implement local preventative strategies.
- Identify those children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

- Take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of particular children and young people who may be sexually exploited.
- To jointly take action against those intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people in this way (Telford & Wrekin 2013).

The Local Safeguarding Board in Telford & Wrekin was keen to widen its learning from their response to CSE between 2008 and 2013 by including the views and experiences of young people, families, professionals and other stakeholders. It was felt that such a review would provide a better quality of learning than a Serious Case Review which would only focus on the experiences of one or two young people. In order to achieve this they commissioned NewStart Networks to undertake this.

## **Methodology**

### **Remit**

The remit for the Review was very clear and was set by the Local Safeguarding Board:

1. To look back on the experiences for all stakeholders and to explore how and what we might do better in the future.
2. To assess the quality of the support offered to the young people, families, communities and staff affected by CSE.
3. To determine to what extent the support offered was accessible, available, timely and of the right kind.

The scope of this Review was to include all young people and their families who were known to the CATE Team between December 2008 and March 2013 and all Children's Services staff who were involved with cases of child sexual exploitation for the same time period.

### **Definition**

For the purposes of this Review we used the following definitions of CSE:

'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.'

(Department for Education 2012)

'Child sexual exploitation is illegal activity by people who have power over young people and use it to sexually abuse them.

This can involve a broad range of exploitative activity, from seemingly 'consensual' relationships and informal exchanges of sex for attention, accommodation, gifts or cigarettes, through to very serious organised crime.' Barnardos 2013

## **Young people**

### **Methodology**

The confidentiality of all the young people was assured from the start through allocation of code names taken from the names of Angels. Throughout this report when individuals are referred to it will be by their code name.

Given the nature of the information required and its potential impact on the emotional health of the young people involved we determined that structured interviews would offer a more sensitive and flexible means of gaining qualitative data. Initially we considered assessing the young people to ensure they were able to take part in the Review using the Trauma Symptom Checklist (Briere J). On reflection we decided that this would be too invasive, may further deter individuals from engaging and was unlikely to tell us anything more than what we suspected i.e. that these young people had experienced serious trauma.

As a group of practitioners who work primarily with young people recovering from trauma we therefore assessed the young person during the interview with a tacit agreement that any interview would be ended if the young person presented as being too distressed. Similarly if any child protection issues were raised in the course of the Review those issues were explored and would have been reported, if necessary. For example, one respondent stated that she only felt "slightly safer" now but when this was explored with her it became clear she did not want or need additional support at that time.

As the focus of the Review was to find out how young people had received services and perceived their usefulness the structured interview did not look at their individual experiences of abuse or seek to independently confirm that they were victims of CSE. This was taken as a given from the information provided by the Local Authority. (Appendix 4)

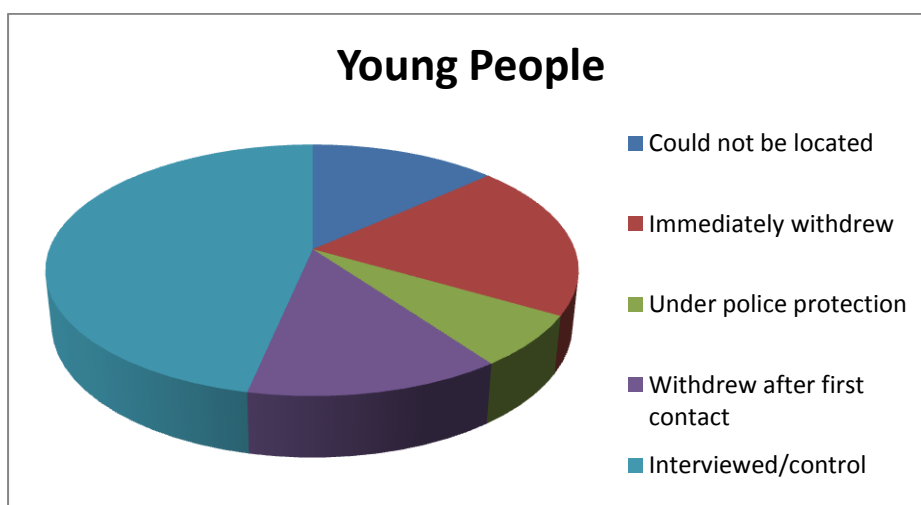
In terms of engaging the young people who were already known to CATE, we aimed to do this through their CATE workers who initially mentioned the Review to them and informed them that they would be contacted as part of the Review. Written information and a consent form were then sent to them followed by a telephone call to arrange a face to face meeting (Appendix 5 & 6). For those who no longer had a worker or who had not been known to CATE we had to rely on writing to them directly.

When considering methods of obtaining information from the young people involved the use of a questionnaire was considered and may have made participation easier for more young people. On balance, however, a decision was made that the use of a questionnaire based on a closed response would be unhelpful as we did not want to prejudice the responses given. For example, in terms of agencies that had been helpful we may not have included CAMHS or the NSPCC as an option due to our lack of knowledge. Similarly the idea of sending a more in depth questionnaire to young people who might still be suffering from the effects of trauma with the expectation that they would complete it without support seemed inappropriate.

## Population

Twelve young women were identified by Social Care to fit the remit with an additional potential control group of three. The control group comprised of young women who were known to have been involved in CSE but had not, for different reasons, engaged with the CATE service. All but one of the young women identified were White British.

Of those twelve, three immediately declined to take part upon receiving the written information. One young person had to be contacted via the Police as she had been moved out of the area under Police protection. She was subsequently contacted directly using information supplied by her mother but declined to take part. Two remaining young people spoke to NewStart practitioners about the Review but did not feel able to meet with someone in interview. When one of the young people, Camael, received the written information she phoned in to say that she and her mother had been very upset by the letter as they had never been involved in CSE and had no idea what the letter was referring to. In actual fact, Camael not only had received a service from CATE over a significant period of time but she had also been forewarned about the Review.



Of the six that did engage and meet with practitioners, three were only able to do this with the encouragement and support of their worker from CATE. The CATE worker

did not sit in the interview but facilitated practical arrangements whilst offering emotional support to the young people involved.

Out of the control group two of the young women identified could not be located. No current addresses or contact information was available and given the confidential nature of the Review it was not possible to “cold call” at possible addresses or to pursue enquiries more actively. The only member of the control group that was able to engage (Tabris) was located via different channels where contact had been maintained with other professionals.

On further examination then, the potential group for Review consisted of thirteen, not fifteen young women as originally presented and of that group seven took part in this Review.

## **Families**

### **Methodology**

Parents were identified via the code names assigned to their daughters. For the purposes of this Review “family” refers to parents and not to the siblings or extended family that may have also been affected by CSE. Information and consent letters were sent to parents in the same way as their daughters and the same method to capture information was employed i.e. a structured interview. (Appendix 5, 6 & 7)

As with the young people, where possible, CATE workers informed families about the Review and that they would be contacted by practitioners from NewStart.

### **Population**

Out of the potential group of parents three sets were immediately unavailable due to death, substance misuse, the young person’s lack of contact with birth parents and because the birth parents were not aware of their daughter’s involvement in CSE. There were also two sets of siblings in the group and the two members of the control group who could not be located. This gave a possible total of eight parents that fell into the remit. Of these eight, the only parents who felt able to respond were the mothers of the young people. Letters were addressed to both parents but, for some reason that we were unable to pursue, fathers chose not to engage in this Review.

## **Staff group**

### **Methodology**

For the staff group quantitative data was collected through the use of questionnaires. Two questionnaires were used to gain a picture of professionals’ knowledge of CSE and also their own personal views and experiences in relation to awareness, support and training. (Appendix 8)

Qualitative data was obtained from the staff forums where groups of professionals were invited to discuss their views on the following areas:

- Attitudes
- Knowledge
- Role
- Impact

These were broken down into questions and the responses recorded during the course of the discussion (Appendix 9). Where individual interviews were necessary these questions were posed to the respondent and recorded at the time of interview. Both the individual interviews and the agency Forum lacked the multi agency dimension in terms of the discussion that took place but were the next best option. Once the data was recorded this was cross tabulated in order to develop themes and cross reference information.

In addition some supplementary questions were asked of the Police based on some of the issues raised by the young people and parents. (See Staff page 33)

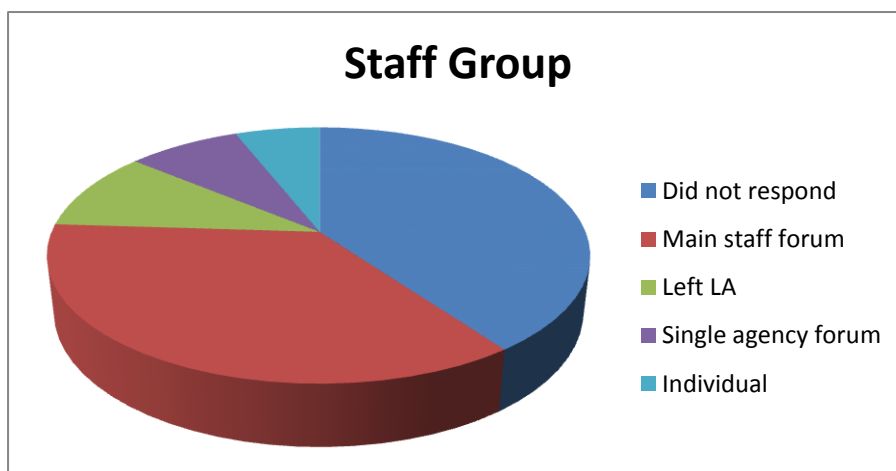
Staff members who co-operated with this Review did so on the understanding that their contributions would be anonymised for the purposes of the report. This appeared to be very important to staff members, raising questions about levels of communication and trust within their respective agencies.

### Population

The Local Authority supplied a list of forty five professionals that had been actively involved in working with the identified young people during this time period. These professionals were from Education, Health, Social Care, Police, YOS and a Charity. In addition we identified a further ten professionals who had not been included on the list but nevertheless fitted the remit giving a possible total of fifty-five. Of these fifty-five, five professionals had left the Local Authority and could not be contacted for the purposes of this Review.

Individual invitations, information and consent forms were sent to all members of staff that were identified. A request was made to Social Care Managers to encourage staff to respond to their invitations.

Out of these fifty professionals, twenty five responded: eighteen via the Staff Forum, four via a single agency based Forum and three via individual interviews based on the areas outlined in the Staff Forum. Out of these twenty five all the agencies identified in the original sample group were represented.



## Limitations

- The Local Authority was relied upon to undertake risk assessments about the potential impact of young people's engagement in this process.
- The time frame for the Review was too limited to allow for more creative means of engaging more young people, families and staff. For example, a second Staff Forum could have been held.
- National statistics and local intelligence suggest that more young people are victims of exploitation than have come to the attention of CATE.
- The size of the sample group means that findings should not be generalised to the larger population but rather used as basis of a working hypothesis.
- The young women and their families had all experienced varying degrees of trauma that had been reawakened by the court case, the coverage of the case in the media and the Channel Four documentary. This impacted on the types of questions it was ethical to pose and also for some of them, we believe, probably affected their ability to engage in this process.
- By using CATE workers to engage young people to talk about their experience of CSE we introduced an element of bias but felt this was unavoidable.
- The time frame stipulated i.e. 2008-2013 meant that the learning which led to the creation of CATE (2006-2008) was not effectively captured by this Review, nor was the experience of the young women involved during this time.
- There was a problem in the manner in which the sample group was identified: two of the girls from the control group were not available in the first instance.
- The Review of families did not include siblings or extended family, where relevant.
- The available data re staff involved was not comprehensive and missed some key members. It is still not clear whether this Review captured all of the staff that were relevant to this period of time.
- The work with victims and their families is not balanced against similar knowledge about the perpetrators and their families. It could be argued that the families of perpetrators are as much victims as the young women who were exploited.
- Only two of the young people agreed we could access their files and so this was an area of the Review that we were unable to pursue.

## Young People

(Please refer to Appendix 10)

### Context

- The data suggests that friends and family were the first people that became aware of negative changes in the young person's presentation that were subsequently linked to CSE.
- Slightly over half of the young people reported problematic relationships within their family but despite this the majority had not been brought to the attention of other agencies prior to their involvement in CSE.
- In terms of education there appears to be no clear relation between the type of schooling, previous behaviour at school and subsequent exploitation. At least two of the respondents were high achieving students at the time they became involved in CSE.
- Their experiences of sex and substance misuse education in school ranged from poor to non-existent with only one describing it as "good". Those that received a service from RISQ felt that this had been helpful and that CATE workers had helped to facilitate their access to this service in a positive manner.
- There was no consensus as to why the respondents felt they had been personally targeted and they gave an even mix of responses based on their personal circumstances. Past history, their peer group, the environment in which they lived and previous family involvement with CSE were all cited as possible reasons. (Appendix 10)
- In terms of their behaviour, whilst exploitation was taking place only two respondents fitted the common profile of abusing drugs/alcohol, going missing and having unexplained possessions. For the majority drugs, alcohol and going missing were separate features of their behaviour and may be useful behaviours to focus on in terms of early intervention. It is worth noting, however, that for one respondent the only behaviour she reported was isolating herself and general behavioural problems so effectively there were no warning signs that obviously linked her to CSE.

### Analysis

*In terms of context most of the girls had different experiences that they felt contributed to them being vulnerable to the exploitation that took place. Drugs/alcohol use and going missing appeared to be the most consistent indicators of CSE but, again, this was not true for all of the young people.*

- "Parents would have seen me coming home late, being drunk/on drugs, running away/going missing. I had different phones, was given money that I

would hide from my parents. I had bruises and bites that my parents would have seen if I hadn't spent all my time in my bedroom."

*Friends and family can be key in terms of recognising signs and symptoms of CSE but may also play a role in the recruitment of the young person to CSE. Some of the young people we spoke to reported that siblings or friends had introduced them to the abusers in the first instance.*

- "Friends noticed that I was smoking cannabis and hanging out with Asian men. I made a new friend that was already involved with the men."

*The fact that over fifty per cent of the young people reported problematic relationships with their families suggests that this may have contributed to their vulnerability and the family's ability to recognise changes in behaviour at an earlier stage*

- "Before all this we had difficult stuff, she (Mum) would kick me out all the time and we had rows".
- "They don't know anything. Mum drank – she was drunk a lot."

*All the respondents reported issues in education once they were being exploited and some were placed with tuition services as a result. Where they were placed, in terms of education, appeared to have little effect on whether offenders could still contact them, with some offenders blatantly waiting outside school/educational settings for the girls.*

- "They all thought I was just a 'slapper', a bad kid who never listened".

*The fact that all but one of the respondents reported that they had received inadequate sex and substance misuse education may be a factor to consider in terms of preventative work. However, one of the respondents expressed her opinion that this would have made little difference to her becoming involved in CSE. In relation to education regarding CSE, it was clear that some of the respondents did not recognise that some of the relationships they were involved in were abusive/exploitative. This may have been exacerbated by their own and possibly others' negative view of them.*

- "Late home, arguments, lies, stress. Yes, who would believe it? I thought it was all OK until I told CATE."

## **Agencies**

- CATE was consistently identified by the young people as the most helpful agency that they were involved with.
- None of the respondents identified a Social Worker from any of the Safeguarding Teams as being helpful. A common response in interview was that, at times, there were too many professionals involved whose role/function was not clear to the young person.

- Where a young person received a positive service from any agency their view of that agency remained consistently positive throughout the process e.g. CAMHS, NSPCC, ISVA. This appears to be based on the nature of the relationship with the individual worker involved rather than a reflection of that agency as a whole.
- The majority also identified the Police and CATE as the agencies that listened to them and it was these agencies, especially CATE that the young people stated they would report concerns to in the future. However, only one respondent said she would report her concerns to both CATE and the Police.
- Just over half of the group felt they had not been protected from risk/ threat to themselves and their families during the Police investigation.
- There was no consensus about what had made a difference to the young people in terms of support and advice and again, all the responses were specific to their individual situations at the time: Two respondents felt that nothing had made a difference.

## **Analysis**

*What was not conveyed in many of the interviews was the feeling that the response to their particular difficulties was a coordinated multiagency one and, in fact, attempts to involve multiple agencies often left young people feeling confused about the roles and responsibilities of different professionals.*

*They valued the fact that workers “stuck with them” and took the time to develop individual relationships. The interviews suggested that young people found workers from CATE to be less rigid in their approach and more willing to look at symptoms rather than possible evidence.*

- “The CATE project was helpful as they listened to me, understood and recognised the signs of what was happening when I didn’t.”
- “At school I was told I was seeing a Connexions worker but it was someone from CATE. She listened to me, I trusted her and told her everything I could but it took time and I was always scared they (the men) would find out.”

*Respondents felt that CATE offered a more consistent, informal, flexible, dedicated service. Some of the young people voiced a strong feeling that they were used by the Police and that the support from the Police was conditional on their co-operation with the investigation and subsequent prosecution. None of the respondents held this view of CATE.*

*It seemed very clear that the respondent’s perception of agencies was very much based on the nature of the relationship they had established with a particular worker. Their view of the Police role was mixed and possibly reflects the dual role of the Police i.e. protection of the victims and prosecution of the perpetrators.*

*The level of fear expressed by some of the respondents and their feeling that they were not protected from risk/threats during the investigation is concerning. In addition all of the girls were worried, to some degree, that they would get into trouble if they disclosed what was happening and this suggests two powerful disincentives to engaging with professionals.*

*Although two respondents were placed in a Secure Unit only one felt this had made a difference and neither endorsed this as an appropriate form of action for young people in their situation.*

- “Why should I be in a house full of criminals and self harmers? Why isn’t there a house for people like me - you get them away but with people like me”.

### **Current Situation/Outcomes**

- On a positive note, all respondents we spoke to reported that they currently felt safe. The majority felt that the Court case had been “scary” and “awful” with only three stating that they were happy or relieved about the outcome.
- All but one of the respondents had seen the Channel Four documentary and their emotional response to it serves to reinforce that they are a disparate group.

### **Analysis**

*It is encouraging to hear that all of the respondents currently feel safe. One commented that she has been able to see a difference in her community and believes that it is a good thing that people are more aware of CSE.*

*In terms of the Court Case all those involved found it to be a difficult experience and for more than half of them this was not mitigated by the conviction of the men involved. The fact that only a few of the respondents described themselves as “happy” about the outcome may suggest that respondents did not have a clear understanding of what the outcome might be when they entered into the process or that prosecution was not high on the agenda for them personally.*

*Most of the respondents felt that their access to services became less clear and consistent once they reached the age of eighteen and some were not aware how long they could continue to receive a service from their CATE worker.*

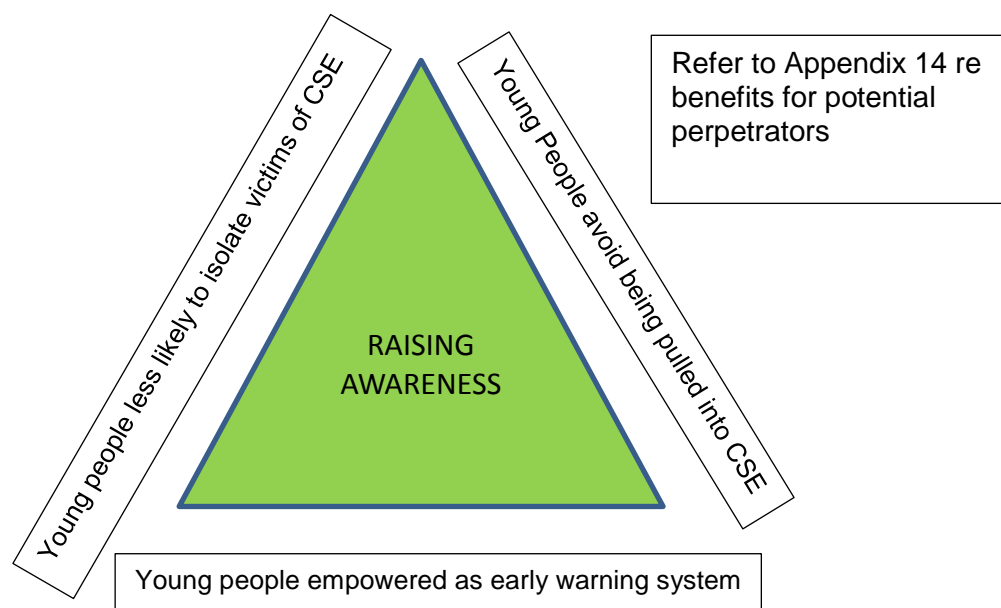
### **Summary**

All of the young people demonstrated some signs of trauma at the point of interview which suggests that the impact of this CSE experience is clearly not over for any of them. Of concern is that none of them reported that they were engaged in therapeutic services or receiving on-going support, other than through the CATE service. This leads us to question how these young people might be expected to successfully manage relationships and the parenting of their own children in the

future. It should be noted that neither of the young people who were parents were able to act as primary carers for their own children at the time of this Review.

The notion that potential victims of exploitation can be identified and therefore prevented from becoming part of an exploitative relationship appears to be flawed as within this Review there were few common factors that would give agencies the confidence that such identification was possible. There is a danger that a belief in the possibility of early identification could actually give a false sense of confidence with the result that respondents like Sofiel and Abdiel (see Appendix 10) could be completely overlooked.

This Review suggests that one reliable form of prevention is likely to be through the delivery of good quality sex and relationship education for young people of both genders. Clearly this needs to include issues around exploitation and clear access to services so that concerns can be reported and support elicited. Given that we are aware that children as young as eleven years old have been involved in exploitation it is important that this education is targeted at the right age group.



When discussing placements the two respondents that were placed in secure accommodation were clear that moving them away would have been more effective where there was therapeutic support, family contact, a clear plan with time-scales and access to education opportunities. In addition they objected to being labelled as “criminal” or “insane” and had felt that the main purpose of the placement was to “warehouse” or contain them for a period of time.

The consensus that agencies did not really understand how scary the situation was for the young people and their families needs to be addressed. Even those that identified good support from CATE and Police were still fearful of disclosing, suggesting the extreme level of power and control the men had over them. Agency support did not do enough to allay those concerns as over half reported that they felt

they were not protected from those risks/threats. This was exacerbated by their fear they would get into trouble if they disclosed. Whether these fears are real or simply perceived to be real by the victim is a moot point as the impact is the same: It makes disclosure more problematic for the victim and it further isolates the victim from agencies.

Whilst there is not a lot of research about the impact issues of CSE there is a wealth of learning regarding the impact of Sexual Abuse (Briere, Kendall, Finkelhor). We know that impact issues of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) are long term and that young people need on-going services that meet their developmental needs. Although there are differences between CSA and CSE there are also many similarities so it is logical to draw upon the research of one to inform the other.

Given that we know recovery from CSA can take many years it is important that services for young people recovering from CSE are afforded the same level of service. Some of the young people in this Review were not clear what services would be available to them either currently or in the future, particularly once they reach eighteen.

The fact that friends and family appear to be the first people to note concerns suggests that services which educate and support all young people, male and female, in both the identification and reporting of this form of abuse could be significant in preventative work. Support for siblings of young people involved in CSE would not only enable greater understanding and therefore potentially improve family relations but could serve to avoid recruitment of siblings into CSE, as we have seen with two of our respondents.

Although girls report feeling safe now there is a level of concern about what happens when the perpetrators are released and return to live in the community. "Hael" reported feeling anxious in her local community knowing that her abusers were released; "Lare" had just settled into her own accommodation but was very aware that the family of one of her abusers lived nearby.

## Summary of Parents' Responses

(See Appendix 11)

### Initial Awareness

- The data suggests that the first indicators of negative change in the young person's presentation were raised by Education and friends within an educational setting. Seventy five per cent of respondents stated that their child (ren) had been excluded from school. Over half were aware of problems at school and half reported that their child had been bullied at school. Subsequently two families reported that the males and females involved in exploitation would wait for and pick their children up from either outside the school or Connexions.
- There were significant concerns raised by all parents about their child going missing. Alcohol and drug misuse was not featured as a determining factor of concern. One parent identified that both her daughters had mobiles, money and alcohol provided and that they were being taken out in expensive, fast cars. One parent noticed her child would receive a phone call and then would "be gone".
- Half the families reported family relationship difficulties as a significant warning sign that something was of concern, with one parent highlighting relationship difficulties with her daughter as having existed prior to her child's sexual exploitation.
- Half of the respondents claimed they realised the problem was CSE, one citing the targeting of her second child as a factor for this recognition. The other half said they were unaware and did not understand what was happening until they received information from the Police or CATE. One parent was concerned that agencies had been aware of what was happening to her child for two years before information was shared with her.

### Analysis

*In respect of parents' understanding of what was happening to their child it appears that educational settings and friends within those settings were the first to recognise change in the presentation of the young person. The consensus was that education was an issue for their child with a subsequent awareness by some families that males and females were waiting outside an educational setting for their child. Attending education was not a protective factor. Therefore identifiable change in behaviours within an educational setting may be considered as a possible indicator of CSE.*

- "She began playing up at school. .... She started going out with other girls one local woman who was known as a prostitute with Asian men".

- “She was bullied and excluded on several occasions. Men and women would wait for her outside Connexions”.

*Half the parents raised concerns about their child going missing and the influence of mobile phones, money, alcohol and fast cars being a factor. Parents felt that they had no control over what was happening.*

- “Both girls would leave at any time night or day and we could do nothing to stop what was happening”.
- “She was constantly called to leave the house. An Asian male took her in an expensive car; he brought her gifts and gave her phones. She was under his influence because he gave her material goods”.

*The fact that half the families had more than one child involved in CSE indicated that in this Review siblings were introduced to the abusers by another sibling or friend, thus becoming part of the recruitment process. It was the involvement of a second child that raised parents’ concerns.*

- “Our concerns increased when our youngest daughter was involved with a gang of men who would come to the house”.

*Half the families reported problematic relationships with their daughters. One parent recognised that there had been difficulties prior to her daughter’s involvement with CSE.*

- ‘She was involved at about thirteen, she was always troublesome and we didn’t relate well anyway, our relationship was not great.’

*Only one parent felt their awareness increased with Police involvement and one parent when CATE were involved. No parents stated their initial awareness was increased by any information from school/ education establishment, rather their child’s education suffered as a consequence of CSE with exclusion from and bullying at school being a factor.*

*The consensus was that parents had little initial awareness of CSE. One parent became aware only when her second daughter became involved and only half the parents’ awareness increased when agencies became involved. An overall lack of initial awareness is evident and this did not significantly improve with agency involvement.*

## **Agency Involvement**

- Half the parents identified the Police as the easiest to secure help from.
- Individual workers from different agencies were identified as most helpful during this time when their child was involved in CSE (Police, Cate, Social Care). No parent identified Health as supportive and one parent identified Health as supportive only when her daughter became pregnant. Agencies as a whole did not feature as helpful, rather an individual worker who was

involved and built up a relationship with the family and these views of agency support were consistent throughout the process.

- Parents felt that Social Care support was not consistent. Consistency was apparent when a relationship with individual workers was established.
- Over half of the parents felt agencies blamed and held them responsible for what was happening. Only one parent felt agencies were not blaming them for what happened but blamed themselves.
- No parents identified Health or Education as agencies who listened.
- Only one parent identified that a worker from CATE had shared information with them appropriately whereas seventy five per cent of parents from this sample of CATE did not share information appropriately. There was a consensus that Police, Social Care, Health and Education did not share information appropriately.
- Seventy five per cent of parents felt that prosecution of the men involved took precedence over their child's needs. Only one parent felt prosecution was a positive decision.
- All parents felt that support was not enough and that it was needed much earlier. The consensus was that parents felt support should be on going. Half the parents felt that support they received was linked to securing a prosecution or to meet the needs of the agency rather than their child.
- No parent felt they would advise other parents to contact Social Care, Education or Health if they were aware of CSE as a problem. Those parents who would advise another parent about who to contact appears to be linked to experiences of individual workers from different agencies such as Police, CATE or PACE.

## Analysis

*It is clear from the respondents that a multi-agency approach to CSE was not evidenced. Families describe a sense of confusion and despair with the lack of agency responses to their situation and the consensus was that things did not improve with agency involvement, but only when an individual worker built up a relationship with the family.*

- “When we rang Social Care we had no support, when we reported our daughter missing the Police soon got fed up”.
- “There was no response even when I was crying and desperate”.

*All parents identified individual workers from different agencies, who developed relationships with the family, as the most helpful and consistent and these relationships, when consistent, were a positive support for parents engaged. Parents valued these relationships and trusted the individual workers.*

- “One social worker listened; when she left the support was bad”.
- “CATE, she was there twenty four hours a day/ night, but we felt agencies did not understand what was happening or how to stop the abuse”.

*Regardless of the relationship individual workers developed with parents, all but one respondent felt blamed by agencies. Parents expressed a sense of guilt because of the CSE and felt they should have known what was happening to their child. Parents felt disempowerment at the lack of support and information to help. This appears to have added to their feelings of self-blame.*

- “We both felt blamed and not listened to, we felt we must be awful parents”.

*One parent expressed strong feelings of self – blame and had expressed being pre occupied with coping to notice that what she felt was a lack of response being associated with blame from agencies.*

- “I felt some agencies looked down on me, but I blamed myself too much to notice, I felt responsible and to blame”.

*The majority of parents felt that information was not shared appropriately with only one worker from CATE sharing information appropriately. Evidence suggests that the parents did not feel that agencies were willing to share information but when information was shared, it was not always consistent.*

- “The Police did not inform us about what was happening at the initial stages of the investigation”.
- “Things changed when our daughter was involved with CATE; we were involved in information sharing to a point”.

*Over half the parents felt that a prosecution took precedence over their child’s needs. There was a consensus that the support offered was not focused on child protection but on securing a prosecution. The views of the majority was that they as parents felt used, or let down and that the end did not necessarily justify the means. One parent was concerned that her daughter had been a victim of CSE but her abusers were not prosecuted and that women involved in grooming the girls were not prosecuted. This evidence may reflect the dual role of the police, to protect and to prosecute. When prosecution did not take place the parent expressed frustration, disappointment and a feeling that their daughter had been used to collate information.*

- “Justice at the expense of my daughter”.
- “At times I felt a prosecution of the men would be a good thing for my daughter, now I feel it was a ‘con’ and that the girls were used and abused by the Local Authority”.

*All parents interviewed felt that support from agencies was not enough, or inappropriate. In addition to experiences of support being poor or non-existent, families stated that they had needs for services much earlier in the process and for these to be on-going, post prosecution and/or beyond their children reaching eighteen years of age. Respondents felt that any support provided was either driven*

*by a focus on the criminal prosecution or to meet agency needs The majority of parents felt agencies lacked understanding of the effect of abuse and the process of prosecution on their child. Parents had been proactive in seeking out support for their child, one having to trawl the county for appropriate supports. No parents identified supports for themselves or siblings and expressed feelings of isolation and lack of agency understanding and support.*

- “I felt there was no emotional support and I felt I was in it on my own”.
- “I didn’t have enough support; school didn’t want to know they just wanted her out and just complained about her behaviour”.

*There was no unequivocal report from families concerning their attitude towards prosecution of the perpetrators except in noting that they believed the prosecution took precedence over the needs of the young people involved. Parents’ reports indicate that there was no single agency, whether from Health, Education, Social Care or the Police, which was consistently helpful or supportive. Whilst half of respondents cited the Police as being the most responsive to their concerns, this did not always translate into actions that were perceived as helpful for them. One parent had found CATE easy to approach for help but this was not universally the case for all families. Where families did identify positive experiences of help and support this was attributable to named individuals rather than the particular agency they worked for. Within these relationships they felt they were listened to by the professional, regardless of the agency. There were examples of good professional support across all agencies but no single agency emerged as consistently supportive of parents. Health and Education services were cited as being the least helpful by the majority of respondents.*

- “The counsellor did not understand what was happening and became upset at what she was hearing”.
- “They (agencies) talked about support when she was involved with Chalice and Court but it was too little too late”.

*One parent felt support was dependent on who you knew and a matter of luck. Parents did not have a consensus of who they would advise another parent to go to if they were concerned about CSE, this was dependent on the experience the parents had with agencies and based on individual relationships that had formed. Single votes were given for the Police, CATE and PACE alone, with no reference to Social Services, Health or Education.*

- ‘The police but not social care’.
- ‘Cate, they were always there for us and understood the problem’.

## Impact on Family

- All families reported and evidenced impact issues and how these had affected relationships in the family and their child.
- The behaviours parents found the most difficult to manage included children going missing, threats from the perpetrators as well as coping with the mental health and emotional difficulties experienced by their children.
- Issues relating to school exclusion or drug and alcohol use were not quoted by parents as problematic as those behaviours cited above.
- Respondents noted a marked difference in their daughters' behaviours.
- None of the parents said that the risks to them or their children were sufficiently managed, with half saying risks not managed well and fifty per cent saying they were not managed at all.
- They all reflected that agencies did not appear to understand or accept the dangers and risks they and their children were exposed to.
- In addition to this lack of understanding, the majority felt agencies failed to provide adequate protection for the victims and did not fully appreciate the mental health needs of the young people and their families.
- Parents identified that what would have made a difference in terms of their experiences would have been: the sharing of information, honesty, not leaving children at risk, believing parents and acting on information.

## Analysis

*A range of impact issues and presenting behaviours were highlighted by the parents.*

- "She was going missing, excluded from school, bullied".
- "Her education has been affected and her prospects limited".
- "They were moody, challenging, aggressive and secretive".
- "Her moods were unpredictable, all over the place and challenging she was shut off from us emotionally".

*The risks that parents felt their daughters and they were exposed to included direct threats to their home, family and child involved in CSE.*

- "They (Police) did not take us or the risks seriously until she was discovered in Birmingham with a group of Asian men who were suspected of sexually exploiting young girls".
- "I was under threat of the house being fire bombed and we were threatened by the men involved".
- "She (daughter) was freaked out because they (perpetrators) were still in the area".

*All the parents struggled to manage these behaviours and risks with varying degrees of success. They talked about a lack of knowledge/understanding about the process of what was taking place. To the parents the threats were real; however parents felt that agencies did not always take the threats seriously.*

- “They were self-harming, shaving hair, using alcohol and drugs. They would rant and rave at me. When I tried to stop them leaving the house this made things worse”.

*The situation was exacerbated by their perception of the support offered by professionals and what parents perceived as a lack of information about the process of CSE and the impact issues.*

- “Her experience of counselling wasn’t positive; she didn’t understand and became upset by what she heard” .
- “Agencies did not seem to understand the dangers and risks the girls and we as a family were under and the police didn’t understand how this affected her emotionally”.

*Evidence from this Review suggests that while CSA and CSE have some common impact issues for victims and their families, it is also evident that there are differences due to the very nature of CSE. Children who are victims of CSE may be exploited and abused by a number of perpetrators, they may leave the home at any time night or day, the victims may be subjected to high levels of intimidation and be collected from what most feel is a safe environment i.e. school or home. Victims of CSE had their relationships and any protective factors destroyed rendering them vulnerable to the demands of the perpetrators. The impact on children and their families evidences the malevolent and traumatic nature of CSE. This Review evidenced that children subjected to CSE display some common factors and warning signs :*

- *Missing from home*
- *Absent from school/exclusions from school*
- *Estranged from family*
- *Gifts from unknown sources*
- *Older ‘boyfriend’*
- *Self- harm/mental health issues*

*Parents expressed frustration at the lack of appropriate and focused therapeutic support, alongside a feeling of not being heard. Parents describe a sense of loss and desperation, a sense of being overwhelmed by events that the professionals they sought help from appeared at times unable to offer timely and appropriate services to keep their child safe, to minimize further risks and to support them therapeutically. The individual relationships workers developed were valued by families.*

## Summary

It is clear that the parents involved with this Review have positively engaged with individual workers who have persevered and offered support and information. The impact issues and presenting behaviours were not identified by agencies as early warning signs and symptoms during the initial stages of a child being involved with CSE, behaviours were dealt with as a problem rather than a cause.

The Review highlighted that educational settings were the first to notice or be informed of warning signs and concerns, therefore it is important to involve agencies other than the Police and Social Care in identifying victims, particularly when concerns are also raised by parents.

This Review highlighted that parents can be informative and knowledgeable about the warning signs and symptoms. The Review evidenced that children did not necessarily have pre-existing vulnerabilities to be at risk of being sexually exploited. Siblings were at risk of being groomed by perpetrators of a sibling already being sexually exploited.

Evidence of individual supportive professional relationships have been cited by parents as invaluable. Sharing information with parents and with other agencies may further protect children from sexual exploitation. Parents would have valued a timely and multi-agency response to their concerns.

It was also clear that parents experienced a lack of agency understanding and clarity about the risks they and their child were exposed to. Support and involvement was felt to be limited and at times perceived as linked to the possibility of prosecution rather than protection. Parents generally felt that information was not shared appropriately leaving them feeling isolated and vulnerable.

All parents demonstrated a level of unmet therapeutic need and a perceived lack of multi-agency responses to their daughters' situation and to their concerns as parents. This suggests that agencies were not able to offer an on-going multi agency response to CSE.

The Review suggests that the nature of CSE and the presenting reactive behaviours rendered agencies unable to identify and respond in a timely manner to safeguard children and to offer on-going appropriate therapeutic support.

Parents were evidently dealing with circumstances that were frightening and of serious safeguarding concern; the involvement of agencies did not always improve the situation, nor minimize the level of risk.

## Staff

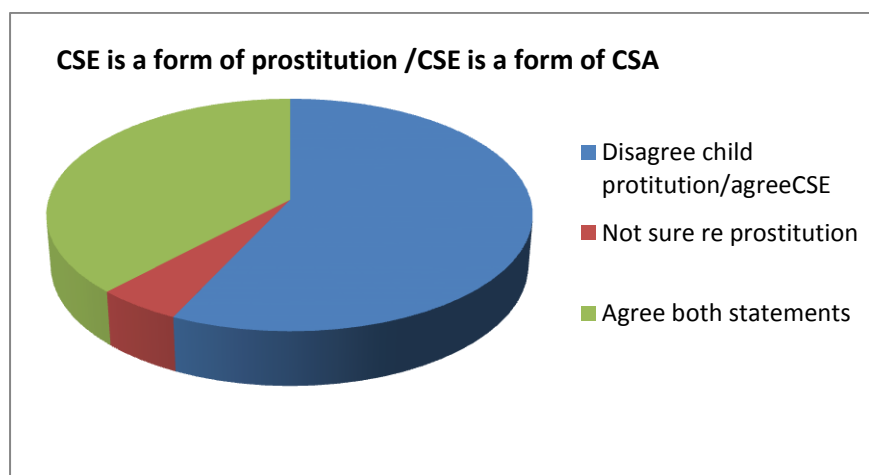
### Questionnaire 1

(Please refer to Appendix 12 & 13)

There was some consensus in the answers and sound knowledge of basic issues relating to CSE e.g. seventy three per cent disagreed with the statement “CSE impacts mainly on white British females” and ninety six per cent disagreed with the statement “Young people over the age of eighteen are not the victims of sexual exploitation – they just make poor choices”.

Given that these were people who had been directly involved with victims of CSE there were some more surprising responses. For example thirty five per cent agreed with the statement “CSE is a form of prostitution”.

When this was correlated with the responses to the statement “CSE is a form of child abuse” the results were that fifty seven per cent agreed CSE was a form of child abuse but disagreed that it was a form of prostitution. Thirty eight per cent however agreed with both statements suggesting at least a radical difference in the use of language/ terminology if not how CSE is perceived.



Similarly thirty two per cent agreed that CSE is a form of prostitution and that victims are reluctant to engage with services because they do not want to lose drugs, alcohol, material benefits that the man/men give them.

Fifty two per cent were either unsure or agreed that “Males involved in CSE are predominately Asian” whilst seventy three per cent were very clear that the males involved in CSE in Telford during this time period were predominately Asian.

### Analysis

*The questionnaire indicates that there is good local and national knowledge about CSE. There is a slight tendency for local experiences to be generalised nationally but this was not the majority of people. That said, some of the responses suggest that*

*even within this group there is room for further education regarding the use of language and processes of CSE.*

## **Questionnaire 2**

The majority stated that their level of knowledge and that of their colleagues had increased over time. Fifty per cent felt they had a “poor” knowledge of CSE during the time period specified compared to four per cent currently. In terms of their colleagues they felt fifty four per cent had “poor” knowledge then compared to four per cent now. A similar trend was reported for managers also.

Generally there was less consensus in responses based on personal experiences. In terms of training fifty four per cent rated the training they had received regarding CSE as “poor”, twenty five per cent felt it was “average” and only twenty one per cent rated it as “good”.

The support offered to staff also varied with thirty five per cent rating it as poor, thirty nine per cent as average and twenty six per cent as good. The support offered appears to correlate to some extent with training as thirty per cent reported they had received both poor support and training during this period whereas only nine per cent reported receiving good support and good training.

Responses regarding levels of supervision were shared across the three responses with twenty one per cent reporting poor levels of supervision, forty two per cent average and thirty seven per cent good. No one who reported receiving good support reported poor supervision and this comprised thirty nine per cent of the sample.

Ninety one per cent reported that multiagency working regarding CSE was average or good (forty eight per cent average, forty three per cent good) with only nine per cent feeling it was poor. When this was correlated with communication with other agencies thirty per cent reported that it was good on both counts; eleven per cent felt both were poor.

When asked about feedback regarding outcomes for those involved in CSE forty six per cent rated the feedback as average and thirty seven per cent felt it was poor. Only seventeen per cent had experienced good feedback. There does not appear to be a good correlation between communication between agencies and feedback on outcomes.

## **Analysis**

*Staff felt generally that the level of awareness and knowledge about CSE had improved since 2008. They also felt that colleagues and managers had also developed knowledge during this time.*

*As regards training we wondered whether the responses suggested a lack of training that would have made sense given that CSE was a relatively new subject. However the fact that twenty one per cent rated it as “good” perhaps suggests that the issue is around availability or application for different agencies.*

*Poor support and training were featured although it should be noted that for some staff their experience was very positive. In addition multiagency working appears to have been successful but does not appear to have extended to the feedback regarding outcomes that might continue to motivate staff and assist them in supporting victims and their families.*

## **The Staff Group Forum**

### **Attitudes**

- Initially professionals across all agencies expressed an element of disbelief when the individual stories began to unfold and they were very much caught up in looking for evidence and proof of abuse through Sexual Exploitation. The response from managers and some agencies was simply “Where is your evidence this is happening?”
- The individual experiences of workers affected how they responded – some of those with experience of working with domestic abuse understood better the insidious processes of ‘grooming’ in CSE involving the psychological/emotional undermining of partners in intimate relationships.
- Personnel in agencies – There were different levels of understanding and many different approaches to address problems. Agencies did not feel they have or were able to take a longer term view to specific risks involved when young people are caught up in processes of CSE.
- There was a recognition that the systems in place at the time e.g. Child Protection systems were not necessarily appropriate or flexible enough to be particularly helpful in cases of CSE.
- Initially there was a lot of intelligence available around CSE but there was also uncertainty regarding recording. Agencies, including Social Care, did not really know what to do with the information they had. It was felt that there was a lack of understanding about the scale of the problem initially and that this is probably still the case today in that agencies suspected there was more CSE happening than they were aware of.
- There was a lack of appropriate processes and mapping of concerns initially and there is still a lack of processing and mapping where problems are. There was a strong feeling that the problem is much bigger even in Telford & Wrekin where systems have been developed.
- Issues were raised regarding recording where Asian men were suspected as perpetrators. Staff felt they had to question recording because of the need to be seen to be politically correct and to avoid accusations of being racist.
- Generally a feeling was expressed that the victims of CSE were made to ‘fit’ existing systems rather than developing more relevant support systems to

engage and protect. Investigations did not take into account the appropriate pace for young people and investigations/help were constrained by current systems and available resources.

- The staff group we spoke to were aware of the particular difficulties in working with these issues. For example, they talked about the perpetrators being hidden: the victims were relied on to provide information and intelligence but often lacked knowledge about the names of abusers, the place and locations it took place. Victims often only knew people by nicknames and abuse occurred at many different locations out of the Telford area.
- The notion of victims “fitting in” was clear in relation to placements. It was felt that there was a lack of specialist understanding about the housing needs of these young people in order to keep them safe. If young people were placed in hotels or refuges they were not safe and placed other residents at risk of exploitation. The lack of recognition that young people’s behaviours as a result of CSE are both difficult and challenging also had a direct impact on foster placements in that foster carers were not trained in what to expect or how to cope. This resulted in many moves of placements for the young victims, further promoting their vulnerability and isolation from appropriate support. A strong feeling was expressed that there is a need for specialist well trained foster families to better support these young people.
- Agencies acknowledged how difficult it was to work with the young people involved because of their behaviour, unwillingness to engage and their own lack of understanding what to do about situations.
- There was a good understanding about the impact of CSE on families, the feelings of blame parents experience and it was acknowledged that families were not always appropriately supported by professionals.
- The age of the victim had a clear impact on the professionals’ notion of risk but those in the Staff Forum were clear that young women aged sixteen to seventeen were still “children”, were still highly vulnerable and that resources based on chronological age were unhelpful for this service user group. This was linked to the fact that the Forum members were aware that for some professionals there had been an understanding that these young girls were making choices based around their own promiscuity and desire for drugs/alcohol. They felt that there had been some notion of consent and that some professionals lost sight of the fact that the victims were children.
- Staff reflected that more recently there have been considerable moves in local responses. They reflected that nationally changes were happening in response to high profile enquiries that brought pressure to agencies to change working practices. There was some frustration created amongst some of the agencies by these moves around the lack of common knowledge/experience.
- CATE was identified as an agency that had promoted multiagency working, good practice and information sharing.

- In spite of the “considerable moves” it was felt that the reorganisation of services within local Social Care has affected ways of working and the way help is provided to victims of CSE. Staff feared a potential loss of local working arrangements/networking due to changes in the way services are now organised, staff redundancies and movement across teams. There was a feeling that the restructure of children’s services has broken up good networking and not yet been able to restore these to previous good levels. Those fears were evidenced to some extent by the fact that staff went on to say that there was a lack of information about where to go with concerns now and who they should contact/make referrals to regarding CSE. They all acknowledged the need for multiagency working and sharing of knowledge but needed to be clear about the lead agency.
- Strong feelings were expressed about the way young people were treated by the Law and Legal Agencies – CPS Solicitors/Barristers for the Defence. Forum members, including strong representation from the Police, described the legal system to be “scandalous” and felt outrage towards systems which put young people through hours of questioning where their characters are assassinated and they are accused of lying.
- In terms of criminal justice some frustration was expressed when victims of CSE become involved themselves in the Youth Justice system and allowances were not made for the trauma they have experienced or their status as victims of abuse.
- The Forum felt that there was a need for earlier intervention – preventative proactive services for educating young people, their parents and carers, teachers etc. about the risks of CSE.
- The Forum felt that there was a need for an improved/increase in Youth Services that had a good racial mix of males and females, to offer guidance and awareness support. Youth services were seen as more able to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to getting appropriate messages/information across to young people in ways that are relevant and not seen to be punitive, critical (of youth) or patronising. Such a response may help address potential perpetrators at an earlier age and so stop the cycle of abuse that appears to have developed.
- It was felt that there is also a need to address racial tensions/stereotypes within the local communities e.g. “CSE only involves males of Asian origin”, “white girls are slags – up for it, asking for it”. The point was made that the Youth Service and whole society response requires local communities’ involvement.
- Throughout the Forum there was very little mention of male victims, the scale of problem for males or services in place to meet need. The feeling/ attitude towards male victims appeared to be different, especially where young males have made relationships with young girls and this is exploited by older males in the community. There was some confusion as to whether these young men

were perpetrators or victims themselves but generally it was accepted that they are assumed to be perpetrators.

## **Knowledge**

- Staff reported that the availability of training specific to CSE was limited. All staff had received Child Protection training but only some had attended the CSE training offered by the Local Authority. Some professionals talked about accessing other materials to increase their knowledge.
- Generally staff felt that supervision was not good enough and they linked this to the skill, knowledge and awareness of their managers. Some pointed out that whilst it was mandatory for them to go on training e.g. CSE this was not the case for their managers and as such they felt their managers were not equipped to support staff adequately.
- Staff identified the need for more preventative work and more resources to be available such as therapeutic work for young people their families and siblings.
- In the beginning staff had wanted systems/pathways in place to assist them. All of Children's Services Staff were now aware of the CATE pathway but adult services less so. Given the ages of some of the young people involved in CSE this is an omission.
- Apart from workers in the CATE project no specific tools for working with CSE were identified but the staff group identified CATE and strategy meetings as useful.
- The Forum demonstrated a good understanding of the complexity of CSE in terms of the grooming process and the need for a different response to the child protection procedures. They felt that the scale of problem was bigger than they were currently aware of.

## **Roles**

- There was a good range of different roles and agencies represented at the Forum.
- There was a consensus that prior to CATE multiagency working had been more difficult but that when the Police came on board and CATE was established (2008) the situation improved.
- Staff raised issues about what the Court system understands about CSE and they queried what training Magistrates and Judges have received around CSE.
- Staff felt that Police holding CSE cases in PPU presented as problematic as they hold and co-ordinate information but are not then responsible for

investigation. This can create issues in communication, consistency and ownership between agencies.

- In terms of meeting therapeutic needs it was acknowledged that the CAMHS policy of closing if first appointment is not attended is unhelpful when working with the chaotic lives of some of the victims of CSE.
- The Local Authority Intranet could be better used to update information about resources, training and the CATE Pathway.
- There was grave concern expressed about the transition between teams, particularly as young people leave care. The Forum felt that the current system does not appear to reflect the vulnerability and special needs of this group of young people and “*young people drop off the radar*”. It was felt that there would be difficulties in Adult Services taking on CSE issues due to access to mental health and therapy services.
- Issues about recording and the accessibility for other teams and agencies.
- The Forum felt that there was not access to specialist counselling that was flexible enough to engage the victims and their families.
- Professionals reflected that some of the networks in place are informal which raised the issue of whether they could be retained as staff move and change roles. In short, how will Telford retain the expertise regarding CSE as their staff group changes over time if they invest in only a small number of staff?
- Concerns were expressed that in the current climate the need to save and to make money sometimes supersedes the needs of the young person.
- The need for preventative services that engage individuals, families and communities was raised again.
- Finally, there was general agreement that there was evidence of learning from 2006 and that there have been good developments in practice that have improved communication and interagency working.

## **Impact**

- The Staff Forum had a very good understanding about some of the impact issues both for the young person and their families
- The emotional impact of working with CSE for staff ranged from disbelief to frustration and anger. There was also some level of fear related to personal safety because of the reactions of perpetrators.
- Factors that exacerbated the impact such as long working hours, caseloads, poor communication and poor supervision were also mentioned.

- The majority did not feel there were sufficient resources at the time to assist them and gave examples of the lack of a dedicated manager for CSE, a lack of “joined up thinking” and the closure of services that had been helpful e.g. RISQ.
- Similar issues were raised about supervision and peer support was seen as being helpful.
- Although it was felt that the situation had improved the Forum did not feel that there was a “robust” understanding of the risks for service users and staff. There was a feeling that some agencies were better protected than others and that staff were not given training about safety awareness to help them in high risk cases.
- In general staff felt that the referral process, strategy meetings and risk assessments had improved. Again they raised concerns about the lack of therapeutic support for victims, poor transitional arrangements to adult services, the need to improve support for families and siblings and the need to move to a preventative, rather than reactive response.

## **Analysis**

*It was interesting to note that responses in the group context differed from the individual responses given in the questionnaire. For example, in the individual questionnaires staff were fairly positive about their managers’ role and supervision but in the group setting this was clearly not the case and was something of an issue for most staff attending. This may suggest a flaw in the questionnaires or simply that individuals feel more confident when supported in their views by peers.*

*The difference in responses may suggest that peer supervision and support in these matters is effective and may go some way to ameliorate any deficiencies within respective organisations.*

*The quality of supervision, knowledge of managers and support were all areas where improvements were suggested. The impact issues for staff were compounded by these factors and the lack of training. Although the phrase was not used in the Forum the danger of vicarious trauma when working with young people with such extreme histories of abuse is very real and has an immediate impact on staff health and professional practice.*

*Concerns were raised about the services for young people and their families in terms of therapy that was available and the type of resources that victims of CSE had access to. This was particularly raised in relation to accommodation and transition arrangements between teams and services.*

*The view of CATE was positive, although the recent restructuring had led to some confusion about referral routes and responsibilities. There was some discussion about the value of a co-located dedicated team comprising of the Police, Cate, Housing Department, Health Services, Education and Therapeutic Support but this debate was not resolved. Some felt that a dedicated service would meet the needs*

*of victims and their families better whilst others feared that this would deskill the wider workforce and stigmatise a young person seeking help if such a team was based in a police station. There was, however, a consensus that work in this area should focus on a proactive, rather than reactive response. There was also agreement that what works is a creative, flexible and sensitive response to the needs of young people involved in CSE.*

*Resource issues included lack of training, use of the intranet and access to information generally. There was also concern that knowledge, expertise and networks linked with various staff members had, or would be lost through the reorganisation. RISQ was highlighted as one organisation that agencies believed is no longer available and not everyone was clear how they now accessed advice regarding sexual health.*

## **Note**

During the contact with the young people and their families issues had been raised that we subsequently had the opportunity to put to some of the Police Officers who had been involved in Operation Chalice:

Was there a time that you believed the girls to be most at risk? Is so when?

- *When the Police were learning about CSE, at the start. The girls were at high risk and placed themselves at risk through their behaviour. When the Police got involved to address issues perpetrators became aware of police interest and so they think girls were then perhaps more at risk.*

What protection was offered to the girls and their families once the Police were involved?

- *The levels of protection varied for those involved in Operation Chalice and individual assessments of risk undertaken.*
- *Some things that were put in place included alarms/police response and the development of the STO's role. If a young person was living at home the police looked at what parents/families could do.*

Is there a difference in the level of protection/support that can be offered to a witness and a victim. If so what is the difference?

- *The Police looked at risk of both roles and assessed accordingly.*

Did the police have a main focus during the investigation?

- *The main focus for the Police was to bring offenders to justice and to understand the risk to victims.*

## Conclusion

This Review has highlighted the level of fear expressed by the young people at the time exploitation was taking place, their own anxiety about getting into trouble and feelings about the numbers of professionals involved. It has been humbling to reflect that, despite their experiences, young people and their families felt able and willing to take part in this process. For that we are extremely grateful.

From our contact with the young people, their parents and the staff group a number of common themes have emerged:

- Family relationship difficulties were identified once CSE became an issue.
- Parents and young people reported being unaware of what was happening until they received appropriate information from CATE or the Police.
- Young people and parents said that education suffered as a consequence of CSE with exclusion from and bullying at school being a factor for some.
- Neither young people nor parents felt that the support from Social Care was consistent or helpful.
- Parents and young people felt that agencies held them responsible for what was happening to a greater or lesser extent.
- Children and young people going missing seems to be behaviour noticed by both groups though not for all.
- All the groups felt that the Court case and a successful prosecution took precedence over the needs of the young people and their families.
- The experience that young people and parents have of helping agencies appears to have a direct impact on their willingness to signpost other families in trouble to resources or indeed to accessing such services for themselves in the future.
- The nature of individual relationships both for young people and parents was identified as significant rather than the role of particular agencies. This involved workers being needs led, flexible, sensitive and responsive as well as having some knowledge about the processes of CSE.
- In the main young people were more positive about the support they received than their parents were.
- For staff, training, supervision and support were highlighted as important factors for them to be able to function effectively.
- Information from parents and young people suggests a central role for Education in early identification of CSE.

Earlier in this report we referred to the similarities between CSE and CSA. However our discussions with young people, their families and staff have highlighted the additional issues relating to protective factors. For most victims of CSA some protective factors may be retained such as school and family/peer relationships. An apparent feature of CSE is the systematic destruction of any protective factors that may be available. We know that it is these protective factors that often reduce the impact issues of CSA. We are not suggesting that impact issues from CSA are not serious or long term. We wonder, however, whether the abusive experiences linked to CSE may be different because of this and is more comparable to CSA cases where intergenerational abuse or networking is evident.

In addition we also wondered whether young people who have been traumatised through exploitation are more vulnerable to exploitation in the future or to being used to groom/recruit other young people thus creating a cycle of abuse that was already suggested by some of the young people and their parents.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner states:

*“A focus on consequences rather than causes of CSE will never catch perpetrators or stop other children being sexually exploited”.*

The evidence from this Review, however, suggests that finding a causal link between communities and CSE is not straightforward and may give professionals a false sense of security eg: that all children involved in CSE are looked after or that all perpetrators of CSE are Asian males.

We would suggest that prevention is synonymous with causation and if this is the case education of young people and communities generally is the key to addressing this cause of abuse. We have learnt from young people and families that their priority lies not necessarily with the prosecution of perpetrators but rather with the safety of the children and young people involved. We should not forget that whilst the convictions related to Operation Chalice were a significant victory for WMP it nonetheless represents a small percentage of abusers involved in CSE within the area.

## **Next Steps?**

CATE has evolved and continued to evolve during the course of this Review. We are aware that some local developments have taken place prior to the completion of this Review but we have been careful to undertake the Review independent of those changes.

### **1) Nature of agencies involved and their remit**

It is clear from the young people we spoke to that individuals within agencies have needed to persevere in order to engage these girls once they are involved in CSE. In order therefore for workers to be able to be effective there needs to be a culture that supports a flexible and needs led approach. There has to be clarity in terms of professionals roles, responsibilities and length of involvement. It is noted that the

only representative from Health in the Review was from CAMHS whereas a true multiagency response to CSE would include significant input from all areas of Health agencies eg GPs, A&E, Sexual Health Services.

A note of caution is suggested in the fact that the Strategy meetings that staff felt were so helpful were often perceived as being confusing and too big by the young people and some families.

## **2) Education**

Education was highlighted as a central theme for both young people and parents in this Review. Given the amount of time young people spend in education settings it makes sense to introduce information regarding CSE to schools as an integral part of the PHSE programme. They have a key role in recognition and monitoring the safety and welfare of young people eg understanding the significance and reporting the level of unauthorised absences, truancy etc.

In the Staff Forum training and awareness was also an issue and these were professionals who already had experience of CSE. Although we acknowledge that Telford & Wrekin is more advanced than some other local authorities in terms of CSE training perhaps this suggests that the training programme needs to be revised, reviewed or made more widely available.

## **3) Work with families and siblings**

Although Telford & Wrekin invested resources in the protection of young people involved in CSE there is no evidence to suggest that the same level of support was offered to families or siblings. Whilst we understand that this situation is mirrored nationally we have already suggested that it is pragmatic to involve families both because of their role as an early warning system and as a protective factor for other siblings.

We are aware of national organisations offering support and advice to families in these circumstances. It would make sense to learn from their experiences when considering how to best engage and support families in the future. Some consideration could also be given to involving families in training for staff and young people in order to raise awareness of CSE.

## **4) Work with communities**

What was missing from our Review of the Telford experience is information regarding the perpetrators and the communities in which they live and work. This was not an area that we felt able to complete satisfactorily within the timescales available. Telford & Wrekin are aware of the need to seek the views of local communities and that this is an outstanding piece of work.

The current media coverage of CSE has raised awareness in communities and at least one of the young people interviewed felt this had made her community safer. It is important that programmes to raise awareness are consistent and not based around court cases that tend to sensationalise and dramatise the experiences of

victims. Therefore there is a role for the Local Authority in ensuring that accurate messages around the awareness of CSE and reporting of concerns are received and understood across the borough.

## **5) Therapeutic Support**

There is a discussion to be had about the definition of “therapeutic support” as being distinct and separate to the support offered by CATE. There is no debate about the impact issues relating to CSE and the ensuing long term damage that can be caused. Each young person’s experience is different and therefore as well as access to the professional relationships we have outlined earlier there also needs to be access to more specialist therapeutic support as and when it is needed. This is also relevant for the families and siblings of young people who have reported that they have not benefitted from this type of support previously.

## **6) Post 18 Support**

The focus of support thus far has been centred within Children’s Services i.e for young people up to the age of eighteen years (unless Looked After). As already stated therapeutic and practical support should be made available as and when it is needed. There is a need for resources that are not ring fenced to chronological age but reflect the on going impact of CSE and the fact that young people may need access to it at different points in their lives.

There is a concern that young people over the age of eighteen years may only become known and therefore receive a service from the local authority once they become pregnant, develop mental health issues or become involved in criminal behaviour. On-going services may go some way to preventing this from happening.

## **7) Staff Support**

It was evident that some professionals were not equipped to deal with the information victims shared. This may be an issue of training and education around issues of CSE and identifying services that are appropriate, timely and on going. The impact of vicarious trauma on staff should not be underestimated nor should the potential risk of threats from perpetrators if we want professionals to work effectively.

One suggestion could be the creation of a Forum of front line staff who meet on a regular basis to give feedback that could inform strategic thinking at higher levels within the organisation.

Within the Staff Forum there was a debate about the value of the creation of a co-located specialist team dedicated to CSE. This is a debate that may continue but within this Review we were very interested by the difference between individual responses and those of a group. This has led us to consider whether a way forward would be to create multi-agency virtual teams around particular schools or communities etc where CSE is identified. These virtual teams could offer group support, peer supervision, improved communication and liaison for the life of the investigation/ support of the victims involved.

## 8) Communication

Our experiences in trying to access accurate information regarding the victims of CSE, their families and relevant staff in Telford & Wrekin leads us to suggest that there needs to be different methods of recording and sharing information across agencies and Local Authorities so as to best identify abusers and protect victims. We know that one of the problems regarding CSE is that victims are trafficked within the UK and therefore do not necessarily stay within the boundaries of their Local Authorities. The Police are very skilled at sharing information across police services but this does not appear to be replicated between Children's Services.

A National Database that could store data about victims and intelligence about abusers could be helpful in increasing professionals' awareness about the scale of the problem, the networks that are being used and to follow victims as they are moved around the country.

To conclude, Telford & Wrekin is to be commended for the work it has undertaken in order to protect young people from CSE. In this Review it has become clear that the focus was on the 'rescue' of the young women involved and that knowledge and resources evolved very quickly from 2006. A specialist team was created, systems were put into place and multi-agency working was encouraged as part of that rescue process.

The suggestions made in this Review point to the next step in the process around the 'recovery' not only of young people and their families but also of the communities affected by this form of abuse. In terms of prevention, the promotion of healthy communities with adults, children and young people who are educated to recognise exploitative behaviour will be key. This needs to lead to clear lines of communication where concerns can be reported and routes to appropriate services provided. The above aims should help to reduce the level of vulnerability of young people within our communities.

**NewStart Networks cic**  
**Office 35, The Rural Enterprise Centre**  
**Battlefield Enterprise Park**  
**Stafford Drive**  
**Shrewsbury SY1 3FE**  
**Tel: 01743 453515**  
**Fax: 01743 453516**  
[info@newstartnetworks.co.uk](mailto:info@newstartnetworks.co.uk)

## References

- Barnardos (2011 Puppet on a String)
- [https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&ved=0CD4QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnardos.org.uk%2Fwhat\\_we\\_do%2Four\\_projects%2Fsexual\\_exploitation.htm&ei=HA9xUpbdKKml7AbxiYCwBw&usq=AFQjCNGl1B-2Jh1HoKIVZ1hUu2bTVWC04A&bvm=bv.55617003,d.ZGU](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&ved=0CD4QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnardos.org.uk%2Fwhat_we_do%2Four_projects%2Fsexual_exploitation.htm&ei=HA9xUpbdKKml7AbxiYCwBw&usq=AFQjCNGl1B-2Jh1HoKIVZ1hUu2bTVWC04A&bvm=bv.55617003,d.ZGU)
- Briere, J. Elliot, D. Immediate and long-term impacts of Child Sexual Abuse The Future of children. Vol. 4, No. 2, Sexual Abuse of Children (Summer - Autumn, 1994), pp. 54-69  
Published by: Princeton University
- Briere, J. (1996). Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC) Professional\_Manual. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- CEOP (2011) Out of Mind, Out of Sight
- Department for Education (July 2012) Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan
- Finkelhor, D. (1986) A sourcebook on child sexual abuse. Sage Pub Ltd London
- Kendall-Tackett, Kathleen A., Williams, Linda M.; Finkelhor, David
- Impact of sexual abuse on children: A review and synthesis of recent empirical studies.
- Psychological Bulletin, Vol 113(1), Jan 1993, 164-180
- OCC (November 2012) Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups (CSEGG)
- Rochdale Borough SCB (2013) Review of Multi Agency Responses to the Sexual Exploitation of Children
- University of Bedfordshire (Oct 2011) What's Going On
- Working Together (2009) Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation

## Appendices

1. Glossary
2. Personnel - NewStart
3. Time line
4. Interview format - young people
5. Letter YP/Families
6. Participants Information YP/Families
7. Interview format - families
8. Questionnaires 1 & 2 - staff
9. Questions used in staff forum
10. Table re Young people responses
11. Table re parents' responses
12. Collated responses to staff questionnaires
13. Correlation Tables in relation to staff questionnaires
14. Benefits for potential perpetrators triangle





## GLOSSARY

<b>CATE</b>	Children Abused through Exploitation (T&W)
<b>CSE</b>	Child sexual exploitation
<b>RISQ</b>	Sexual Health Service based in T&W
<b>CAMHS</b>	Children and Adult Mental Health Service
<b>NSPCC</b>	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
<b>ISVA</b>	Intimate Sexual Violence Advisor
<b>AXIS</b>	Counselling Service, based in Shropshire
<b>PACE</b>	Parents Against Child Exploitation
<b>CARM</b>	Consultation and Research Meeting
<b>WMP</b>	West Mercia police
<b>LSCB</b>	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
<b>PPU</b>	Public Protection Unit



**Francesca Varutti, Practice Manager**

- CQSW 1987
- Applied Social Studies Bsc Hons 2.1
- Post Graduate Certificate Therapeutic work with Children

**Carol Harley, Children's Practitioner**

- Open University: Undergraduate Foundation Course 1992; Applied Social Studies: Pass
- Staffordshire University 1992/1994, BA 2.1 (Hons) Modern Studies
- Keele University: 1996/8 MA/ DIPSWA 1st (Hons)
- PQ NSPCC/ Leicester University, Therapeutic models 2003/4
- NSPCC/Birmingham University, Training for Trainers 2008
- NSPCC/University of Birmingham, LSCB Safeguarding Trainer Award , 2009: Leading Learning for Effective Safeguarding 20 Academic Credits at Postgraduate level

**Helen Torrington, Children's Practitioner**

- BA (Hons) Applied Social Sciences
- Diploma Social Work
- Post Graduate Certificate Therapeutic work with Children

**Dallas Shaw, Children's Practitioner**

- BA (Hons) Applied Social Sciences
- Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) 1989
- Practice Teacher Qualification and Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work Education 2001
- PQSW 2005

**Nicki Pitts, Office Manager**



## Time Line

**Late 1990's:** Growing awareness around CSE in Telford & Wrekin. Practitioners based in the clusters raising concerns that CSE needs addressing. Multi agency meetings held.

**2008:** CATE Project created. CATE practitioners recognised the complexities of CSE and the need for a multi- agency response. CATE practitioners passed information to WMP.

**2009:** Telford & Wrekin LSCB makes CSE a priority.

**2009 - 2012:** WMP run Operation "Chalice": The Investigation Into the Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Young People in Telford & Wrekin.

T&W focus on mainstreaming the response to CSE –  
*"Prevent / Protect / Prosecute"*

**2011:** LSCB in T&W consider whether criteria for a SCR has been met. Process concluded SCR would not be best way to review effectiveness of responses.

**2012:** Trial of men accused of CSE in T&W – June – December.

**2013:** Procedure for Safeguarding Children Abused Through Exploitation –new CATE pathway in Telford & Wrekin.

NewStart Networks commissioned by Telford & Wrekin to undertake a review of services encompassing young people, their families and the staff involved in CSE in Telford & Wrekin between 2008 and 2013.

National Commissioning and Contracting Training Conference.  
 Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board Annual Conference: *"Your Child My Child Any Child"*.



### Format for Interview with Young Person

The following questions relate to a time period between December 2008 and March 2013 during which time you came to the attention of agencies because of concerns about you being exploited in an abusive relationship.

- 1) How did other people become aware of what was happening to you?
- 2) What was your relationship with your family/at school/friends like before it started?
- 3) Had there been any other difficulties/problems that had brought you to the attention of agencies?
- 4) What were you doing at the time- school, college, job and how was this affected by what happened?
- 5) When you were at school were you given information about sex education and substance misuse?
- 6) How available was information about sexual health and contraceptives?
- 7) Why do you think it happened to you?
- 8) If you received help how did this happen, did it happen quickly enough and was it helpful?
- 9) Which person or agency was the most helpful to you during this time and why?
- 10) In your opinion was any support that was offered to you consistent?
- 11) Did you feel protected from any risks or threats made towards you and/or your family by the man/males involved?
- 12) Did you have any worries that you might get into trouble if you told the full story? What were the worries?
- 13) Who listened to you?
- 14) What behaviour might other people have seen at the time? For example, did you go missing, abscond from school, use drugs/alcohol, have injuries, catch STI's or have money/things in your possession that you could not account for. Did anyone pick up on this?
- 15) What was your experience of how agencies/professionals treated you?
- 16) What was your experience of any prosecution that was made against the man/men involved and how did you feel about it?
- 17) In your opinion what made a difference in terms of support/advice?
- 18) Do you feel safe?
- 19) If you felt at risk in the future or knew someone who you felt was in danger of being exploited then who, if anyone would you contact
- 20) Were you aware of the recent Channel 4 documentary about sexual exploitation in Telford? If so how did you feel about it and did it affect you in any way?

NewStart Networks CIC  
Office 35  
The Rural Enterprise Centre  
Stafford Drive  
Battlefield Enterprise Park  
Shrewsbury  
SY1 3FE  
Tel: 01743 453515  
Fax: 01743 453516

Dear YP/Family

We are writing to introduce ourselves and to ask if you would agree to taking part in a piece of work we have been asked to do for Telford & Wrekin Council who are looking at the support they offered to young people and families who were victims of sexual exploitation.

We understand that this might have affected you and would be grateful if you would read the information enclosed which explains who we are and exactly what this piece of work is about. If you were offered support by Telford & Wrekin Council and did not accept this we would still like to speak to you to find out why.

A member of staff from NewStart Networks will be in touch with you within the next 7 days to arrange a time to meet that suits you best. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ring us on 01743 453515.

Yours sincerely

Francesca Varutti  
Practice Manager  
NewStart Networks

Encs:  
Information to Participants  
Consent Form



## **Participation Information Sheet (Young People & Families):**

### **Section A: The consultation/research project**

#### **Who are NewStart Networks**

NewStart Networks is a Community Interest Company (CIC) that delivers specialist services for children and young people who are recovering from trauma. We do direct work with children and young people, on a one to one basis, work with their family/carers as required and also offer consultation and training packages.

#### **Title of Project**

Child Abuse through Sexual Exploitation (CATSE) Learning 2008-2013.

#### **Purpose and value of activity**

- 1) The overall aim is to look back on the experiences for all young people, families and professionals involved and to explore how and what Telford and Wrekin might do better in the future.
- 2) To assess the quality of the support offered to the young people, families and staff affected by CSE.
- 3) To what extent was the support offered accessible, available, timely and of the right kind.

#### **Invitation to participate**

We are inviting a number of young people, their families and staff who were involved in, or known to CATE (Child Abuse Through Exploitation) between December 2008 and March 2013 to take part in this Review.

If you have a particular difficulty in taking part in this Review then please let us know so that we can support you if possible.

### **Who is organising the consultation/research**

This Review has been commissioned by Telford & Wrekin Council but will be undertaken by an **independent** Community Interest Company, NewStart Networks. A Community Interest Company works for the benefit of the community rather than for private gain. NewStart Networks has no connection with the CATE project or Operation Challice.

### **What will happen to the results of the activity?**

The results of this work will be included in a Review Report which will be presented to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Telford and Wrekin Council Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and a National Conference. The Local Safeguarding Board is made up of all the organisations in Telford that work with children and young people. They make decisions about new policies and services in the area.

### **Source of funding for the consultation/research**

This Review is funded by Telford and Wrekin Council.

### **Contact for further information**

Francesca Varutti  
Independent Lead Facilitator  
NewStart Networks cic  
35 The Rural Enterprise Centre  
Stafford Drive  
Shrewsbury  
SY1 3FE

Tel: 01743 453515  
Mob: 07534 566556  
Fax: 01743 453516

## **Section B: Your participation in the consultation/research project**

### **Why you have been invited to take part**

You have been invited to take part in this Review due to your involvement with CATE during this time period.

### **Whether you can refuse to take part**

You can refuse to take part in this Review from the start of the process.

### **Whether you can withdraw at any time, and how**

You are free to withdraw from the Review at any time, for any reason and without prejudice. Just inform the Lead Facilitator, Francesca Varutti, or any of the other NewStart facilitators, namely, Dallas Shaw, Helen Torrington or Carol Harley.

You can tell us when we meet or by phone or complete the withdrawal application form on the back of your consent form. If you choose to withdraw verbally one of the facilitators will ask you to sign the withdrawal application form for us to keep with our records.

**What will happen if you agree to take part (brief description of procedures/tests/timescales)**

Interview 1 – Introductions, explain what will happen, answer any questions (approximately 1 hour).

Interview 2 – An interview about your experiences and opinion regarding CATE (approximately 1 hour).

The above interviews can take place at home or anywhere else where you feel comfortable.

In addition we will ask for your consent to view any files held by the Social Care Department. The reason for this is because we are also looking at the quality of any help given by the Local Authority to you and your family and whether that was consistent for different young people/families.

Your participation will be completely confidential and any information given will be anonymous.

Feedback concerning the outcomes of this Review will be offered by NewStart and can be in the form of a letter, telephone call or face to face meeting depending on your preference.

**What will happen if you do not agree to take part**

There will be no consequences if you do not agree to take part. However, it is hoped that what young people (and families) say in this Review will be helpful in improving existing or developing new and/or better services for children, young people and their families in the future.

**Whether there are any risks/disadvantages involved and if so, what will be done to ensure your well being/safety.**

Any information will remain confidential in the report and will only be shared with professionals involved in this field of work. None of the information shared will identify anyone to potential abusers or conflict with your right to privacy

It is understood that talking about incidents that have taken place in the past may have an effect on people by reminding them of what happened or something that was not addressed at the time. If this is the case then NewStart will direct you to the most appropriate service to provide support and we will help you in that process.

**Agreement to participate in this consultation/research should not compromise your legal rights should something do wrong.**

**Whether there are any special precautions you must take before, during or after taking part in the activity.**

NewStart and Telford and Wrekin Council will be extremely grateful to any young person or family who agrees to help us but our main concern is your health and safety. If you have any concerns before meeting with NewStart or feel that you are not in the right place to take part then we will be happy to talk with you about this and to support you in accessing some support.

**What will happen to any information/data/samples that are collected from you.**

The information will form the basis of a report that will be kept by Telford and Wrekin County Council. All information that NewStart receive in the course of our research will be destroyed once the report is accepted by the Local Authority.

**Whether there are any benefits from taking part.**

The main benefits are:

1. Your opinion and views, positive and negative, will be shared with a range of professionals who work with children and young people.
2. This information will be used to improve services that are offered to young people that are victims of sexual exploitation
3. As a result of your actions children and young people in the future may not suffer the same experiences you or your family have.

**How your participation in the project will be kept confidential.**

Any information about an individual and their family will be given a code as soon as they agree to take part and any further information will be stored using only that code. Any information that may identify a young person/family will be anonymised before being used in the report.

Whilst we take confidentiality very seriously if we were told something that meant a child or young person (under the age of 18 years) was at risk of harm then we would have to share that information in order to keep the young person safe. Whenever possible we would discuss this with you before doing anything.

All the information at NewStart is stored on a secure Cloud system so no information will be kept in our office that could be vulnerable to theft, fire etc.

**What will happen at the end of the consultation/research and how you will receive feedback.**

At the end of the consultation we will write a summary report using all the information received. You will be given a choice as to whether you want feedback regarding the findings and recommendations in the report before or after the Local Safeguarding Board Conference in July.

You will be given a choice whether you want feedback and in what form:

- Letter
- Telephone call
- Face to face meeting

**You will be given a copy of this to keep, together with a copy of your consent form.**

**NewStart Networks cic**  
**Office 35, The Rural Enterprise Centre**  
**Battlefield Enterprise Park**  
**Stafford Drive**  
**Shrewsbury SY1 3FE**  
**Tel: 01743 453515**  
**Fax: 01743 453516**  
[info@newstartnetworks.co.uk](mailto:info@newstartnetworks.co.uk)



## Family Format

The following questions relate to a time period between December 2008 and March 2013 during which time you came to the attention of agencies because of concerns about your daughter being exploited in an abusive relationship.

- 1) When did you first become concerned about your daughter and why?
- 2) What was your relationship like with her before the abuse began?
- 3) How easy was it for you to get help from professionals/agencies?
- 4) Who was the most helpful during this time and why was this helpful?
- 5) Was support consistent?
- 6) Did you understand what was happening and, if not, what happened to change your understanding?
- 7) Did you ever feel that professionals were holding you responsible for what happened or blaming you?
- 8) What are your thoughts and feelings about what happened? Did you ever feel responsible or blamed?
- 9) Who listened to you?
- 10) What were the most difficult behaviours to manage e.g. going missing, substance misuse, sexual behaviour
- 11) Were you worried about any threats to your daughter and the rest of the family from the perpetrators? How effectively do you feel that those risks were managed?
- 12) In your opinion was information shared with you appropriately? What could have been done to improve this?
- 13) In terms of support/advice what do you think made a difference to you and your family?
- 14) How did you feel about any decision to prosecute (or not prosecute) the man/men involved in the abuse?
- 15) Do you believe that you supported for long enough and could access further support now if you needed it?
- 16) If you became aware of a situation like this involving a family or friend what advice would you give them? Who would you advise them to contact?
- 17) If there were 2 parents involved were you of the same opinion and did you both agree with action taken?

## Questionnaire 1

The time period we are looking at is from December 2008 to March 2013

No	Question	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree
1.	CSE impacts mainly on white, British females			
2.	CSE impacts mainly on LAC			
3.	Males involved in CSE are predominately Asian			
4.	CSE is a form of prostitution			
5.	Victims are reluctant to engage with services because they do not want to lose drugs, alcohol, material benefits that the man/men give them			
6.	Males involved in CSE in Telford & Wrekin between 2008 and 2013 were predominately Asian			
7.	Disrupting the grooming behaviour is the key to addressing exploitation			
8.	Males are very rarely the victims of CSE			
9.	CSE is a form of child sexual abuse			
10.	CSE tends to occur in families where there are poor boundaries and inconsistent care			
11.	Young people over the age of 18 are not the victims of sexual exploitation – they just make poor choices			
12.	Statistics about CSE have been used by the Government to scare people and take attention away from other, important issues			
13.	The response given by Telford & Wrekin LSCB to this issue has been robust and effective			

## Questionnaire 2

No	Question	Poor	Average	Good
1.	Your knowledge about CSE before December 2008			
2.	Your knowledge about CSE now			
3.	Your colleagues' level of awareness and understanding then			
4.	Your colleagues' level of awareness and understanding now			
5.	Your Manager's level of awareness and understanding then			
6.	Your Manager's level of awareness and understanding now			
7.	The support offered to you during the time you were working with CSE during this time period			
8.	The supervision during this time period			
9.	The training offered			
10.	Multi-agency working in relation to CSE			
11.	Communication between agencies			
12.	Feedback regarding outcomes			
13.	Telford & Wrekin's response to the issue of CSE			

**Any other comments regarding your experience of the CATE process:- (please continue on reverse if necessary)**



## The Groups

### Attitude

Other reports and reviews about CSE have cited professionals' attitudes as a factor in the level of service and approach to young people and their families. In view of this:

1. What was the initial view of the young person/people involved in CSE

Personally

From your agency

From other agencies you worked with

2. Were you aware of any views that suggested the young person may simply have made a 'life choice' to behave in this way or was naturally promiscuous.
3. Did the young person's age effect how vulnerable they were perceived to be?
4. What was the view of the family regarding their ability to impose boundaries for the young person?  
Was there an element of blame?
5. If the young person was unwilling to engage how was this perceived by you, your agency and agencies you worked with?
6. What was the attitude towards the male perpetrators?



## **The Groups**

### **Knowledge**

1. When were you first made aware of child sexual exploitation and how?
2. What training have you received regarding CSE?
3. What tools have been made available and how helpful were they?
4. How did you determine that CSE was an issue and not some other form of child protection?
5. Were you aware of the different forms of grooming? Are you aware of them now?
6. Are you clear about the CATE pathway?  
Has this made a difference to the way in which CSE cases are dealt with?
7. Do you feel confident that professionals understand the scale of the problem in Telford and Wrekin and is it enough?
8. What would have liked to have known at the beginning of your work in this area that you did not?



## The Groups

### Role

1. What was your role in the process?
2. How multi-agency was the response to concerns and, if you were the referrer, how hard was it to get a response?
3. Did you feel part of a team?

Was communication good?

Was information shared appropriately?

Did you receive information about the outcome of any Court proceedings?

4. Was it clear who was leading the process? If so, who?
5. What could have made it better?



## The Groups

### Impact

1. What are the impact issues for :
  - a. -The young person
  - b. -The family
  - c. -The professionals involved
2. Were there sufficient resources to assist you through the process?
3. What level of support and supervision did you receive in order to be able to cope?
4. Was there a shared understanding about the potential risks to the young person, the family and professionals involved from males who may have made threats etc  
How was this managed?
5. Do you believe that the current system offers better support to young people, their families and professionals? Why/How?

<b>YOUNG PEOPLE'S RESPONSES</b>
---------------------------------

<b>Context</b>
----------------

How did other people become aware of what was happening to you?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Friend	*		*	*			
Family		*			*	*	
Agencies							
Community	*						

What was your relationship with your family like before it started?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Problematic	*		*	*	*		
Not Problematic		*				*	*

Had there been any other difficulties/problems that had brought you to the attention of agencies?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Yes	*			*	*		
No		*	*			*	*

What were you doing at the time?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Mainstream School			*	*		*	
Tuition	*	*			*		*

When you were at school were you given information about sex education/substance misuse?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
None						*	
Basic / Poor	*	*	*	*			*
Good					*		

Why do you think it happened to you?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Vulnerable	*	*		*			
Past history	*		*			*	
Peers			*			*	*
Environment		*		*			
Previous Family involvement					*	*	

What behaviour might other people have seen at the time?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Drugs / alcohol	*	*		*	*	*	
Absconding	*	*			*	*	*
Injury / illness	*	*			*		
Criminal behaviour						*	
Material possessions	*	*					
Isolation		*	*				*
Behaviour problems			*	*		*	

<b>Agency Involvement</b>
---------------------------

Which person / agency was the most helpful at the time?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
CATE		*	*	*		*	*
Police		*					
Social Worker							
CAMHS					*		
NSPCC	*						
ISVA				*			

Did you feel protected from any risks or threats made to you or your family?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Yes		*		*	*		
No	*		*			*	*

Did you have any worries you might get onto trouble if you told the full story?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Yes		*	*	*	*	*	*
No							
Some	*						

Who listened to you?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
NSPCC	*						
Everyone		*			*		
CATE			*	*		*	*
Police				*		*	
Carers				*			

In your opinion what made a difference in terms of support and advice?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Listened to / believed/ Support / Easy to access		*					
Secure Unit	*						
Nothing			*				*
Time / Informal approach				*			
Police /CAMHS					*		
Support offered to family						*	

<b>Current Situation/Outcomes</b>
-----------------------------------

<b>Do you feel safe?</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>K</b>
Yes	*	*	*	*		*	*
No							
Slightly safer					*		

<b>If you felt at risk in the future or knew someone who you felt was in danger of being exploited who, if anyone, would you contact?</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>K</b>
Police		*		*	*		
CATE		*	*			*	*
Social Worker							
NSPCC	*						
CAMHS					*		

<b>What was your experience of any prosecution that was made against the man / men involved?</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>K</b>
Don't know	*						
Scary / awful experience		*	*	*	*	*	*
Happy with outcome			*				*
Relief					*		

Were you aware of the recent Channel 4 documentary about CSE in Telford?	T	H	S	A	G	L	K
Yes	*	*	*	*	*		*
No						*	
Angry	*						
Upset / devastated			*	*			
Good response					*		
Disbelief re scale							*

<b>Initial Awareness</b>
--------------------------

<b>When did you first become concerned about your daughter and why?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K &amp; A mother</b>
Problems at school			*	*
School exclusion	*		*	*
Bullying at school			*	*
Going missing at odd hours night and day	*			*
Family relationship difficulties		*		*
Groomed into process by another woman	*		*	
Would get a phone call and would be gone	*			
Asian male buying gifts and phones, taking out in fast expensive car				*
Suspected alcohol and drug use.				*
Males and Females involved in exploitation would wait for girls outside school/connexions			*	*

<b>Did you understand what was happening and if not what happened to change your understanding?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K &amp; A mother</b>
Initially did not understand what was happening			*	*
Became aware when second daughter became involved		*		
Understanding improved when contacted by CATE				*
Issues explained by a police officer			*	

<b>Agency Involvement</b>
---------------------------

<b>How easy was it for you to get help from professionals /agencies?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
Police	NE	E	E*	NS
Social Care	NS	NE	NE	NS
Health			E*	NS
Education		NE	NS	NS
Cate		NE	NS	E
Other		NS		NS
E = easy NE = not easy NS= not supportive * = qualified				

<b>Who was the most helpful during this time and why was this helpful?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A Mother</b>
Police		MH	1PO	
Social Care	1SW	1SW*		
Health				
Education				
Cate				1 Worker
Other victim support/Counselling				Connexions

Was support consistent?	T Mother	L & S Mother	? mother	K&A mother
Police	No	Yes	1PO	
Social Care	No	No		
Health				
education		No		
Cate		No	no	Yes
Other		No		

Did you ever feel that agencies were holding you responsible for what happened or blaming you?	T Mother	L & S Mother	? mother	K&A mother
Police	Y	No*	Yes	Y
Social Care	Y	No*	"	Y
Health	Y		"	Y
Education	Y		"	Y
Cate			"	Y
Other				Y

Who listened to you?	T Mother	L & S Mother	? mother	K&A mother
Police		Police	1PO	
Social care	1SW	1SW		
Health				
Education				
Cate				! Worker
Other				Connexions

<b>In your opinion was information shared with you appropriately?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
Police	N	N*	N	N
Social Care	N	N*	N	N
Health				N
Education	N			N
Cate		N	N	Y*
Other				

<b>How did you feel about the any decision to prosecute (or not prosecute) the man /men involved in the abuse?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
Positive	• Qu			
Negative				
Thought prosecution took precedence over YP needs		*	*	*

<b>Do you believe you were supported for long enough and could access further support now if needed it?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
Not enough support	*	*	*	*
Support needed much earlier	*	*	*	*
Believe Support linked to prosecution/agency needs	*		*	
Support not ongoing	*	*	*	*

If you become aware of a situation like this involving a friend or family what advice would you give them / who would you advise them to contact?	T Mother	L & S Mother	? mother	K&A mother
Police	*			
Social Care				
Health				
Education				
Cate				*
Pace			*	
Other				

<b>Impact on Family</b>
-------------------------

<b>What are your thoughts and feelings about what happened?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
Parents felt blamed/responsible	*	*	*	*
Didn't feel listened to/felt disempowered	*		*	*
Anxiety when child missing very frightening	*		*	*
Agencies do not appear to understand the dangers and risks the girls and their families were exposed to.	*	*	*	*
Victim and family mental health needs not fully understood	*		*	*
Agencies failed to provide adequate protection for victims		*	*	*
Counselling services not provided or inadequate	*	*	*	*
Poor communication across agencies, lack of consistent response.		*	*	*
If appropriate services not available to help children overcome abuse/trauma this may render them more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.	*			
Believe convictions became the priority		*	*	*

<b><u>What were the most difficult behaviours to manage?</u></b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
Going missing	*	*		*
Alcohol/other Substance misuse		*		*
Threats from perpetrators	*		*	*
Mental Health and emotional difficulties of child		*	*	*
School exclusion				*

<b>How effectively do you feel that the risks were managed?</b>	<b>T Mother</b>	<b>L &amp; S Mother</b>	<b>? mother</b>	<b>K&amp;A mother</b>
well				
Not managed well			*	*
Not managed at all	*	*		

## Questionnaire 1- 23 responses

The time period we are looking at is from December 2008 to March 2013

No	Question	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree
1.	CSE impacts mainly on white, British females	17	2	4
2.	CSE impacts mainly on LAC	19	1	2
3.	Males involved in CSE are predominately Asian	11	5	7
4.	CSE is a form of prostitution	13	1	8
5.	Victims are reluctant to engage with services because they do not want to lose drugs, alcohol, material benefits that the man/men give them	11	3	9
6.	Males involved in CSE in Telford & Wrekin between 2008 and 2013 were predominately Asian	2	4	16
7.	Disrupting the grooming behaviour is the key to addressing exploitation	4	3	16
8.	Males are very rarely the victims of CSE	12	6	5
9.	CSE is a form of child sexual abuse			22
10.	CSE tends to occur in families where there are poor boundaries and inconsistent care	19	2	2
11.	Young people over the age of 18 are not the victims of sexual exploitation – they just make poor choices	22	1	0
12.	Statistics about CSE have been used by the Government to scare people and take attention away from other, important issues	20	3	0
13.	The response given by Telford & Wrekin LSCB to this issue has been robust and effective	4	11	6

## Questionnaire 2

No	Question	Poor	Average	Good
1.	Your knowledge about CSE before December 2008	12	8	4
2.	Your knowledge about CSE now	1	6	17
3.	Your colleagues' level of awareness and understanding then	13	8	2
4.	Your colleagues' level of awareness and understanding now	1	11	11
5.	Your Manager's level of awareness and understanding then	8	8	7
6.	Your Manager's level of awareness and understanding now	3	4	16
7.	The support offered to you during the time you were working with CSE during this time period	8	9	6
8.	The supervision during this time period	5	10	9
9.	The training offered	13	6	5
10.	Multi-agency working in relation to CSE	2	11	10
11.	Communication between agencies	7	7	9
12.	Feedback regarding outcomes	9	11	4
13.	Telford & Wrekin's response to the issue of CSE	2	13	7

**Any other comments regarding your experience of the CATE process:- (please continue on reverse if necessary)**

## Correlation Tables

1. Your knowledge about CSE before December 2008/ 2. Your knowledge about CSE now

	Q2		
Q1	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	4%	21%	25%
AVERAGE		4%	29%
GOOD			17%

3. Your colleagues' level of awareness and understanding then/ 4. Your colleagues' level of awareness and understanding now

	Q4		
Q3	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	4.5%	36%	18%
AVERAGE		9%	23%
GOOD			9%

5. Your Manager's level of awareness and understanding then/ 7. The support offered to you during the time you were working with CSE during this time period

	Q7		
Q 5	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	9%	14%	9%
AVERAGE	18%	4.5%	14%
GOOD	9%	18%	4.5%

7. The support offered to you during the time you were working with CSE during this time period/ 9. The training offered

	Q9		
Q7	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	30%		4%
AVERAGE	9%	22%	9%
GOOD	13%	4%	9%

7. The support offered to you during the time you were working with CSE during this time period/ 8. The supervision during this time period

	Q8		
Q7	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	13%	22%	
AVERAGE		22%	17%
GOOD	4%		22%

**10. Multi-agency working in relation to CSE/ 11. Communication between agencies**

	Q11		
Q10	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	11%		
AVERAGE	22%	17%	9%
GOOD		13%	30%

**11. Communication between agencies/12. Feedback regarding outcomes**

	Q12		
Q11	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
POOR	21%	8%	
AVERAGE	4%	25%	4%
GOOD	8%	13%	17%

**4. CSE is a form of prostitution/ 5. Victims are reluctant to engage with services because they do not want to lose drugs, alcohol, material benefits that the man/men give them**

	Q5		
Q4	DISAGREE	NOT SURE	AGREE
DISAGREE	45%	9%	4.5%
NOT SURE		4.5%	
AGREE	4.5%		32%

**4. CSE is a form of prostitution/ 9. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse**

	Q5		
Q4	DISAGREE	NOT SURE	AGREE
DISAGREE			57%
NOT SURE			5%
AGREE			38%

## Awareness Raising in Schools and the Community

For Potential Abusers

