



Department
for Education

Tackling child sexual exploitation action plan

Progress report – July 2012

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Ministerial foreword

Introduction by Tim Loughton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families



In January last year, Barnardo's published its report, *Puppet on a string: the urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation*. It called for a national action plan to tackle child sexual exploitation. My officials subsequently worked with other Government Departments and a wide range of national and local organisations to produce that plan which I published on 23 November 2011.

This horrific form of child abuse is blighting the lives of too many of our children and young people. There is now, however, greater awareness of this crime amongst parents, young people themselves and the people who work with them. While we rarely hear about those children who are protected and saved from sexual exploitation, it is encouraging to see – as we have done since the publication of the action plan – a number of perpetrators being brought to justice.

I said when I issued the action plan that I was determined that it would not be a document which was published, read and then forgotten. It was clear that the action plan could only be effective if actions in it were implemented and that would require concerted and joined-up effort at the national and local level.

This report shows encouraging progress by Government Departments, voluntary sector organisations nationally and locally, and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in implementing the action plan. Although I recognise that there is still much to be done, it is gratifying to see LSCBs rising to the challenge, acting to ensure that local organisations are working together to identify and tackle child sexual exploitation. Recent well reported police operations have highlighted some very effective joint working by the voluntary and community sector and statutory agencies.

In addition, the report highlights some important work being taken forward over and above the commitments in the action plan. One example is the joint work between the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and The Children's Society to develop a national *Say Something If You See Something* campaign, addressing the problem of hotels unwittingly being used as venues for the sexual exploitation of young people. Another example is the work that Safe and Sound in Derby and the BLAST project in Yorkshire are doing to raise awareness of sexual exploitation of boys and young men and to support male victims. I have also been approached by a number of people eager to set up voluntary groups to support victims and parents. It is clearly of immense importance that we do all that we can to ensure that good practice, advice and guidance are circulated and shared across the country.

Child sexual exploitation is not an easy issue to tackle or one that can be dealt with quickly. The work set out in November's action plan is far from completed, not least because we know that there are still areas where the existence of child sexual exploitation

is not properly acknowledged or addressed.

The conviction in May of nine members of a network responsible for appalling crimes in Rochdale raised serious concerns about the safety of young people in residential care and the ease with which they can fall prey to sexual exploitation. The Secretary of State asked the Deputy Children's Commissioner to report to him as a matter of urgency on emerging findings from her Office's continuing Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups. That report, also published today, focuses particularly on risks facing looked after children living in children's homes and contains a number of recommendations which the Government has accepted.

Importantly, the Office of the Children's Commissioner report confirms our understanding that child sexual exploitation is more widespread than was previously thought. It states very clearly that the perpetrators are far from being exclusive to any one community, race or religion and that the victims come from an equally diverse range of backgrounds. The report acknowledges that the majority of children at risk of sexual exploitation are not looked after children living in residential care but it highlights some of the risks facing such children and young people.

The *Report from the Joint Inquiry into Children Who Go Missing From Care* issued by two All Party Parliamentary Groups on 18 June reaches similar conclusions to the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report. It contains detailed recommendations to address some of the current failings in the system for this extremely vulnerable group.

This progress report includes important actions that the Government is taking immediately to address the recommendations in both reports.

There are no grounds for complacency and I am determined that the progress set out in this report should be maintained in the months ahead. Nothing is more important than keeping children and young people safe from harm. I am determined that momentum is maintained and that everything that can be done is done to make our children and young people safer from sexual exploitation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Loughton', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Tim Loughton MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Introduction

“Child sexual exploitation is one of the biggest child protection issues of our time, but together we can make a real difference. By spotting the signs early, we can all take practical steps to protect children. We don’t know how many abusers there are out there – but together there are more of us. These abusers have power over their victims – but together we are more powerful. They are persistent – but together our persistence is greater.”
(Anne Marie Carrie, Chief Executive, Barnardo’s)

1. Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse which is complex and can manifest itself in different ways. Essentially it involves children and young people receiving something – for example, accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection – in exchange for sexual activity or having others perform sexual activities on them.

2. The action plan published in November 2011 sets out the action needed to help prevent child sexual exploitation occurring. Where that is not possible, it contains actions to disrupt the activities of offenders and help victims to cut free from exploitation and recover. The plan also recognises the importance of justice being obtained for victims and their families, with actions to ensure that the processes involved are as supportive to the young people involved as possible.

3. The action plan was published by the UK Government. The devolved administrations have their own approaches to tackling child sexual exploitation in areas where responsibility is devolved. Many of the policy areas covered by this progress report apply in England only, although others apply across the devolved administrations. The UK Government will continue to work with the devolved administrations where policy responsibilities overlap.

4. The action plan considers the different aspects of child sexual exploitation from the perspective of the young person. This report sets out the progress being made in relation to the four key themes of the plan:

- Growing independence – managing the risks
- Getting out of and combating child sexual exploitation
- Getting justice for victims and their families
- Getting help to deal with what has happened and looking to the future

1 – Growing independence – managing the risks

“Children and young people tell us that they are often misunderstood and even sometimes blamed by professionals for putting themselves in risky situations such as running away from home or care to be with their abusers. It is critical that in such cases they are always seen as being at risk and treated with respect and understanding. That’s what they have told us will make the biggest difference and will help make sure their needs are identified and they are protected from their abusers.”

(Penny Nichols, Director of Children and Young People Services, The Children’s Society)

5. The action plan recognised the crucial role of raising awareness in preventing sexual exploitation taking place. Children and young people themselves need to understand risks, developing the knowledge and skills to make safe choices about relationships and sexual health. Schools have a vital role in providing relevant information to young people. But it is vitally important too that parents are aware of the risks, so that they can spot danger signs and give their children the help and support they need. Practitioners who work with young people also need to be clear about the signs of sexual exploitation and what they should do if they see them.

6. The main actions since publication of the action plan in relation to this theme are set out below:

- **Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)** is being considered within the wider context of the current Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education review. The Department for Education will publish outcomes of the review later this year and there will be consultation on them. The intention remains to simplify the statutory SRE guidance to schools to make it more effective.
- The Home Office ran a **Teenage Rape Prevention campaign** which built on last year's Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign. The new campaign, which launched in March and ran until the end of April 2012, sought to prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of sexual violence and abuse. It was delivered through television, cinema and other forms of advertising and the campaign website *This is Abuse* received over 370,000 visits. The website is still live and offers information, support and advice to teenagers. It also gives them a safe place to discuss (anonymously) with their peers the issues raised.
- The wide range of organisations which make up the National Working Group (NWG) for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People, and other voluntary sector organisations, continue to promote **awareness and understanding of materials** targeted at children and young people. This work is being pursued by a wide range of organisations through websites, conferences, seminars and other training and awareness-raising events. Examples include Barnardo’s *Cut Them Free* regional seminars; this year’s third annual Yorkshire Child Sexual Exploitation Conference organised by the BLAST Project; and the fifth Safe and Sound national conference. The NWG alone has delivered awareness raising through conferences, seminars and training events to over 3,400 practitioners since July 2011.

- The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) are taking forward proposals for the **training of frontline police officers** on child sexual exploitation. ACPO has established a 'task and finish' group to consider the learning and development issues for policing identified in the CEOP thematic assessment *Out of Mind, Out of Sight*, published in June 2011, and will produce a related action plan by Autumn 2012.
- ACPO is also developing a virtual library of **child sexual exploitation awareness materials**, and will create a child sexual exploitation community on the Police Online Knowledge Area (POLKA).
- The Home Office ***Review of effective practice in responding to prostitution***, published in October 2011, includes advice on child sexual exploitation and is a useful tool for practitioners.
- The Home Office is also ensuring that child sexual exploitation issues are taken account of in work such as the **Positive Futures** programme which is focused on preventing and diverting vulnerable young people aged 10-19 away from crime and substance misuse.
- Building on commitments in the *Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan*, the Home Office is supporting the work of the Metropolitan Police **Healthy Relationships Training** (HEART) Programme to safeguard teenage girls at risk of sexual violence and help those being abused to escape their predicament. A total of 360 girls have benefited from the HEART programme and a further 180 young women will take part in it in 2012.
- The Department of Health is working with key partners to identify where existing **training and guidance for health professionals** can be improved. The 2012 Foundation Curriculum for new doctors now includes competences on meeting the health needs of women and children who are victims of violence and abuse, which means that all new foundation year doctors should receive relevant training. A training pack was launched in March 2012 to direct the teaching of these new competences.
- A short film on child sexual exploitation has been commissioned to go on NHS Choices, the online 'front door' to the NHS, to raise awareness amongst young people, parents and healthcare professionals. This should improve the **identification of young people who have been sexually exploited**. The Department of Health has also helped fund dissemination to further education colleges and universities of the *Where is your line?* interactive pack on sexual consent produced by The Havens (specialist centres in London for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted).
- The College of Social Work is considering how it might help LSCBs and Directors of Children's Services ensure that child sexual exploitation is properly addressed in the **training of social workers**.

- The action plan refers particularly to the link between **children going missing** and being sexually exploited. The Government's new *Missing Children and Adults Strategy* was published on 5 December 2011. The strategy provides a core framework of three key objectives for all local agencies to review the plans they have in place to **prevent** people going missing in the first place (reducing, for example, the number of children who repeatedly go missing or run away); **protect** them when they do (by finding them quickly); and provide **support** to vulnerable missing children, adults and their families during difficult times.
- The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is currently working to integrate new services for **missing children** in its operating model. This includes the adoption of the Missing Kids website which was re-launched on International Missing Children's Day on 25 May 2012. The site has been re-designed by CEOP to make it more attractive to children and other users wanting advice and support and to maximise the opportunities to locate missing children. It links to the European standard number 116 000 which, through a partnership with the charity Missing People, provides 24 hour free and confidential support and advice to missing children and adults and their families. The helpline also enables those who are missing to re-connect with their families or to gain the assistance of the police.
- On 1 December 2011 CEOP launched the *My Choice* film on its website, signposting sources of help and advice for children and young people who **run away from home**. CEOP has also developed an **online directory** for children and young people, signposting the availability of local services, and is currently assessing options for developing and integrating education resources on child sexual exploitation in the Think U Know programme.
- On 18 June 2012 the All Party Parliamentary Group for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Looked After Children and Care Leavers published their ***Report from the Joint Inquiry into Children who Go Missing from Care***. The Government has welcomed the report, which emphasises the vulnerability of children who go missing from care to sexual exploitation. Immediate actions which the Government is taking in response to the report are outlined at paragraph 16 below.
- The Department for Education is preparing revised statutory guidance on children who **run away or go missing from home**. The revised guidance, which is expected to be published later in 2012, will make clear the very strong links between missing children and child sexual exploitation.
- The **voluntary sector** continues to raise awareness of sexual exploitation. Examples include:
 - joint work between the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and The Children's Society to develop the *Say Something If You See Something* campaign, addressing the problem of hotels unwittingly being used as venues for the sexual exploitation of young people;

- Barnardo's and the Local Government Association's joint publication *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation: Helping local authorities to develop effective responses*. This document, which was published on 1 June 2012, complements existing guidance and sets out the key elements that make up an effective local multi-agency response. It provides good practice examples which local areas can draw on in putting appropriate arrangements in place;
- the work that the BLAST project in Leeds and Bradford is doing to raise awareness of the sexual exploitation of boys and young men;
- Children's Society programmes including, for example, the Street Safe Project in Lancashire, where a group of young people are working together to produce an advice leaflet for professionals; and Check Point in Torbay, which are delivering training to police officers and primary and secondary schools.

Stop it Now! UK & Ireland, run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, delivers 'Parents Protect!' courses. These are 90minute child sexual abuse awareness workshops for parents and carers, delivered at children's centres, schools and other community venues such as youth and church groups. In England, these sessions are supported by a grant from the Department for Education and are free of charge. The workshops inform parents and carers of the risks of child sexual abuse, the signs to look out for in children and those around them and preventative steps that they can take. Concerned participants are given information on relevant resources, including the Stop it Now! freephone helpline. Parents Protect! sessions are supported by a comprehensive website: www.parentsprotect.co.uk.

Alongside its continuing training for professionals and preventative work in schools, Barnardo's has sent out 223,000 'spot the signs' leaflets, postcards and posters to schools, statutory and voluntary sector services, and shops. In addition, over 4,000 of these leaflets for parents/carers, professionals and children and young people have been downloaded from Barnardo's website. <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/cutthemfree/spotthesigns>

2 – Getting out of and combating child sexual exploitation

"Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board made tackling child sexual exploitation a Board priority in 2009. This enabled concerted action to be taken requiring a transformative redesign of the existing partnership approach, especially between the police and Children's Social Care. Anecdotal evidence suggests that children and families feel better supported and staff feel more confident in identifying and tackling child sexual exploitation, the network of organised criminality has been disrupted with prosecution ongoing and there is increased community engagement in tackling child sexual exploitation." (Chris Brannan, Independent Chair of Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board and member of DfE Children's Services Task and Finish Group)

7. The action plan emphasised the need for an effective response from services when child sexual exploitation is identified, in order to help victims break free from it and to ensure that perpetrators are dealt with appropriately. Victims need a helpful, swift, understanding and supportive response, co-ordinated across partners - in particular, children's services, health and enforcement, but drawing on voluntary and community sector expertise where available. Actions in the plan focus on strengthening local response arrangements in relation to both victims and perpetrators.

8. The main actions since publication of the action plan in relation to this theme are set out below:

- A number of fora have been established to **support LSCBs** in mapping the needs of their own areas and ensuring that effective arrangements are in place and work is properly co-ordinated across agencies. For example, the Department for Education has convened a children's services 'task and finish' group, including several LSCB Chairs; and the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People has set up LSCB Co-ordinators and Business Managers fora.
- The Independent LSCB Chairs' Network is developing further action to **support LSCBs** in tackling child sexual exploitation. This includes establishing a Special Interest Group which will facilitate the sharing of good practice across the network.
- The Department for Education is discussing with Ofsted ways of ensuring that **Ofsted inspectors** are equipped to assess whether local authorities have responded appropriately in cases where sexual exploitation has been identified.
- The Department for Education is issuing at the same time as this report a short, accessible **step-by-step guide for frontline practitioners** on what to do if they suspect a child is being sexually exploited.
- The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into **Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups** has gathered extensive evidence since October 2011. An interim report on prevalence and patterns will be published in September 2012, when all the data gathered in the first year of the Inquiry has been analysed. Full recommendations on policy and practice will be made in September 2013 when the Inquiry concludes.
- On 9 May 2012, the Office of the Children's Commissioner agreed to a request from the Secretary of State for Education to provide an **early report** to him in June **on**

issues arising from the Inquiry, including recommendations on how children in care homes can be kept safe from this abuse. The early report, which has been published separately, confirms that the sexual exploitation of children is widespread and that while the majority of children who are exploited are not in care, a disproportionate number are. The Government has accepted the recommendations for protecting children in care and is taking the actions outlined at paragraph 16 below.

- The University of Bedfordshire, with funding from Comic Relief, has tested and produced a **data monitoring tool** to record the prevalence and nature of child sexual exploitation. The tool, with guidance on its use, has been circulated to all LSCBs and relevant voluntary and community sector organisations. It is available on the University of Bedfordshire website, together with a **self assessment tool** which practitioners can use to assess their progress in tackling child sexual exploitation. With Barnardo's, the University has promoted these tools to local authorities at their joint Sexual Exploitation Research Forum. Drawing on funding from Comic Relief, the University and CEOP will undertake a review of data using the data monitoring tool in the Autumn of 2012.
- The Home Office continues to empower parents and carers to protect children through the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme. On 5 March 2012 the Home Office also announced changes under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 which will strengthen and extend the system of notification requirements placed on **registered sex offenders**. These additional provisions will provide police with the information that they need to manage offenders effectively in the community.
- The Home Office is working to ensure that the police continue their efforts to **secure prosecutions and maximise opportunities to disrupt child sexual exploitation** locally – supported nationally by strategic threat assessments, the National Crime Agency (when operational), and the continued role of CEOP. ACPO is creating a toolkit for investigators to help them adopt successful disruption tactics and secure prosecutions.
- The Home Office has made available £400,000 per year for the three years ending March 2015 to fund 13 **young people's advocates** to support young victims of sexual violence and exploitation, including from street gangs. The successful bids have now been announced, with eight organisations gaining funding.
- The Home Office has established a **Women, Girls and Gangs working group** with representatives from government departments, the criminal justice system and voluntary sector. The group has agreed its objectives and action plan for the next 12 months. Themes will include working with prisons to raise awareness of gangs and the effects on girls; and agreeing and publishing minimum standards and a toolkit for organisations to gender-proof their interventions.

Greater Manchester is a conurbation with 10 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and 12 police Basic Command Units, a complex structure that works together as the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (GMSP). GMSP is actively developing a combined, holistic approach to tackling the sexual exploitation of children, recognising that those children do not recognise local authority boundaries, while their abusers deliberately manipulate them. This work has been inspired and informed by the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People, and advocates a framework for resourcing, investigating and managing child sexual exploitation at operational, tactical and strategic levels. This approach will support local practitioners while enabling identification of networks and patterns of activity, promoting the best possible response regardless of where the child or abuser is in Greater Manchester.

3 – Getting justice for victims and their families

"The victims of child sexual exploitation deserve the very best of treatment and services as they move towards being 'survivors'. It's also vital that they have the confidence and support they need to give evidence against their abusers. It's incumbent on all the public services to deliver this to them." (Peter Davies, Chief Executive Officer, Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, ACPO Lead for Child Protection and Abuse Investigation and ACPO Lead for Missing Children)

"The law is clear that children under the age of 13 are incapable of giving consent to sexual activity, and I hope that today's sentence sends out a strong message to anyone who commits terrible crimes such as these - that you can expect to spend a substantial time in prison." (Attorney General, Dominic Grieve QC, following the decision of the Court of Appeal to increase the sentences of two men convicted of the rape of an 11 year old, from 40 months to seven years)

9. The action plan recognised the vital importance of disrupting child sexual exploitation locally and securing robust prosecutions when the perpetrators of child sexual exploitation are identified. It also considered in particular the need to minimise the difficulties faced by young victims within the criminal justice system. The words of a young victim quoted in the action plan - "Going to court was worse than the abuse" - are a clear reminder of what the objective should be.

10. The main actions since publication of the action plan in relation to this theme are set out below:

- Child sexual exploitation as an organised crime type is now included in the remit of the relevant national level **Threat Reduction Board**. The Board considers and agrees the actions operational partners will take to reduce the threat to the public from organised crime. This ensures that national capability, as well as local law enforcement activity, is brought to bear on the threat.
- A joint Ministry of Justice and police project team is developing proposals to improve guidance, training and authorised professional practice for police officers, to enhance the **protection of intimidated witnesses**. The aim is to establish a coherent procedure for identifying and managing intimidation at all levels and to provide a menu of options for police officers and other practitioners dealing with intimidation.
- The Ministry of Justice is currently reviewing victims' services to ensure that those affected by crime – including young victims – are supported in the best way possible. Proposals were published in the consultation *Getting it right for victims and witnesses* which ran from 30 January to 22 April 2012. Part 1 of the consultation set out the Government's proposed approach to ensuring that **victims and witnesses get the support they need**, both to overcome the consequences of crime and to participate fully in the criminal justice process.

- Comprehensive guidance on **special measures** available to support vulnerable and intimidated witnesses has been updated and improved. This includes providing child witnesses with more choice about how they give evidence and ensuring that they have an appropriate individual to support them when giving evidence by live link. The Ministry of Justice is promoting the legislative changes through conferences and training to ensure that practitioners understand the benefits of the changes.
- In addition, the Crown Prosecution Service will be publishing later in 2012 a report presenting the findings from its research on **special measures**. These findings will be used to take forward work to improve the use of special measures in appropriate cases.
- The Ministry of Justice is working very closely with the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the courts and the judiciary to establish whether the implementation of Section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 could be made to work in practice. This is a special measure which would allow for **pre-trial video-recorded cross-examination**.
- The Crown Prosecution Service has developed a programme of work to deliver its commitment to **improve the effectiveness of prosecutions**. This includes detailed consideration of a selection of child sexual exploitation cases and an analysis of best practice. This will result in targeted training and the development of legal guidance on the specific issues arising when prosecuting cases of child sexual exploitation.
- The Crown Prosecution Service is seeking to re-establish effective voluntary arrangements with local authorities to ensure that the 'third party protocol' on **exchange of information in child protection investigations** is adopted and used to best effect. Work on an enhanced protocol is being taken forward in the West Midlands and Warwickshire and significant progress is anticipated by the end of summer 2012.
- The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill received Royal Assent on 1 May 2012. The **new sentencing regime for dangerous offenders** is likely to be implemented by Autumn 2012, with offenders then being subject to the new extended determinate sentences. Very serious repeat offenders will be subject to mandatory life sentences. Work is underway to monitor the use of the new sentences.

The Coalition for the Removal of Pimping (CROP) works with parents to bring an end to child sexual exploitation. Parents are often unwittingly in possession of considerable information about the perpetrators. With support from an independent person, parents are more likely to trust and to share this information. A child is more likely to disclose the abuse they are experiencing with both a supportive and understanding parent and input from a young person's worker. CROP has worked with Engage, the multi agency team in Blackburn, to develop a victim and witness care package based on two years' experience of supporting families going to court. Such support reduces the trauma of going to court and can increase the chance of conviction. Getting a conviction gives a family a greater chance of recovering from the abuse they have suffered. CROP has supported 130 families across England in the last six months.

4 – Getting help to deal with what has happened and looking to the future

"I regularly receive calls from people who were sexually exploited as children and received no help or support. These people are still struggling to come to terms with the abuse they suffered. It is absolutely critical that we recognise and respond to the need for on-going support and that we get it right so that we do not fail yet another generation." (Sheila Taylor MBE, Director, National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People)

11. The action plan recognised that victims of child sexual exploitation, and their families, are likely to need substantial support in picking up their lives once the exploitation has ended. Such support, from both statutory agencies and voluntary organisations, may be needed over a long period of time.

12. The action plan highlighted the need for effective links between child and adult services such as local authority social care, education and health services, the voluntary and community sector, local police and youth justice structures. The actions in the plan were focused on ensuring that services respond to the particular needs of sexually exploited children and young people.

13. The main actions since publication of the action plan in relation to this theme are set out below:

- The Department of Health is exploring what more can be done to highlight the particular needs of **children who have been sexually exploited**. A health working group, currently being established, will look at this. In addition, the Academy of Royal Colleges has set up its own working group to consider what more the Royal Colleges can do, both individually and together, to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation, identify victims, and provide ongoing support for those who have been identified as victims.
- The Department of Health has a programme of policy work in place to improve the development of **sexual assault referral centre (SARC)** services within the new NHS commissioning and public health structures. The Department is also working to improve education and training to increase the pool of competent **forensic physicians** available to victims and the responsiveness of all doctors to victims of violence, including sexual assault. The Society of Apothecaries Diploma in Forensic and Clinical Aspects of Sexual Assault, pump-primed by the Department of Health, is now in its third year and includes a children's module.
- Department of Health officials have been liaising with those responsible for commissioning and providing **SARC services**, drawing attention to the special circumstances of children who have been sexually exploited. The findings of the CEOP *Out of Mind, Out of Sight* thematic assessment have been drawn to the attention of the National SARC Advisory Board and discussed with the ACPO Rape Working Group to raise awareness. In addition, an early adopter programme for commissioning will enable the continuing development of SARCs to address the needs of sexually exploited children and young people locally.
- From April 2013, the NHS contribution to **SARC services** will be the direct

responsibility of the NHS Commissioning Board (NHSCB). Delegated to the NHSCB as a public health service, this will ensure its development with the wider partnerships in the criminal justice and health improvement sectors. Police responsibility for commissioning forensic medical examination for victims of sexual violence is expected to transfer to the NHSCB during the next spending review period.

- The Department for Education is continuing to support a Barnardo's project developing **specialised foster care placements for victims** of child sexual exploitation and trafficking, and a high quality two day training course for foster carers, through an investment of £1.4m over two years (up to 31 March 2013). The evaluation of the first year published in April suggested that staff in children's services need to be aware of the needs of exploited young people and to work effectively with carers in order to ensure the success of specialist placements. Local authorities could also encourage involvement from possible candidates for becoming specialist carers. In 2012-13 we look forward to the project training more people and creating more placements than in 2011-12, so that the potential benefits of such work can be demonstrated fully.
- The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People continues to help local authorities **share good practice** in making provision for children and young people who are recovering from child sexual exploitation.

'Jessica' (not her real name) met an older man when she was just 13. He treated her well and listened to her. She believed he was her boyfriend. Things changed when he forced Jessica to sleep with other people. Soon, she was being given drugs and alcohol, and was regularly going missing from home, often for days at a time. She was being subjected to serious sexual violence and abuse.

Safe & Sound Derby, working closely with multi-agency partners, supported Jessica for three years from the outset of a police investigation, throughout court proceedings and thereafter. Jessica was given time to talk about what had happened to her. She began to understand that she had been a victim of abuse. With her project worker's support, Jessica was able to explore the options available and make decisions about her future. Data sharing and good communications between agencies ensured that the support provided was centred on Jessica's needs.

Jessica is now 18, and doing well. She still contacts her Safe & Sound Derby project worker from time to time, to ask any questions she may have, give an update of what she is doing, and how she is. The contact is always Jessica's choice.

Safe & Sound Derby is currently supporting 65 young people who are being, or are at serious risk of being, sexually exploited.

Next steps

"At long last I'm happy to say I feel that child sexual exploitation is finally being recognised by agencies and professionals across the country. We are beginning to tackle this issue but we are not all the way there yet, and now is the time for action. This is never an easy subject, but let's not run scared, let's start as we mean to go on and make some changes." (Emma Jackson, author of "The End of My World")

14. This progress report demonstrates that the Government's determination to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation is shared, and is being acted on, by a wide range of partners. It does not cover all the activity which is taking place across the country to tackle child sexual exploitation. The Government is aware in particular that much useful work, across all the themes, is being pursued at local levels, by statutory agencies and voluntary organisations.

15. It is clear, however, that there is still much to do. The Office of the Children's Commissioner's (OCC) early report on emerging findings from its Inquiry into *Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups* confirms that children's lives continue to be blighted by sexual exploitation in every community right across the country. The recent *Report From The Joint Inquiry Into Children Who Go Missing From Care* reinforces the very strong links – clearly recognised in the action plan – between children going missing and being sexually exploited. Both reports contain recommendations for giving better protection against sexual exploitation to children in care.

16. Alongside this progress report the Government is announcing a series of actions to address the concerns expressed in the two reports mentioned above. These include:

- immediate action to ensure that there is much better and clearer data about children who go missing from care, and who may often then be at risk of sexual exploitation. The Government has already asked all local authorities to review their own data collections and to check their figures against those collected by local police forces. The Government is working closely with an expert group to develop a data collection system which gives a clearer national picture of the numbers of children who go missing from care. This will identify what more needs to be done to protect children in care and reduce the numbers who go missing, as well as helping to bring greater consistency to local data;
- changing regulations so that Ofsted can share information about the location of children's homes with the police and other relevant bodies; and
- setting up a 'task and finish' group to introduce additional safeguards to improve local authorities' scrutiny of their decisions to place children out of area. This will include:
 - the local authority which is making the placement satisfying itself that the location of the home gives sufficient reassurance that the child will be safe if sent to live there;
 - reviewing urgently whether the current care planning framework supports effective practice well enough so that children's needs are effectively addressed at the point of placement and robust action takes place if, for example, the child subsequently goes missing;

- taking forward changes so that there is a clear expectation that all children's homes take a very proactive approach, in collaboration with local police forces and other services, to support children who are at risk of running away or being sexually exploited;
 - reviewing how current provisions can be clarified and, where necessary, strengthened so that local authorities monitor the quality of care in children's homes located in their areas and alert Ofsted and placing authorities if they assess homes as failing to offer children the supervision and support they need.
- developing coherent risk analysis maps for those areas with high concentrations of children's homes and working with local authorities which place large numbers of children in those areas to review and change their practice; and
 - setting in place work to address the quality of children's homes and develop a plan for significant improvements. This will:
 - have a broad remit to review all aspects of the quality of provision being delivered for children placed in children's homes, including the qualifications and skills of the workforce;
 - review wider issues such as the location of homes, models of ownership and commissioning practice;
 - consider the effectiveness of current arrangements to drive improvement across the sector;
 - result in a clear action plan to drive up quality, including through improvements in the qualifications and skills of those working in children's homes. The action plan will be developed by a group of experts with the remit to complete their work by the end of 2012.

17. More widely, the Government will consider what further action is required as a result of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry findings when the OCC issues its interim report and recommendations in September 2012. In the meantime, LSCBs and partner organisations should review the early report and the Government's response to it, and consider the implications for their areas. The *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation* action plan remains a 'live' document and the Government hopes that all those with parts to play in fighting against this appalling form of child abuse will continue to follow the plan.

18. There is growing evidence of LSCBs and local authorities establishing and acknowledging the existence of child sexual exploitation in their areas and taking steps to address it. Some, however, are still not giving this issue the priority it requires. The Government hopes that the new 'tools' referred to in this report will help all LSCBs and local authorities form a comprehensive view of the size and nature of sexual exploitation in their areas and assess their own performance in addressing it.

19. The Government intends to conduct a further review of progress in implementing the action plan towards the end of 2012.

Annex A – Resources mentioned in this report

Resources

Department for Education

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation action plan, November 2011

www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation

The step-by-step guide for frontline practitioners, May 2012

www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation

Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2009

www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation

Statutory guidance on children who run away and go missing from home or care, 2009¹

www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguarding/a0066653/young-runaways

The Office of the Children's Commissioner's (OCC) early report on emerging findings from its Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups

www.education.gov.uk/

Department for Health

The Havens, 'Where is your line' interactive pack on sexual content

<http://www.thehavens.co.uk/>

The Society of Apothecaries Diploma in Forensic and Clinical Aspects of Sexual Assault

<http://www.apothecaries.org/index.php?page=120>

Home Office

Teenage rape and sexual assault campaign, March 2012

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/teenage-rape-prevention/>

This is Abuse – Teenage Rape Prevention campaign website

<http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>

Review of effective practice in responding to prostitution

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/responding-to-prostitution>

Positive Futures

<http://www.posfutures.org.uk/>

¹ The DfE is currently revising this guidance and publication is expected in Summer 2012.

Violence against women and girls: action plan

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-end-violence-women-girls/vawg-action-plan>

Healthy relationships training (HEART) programme

<http://www.heartprogramme.org/site/>

Missing children and adults strategy, 2011

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/missing-persons-strategy>

Draft Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Remedial) Order 2012

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/legislation/sexual-offences-notifications/>

Child sex offender disclosure scheme

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/child-sex-offender-disclosure/>

Ending gang and youth violence: cross government report, November 2011

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/ending-gang-violence/gang-violence-detailreport?view=Binary>

Ministry of Justice

Consultation document on getting it right for victims and witnesses, January – April 2012

https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/victims-witnesses/consult_view

The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act, 2012

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/press-releases/moj/royal-assent-for-legal-aid,-sentencing-and-punishment-of-offenders-bill>

Crown Prosecution Service

Resources to support Victims and Witnesses

http://www.cps.gov.uk/victims_witnesses/

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

Thematic assessment, Out of Mind, Out of Sight – breaking down the barriers to child sexual exploitation, 2011

www.ceop.police.uk/Publications

My Choice - film signposting help and advice for children and young people who have run away from home

<http://ceop.police.uk/missing/Young-people/My-Choice/>

Think U Know Programme

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC), England

Office of the Children's Commissioner Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/info/csegg1>

The Office of the Children's Commissioner's (OCC) early report on emerging findings from its Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups
<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications>

All Party Parliamentary Groups for Runaway and Missing Children and for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

The Report from the Joint Inquiry into Children who Go Missing from Care, June 2012
<http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-lobbying/parliamentary-work/appg-inquiry-children-who-go-missing-or-run-away>

University of Bedfordshire

The University of Bedfordshire Child Sexual Exploitation Data Monitoring Tool
http://www.beds.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/162209/final-version-Updated-data-monitoring-tool-new-Dec-11.pdf

University of Bedfordshire Self Assessment Tool to assess progress in protecting children from sexual exploitation

http://www.beds.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/152179/Self-assessment-tool.pdf

Barnardo's and the Local Government Association

Tackling child sexual exploitation: helping local authorities to develop effective responses
www.barnardos.org.uk/tackling_child_sexual_exploitation.pdf

National Working Group and The Children's Society

Say Something If You See Something campaign resources.
<http://nationalworkinggroup.org/>

Useful contacts for further information and resources

Government departments:

The Department for Education - www.education.gov.uk

The Department of Health - www.dh.gov.uk

The Home Office - www.homeoffice.gov.uk

The Ministry of Justice - www.justice.gov.uk

Attorney General's Office - <http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.uk>

Crown Prosecution Service - <http://www.cps.gov.uk>

Other organisations:

Academy of Royal Colleges - <http://www.aomrc.org.uk/>

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) - www.acpo.police.uk

Barnardo's - www.barnardos.org.uk

BLAST - <http://mesmac.co.uk/blast>

Coalition for the Removal of Pimping - <http://www.cropuk.org.uk>

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre www.ceop.police.uk

The Children's Commissioner for England - www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The Children's Society - www.childrenssociety.org.uk

The College of Social Work - www.collegeofsocialwork.org

Local Government Association (LGA) - <http://www.local.gov.uk>

Lucy Faithfull Foundation - www.lucyfaithfull.org

The NHS Choices website - www.nhs.uk

The NHS Commissioning Board (NHSCB) - <http://www.commissioningboard.nhs.uk/>

The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People - www.nationalworkinggroup.org

National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) - <http://www.npia.police.uk/>

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) - <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Ofsted - <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Rape Crisis - www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Safe & Sound, Derby - <http://www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk/>

The Social Work Reform Board - <http://www.education.gov.uk/swrb>

The Survivors Trust - <http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/>

Sexual Assault Referral Centres - <http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/Referralcentres2.php>

For a comprehensive list of useful contacts and organisations please refer to the Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation action plan (2011)
<http://www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation>



Department
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