



## Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People in the West Midlands

### **Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation across the West Midlands Metropolitan Region**

#### **Assessment: July - September 2015**

The West Midlands Metropolitan Region are committed to issuing regular snapshots of the nature and scale of child sexual exploitation (CSE) across the West Midlands, based on data from the seven Local Authorities within the West Midlands Police boundary, in conjunction with the police, working together as seven CSE Operations Groups meeting regularly to assess priorities and progress. This is the second of our quarterly assessments and covers the period of July to September 2015.

#### **What is CSE?**

CSE is a form of abuse where children received something (accommodation, drugs, affection, gifts, money, drugs) in 'exchange' for sexual activity. It is child abuse, involving the child being forced, coerced or intimidated, and sexual activity with a child under 16 is unlawful in any case. Often the victim is groomed into believing the abuser cares for them. The perpetrator is exploiting them through abuse of power, and many victims worry they won't be believed. There are many different methods and approaches to sexually exploit children and young people, which can be undertaken by an individual, peers, groups and gangs. While there is no specific criminal offence of 'CSE', common offences can include rape and other forms of sexual assault, trafficking and child abduction.

#### **What does this snapshot tell us?**

##### Young People at Risk:

- There are currently a total of 614 children identified as being at risk of CSE, this compares to a total of 720 children at Q1. Whilst this is a decrease in the overall figure, for the purpose of this assessment we are only collecting numbers so are not able to determine where differences may be due to young people moving out of area or becoming adults.

- Only a proportion of these are newly identified over the last quarter. There has also been some movement between risk levels with at least 62 children showing a reduction in level of risk.
- 133 of those children identified were at the highest level of risk (serious), which requires detailed intervention plans. The number has increased from 113 to 133 this is now 21% of the overall number as opposed to 16% at time of last reporting.
- The significant majority of the children identified were White British. The second largest cohorts were mixed (unspecified) and Asian.
- Only 13% of the cohort is male which is a similar percentage to last quarter. We still need to understand why there are such significantly lower numbers of young males. Barnardos<sup>1</sup> found that there were some particularly prominent routes for young males into CSE and that whilst they were less likely to be identified initially when they were the risks were likely to be particularly high. They also found that professionals tended to show a less protective attitude to young boys than young girls and that there were specific issues around disclosure in line with social attitudes and gender stereotypes. We need to ensure that this knowledge is embedded into practice and that young males are being appropriately identified.
- The age range in the cohort starts at 9 and goes up to post 18. There are two 9 year old children, a male and a female who have been identified as significant risk. The most prevalent age group is 14 to 16, closely followed by 17 year olds. The number drops dramatically for 18 and 18+. Part of the reason for this could be that cases close to children's social care at 18 and may not be accepted by Adult services unless they have been looked after and move to the leaving care team, which is not the majority of "at risk" young people.
- Interestingly the 14 - 16 age category is the most frequently occurring across all three risk levels which would suggest that we can still improve our early identification for younger children. There is a noticeable increase in the numbers from age 10 to age 11 and therefore the work being done by Solihull about early emergence and recognition of risks and vulnerabilities in primary school children should support identification and intervention pre transition to secondary school. This knowledge can be used across the region to support early identification.
- From the available missing data, which is not from all seven Local Authorities, it is evident that episodes of missing (from home or care) continue to indicate an increased risk of CSE with 27% of the young people who have had reported missing episodes being identified as "at risk" of CSE.
- A review of the social care status shows that young people identified as being at risk of CSE are receiving a service or intervention dependent on their level of

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<sup>1</sup> Barnardos (2014). *Hidden in Plain Sight : A scoping study into the sexual exploitation on boys and young men in the UK – Policy Briefing.*

need with Early help, child in need, child protection and looked after children care plans being used.

- There appears to be a growing trend of young people being targeted or exploited online and more needs to be done to understand this type of offending and how to effectively record and capture the prevalence.
- The three Local Authorities that have established CSE teams have higher percentages of identified young people according to population of 0 – 17 year olds. In all cases the current identified cohort “at risk” of CSE makes up no more than 0.2% of the child population of the authority area
- A breakdown of the numbers across the seven local authority areas is set out in the enclosed table.

### Offenders:

- There are currently 279 suspected CSE offenders and 16 large investigations on going. The number of victims these 279 offenders are associated with is much fewer therefore reflecting that CSE is often, but not exclusively, a multi perpetrator offence.
- Asian males are significantly over represented in the suspected offender cohort, nearly twice as many as the sum total of the other ethnic groups, this is also taking into account ethnicity of the population according to the 2011 census data. Although no ethnicity is significantly absent and we still have work to do to understand the offender profile of online CSE which could alter this data.
- Over the last 3 months there have been 6 civil interventions and 2 formal charges. The Police have increasingly been using a range of tactics to identify offenders and victims. Recent success includes a stop on the motorway in the North of the Country in which a CSE victim from West Midlands who was at the time a high risk missing person was found in company with two males. These males were subsequently arrested.

### Locations:

- Child exploitation and missing operational groups (CMOGs) continue to use a multi- agency approach to gathering intelligence and directing disruption tactics. In Dudley where they identified that suspected perpetrators were seen to be frequenting school areas at the end of the school day and weekends an effective partnership response was developed which meant the area was monitored and disruption tactics were employed in respect of one of the individuals through effective partnership working with other local Government departments.
- We continue to gather intelligence around locations of concern, where young people who frequent them may be at increased risk of CSE. Public spaces and local businesses such as; licensed premises, shops, parks and bus stations have

been identified as locations of concern but others are; fast food outlets, hotels and certain taxi firms as well as residential properties.

### **What is different from the Assessment published in July 2015?**

Although there is some variation in the numbers this is still fairly consistent with what was reported last quarter, we are still expecting the overall figure to rise. We continue to train and raise awareness with professionals and the community. Recording and tracking of cases is becoming increasingly accurate and we will continue on this journey to ensure that we are clear on the scale and nature of this threat across our region. Ultimately we want to see increased reporting and identification of young people earlier and a reduction in the number of those at highest risk due to increased understanding of what is an effective intervention.

### **So if the numbers have gone down over a short time period then things are improving?**

The picture is a fluid one as there will be constant changes in the cohort of young people as they move up and down the risk categories, in and out of areas or reach adulthood. We think the numbers have decreased slightly this quarter due to more accurate reporting and recording. CMOGs are working hard to disrupt and identify themes and trends, and agencies are working hard to safeguard and protect but we still have some way to go with our communities to tackle the underlying attitudes and beliefs that contribute to CSE that will eventually result in a sustainable reduction in prevalence of this problem within our society.

### **What about the variations across the region?**

These will continue to be assessed by us regionally and locally. We are very clear that all parts of our region are facing this threat and need to work together to combat it. Many perpetrators of CSE operate beyond local boundaries and some victims get trafficked across the region and beyond. We recognise there is more to do in particular in ensuring a consistent level of response to episodes of children going missing and to information sharing cross borders.

### **Why concentrate so much on CSE when there are much bigger numbers of children at risk of familial abuse and neglect?**

It is true that the overall numbers of children at risk of CSE are relatively small compared to wider problems of abuse and neglect. But we are absolutely clear that the horrendous nature of CSE, and public concerns about the growing threat of online activity and inappropriate sexual "norms" for young people, makes this work an absolute priority.

### **So what have you actually done to combat this threat?**

- **Regional Accountability** – The regional CSE co-ordinator and implementation officer report into the Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People Board

chaired by Solihull LA Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Constable Carl Foulkes to support Safeguarding Boards' leadership of local arrangements because this is a "cross-border" threat.

- **Operations Groups (CMOGs)** are central in tracking and pursuing offenders and supporting victims, driven by a core team of; a senior police investigator and key decision-makers from Children's Services, NHS, voluntary & community sector, youth services, probation, licensing and others.
- **Prevention** – developing resource materials for schools, taxi drivers, hotels and other licensed premises, communities and young people that focus on early intervention around healthy relationships, gender equality and staying safe. Roll out of training for community engagement sessions to raise awareness in the community. Voluntary and mandatory training for taxi drivers in some areas.
- **Voluntary Sector** – Key voluntary sector partners are engaged in specific projects in some of the local areas to target; the night time economy, engaging with the BME community and working with young men.
- **Protection** – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs, including dedicated CSE teams and joint Safeguarding Board training
- **Justice** – Securing Sexual Risk Orders against suspected perpetrators. Using licensing to close venues or amend licence conditions. On-going criminal investigations.
- **Campaign** – [www.seeme-hearme.org.uk](http://www.seeme-hearme.org.uk) website, radio and bus advertising, BAIT/ Anybody's Child / Jasmin's story <http://www.seeme-hearme.org.uk/videos/> taxi postcards, hotel resources

### **And what happens next?**

We have a regional CSE co-ordinator and implementation officer in post who will continue to work with each of the individual LAs, Police and partners to support the full implementation of the framework and highlight emerging regional trends and issues. This will then allow for a period of review and evaluation of our impact, of which these quarterly assessments will form an important part.

We are continuing to work on the quality and accuracy of our data sets to give us a good and comprehensive understanding of our victims and offenders which will support us to intervene early and prevent young people becoming victims of CSE and challenge the attitudes and values that lead to offending behaviour.

### **Who do I contact if I have any concerns about a child or young person at risk of CSE?**

You should expect an immediate and supportive response from any of the professional agencies involved in this work - whether a teacher, GP, social worker or youth worker. But if you don't know anyone to contact please get hold of West Midlands Police on 101, Barnardo's on 0121 359 5333 or any of the services listed on [www.seeme-hearme.org.uk](http://www.seeme-hearme.org.uk)

### **October 2015**

**West Midlands Operations Groups' Data on young people at risk of CSE by Local Authority**  
**Area: July -September 2015**

<b>BIRMINGHAM</b>		LAs ranked in order of highest % of identified young people against population of 0 - 17 year olds (taken from ONS census data 2013)
<b>Victims</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	
<b>240 young people at risk</b>	59 - Serious Risk	1. Coventry (0.2%) 2. Sandwell & Solihull (0.11%) 3. Birmingham & Walsall (0.09%) 5. Dudley (0.07%) 6. Wolverhampton (0.06%)
<b>Breakdown:</b>	60 - Significant Risk	
207 - Female	121 - At Risk	
33 - Male		
Age range - 11-17		
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White UK - 96 (40%)		
White Other - 13 (5%)		
Irish - 1 (0.5%)		
Asian Other - 17 (7%)		
Bangladeshi - 4 (2%)		
Indian - 3 (1%)		
Pakistani 28 (12%)		
Black Other - 3 (1%)		
Black African - 5 (2%)		
Black African Caribbean - 18 (7.5%)		
Gypsy Roma - 6 (2.5%)		
Mixed Parentage Other - 14 (6%)		
Mixed Parentage White/Asian - 1 (0.5%)		
Mixed parentage White/Black African - 3 (1%)		
Mixed parentage White/Black Caribbean - 9 (4%)		
Other - 7 (3%)		
Information not yet obtained - 12 (5%)		

**Coventry****146 young people at risk*****Breakdown***

121 - Female

25 - Male

Age Range 9 - 18+

***Risk Level***

30 - Serious Risk

59 - Significant Risk

57 - At Risk

***Ethnicity***

White UK - 106 (73%)

White Irish - 0 (0%)

Eastern European - 1 (0.5%)

White Other - 10 (7%)

Black Caribbean - 3 (2%)

Black African - 7 (5%)

Indian - 2 (1%)

Pakistani - 3 (2%)

Bangladeshi - 1 (0.5%)

Chinese - 0 (0%)

Other Asian - 2 (1%)

Mixed - 10 (7%)

Other - 1 (0.5%)

**DUDLEY****48 young people at risk*****Breakdown:***

45 - Female

3 - Male

Age Range 12 - 18

***Ethnicity***

White UK - 43 (90%)

White Irish - 0 (0%)

Eastern European - 1 (2%)

White Other - 0 (0%)

Mixed - 3 (6%)

Asian - 1 (2%)

Black African - 0 (0%)

Black Caribbean - 0 (0%)

***Risk Levels***

8 - Serious Risk

11 - Significant

26 - At Risk

3 - Awaiting Risk Classification

**SANDWELL****84 young people at risk*****Breakdown:***

75 - Female

9 - Male

Age Range 11 - 18

***Ethnicity***

White UK - 47 (56%)

White Irish - 1 (1%)

Eastern European - 0 (0%)

White Other - 2 (2%)

Black Caribbean - 2 (2%)

Black African - 0 (0%)

Indian - 3 (4%)

Pakistani - 3 (4%)

Bangladeshi - 0 (0%)

Chinese - 0 (0%)

Other Asian - 0 (0%)

Mixed - 5 (6%)

Other - 1 (1%)

Unknown - 20 (24%)

***Risk level:***

17 - Serious Risk

14 - Significant Risk

53 - At Risk

**SOLIHULL****49 young people at risk*****Breakdown:***

46 - Female

3 - Male

Age Range 11 - 18+

***Ethnicity***

White UK - 43 (88%)

White Irish - 0

Eastern European - 0 (0%)

White Other - 1 (2%)

Black British - 1 (2%)

Black Caribbean - 0

Black African - 0

Indian - 0

Pakistani - 0

Bangladeshi - 0 (0%)

Chinese - 0 (0%)

Other Asian - 0 (0%)

Mixed - 4 (8%) 3 White/Asian 1 White/Black Caribbean

Other - 0

Unknown - 0

***Risk Level:***

4 Serious Risk

17 Significant Risk

24 At risk

4 Awaiting Risk Assessment

**WALSALL****56 young people at risk*****Breakdown:***

51 - Female

5 Male

Age Range : 10 - 18

***Risk level:***

10 - Serious Risk

9 - Significant Risk

37 - At Risk

***Ethnicity***

White UK - 38 (68%)

White Irish - 0 (0%)

White Other - 1 (2%)

Eastern European - 0(0%)

Black Caribbean - 1 (2%)

Black African - 1 (2%)

Indian - 1 (2%)

Pakistani - 3 (5%)

Bangladeshi - 0 (0%)

Chinese - 0 (0%)

Other Asian - 4 (7%)

Mixed - 6 (10%)

Other - 1 (2%)

Unknown - 0 (0%)

## **WOLVERHAMPTON**

### **33 young people at risk**

#### ***Breakdown:***

31 - Female

2 - male

Age Range : 13 - 17

#### ***Risk level:***

9 - Serious Risk

16 - Significant Risk

8 - At Risk

#### ***Ethnicity***

White UK - 23 (70%)

White Irish - 0 (0%)

Eastern European - 0 (0%)

White Other - 2 (6%)

Black Caribbean - 0 (0%)

Black African - 0 (0%)

Indian - 0 (0%)

Bangladeshi - 0 (0%)

Other - 0 (0%)

Other Asian - 0 (0%)

Chinese - 0 (0%)

Mixed - 2 (6%)

Not Known - 6 (18%)