



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## **Public Petitions Committee**

### **1st Report, 2014 (Session 4)**

# **Report on tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland**

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## **Public Petitions Committee**

### **1st Report, 2014 (Session 4)**

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## **Public Petitions Committee**

### **Remit and membership**

#### **Remit:**

The remit of the Public Petitions Committee is to consider public petitions addressed to the Parliament.

#### **Membership:**

Chic Brodie (Deputy Convener)  
Jackson Carlaw  
Adam Ingram (from 30 October 2012 to 27 June 2013)  
Richard Lyle (from 18 September 2012 to 30 October 2012)  
Angus MacDonald  
Anne McTaggart  
David Stewart (Convener)  
David Torrance (from 27 June 2013)  
John Wilson

#### **Committee Clerking Team:**

##### **Clerk to the Committee**

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##### **Assistant Clerks**

Andrew Howlett  
Stuart Todd

##### **Committee Assistant**

Chris Hynd



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## Public Petitions Committee

### 1st Report, 2014 (Session 4)

#### Report on tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland

The Committee reports to the Parliament as follows—

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The remit of the Public Petitions Committee is to consider public petitions addressed to the Parliament.

2. In July 2011, the Committee received a public petition from Barnardo's Scotland calling for new research into the nature and scope of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Scotland and new Scottish Government guidelines. After considering some preliminary evidence and hearing from Aileen Campbell, the Minister for Children and Young People, the Committee decided to undertake an inquiry into some of the issues around CSE. It agreed the following remit for the inquiry—

To examine the nature and extent of child sexual exploitation in Scotland (CSE); in conjunction with relevant agencies and stakeholders, to determine the most pertinent issues that need to be addressed; to examine the effectiveness of current measures aimed at tackling and preventing CSE; and to make recommendations on what needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of those measures.

3. The Committee observed that around the same time as it commenced its work, a number of working groups and research bodies also decided to commence work in this area. This could have led to problems of co-ordination and overlap. In a serious subject and policy area such as this, it is easy to see how that could cause confusion, not least for those who work with young people. We therefore urge a more co-ordinated, less piecemeal approach to taking these issues forward.

4. Different authorities have had varied levels of success in achieving genuine multi-agency and multi-sector working. They can differ in their acknowledgment, awareness and understanding of the issues associated with CSE. Although individual examples of good practice exist, the overall response to CSE is patchy. In the view of the Committee, training, addressing young people's needs and

vulnerabilities, supporting them after CSE and disrupting perpetrators are inadequately co-ordinated.

**5. For these reasons, the Committee's overarching recommendation is that the Scottish Government should develop a National Strategy for tackling child sexual exploitation.**

**6. The National Strategy would be a framework for a co-ordinated national approach to tackling and preventing CSE and supporting the victims. In responding to this report, the Committee expects the Scottish Government to provide details of its progress in this area and suggests that the Ministerial short-life working group could, through its continuation into 2014, be tasked with the initial planning of this.**

7. Although it would appear to be generally accepted that child protection work should be child-centred, information provided in evidence from sexually exploited young people themselves about their experiences was relatively limited; this was something that the Committee had tried to obtain. The agencies we enlisted to assist in identifying young witnesses for this inquiry were keen to help, however young people were reluctant to come forward in person. We understand the reasons for this and thank the agencies for providing the anonymised case studies instead.

8. The Committee also noted that much of the focus to date has been on statutory agencies' information and recording. While this is essential and valuable, it is important to acknowledge that the voluntary and charitable sector undertakes a significant proportion of the support for, and with, young people.

9. The Committee issued its call for evidence in two tranches. The first tranche sought submissions from support organisations for vulnerable or excluded young people, female and male and organisations that work directly with CSE and childhood sexual abuse, in areas such as homelessness, mental health, addictions, leaving care, school exclusions, sexual health or offending. Such providers are mainly found in the "third sector". The Committee posed a number of questions and also asked organisations to provide views from their service users.

10. The Committee's second tranche call for evidence was aimed at bodies and organisations working within the statutory sector as part of the current framework for tackling and preventing CSE. The Committee asked about barriers to effective practice in the identification, disruption or prosecution of CSE perpetrators.

11. The Committee received thirty eight written submissions and heard oral evidence over four meetings. Annexes C and D contain the Official Reports of the evidence sessions and the written submissions in full. The Committee would like to thank all those who provided evidence. In addition, the Committee would like to thank its adviser Dr Sarah Nelson, University of Edinburgh, who provided valuable direction and insight.

## Background

12. CSE takes many guises and forms, as do perpetrators, and it is vital that Scotland's response, and indeed the steps taken to prevent and disrupt CSE, are inclusive, clear in purpose and outcome based. As already noted, the Committee was made aware of some of the current work in the field of CSE in Scotland and the rest of the UK. We have all been aware of the high-profile cases reported recently in the media. Such cases have been the catalyst for inquiries and action by the UK Parliament and authorities and this is clearly welcomed; but of equal importance is ensuring that lessons are learned and recommendations implemented.

13. In England and Wales, some of the work noted by the Committee was the recent completion of the Children's Commissioner for England's two-year inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups (CSEGG); in June 2013 publication of the UK Parliament's Home Affairs Committee report: *Child sexual exploitation and the response to localised grooming*<sup>1</sup> and the announcement in October 2013 by the then Director of Public Prosecutions, Keir Starmer QC, that prosecutors (in England and Wales) would be taking a new approach when reviewing cases of child sexual abuse (including CSE).

14. In Scotland, in early 2011, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) and the Centre for Rural Childhood, Perth College, UHI published a report: *Scotland: a safe place for child traffickers? A scoping study into the nature and extent of child trafficking in Scotland*.<sup>2</sup>

15. In late 2011, the University of Bedfordshire was commissioned by the Scottish Government to review the existing research, policy and practice literature from the UK regarding the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation and trafficking for exploitation, focusing on Scotland; to review key Scottish statistics regarding the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation in Scotland; and to gather preliminary and exploratory information from key professionals regarding their perceptions of the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation in Scotland. This work was undertaken between January and June 2012 and the report was published in October 2012.<sup>3</sup>

16. In December 2012, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (also known as the Care Inspectorate) commissioned the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) to undertake research to investigate sexual exploitation of looked after children in Scotland. The work related in particular to children in Scottish care services for which the Inspectorate has responsibility. This CELCIS report was published in December 2013.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/68/68i.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.sccyp.org.uk/uploaded\\_docs/policy/sccyp%20child%20trafficking%20report.pdf](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/uploaded_docs/policy/sccyp%20child%20trafficking%20report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *Exploring the Scale and Nature of Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland:*  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00404853.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland:*  
<http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>

17. In January 2013, the Scottish Government announced “a programme of action to tackle CSE including the establishment of a new expert group” – a Ministerial Short-Life Working Group. The remit of the Group was—

to review the actions that are being taken forward in other parts of the UK, such as the action plans set out by the UK Government and the Association of Chief Police Officers, and their applicability and value in Scotland; to assess what practical steps could be taken to improve the understanding of the prevalence of child sexual exploitation in Scotland; and more widely, to consider the issue of how well young people are supported on all aspects of child protection, including the wider vulnerability of some young people and the difficulties services have in identifying and supporting them – the working group will highlight the areas where further national work should be progressed to ensure that the issue of sexual exploitation is seen, and addressed, in this wider context.

18. The Working Group met for the first time in April 2013 and recently reported to Scottish Ministers.

19. The Scottish Government also commissioned the University of Bedfordshire to continue its work by piloting a data monitoring and self-evaluation tool with a local authority. In June 2013 it was announced that the Forth Valley Child Protection Committees would undertake the pilot.

20. In May 2013, the Scottish Child Protection Committee Chairs Forum (SCPCCF) set up a CSE sub-group. Its main initial work for the sub-group was to take forward the pilot with the University of Bedfordshire, the refresh of the National Guidance for Child Protection and discussion and dissemination of recent research and reports. The sub group reports to the SCPCCF and the Committee understands that a full report on progress is to be considered at a meeting in March 2014.

21. It is clear that in 2013 there was more focus on attempting to measure and address CSE in Scotland. The Committee welcomes this but does express surprise that this work seemed to coincide with the inquiry being undertaken by this Committee.

22. Despite the recent focus, there is still a lack of knowledge about the prevalence of sexual exploitation in Scotland, differences in agencies’ understanding of what constitutes CSE and the way in which policy and practice is developed at local level. The Committee is concerned about this.

23. The purpose of the Committee’s inquiry was not, however, to re-open work undertaken elsewhere but to consider the gaps and determine what is required to improve the effectiveness of Scotland’s response to this growing problem.

24. There were some issues raised in written evidence that the Committee was unable to look at in detail as part of this inquiry. For example, in relation to trafficking, the Committee has not considered trafficking from and to other countries, although internal trafficking was touched upon when considering issues relating to looked-after children. Nevertheless, the Committee noted the detailed

written submission received from Glasgow Community Safety Services Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance Service (TARA) which drew attention to the issues and concerns around trafficking and the work on child trafficking undertaken by Glasgow Child Protection Committee and others.

**25. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government commission research into external trafficking in Scotland, that this takes account of evidence from TARA, Aberlour, Legal Services Agency, Izzy's Promise and other groups knowledgeable in this field; and that evidence given to this inquiry, relevant to external trafficking and issues relating to sexual exploitation of refugees and asylum seekers, is made available to those commissioned to undertake this research.**

#### **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**26. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government develop a National Strategy for tackling child sexual exploitation. This would be a framework for a co-ordinated national approach to tackling and preventing CSE and supporting the victims. The Committee expects the Scottish Government to report regularly to the Parliament on its progress.**

**27. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government commission research into external trafficking in Scotland, that this takes account of evidence from TARA, Aberlour, Legal Services Agency, Izzy's Promise and other groups knowledgeable in this field; and that evidence given to this inquiry, relevant to external trafficking and issues relating to sexual exploitation of refugees and asylum seekers is made available to those commissioned to undertake this research.**

**28. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government gives high priority to ensuring that high-quality data collection tools, which will supply vital information on the prevalence and nature of CSE in Scotland, can be identified, standardised and rolled out across Scotland.**

**29. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government should call together representatives from the NWG, CPC Chairs' Forum, Police Scotland, the Ministerial Working Group, Barnardo's, social work, health, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People and COPFS and others who have been, or should be, significantly involved in data collection issues, expertise and initiatives, and in promoting good practice throughout the UK. This forum should decide collectively on a coherent data collection strategy for Scotland, and the tools and techniques which will be most effective in tackling CSE.**

**30. The Forth Valley Child Protection Committees' pilot of data collection tools should be carefully monitored and evaluated, and if successful should play an important part, of the strategy for greatly improved data collection. An evaluation report of this pilot should be made available to the Scottish Parliament.**

- 31. Given the identified gaps in knowledge, the Committee recommends that specific research into the prevalence of CSE in rural and remote areas and the current barriers to its identification is commissioned.**
- 32. The Committee recommends that all schools should have safety programmes including interactive safety workshops and covering internet and social media dangers.**
- 33. Education programmes need to show young people how to recognise and challenge sexual bullying and challenge girls being stereotyped as submissive and appearance-driven and boys as aggressive and active. A mapping exercise of current good practice in this area should be a first step.**
- 34. The Committee recommends that work in schools and in youth settings, with young men in particular, is undertaken to make them aware of inappropriate, coercive sexual conduct, and to offer alternatives.**
- 35. The Committee recommends that social work and other child protection services give higher priority to addressing childhood sexual abuse in general, and other vulnerabilities in younger children, such as neglect, which may put them at particular risk of CSE.**
- 36. Data collection for looked-after children should be reviewed including half-yearly reviews of information held on all child protection registers. Data from specialist services on children at risk should be collated by child protection committees. There should be a category on child protection registers for CSE, and there needs to be a policy investigation around why so few children over 12 are currently on child protection registers.**
- 37. The Committee recommends that refuges for young people experiencing or at risk of CSE need to be established. Consideration should be given to placing a relevant duty on all local authorities in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill. The reasons for Scotland's only refuge closing should be investigated.**
- 38. The Committee recommends that the powers of residential staff to protect the young people in their care need to be clarified.**
- 39. The Committee recommends that the Care Inspectorate should make CSE a specific area for inspection for local authorities and all organisations accommodating children.**
- 40. The Committee recommends that whenever it emerges that a young person has an impairment, not originally identified, practitioners must update records at the very earliest opportunity.**
- 41. The Committee calls for closer partnership working between mainstream services and third sector organisations rooted in BME communities, to raise capacity and build confidence amongst the mainstream workforce.**

42. It is the view of the Committee that in order to help young people recognise and escape from sexually exploitative situations, specialist and general services must be made available in every region of Scotland.

43. Third sector agencies make an important contribution to the support of traumatised young people. Greater recognition of the value and contribution of the third sector is needed. It should be funded to enable it to provide support services. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government take the lead on this.

44. The Committee calls for a national education programme on CSE, with support materials to be delivered in all schools and for higher and further education courses in social work and social care to cover all aspects of disability and child protection.

45. The Committee recommends that a programme of training be co-ordinated across Scotland as part of the national strategy to tackle child sexual exploitation. Child protection committees should play a key role at local level.

46. The Committee recommends that the With Scotland network explore how it might best co-ordinate with the NWG to publicise training opportunities in Scotland.

47. The Committee expects that every effort should be made to involve young people in the content of training for adults. It is extremely hard for exploited young people to come forward and talk about what happened to them. Initiatives in England using photography and DVD projects with young people allow them to have their voices and thinking heard by the professionals. These should be studied for possible adaptation in Scotland.

48. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government, Police Scotland and all key agencies adopt a high commitment to disrupting perpetrator activity and identifying those at risk.

49. The Committee recommends that consideration is given to having a named person support CSE victims throughout the justice process.

50. The Committee recommends that post-legislative scrutiny of the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005 be undertaken to ensure that the intention of this legislation is delivered and that all possible perpetrators of CSE crimes are being prosecuted.

51. The Committee recommends that Risk of Sexual Harm Orders (RSHOs) are used in a much more comprehensive way for the protection of young people in Scotland.

52. The Committee recommends mandatory training for frontline and specialist police officers on legislative options to disrupt perpetrators. The

**Committee also recommends better police analysis and collation of information about and the tracking of abusive networks.**

**53. The Committee recommends that third sector agencies be fully involved and consulted in multi-agency arrangements for intelligence-gathering and intelligence-sharing in relation to CSE.**

## PART 1: THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

54. The first part of the Committee's remit was to examine the nature and extent of child sexual exploitation in Scotland.

### Definition of child sexual exploitation

55. In Scotland, the definition of child sexual exploitation is—

“Any involvement of a child or young person below 18 in a sexual activity for which remuneration of cash or in kind is given to a young person or a third person or persons. The perpetrator will have power over the child by virtue of one of more of the following – age, emotional maturity, gender, physical strength, intellect and economic and other resources e.g. access to drugs.”<sup>5</sup>

### Current definition of CSE

56. During the Committee's inquiry, a wide range of individuals and agencies was asked how far the current definition of CSE helps efforts to protect young people, and whether it is helpful to distinguish CSE from childhood sexual abuse.

57. While the majority of respondents found the definition useful, and important in raising awareness and understanding, some expressed reservations.

58. A number of organisations, including NSPCC Scotland, Children 1<sup>st</sup>, Aberlour, Open Secret and others did not see or support a distinction between sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, especially since many of their service users had suffered both during their lives. 18 and Under said—

“We have found that there is no simple model of exploitation, with each young person's case being different and complex. The main thing we have found in common...is that the majority of the young people have already suffered sexual abuse (usually by a family member) and they have low self-esteem”.<sup>6</sup>

59. Say Women, Zero Tolerance and Women's Support Project felt that CSE was part of a continuum shaped by gendered power imbalances and by the socialisation of young men and women. Zero Tolerance queried the focus on remuneration in the current definition of CSE—

“We know that in fact much sexual exploitation involves no exchange of goods, gifts or cash, but is in fact conducted for reasons of conformity and due to the power imbalances cited in the definition. For many girls in particular, taking part in sexually exploitative practices, such as sharing images of their body parts via mobile phones, is not done for remuneration, but to be accepted and recognised in a culture that routinely objectifies women's bodies.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Scottish Executive, 2003 *Sexual Exploitation Through Prostitution*:  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/07/vcyp/4>

<sup>6</sup> 18 and Under, written submission, page 1.

<sup>7</sup> Zero Tolerance, written submission, page 1.

60. Safe Space suggested that any strategy developed to address and prevent CSE would need to ensure that young people *themselves* understand what CSE is and how to recognise it—

“Safe Space has a young people’s Advisory Group. Recent discussion highlighted that young people were unhappy about the term *sexual exploitation* as opposed to *sexual abuse*... their understanding of sexual abuse is by exploiting the vulnerability of young people whether or not goods are received. Many of these young survivors recognise the term *sexual abuse* and through working hard to overcome the secrecy, fear and shame associated with it can now say the words and importantly speak openly about it (they) fear the term *sexual exploitation* is now confusing issues for young people in Scotland who are reluctant to ask what this term actually means.... “does this mean grooming?” was asked repeatedly by them...

The definition was also understood to mean one significant transaction taking place for money or goods whereas their experience of abuse was long term, insidious and complex regarding abuse of trust and often within perceived loving relationships.”<sup>8</sup>

61. Martin Henry (Stop it Now) and Daljeet Dagon (Barnardo’s Scotland) both acknowledged that there is a continuum; but there are particular aspects, features and complexities which demand attention, training and action. Martin Henry told the Committee—

“From a preventative point of view, it would be dangerous to separate child sexual exploitation too much from the wider childhood sexual abuse agenda. That said, it is absolutely right strategically that we start to pay attention to the particular form that child sexual exploitation takes and the complexities around it”.<sup>9</sup>

62. Daljeet Dagon explained—

“Barnardo’s focus has never been about one or the other, but is about recognising that child sexual exploitation is different, in the sense that it tends to be non-familial people who are involved in the abuse and exploitation of the child. Barnardo’s feels that child sexual exploitation has been under the radar for too long. ....the experience of the past 20 years and inquiries that have been done down south have highlighted the complexity of the issue—all the different ways in which young people become involved and all the different techniques that perpetrators use to avoid prosecution.”<sup>10</sup>

63. While the Committee agrees that CSE is often part of a continuum, it shares the belief that it is an extremely important and previously under-emphasised part which deserves urgent attention in its own right.

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<sup>8</sup> Safe Space, written submission, page 1.

<sup>9</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report 11 June 2013*. Col 1434.

<sup>10</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report 11 June 2013*. Col 1434.

## Availability of data

64. The 2011 University of Bedfordshire Scottish scoping study, which provided the background information for this inquiry, makes clear that data is not systematically collected on the nature and prevalence of CSE in Scotland.

65. Participants in the scoping study's expert seminar felt CSE did not necessarily have high priority and that awareness varied considerably across Scotland. The scoping study recommended that future Scottish estimates should consider not just high-risk young people, but young people in general; a more challenging task since such young people may not be on the "radar" of any agency.<sup>11</sup>

66. Due to the lack of robust evidence, the Committee has not been able to make any definitive findings on the nature and extent of CSE in Scotland. Nearly all organisations who submitted evidence to us had problems in estimating numbers, in most part due to the difficulty in separating sexually abused young service users in general from those specifically suffering CSE.

67. More accurate prevalence figures will only emerge after CSE is given higher priority and after more informed awareness exists throughout the agencies, communities, public and young people themselves as to what CSE is and the various forms it can take.

68. The Committee expects that its inquiry recommendations themselves will lead to greater exposure of CSE cases and will contribute to more accurate recording of prevalence. The Committee also shares Children in Scotland's view, that while further prevalence research would prove very useful—

"It should not act as a brake or delaying measure on identifying action which would help young people and children experiencing sexual exploitation, those at risk, and the practitioners who want to support these young people and children effectively."<sup>12</sup>

69. The Committee has made a number of observations and highlighted some examples of good practice around data collection and estimating prevalence. Included are some prevalence estimates from England (noting that England has approximately ten times the population of Scotland) Nothing the Committee was told led it to believe England and Scotland differ to any great extent in terms of the prevalence of CSE.

70. Further research should be carried out to build on the studies undertaken which were either "snapshots" of prevalence or considered one aspect of CSE (such as risks to looked-after children or gangs and groups). Some examples of these are—

- The 2012 Interim Report of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into CSE in Gangs and Groups "*I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world*" found 2407 confirmed

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<sup>11</sup> *Exploring the Scale and Nature of Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland:*

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00404853.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Children in Scotland, written submission, paragraph 1.

victims of CSE in either gangs or groups. However 16500 displayed three or more signs or behaviour indicating high risk of CSE.<sup>13</sup>

- The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG) reported that 53 of their member services had engaged 2894 children in 2009-10. It produced a data monitoring tool to enable agencies to collate information on the nature and prevalence of CSE.<sup>14</sup>
- A small-scale scoping study<sup>15</sup> estimated through case-file analysis that a third of looked-after and accommodated young people were at substantial risk of, or already harmed by, sexual exploitation. This can be compared with a Barnardo's study<sup>16</sup> which identified sexual exploitation as an issue for almost two thirds of girls in residential homes in Northern Ireland who took part.
- In 2011, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) conducted "A thematic assessment of on-street grooming" to assess the extent of CSE. It collected data from police forces, children's services, local safeguarding children boards and specialist services providers and found evidence of 1875 cases.
- Following the NWG's visit to Scotland in October 2013, it reported that estimates gained from agencies of young people accessing services suggested that the number accessing each service could be anything from 64 – 300 annually. It found much concern about under-reporting and under-recognition of the issue, particularly in rural areas.
- The NWG's findings also included low recognition and recording of boys as victims. In oral evidence to the Committee, Stop it Now, Barnardo's Scotland and the Open Road project commented that services were less likely to identify them; that boys had a particular fear of a "gay" label if they came forward; and that some services believed boys involved in CSE were simply experimenting with their sexuality.
- CELCIS concluded from its case study research that "Provisionally, based on these results, the assumptions above and findings from other strands (of our research), a prevalence of CSE at least

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<sup>13</sup> Executive summary of the report:

[http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content\\_636](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_636)

<sup>14</sup> *A National Picture of Child Sexual Exploitation and Specialist Provisions in the UK 2010:*

<http://mesmac.co.uk/files/cse-specialist.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> *Sexual exploitation of vulnerable young people looked after and accommodated in Glasgow* (Rigby P and Murie S, March 2013):

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=15275>

<sup>16</sup> *'Not a world away' The sexual exploitation of children and young people in Northern Ireland* (Dr Beckett H, October 2011)

[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/13932\\_not\\_a\\_world\\_away\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/13932_not_a_world_away_full_report.pdf)

approaching 25% (one in four) would seem likely for children in the care population. Furthermore we expect this to be considerably higher for older age groups, for girls and for children placed in residential care.”<sup>17</sup>

## **Data collection**

71. The NWG believes a scoping exercise across Scotland to gain more comprehensive understanding of the nature and scale of CSE would be helpful.<sup>18</sup> The Committee also heard evidence from a wide variety of sources calling for data recording systems to be improved before this could be achieved successfully. NSPCC Scotland said that improvement must be at local and national level to risk-assess against prevalence and inform the development of policy and practice.”

72. The CELCIS report recommended more effective systems for gathering and aggregating data about CSE. The Committee notes that participants in the CELCIS study identified varied practice across Scotland, and suggested that a ‘national template’ may be required.

73. The Committee noted some initiatives in data collection in Scotland which could help establish a template for wider use in future. For example—

- The Child Protection Committee Chairs Forum (SCPCCF) has set up a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) subgroup which reports to the committee. It is taking forward a pilot in conjunction with the University of Bedfordshire, which had developed various data monitoring and self-evaluation tools. The Scottish Government has been keen to adapt and develop this material for a Scottish context, in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire and child protection committees. Forth Valley CPCs are progressing this pilot.

74. Police Scotland submitted some additional examples to the Committee, which included data on perpetrators as well as victims—

- The Vulnerable Young People Operational Group in Renfrewshire: representatives from police, social Work, education, health, the Children’s Reporter and Barnardo’s, plus others on a case-by-case basis meet regularly. The group tracks cases of CSE in the local area and shares necessary information and expertise in relation to identifying young people involved and disrupting perpetrator activity.
- Operation Dash: In February 2013 police established a research cell to scope the scale and extent of CSE in the 12 local authorities of the (then) Strathclyde Police force area. The research cell works closely with Barnardo’s to encourage submission of intelligence information.

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<sup>17</sup> CELCIS report: *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland* (2013): <http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>. Page 75 of the report.

<sup>18</sup> NWG Network, written submission, page 3.

- Angus Child Sexual Exploitation Short Life Working Group (SLWG): Police, other statutory agencies and the third sector have been in discussion to set up a SLWG to carry out a scoping / mapping exercise, to understand the prevalence of CSE in Angus.

### **Nature and types of child sexual exploitation**

75. As with prevalence, the Committee had the same problems in making definitive statements about the different types of CSE found in Scotland, and their relative significance. Such information can only emerge over time when positive measures are implemented to protect young people and disrupt perpetrators.

76. Some evidence suggested an increased vulnerability for young people living in remote and rural areas, as access to appropriate services can be limited. Safe Space said—

“Out with the cities Scotland’s remote and rural areas are desperately lacking in resources offering support even on an outreach basis. This needs to be addressed in order to disrupt the potential isolation and helplessness many looked after young people experience.”<sup>19</sup>

77. The Committee did not consider issues around CSE specific to rural or remote areas however it believes that more information is required in order to have a better picture of CSE prevalence across Scotland.

78. Some broad categories of CSE such as peer-on-peer, online exploitation, CSE by gangs and groups, or CSE of looked-after young people have been well-publicised and to some extent are familiar. The evidence of support agencies has been valuable in revealing less-considered or more subtle forms of CSE and the newer exploitation techniques now being found within familiar categories. Some of the examples we were told about include—

- Both the EVA project and 18 and Under discussed their experiences of alcoholic parents who permit multiple adult males to sexually abuse their children during drinking sessions or at other times, by selling them, or possibly providing access in exchange for alcohol.
- The Women’s Support Project described young women students targeted via recruitment posters for escort agencies in colleges and universities. Young people are more vulnerable to becoming involved in the commercialised sex industry through increasing financial pressures or to being approached online by “Modelling Agencies” to take sexualised pictures and share them.
- Open Secret, writing about online grooming of their vulnerable service users, noted: “One indicator of CSE in the past could have been purchasing phone credit; but now due to free applications such as whatsapp...young people can send messages for free, so this may increase or hide the risk.”

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<sup>19</sup> Safe Space, written submission, page 2.

## **Recommendations**

**79. We recommend that the Scottish Government gives high priority to ensuring that high-quality data collection tools, which will supply vital information on the prevalence and nature of CSE in Scotland, can be identified, standardised and rolled out across Scotland.**

**80. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government should call together representatives from the NWG, CPC Chairs' Forum, Police Scotland, the Ministerial Working Group, Barnardo's, social work, health, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People and COPFS and others who have been, or should be, significantly involved in data collection issues, expertise and initiatives, and in promoting good practice throughout the UK. This forum should decide collectively on a coherent data collection strategy for Scotland, and the tools and techniques which will be most effective in tackling CSE.**

**81. Forth Valley Child Protection Committees' pilot of data collection tools should be carefully monitored and evaluated, and if successful should play an important part, of the strategy for greatly improved data collection. An evaluation report of this pilot should be made available to the Scottish Parliament.**

**82. Given the identified gaps in knowledge, the Committee recommends that specific research into the prevalence of CSE in rural and remote areas and the current barriers to its identification is commissioned.**

## PART 2: THE SOCIALISATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND EARLY INTERVENTION

83. Many of those who gave evidence to the Committee were keen to emphasise that child sexual exploitation does not take place in a vacuum, outside the norms and values of our society; nor does it suddenly arise in the early teenage years.

### **Social networks**

84. Young people have more direct access to images, advertising, media and social contact than ever before. There is also an increasingly normalised climate of sexualized and intimate relationships among young people and the ways in which boys and young girls are socialised into thinking about relationships; especially when exploitative images are now so readily available to view, exchange and create.

85. The Committee is alive to the danger of normalising such behaviour for young people by the objectification of women and girls, by peer sexual bullying and “sexting” on mobile devices. Caledonia Youth illustrated the concerns—

“The advent of the internet poses particular issues relating to child sexual exploitation and much more needs to be done at an earlier age to educate children and young people about the real dangers that exist. We should also work with supporting parents and carers on the internet as again many will feel intimidated with technology”.

“In addition we need to ensure that young men understand the implications of inappropriate sexual conduct which they may not perceive as being abusive together with instilling an appreciation of the importance of equality in relationships.”<sup>20</sup>

86. The Committee would note that the remit of the inquiry did not include looking at the key role that the media plays and can play in reporting, defining, mitigating and promoting possible solutions to the problems of CSE. Attempts to tackle CSE must include media specialists who bring a different knowledge dimension to the issue.

### *Values and relationships*

87. Early intervention with vulnerable children can increase their resilience and protection but it is not just those who are conventionally vulnerable who are at risk of CSE. Sheila Taylor of the NWG told the Committee that there are no common threads—

“With child abuse in particular, that is learned behaviour, the child does not understand the boundaries and does not know what is normal and not normal and the progression into child sexual exploitation is part of that journey. The starting point for that child will be much earlier, and work might be required with the family”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Caledonia Youth, written submission, page 2.

<sup>21</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 29 October 2013, Col 1742.

“There are also single-complex cases. (A teenage girl might have) no vulnerabilities in her life, and she has a normal, healthy relationship with her parents in a happy family home. Her only vulnerability arises when she is a teenager. She might be friends with somebody who is engaged in child sexual exploitation. Out of concern or curiosity, she might go along one day, and she gets locked in, raped and filmed – she is involved then, with the blackmail and all the rest of it. A whole host of other things might manifest themselves around that individual child. The starting point for that individual is very different. Usually in such cases, the family is very supportive in trying to do everything that it can to manage the situation.”<sup>22</sup>

88. Zero Tolerance told the Committee that “a society awash with sex ‘entertainment’ venues is one that creates clear pathways from child exploitation into adult exploitation.”<sup>23</sup>

89. Roshni said that CSE could not be tackled without addressing fundamental values and attitudes—

“Many of which are held by wider society, (and) fuel some of the misogynistic behaviour seen in the recent high-profile CSE cases. Therefore, we would call on the Government to adopt a strategy to combat these negative attitudes. We need to educate young men and empower young women so that the misogynistic beliefs which fuel CSE no longer have a place in our society”.<sup>24</sup>

90. The Women’s Support Project spoke of the “pressure on young men to adopt stereotypical hyper masculine roles”. Open Road, which works with men who sell sex, urged the promotion of a positive role for young men, saying--

“The Scottish Government’s document *Curriculum for Excellence* identifies multiple actions under the “Relationships, sexual health and parenthood” outcomes, including “I understand and can explain the importance of, and need for, commitment, trust and respect in loving and sexual relationships” and “I recognise that power can exist within relationships and can be used positively as well as negatively (p.95).”<sup>25</sup>

91. It is important that all children and young people are educated about values, relationships and boundaries. There is already some good practice in relationship education and internet safety education. For example, Open Secret told of its involvement in a Central Scotland internet safety action group which includes social work, health, education and the voluntary sector. However Children 1<sup>st</sup> called for a less piecemeal approach and urged that a mapping exercise be undertaken into existing good practice, so that “we could, as a sector, plan an approach to healthy relationships’ education and deliver a comprehensive programme, building on the work that has already been undertaken.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 29 October 2013, Col 1743.

<sup>23</sup> Zero Tolerance, written submission, page 3.

<sup>24</sup> Roshni, written submission, page 4.

<sup>25</sup> NHS Open Road, written submission, paragraph 3.2.

<sup>26</sup> Children 1st, written submission, page 2.

## Early intervention with children at risk

92. Another theme to emerge in evidence was the need to intervene positively and protectively with more vulnerable children *earlier* in their lives and to build resilience against later exploitation. Children in Scotland pointed to research that suggested—

“our early intervention principles fall down, not in the principles, but in their robust application...(when) delays are made in intervening early. If we could understand more about the journey of a young person who has been exploited and how this could have been prevented, we will know what practice could be improved and how practitioners could be supported to put in place preventative action.”<sup>27</sup>

93. The Committee heard that previous neglect and maltreatment is a risk factor for later child sexual exploitation, and that as a result Stop it Now, Children 1st, 18 and Under, Zero Tolerance and other organisations now give some priority to providing support for younger children. However, Zero Tolerance urged—

“Social work to give more priority to this issue.... and social work needs to upgrade its lowered priority for child sexual abuse”.<sup>28</sup>

94. And 18 and Under called for—

“much earlier intervention with young people to make them aware of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and work needs done to identify young survivors sooner and prevent further abuse.”<sup>29</sup>

95. The Committee was told that child protection services are organised largely to explore and investigate sexual abuse or exploitation *within* the family. Perpetrators can come from within or outside a family and it is clear that there is a requirement for child protection services to be able to address CSE regardless of whether there is any family connection between the perpetrator and victim.

96. Children 1<sup>st</sup> and 18 and Under called for more confidential services for children to give them initial confidence and the ability to come forward. Children 1<sup>st</sup> emphasised the equal importance of all adults being willing to listen—

“All people who work with children and young people need training on disclosure. This is paramount if awareness of this issue is to be raised and staff know how to support children through a disclosure and ultimately ensure they are believed and supported.”<sup>30</sup>

97. To illustrate some of these problems, the following quote from a young person provides a first-hand account of abuse from a young age that was not picked up by agencies and its progression into exploitation by other men—

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<sup>27</sup> Children in Scotland, written submission, paragraph 8.

<sup>28</sup> Zero Tolerance, written submission, paragraph 4.

<sup>29</sup> Eighteen and Under, written submission, page 3.

<sup>30</sup> Children 1st, written submission, page 3.

*"I'm 22 now. When I was 5 or 6 my cousin started to sexually abuse me. It went on for years. I tried to tell but no one believed me. When I was 13 he started forcing me to have sex with his mates and he took money. Things were getting worse and worse but when I was 15 one of my sisters told on my cousin.... The police asked me and I said it happened to me too but I was too scared to tell it all. It went to court and he was found guilty but was not jailed. When I was 16 he started stalking me and saying he was going to tell about what I had done with men. He tried to get me to do it all again. What was not helpful? I was scared of the social work in case they took me and my sisters away. The doctor offered pills. What would help others? Confidential services that listen. Education (about abuse) at a very young age: someone to trust in." J, 18 and Under*

98. In an era of instant access to online pornography and increasing use of social media, the Committee believes education programmes must be expanded and developed to focus on healthy, caring and consensual relationships.

### **Recommendations**

99. **The Committee recommends that all schools should have safety programmes including interactive safety workshops and internet dangers.**

100. **Education programmes also need to show young people how to recognise and challenge sexual bullying and challenge girls being stereotyped as submissive and appearance-driven and boys as aggressive and active. A mapping exercise of current good education practice in Scotland should be a first step.**

101. **The Committee recommends that work in schools and in youth settings, with young men in particular, is undertaken to make them aware of inappropriate, coercive sexual conduct, and to offer alternatives.**

102. **The Committee recommends that social work and other child protection services give higher priority to addressing childhood sexual abuse in general, and other vulnerabilities in younger children, such as neglect, which may put them at particular risk of CSE.**

## PART 3: THE VULNERABILITIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

### Young people in the care system

#### *New technologies*

103. The Committee has already made reference to the ease with which young people now have access to images, advertising, media and social networks. It was concerned to hear from a number of agencies that children and young people without particular vulnerabilities are now being drawn into sexual exploitation, particularly as a result of advances in access to online technology and social media. The risks of peer sexual exploitation, in particular, through young people being able to easily access abusive and pornographic images, with the possible effects on gender relationships and young men's distorted views of intimate behaviour were raised.

#### *Peer pressure*

104. Any child, regardless of background, can find themselves in a situation at risk of exploitation.

105. Barnardo's Safer Choices project in Glasgow gave an example in their case studies of how Roisin, an ordinary teenager, perhaps during a short spell of vulnerability herself and under the strong influence of a friend, became involved (*full case study reported in Annexe A*)

**Example 5:** *Roisin's school friend Amanda, it later turned out, was a vulnerable rape victim. Amanda tried to get her into meeting men online. Last summer Roisin and Amanda met 28 year old Ryan and his 24 year old friend, Amanda having met Ryan on Facebook, and Roisin was persuaded to have sex with the 24 year old. The Barnardo's worker explored with Roisin why someone in their 20s might want to meet someone much younger. Roisin couldn't understand it either as they would have nothing to talk about. Roisin was visibly upset remembering meeting the men, saying she wouldn't have gone through with it if it hadn't been for Amanda. She felt she would still be a virgin if she had not become friends with Amanda and would not now drink as much. Roisin raised concerns about Amanda who is continuing to meet men through Facebook.*

106. This group of young people may be able to benefit particularly from a nationwide programme of preventive education (see below) and from programmes that encourage respect between young men and women. This group may also be able to benefit particularly from the kinds of specific third sector CSE support projects based in the community which they could approach discreetly for help. Examples in England such as Safe and Sound Derby, and Hand in Hand Keighley, which help young people to escape violence and abuse, are worth studying for their possible adaptation in Scottish urban and rural areas.

107. The CELCIS report warned against easy generalisations about vulnerability. However, it said, research still suggested particular consideration should go to young people whose background makes them particularly vulnerable, for example having been sexually abused or violently mistreated before being looked-after, and in need of residential care; along with current signs of risk like going missing, or misusing drugs or alcohol.

108. The University of Bedfordshire's Scottish report<sup>31</sup> described some causal connections between residential care placements and the experience of CSE. These connections included deliberate targeting of residential units by abusive adults; peer exploitation by children living there and by networks of looked-after young people; exploitation as a reason for entry to care in the first place; and exploitation after going missing from care. The Committee was told that this demonstrates the importance of extending safety programmes to residential units and schools.

109. A practitioner participant in the CELCIS study said—

“From my experience the abusers are usually known to at least one of the young people before that child was accommodated...often a child's journey through care can unfortunately involve many placements meaning that the perpetrator may have access to a large number of young people... by exploiting a young person's contacts. This is especially true in the age of social media where grooming takes place at an incredibly fast rate and young people openly advertise contact details and friends' lists”.<sup>32</sup>

*Peer pressure in the care system*

110. The backgrounds of many young people in the care system have contributed to their vulnerabilities and their inability to recognise that they are victims of exploitation at all. Because of the experiences some have had earlier in their lives, they may have unsafe personal boundaries or expectations of what other people should be able to ask of them.

111. 18 and Under's experience of looked-after young people in residential units and schools involved in CSE was—

“They tend to be quite hostile to authority and often have complex backgrounds involving neglect and abuse. They often regard themselves as in control and able to exploit men into giving them money, which they can then use for cigarettes, clothes, drugs and alcohol. They are often encouraged into exploitation by friends they meet in the units and men (sometimes women) who befriend them...As they are already taking big risks with their lives (using alcohol, drugs and running away) and have low self-esteem some of them see the exploitation as a way of being in charge...(some believe) it is better to get money for sex than do it for nothing”.<sup>33</sup>

112. Project No-1 expressed concerns about residential units, telling the Committee—

“There is also a very unnatural atmosphere within these (care) environments, and a lot of peer pressure for the young people to be

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<sup>31</sup> *Exploring the Scale and Nature of Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland:*  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00404853.pdf> Paragraph 4.69

<sup>32</sup> CELCIS report: *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland* (2013):  
<http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>. Page 45 of the report.

<sup>33</sup> Eighteen and Under, written submission, page 1.

sexually active. Young people... also introduce each other to abusers, often running away together to an older persons house...(also) the young people have no one that they can speak to about their concerns/problems/intimate life. Social workers are very much viewed as the enemy by the young people in care...”<sup>34</sup>

113. The Committee recognises that peer pressure can be about trying to “fit in”. Who Cares? Scotland provided some direct evidence from young people themselves about loyalty to friends they make in residential units—

“Some people tell you that your friends are not good for you, but you don’t believe them. Even though you know they’re right. Sometimes when you realise they’re not your pals, it’s too late. You feel that you are betraying your friends if you stop seeing them”.

“...You might go into the house a few times and never take drugs or anything, but you might be having a bad day about something...and that’s when you can get talked into drinking or doing other stuff. Adults sometimes are just waiting for the opportunity. Once you’ve done it it’s like you need to keep doing it or you lose face, because they’re your pals.”<sup>35</sup>

#### *Stigmatising looked-after children*

114. The Committee heard that the risks to looked-after and accommodated children increase if staff or carers do not recognise the risks that the children can face. Who Cares? Scotland said—

“One of the most significantly unhelpful elements of practice is that many workers, from different sectors, are not able to identify CSE, often taking the view that young people are engaged in consensual activity, or that they have made a conscious choice to engage in harmful or risky behaviours. Responses to young people are often judgemental, which can further alienate them and make their “friends” seem more appealing.”<sup>36</sup>

115. Liz Ray (Who Cares? Scotland) added in oral evidence about this attitude—

“I think that they are often seen not as children who are being exploited, but as children who are behaving riskily. Quite often they are viewed just as absconders and as young people who make risky decisions and hang about with dodgy people. The issue becomes about the young person rather than about the perpetrators who are involved with them”.<sup>37</sup>

116. These attitudes and the need for training and awareness-raising to change them are covered further in Part 5 on training and preventative education.

#### *Staff powers and relationships*

117. The evidence received by the Committee suggested that problems are not simply about attitudes but about the powers to protect young people that staff who

<sup>34</sup> Project No-1, written submission, page 2.

<sup>35</sup> Who Cares? Scotland, written submission, page 2.

<sup>36</sup> Who Cares? Scotland, written submission, page 3.

<sup>37</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report 11 June 2013*. Col 1433.

care for looked-after children have, or believe they have. The Committee was not able to achieve any clarity around this and believes it needs to be further examined. Liz Ray demonstrated—

“Young people in residential care units often have free time—they go out with their friends at night and weekends, they visit their families and they may be allowed to be in the community... provided that no issue has been raised in the past, young people are free to come and go at will. That is reasonable for the majority of young people...

...I do not think that staff underuse the powers that they have. Their powers are very limited; young people have rights and if staff are too punitive, the young people contact organisations such as ours to challenge their being kept in the unit. If they are not under a place-of-safety warrant they are not secured, so we have to advocate that they be allowed some time in the community.”<sup>38</sup>

118. This appears to mean that staff caring for particularly vulnerable and at-risk children under 16 have fewer options and powers to keep them safe than would a parent of an under-16 teenager who is far less vulnerable. This could raise questions about the point of taking a young person at risk into residential care in the first place.

#### *Looked-after children: case studies*

119. Barnardo's and 18 and Under provided us with some case studies. These convey the complexity and seriousness of problems from an early age which some have had to deal with, their mixed experiences of residential or foster care and their involvement in CSE. The case studies also suggest a need within residential and foster care for intensive interventions by trained staff on trauma issues to address complex underlying vulnerabilities.

**Example 1** from 18 and Under: *P, a 21 year old girl living in Stirling was taken into care at 3: her mother was an alcoholic. She moved several times in foster care and at 10 was sexually abused by a carer, began acting-out and was eventually put in a residential unit.*

*“While there I was involved in sexual exploitation and all the girls were doing it to get money.... I started fire raising and getting really out of control and was put into a secure unit. That was the most abusive place I ever lived. It was worse than a prison... I was strip searched, left with no clothes or bedclothes and had to eat with plastic cutlery. 18 and under was helping me by visiting and listening but staff did not always let them in. Staff didn't like that they were confidential.”*

*At 18 she was housed in a flat in an area where she did not want to be: Who Cares and 18 and Under supported her and gave practical help. P criticised social work and the NHS for calling her attention-seeking and giving her labels.*

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<sup>38</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report 11 June 2013*. Col 1432.

*“In the flat I had no skills and was lonely. Mates got me involved in exploitation and that helped financially as I had no money. It soon got out of control and my flat was trashed and I was beaten up.”*

*Asked what might help other young people, she said: “More services that are independent from the authorities, and confidential. Safe places to live, and education”.*

**Example 2:** *Barnardo’s writes that Christopher (17) was looked-after from a young age after significant abuse and trauma. His foster placement had recently broken down and he no longer felt safe there. He had ongoing mental health issues and was struggling with both his sexuality and his gender and spent time living under a female identity. There were significant concerns about Christopher’s use of alcohol and drugs, sexual health and risk taking behaviours and his relationships (with peers and adults).*

*He was referred to the service after strong concerns that he was frequenting bars in the city centre and coming back heavily under the influence. He was several times found in the city centre unconscious and has claimed several times to have been sexually assaulted. But he did not believe he was at any risk and couldn’t understand why workers were concerned about him.*

*Barnardo’s gained his trust slowly and gradually. During this time his accommodation broke down, so he became homeless and didn’t follow through with help to access more suitable accommodation.*

*More information emerged about his involvement in sexual exploitation but he denied the risk and did not want to acknowledge or discuss this part of his life. His alcohol and drug use increased and his mental health deteriorated. He eventually withdrew from engaging with the service and other workers in his care plan. Christopher acknowledged that the service allowed him to be himself and was honest and up front with him regarding his behaviours and experiences.*

*The service currently has no contact with Christopher, although we continue to keep a look out for him through street work. He is apparently engaging with some workers and has been referred to a suitable accommodation project.*

120. Both examples highlight the need for agencies to work in a more co-ordinated way. Agencies need to find ways to share information, relevant to a young person’s safety or wellbeing, to ensure that vulnerable individuals such as Christopher are picked up and then receive support and assistance.

#### *Missing and running away*

121. The relationship between running away and going missing and the risk of CSE for young people has been well documented, for instance most recently in Smeaton, E. (2013) *‘Running from hate to what you think is love: The relationship between running away and child sexual exploitation’* (Barnardo’s)<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/15505\\_cse\\_running\\_from\\_hate\\_2l\\_web.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/15505_cse_running_from_hate_2l_web.pdf)

122. NSPCC Scotland raised concerns about children running away and going missing—

“We need to understand better practice to prevent looked-after children running away in order to avoid a pattern of unsafe experiences and placement disruption. Looked after children in residential care are an estimated three times more likely to go missing. Assumptions can be made that the longer a young person is missing, the more able they are to take care of themselves. Lack of action from the police can in turn deter professionals from reporting in the future.”<sup>40</sup>

123. This fear was echoed in the CELCIS report—

“There is also evidence that young people don’t always go very far initially but the more often they run the further they travel, the more it can be accepted that it is something they do and perhaps less concern is shown to them. This has the potential to isolate them further leaving them more open to exploitation.”<sup>41</sup>

124. Risk assessments and guidance applied to repeat missing persons who are looked-after can appear to be inconsistent across authorities. The Committee is of the view that there are at least two linked reasons to trace and provide safety for, and discuss the period of absconding with young people who go missing. One is that vital evidence about perpetrators may be gained, the other is concern for the young people’s health and wellbeing.

125. The NWG reported after its visit to Scottish projects that running away should not just be a concern for those in residential care—

“There appeared to be a greater focus on the risks of CSE when looked-after young people were missing as opposed to young people missing from home. Two projects reported they carried out return interviews for young people missing from care - however there seemed less consistency with return interviews for young people missing from home”.<sup>42</sup>

126. The Committee did hear of examples of good practice such as the Renfrewshire Missing Service (a collaboration between Barnardo’s and police) which undertakes return interviews with young people who have run away from home. Aberlour also told of their multi-agency partnership with Glasgow education and social work services and the police to provide ‘Return Home Welfare Interviews’ to young runaways. The Committee suggests that the good practice that does exist needs to be rolled out more widely across Scotland.

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<sup>40</sup> NSPCC Scotland, written submission, page 3.

<sup>41</sup> *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland:*  
<http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>. Page 43 of the report.

<sup>42</sup> NWG Network, written submission, page 3.

## Refuge provision

127. During evidence taking the Committee heard about Scotland's only refuge for children who had run away from home. Run by Aberlour in the Glasgow area it comprised a three bed unit and support service. The refuge shut down in June 2013 on the grounds that it was not possible to obtain a viable future for it.

128. The Committee is aware that around 9000 young people go missing in Scotland each year and that even though there has been provision in law for refuge for under-16s since 1995, very few have ever been established and there has been little use by statutory agencies. The Committee notes with regret that what was Scotland's only refuge for under-16s, run by Aberlour, has now closed. The Committee is of the view that it is important to establish why this facility was not viable.

129. Ken Dunbar (Aberlour) told the Committee —

“Over the years, we have tried to work with the local authorities and all agencies, including the police, to get right not just the refuge, but the whole system of engagement with young people, including things such as return home welfare interviews, and the whole process of trying to look after a child. There has not been enough appreciation of the importance of a refuge, and an intense period of support for children who have been pushed into a runaway situation.

“We propose placing a duty on local authorities in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill to provide refuge, which we believe would make a huge difference to the way in which refuge works. Currently, there is a power to provide it, but that power has not been taken up. In essence, we believe that there should be a duty, which might well change the way in which local authorities and the other agencies that are involved support refuge. So far, it has been a struggle, but from the cases that we deal with—many of which are horrific—we can see the need and the value of the service”.<sup>43</sup>

130. As the Committee's work coincided with scrutiny of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill, consideration could be given to this suggestion during stage 2 scrutiny.

131. The two case study examples below (reported in full in Annexe A) illustrate the real-life interplay between running away and the risks of sexual assault and exploitation:

**Example 3, from Barnardo's:** *Zoe was known to social work services all of her life and started having a drink problem at 11, which she used to blot out the world. Growing up against a chaotic background where her mother was an alcoholic and in violent relationships, before long she began running away from home. “No one*

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<sup>43</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report 11 June 2013*. Col 1438.

*really cared about me; I don't think they noticed if I didn't come home. I didn't like it when mum's 'boyfriend' was around, I suppose I got scared.*

*So I started going missing for a few nights – I was 11. Then I met this boy, he was 17 and really paid me a lot of attention. He let me stay in his house and I thought he loved me. Then he forced me to have sex, I didn't want this to happen, I said no,” says Zoe.*

*Zoe's drink problems accelerated and her 'boyfriend' introduced her to drugs. Before long she stopped attending school and was self-harming. Eventually Zoe was placed in secure accommodation – but it was only a temporary measure. The 'missing' episodes continued and when Zoe was 14 a friend introduced her to yet another man (of 35). After three months her new 'boyfriend' started getting violent, would demand sex, then one day she was taken to one of the 'regular flats' and he told her to have sex with his friends. Isolated and frightened Zoe was forced to do this under threat of beatings. The exploitation escalated, in different towns and flats, often involving other girl victims too.*

*Zoe's behaviour and constant missing episodes had raised concerns with social services and at this point Barnardo's became involved. Her missing episodes dropped and gradually she came to realise that she was not to 'blame' for her own abuse. Today Zoe is back in education.*

**Example 4**, from Barnardo's: *Emma came into contact with Barnardo's when she was 12 and in a children's home. She had a history of running away and was thought to have been sexually abused.*

*There were concerns that Emma was being sexually exploited on home visits or when she absconded. It soon emerged that her mother had different men coming to the house, who would often be physically abusive to her. The mother was known to be in prostitution and was believed to be putting her daughter on the streets, forcing her to sleep with men for money.*

*However, despite this Emma still loved her mother, felt protective towards her and would put herself in danger to protect her mum. On the occasions that Emma ran away from the care home, she would always head for her mother.*

*Once at 'home' she would give men her mobile number, or go off with them, so that they would leave her mother alone. However, through working with Barnardo's Emma finally came to understand that by running away, she was risking her life. She realised that she couldn't live with her mother, despite how much she loved her. Emma is now 14 and for the first time in years, is attending a specialist school regularly.*

#### *Young people living at home*

132. The Committee did not receive much evidence on whether young people, still at home, face the same risks of being exploited as children in residential care but is mindful of practitioner views in the CELCIS report—

“I would imagine it would be easier for a perpetrator to groom a single carer or two carers than a whole staff group, given that their grooming behaviour

would be exposed to people who have had training and also who would probably as a staff team (in residential settings), challenge each other's thinking.”<sup>44</sup>

133. Although the Committee did not receive much evidence on this, some examples of dangers in the home situation were provided. 18 and Under told the Committee—

“The past few years, we have seen an increase in young people introduced to exploitation by their drug-using parent...we have found that a mother involved in sexual exploitation herself to pay for her drug habit is less able or likely to protect her children from abuse. We have supported young people sexually abused by their mother's clients. ...and young girls who have been encouraged and coached by their mothers into sexual exploitation (and) by other family members....including brothers, sisters, uncles and cousins. Some of these families are known to social services but the families tend to stick together and stay silent. Generally we have found huge family loyalty, a dislike of authorities and careful grooming of the victim to ensure compliance and silence. Some families are under the radar of social services and abuse and exploitation”.<sup>45</sup>

134. For young people still at home without identifiable vulnerabilities, projects in the community can help them to identify if something is wrong or can offer a place to go for help. This is of considerable benefit when the young people are not already on statutory agencies' "radar". Examples of such projects are Safe & Sound Derby and Hand in Hand Keighley, which aim to provide safe, accessible, long-term and consistent services for children who have suffered CSE or are at risk of it. The Committee stresses the importance of such provision in Scotland's communities.

### **Particular vulnerabilities**

135. Professor Kirsten Stalker, Professor of Disability Studies (University of Strathclyde) described in oral evidence to the Committee a “definite gap in knowledge about disabled children and young people in relation to child sexual exploitation”.<sup>46</sup>

136. In a recent scoping study of abuse of all kinds against disabled children, Professor Stalker told the Committee that it was found that some managers still had the view “that because a child was disabled they were somehow protected from abuse. There is a myth that nobody would dream of harming a disabled child.”<sup>47</sup>

137. Professor Stalker pointed to an analysis of 17 studies, looking at more than 18,000 children. The study concluded that the prevalence rate of abuse of

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<sup>44</sup> CELCIS report: *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland* (2013): <http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>. Page 42 of the report.

<sup>45</sup> Eighteen and Under, written submission, page 2.

<sup>46</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 29 October 2013, Col 1751.

<sup>47</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 29 October 2013, Col 1751.

disabled children was three to four times higher than that of non-disabled children and a large American study had concluded that children with learning disabilities had a four times higher risk of abuse than non-disabled children. Neglect was the most common reason for children becoming more vulnerable to other abuses, including CSE however disabilities made self-protection harder—

“If you have a visual impairment you cannot see your attacker coming, if you have a mobility impairment you cannot remove yourself ...if you have communication impairments it may be difficult for you to report”.<sup>48</sup>

138. Professor Stalker said that many young disabled people, particularly young girls with learning disabilities, may feel lonely, without many friends, and find it hard to keep up with their peer group. Thus they may be particularly vulnerable to approaches and grooming by older men. ChildLine, she said, had already found that teenage girls with learning disabilities had been groomed and asked to send explicit pictures over the internet.

139. Professor Stalker’s evidence was echoed by others such as 18 and Under who said—

“We have encountered young people who have learning difficulties and mental health problems who have been pulled into sexual exploitation by their peers and by older people. Often these young people do not understand the difference between sex and love, and some of them are very easily manipulated.”<sup>49</sup>

140. Professor Stalker was concerned that impairment often remained unrecorded, even in cases that went to the child protection register. The Committee was told that the Scottish Government’s child protection statistics record disabled children’s rates of abuse as very low, whereas research has shown it is on average higher than for non-disabled children.

**141. The Committee recommends that whenever it emerges that a young person has an impairment, not originally identified, practitioners must update records held at the very earliest opportunity.**

142. Although there has been more media publicity about perpetrators of CSE from BME communities than about victims from BME communities, evidence received emphasised the often concealed nature of such exploitation, and particular difficulties in disclosure, especially around the concepts of honour and shame specific to victims from BME communities.

143. Sheila Taylor (NWG) told the Committee that there was still a lot to learn about young people from black and ethnic minority communities, who find it incredibly difficult to come forward and have added complexities in doing so. They can face threats, which make it difficult for them to disclose their situation. She said that the right environments had not been created for them to disclose.

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<sup>48</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 29 October 2013, Col 1754.

<sup>49</sup> Eighteen and Under, written submission, page 2.

144. On the same theme, Anela Anwar, head of projects at Roshni, sought for recognition among service providers and statutory services that minority ethnic young people are victims of exploitation. Calling for a national strategy, she said this must take account of culture-specific issues that can heighten vulnerability. She added—

“we need to tackle the fact—and the national strategy has to explicitly state—that those who exploit young people, and their victims, come from all ethnicities and communities. ...we have to admit that yes, across the Asian and African minority ethnic communities there are individuals who exploit young people, as there are in the mainstream white Scottish community. Minority communities also need to accept that fact. However, we should not stigmatise or stereotype one specific community as being the only type that will perpetrate child sexual exploitation, because that is not helpful”.<sup>50</sup>

#### *Boys and young men*

145. The most common perception of CSE is of female victims and male perpetrators but the Committee is well aware that victims can just as easily be male.

146. Martin Henry, Stop it Now, told the Committee—

“It seems to me that, if we are going to be successful with any prevention strategy, we need to see young men as a particular target group and to start to frame our messages around how they understand the issue - rather than just do that in a general way, which is often predicated on a model that is more effective for girls and women than for men.”<sup>51</sup>

147. In relation to young male victims, Professor Stalker described how evidence from a number of studies showed boys were disproportionately represented among disabled children and young people who had been abused, compared with ratios among abused young people without disabilities.<sup>52</sup>

**148. The Committee recommends that development of a national strategy takes account of young men as a particular target group.**

#### **Risk assessment tools**

149. In considering risks to more vulnerable young people, good risk assessment tools will be important, particularly for staff and workers less familiar with CSE. There are a number of examples, for instance Barnardo's Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF). It was developed in response to issues raised by practitioners about difficulties in identification and intervention with young people at risk of or abused through CSE. A framework including four categories of risk is intended to inform appropriate responses.

150. Risk assessment tools will never be foolproof (some children at risk do not have obvious vulnerabilities, while some with vulnerabilities will overcome them)

<sup>50</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1443.

<sup>51</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1430.

<sup>52</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 29 October 2013, Col 1749.

and should not be used as a simple tick-list. However they do help to ensure a level of awareness and monitoring, and rolling out risk assessment tools of the best possible quality could be an important task of a National Strategy (see Conclusion).

## **Recommendations**

**151. Data collection for looked-after children should be reviewed including information held on all child protection registers. Data from specialist services on children at risk should be collated by child protection committees. There should be a category on child protection registers for CSE, and there needs to be a policy investigation around why so few children over 12 are currently on child protection registers.**

**152. The Committee recommends that refuges for young people experiencing or at risk of CSE need to be established. Consideration should be given to placing a relevant duty on all local authorities in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill. The reasons for Scotland's only refuge closing down this year should be investigated.**

**153. The Committee recommends that the powers of residential staff to protect the young people in their care need to be clarified.**

**154. The Committee recommends that the Care Inspectorate should make CSE a specific area for inspection for local authorities and all organisations accommodating children.**

**155. The Committee recommends that whenever it emerges that a young person has an impairment, not originally recognised, practitioners must update records at the very earliest opportunity.**

**156. The Committee calls for closer partnership working between mainstream services and third sector organisations rooted in BME communities, including the role of partnership in raising capacity and building confidence amongst the mainstream workforce.**

#### PART 4: SUPPORT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

##### **Support, therapy and exit strategies for young victims of CSE**

157. The Committee heard of some of the traumatic experiences suffered by young people. Such experiences leave an inevitable legacy of trauma. The Committee also heard about the paucity of existing services and the months that can elapse in some cases before a young person can even access an available service. Long waiting lists for such vital services can compound trauma and militate against a young person sustaining the courage to go to court and all that is entailed in that.

158. The CELCIS report points to research from 2009 that found that the needs of these young people are complex. They may have a range of physical, sexual, mental and emotional health problems, be dissociated from school and peers and they may repeatedly go missing. This would seem to indicate a need for long-term interventions from trained staff working within a supportive environment to address the complex underlying vulnerability factors.<sup>53</sup>

159. Safe Space told the Committee that the act of running away from home can expose children to far greater risk. As already mentioned earlier in this report, the establishment of safe houses, particularly near ports and transport stations, could provide necessary respite together with a duty on Scottish local authorities to provide age appropriate refuges for young runaways who request it.

160. A number of the submissions received by the Committee raised issues about a lack of trust when dealing with statutory agencies and bodies such as the NHS and social work services and the feeling that statutory bodies had generally been unhelpful. Some reasons given for this were that the statutory bodies “labelled” young people, the young people were often regarded as consenting to exploitative relationships, felt they were not being listened to and family units were split up.

161. The Committee heard repeatedly about the importance of confidential services for young people which they can trust, services independent from the authorities and the need for better sign-posting of these for young people involved in CSE. There can be multiple barriers to disclosing abuse and we agree with CELCIS that children and young people need safe spaces and relationships with trusted adults to enable them to disclose and break away from the exploitative situations and people.

162. In an effort to engage with services and projects in Scotland, the Network Specialist team recently spent 4 days in Scotland, strengthening links with members of the network and developing new partnerships. The team visited a number of frontline specialist projects. Its report of the visit noted that across all

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<sup>53</sup> CELCIS report: *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland* (2013): <http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>. Page 19 of the report (Pearce 2009).

services there appeared to be a lack of therapeutic interventions for young people affected by sexual exploitation.

163. The Committee is aware of some therapeutic projects such as the specialist child sexual exploitation service run by NSPCC Scotland called Protect and Respect that provides support for young people aged 11-19. Children and young people who have been sexually exploited are vulnerable to high levels of physical and sexual violence and it may take substantial therapeutic work to enable them to recover. NSPCC Scotland cited problems such as difficulties in forming relationships, a lack of confidence or self-esteem and negative impacts on their physical and mental health. This could include sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy, abortion and long-term reproductive problems, anxiety, depression and behavioural disorders.

164. The NWG website lists a number of useful projects. Safe and Sound in Derby provides support to children and young people who are being, or are at risk of being sexually exploited, and delivers a UK-wide programme of training services. Hand in Hand in Keighley works in partnership with other services to provide an advisory, advocacy and facilitation role to support young people to make positive changes and choices. It is clear that there are a number of valuable examples of third sector projects in England which provide continuing support to young people. The Committee would urge that the NWG website be consulted for further examples and contact made with these projects to discuss experiences and to provide valuable advice to Scottish bodies and projects looking to establish similar services.

165. Children 1<sup>st</sup> told the Committee—

“We know from the children and families we work with that confidential space to discuss what is happening is hugely important. National confidential services such as ChildLine and ParentLine are available for anyone who has concerns about a child to talk about their concerns and gain support before, during and after the child protection process...We must continue to publicise and fund these services.”<sup>54</sup>

and

“The justice process should serve as an incentive for victims’ disclosure, not a disincentive: We have worked with many child abuse victims who tell us after the trial is finished that had they known what the justice process would be like, they would have never disclosed abuse in the first place. In certain cases the child feels well supported by the justice process, and able to move on after the trial without any difficulty. But in other cases, particularly where the case was delayed and where the child felt unsupported in giving evidence, the child will feel the justice process was a trauma in and of itself.”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Children 1st, written submission, page 3.

<sup>55</sup> Children 1st, written submission, page 3.

166. Safe Space said—

“Only through listening to young people will we begin to identify and disrupt perpetrators and this means ongoing provision of support services that are accessible and adaptable to their needs. Long waiting lists are the first turn off point for those who need support at the time they want to disclose or need time to explore fears, concerns and feelings about their experience. Expectations that young people will disclose an abusers identity and speak to statutory services before being offered a supportive, trusting environment is unrealistic and can serve to keep young people silent for too long.”<sup>56</sup>

167. The importance of support, therapy and exit strategies cannot be overstated and the Committee agrees with Children 1<sup>st</sup> that the care and support offered to children once they have escaped a sexually exploitative situation needs to be better than the care and attention the child receives at the hands of the exploiters. On the evidence received by the Committee this is always the case. More needs to be done.

### **Education and training**

168. The Committee heard frequently about the value of preventative education for young people themselves. It also heard that training and awareness-raising to recognise and address child sexual exploitation was patchy across the country and often appeared inadequate. The Committee notes that such concerns had been made by practitioners who took part in the 2011 University of Bedfordshire expert seminar. They felt that not enough expertise had been developed, both generally in mainstream services dealing with children at risk, and more particularly for the 16 and 17 age group, including care leavers.

#### *Preventive education for young people*

169. The vulnerabilities of young people call for many forms of protection, but an important one is preventive education for young people themselves, to equip them with the knowledge and understanding to recognise dangerous situations and people, and seek support. Indeed, along with young people’s support projects and training for parents, preventive education may be the key protection for young people from safer and more supportive backgrounds some of whom are now getting “pulled into” CSE through online grooming or the pressures of peers. Other more vulnerable groups will require additional help, especially those with attachment difficulties or poor understanding of social and intimate relationships. These groups may be less able to benefit from education and awareness-raising alone.

170. The NWG report of the visit to Scotland reported a lot of existing good practice in awareness-raising for young people, but noted that gaps remain—

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<sup>56</sup> Safe Space, written submission, page 2.

“Many of the CSE services were very engaged in preventative education within secondary schools within their areas...however, again this seemed to be sporadic dependent on area.”<sup>57</sup>

171. The NWG website has a wealth of training and information materials, often imaginatively produced. For instance, Barnardo’s “Nae Danger” DVD, for 11-16 year olds, which includes games and activity sheets, was made with young people affected by sexual exploitation and looks at issues around risk, internet risks and keeping safe. The Sick Party DVD and Resource Pack (produced by Basis for the Isis Project) is a hard-hitting film depicting current CSE in cities across the UK. Based on real life experiences, it follows young women’s chance meeting with two men who send them into the world of drink, drugs, sex and parties.

172. Sheila Taylor (NWG) described in oral evidence a downloadable resource, Cody’s Choices. It takes young people to a setting—a hotel, flat, shopping centre, park or bus station—and looks at how exploitative situations could arise, what sexting is, what the implications and impact are, how offender profiles can be very varied, and so on. **The Committee urges all CPCs and individual agencies concerned with addressing CSE to study the range of materials available and promote their use among young people.**

#### *Training and awareness*

173. There is a need for better training and awareness-raising. Some examples of issues that need to be addressed were given—

- Attitudes to the young people at risk. For instance, Who Cares? Scotland said many workers are unable to identify CSE, often believing it is consensual choice. Responses are often judgmental, which can further alienate them and make their “friends” seem more appealing.<sup>58</sup>
- Assumptions being made. The CELCIS report noted “Often the ones who are most at risk are the children who the care home staff identify as being 'street wise'. This seems to make some of the staff believe that they are more capable of looking after themselves than others, however, the opposite is often the case. The 'street wise' kids are often the ones who have no concept of risk”....And “Behaviours that would cause alarm within our own families are too easily ignored with looked after children and glib excuses made such as 'she's ok - she's street wise' or 'it's her choice'.”<sup>59</sup>
- Behaviours not being challenged. The EVA project commented about attitudes which, without awareness-raising, allowed sexual exploitation to continue unquestioned: “Most poor practice sadly comes from professionals who exhibit ignorance about fundamental issues of

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<sup>57</sup> NWG Network, written submission, page 3.

<sup>58</sup> Who Cares? Scotland, written submission, page 3.

<sup>59</sup> CELCIS report: *The Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland* (2013): <http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf>. Page 41 of the report.

gender, gender inequality, and where ‘just a bit of fun’ morphs into what we end up picking up the pieces from”.<sup>60</sup>

- The need for training and awareness-raising for staff involved with children in care or under supervision was highlighted but there can also be wider lack of understanding by agencies and families. It appears there are currently few resources to increase parents’ understanding and confidence. ChildLine said that the majority of children had said there was a lack of understanding from families, police and other adults when they had first disclosed sexual exploitation and were struggling to cope.<sup>61</sup> The NWG report on its visit to Scotland also noted a lack of current work with parents.<sup>62</sup>

174. Situations involving minority ethnic considerations seemed to cause particular concerns. Roshni said—

“Front line professionals have told us that they find it difficult to engage on this issue through lack of understanding and confidence in addressing minority ethnic (ME) issues and for fear of being branded ‘racist’.”<sup>63</sup>

175. Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project (KASP), which supports sexual abuse survivors, emphasised the importance of returning to basics and listening to children and young people at risk, rather than assuming CSE can be dealt with simply as some separate issue in the teenage years.

176. In its evidence, it called for more training—

“Educating all staff / personnel who work with children to be open to the signs that a child is at risk and to enable them to feel confident to sensitively seek disclosures and create opportunities for disclosure. Consistently, our clients tell us that they tried to tell someone what was happening to them when they were a child and they were not believed”.<sup>64</sup>

177. Another observation was that police and prosecution services had inadequate knowledge and there was inadequate usage of Scottish legislation which could be employed to disrupt and prosecute perpetrators of CSE.<sup>65</sup>

#### *Examples of current training work and resources*

178. Despite the concerns voiced, training has had a high profile in the work of agencies and services in the forefront of addressing CSE, including Barnardo’s. It is clear that there is some good practice already in existence which could be learned from or adapted. The Committee notes below some examples brought to its attention—

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<sup>60</sup> EVA Services, written submission, page 2.

<sup>61</sup> NSPCC Scotland, written submission, page 7.

<sup>62</sup> NWG Network, written submission, page 3.

<sup>63</sup> Roshni, written submission, page 5.

<sup>64</sup> Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project, written submission, page 1.

<sup>65</sup> Barnardo’s Scotland, written submission, page 2.

- The Committee was told that the National Working Group network is the only child sexual exploitation network working across voluntary/statutory agencies tackling CSE. It is currently developing closer working links with Scottish organisations. It has more than 1,000 practitioners from 260 organisations working with CSE and child trafficking in the UK. A wide-range of training resources is found on its website.<sup>66</sup>
- The CSE Co-ordinators' Forum<sup>67</sup>, which shares good practice and finds solutions to common frustrations and barriers, may be of particular interest to Scottish Child Protection Committees. A Practitioners' Forum and Parent Practitioners' Forum (for practitioners working with parents) share ideas and experience in a confidential environment.
- Toolkits and training resources are also available. For example *Say Something if you See Something (2013)*<sup>68</sup> is aimed at communities and settings like licensed premises: staff can also access a free training course.
- Training courses include work with boys and men, and BME training, such as *'Effectively Engaging South Asian and 'Hard to Reach' communities on CSE*, and *Working with Young Men at risk of Perpetrating Sexual Violence and CSE*.<sup>69</sup>
- Barnardo's have developed a range of training and awareness-raising materials over nearly two decades of working with CSE in the UK<sup>70</sup>
- Police and partner agencies have received training directly from CEOP to enable them to deliver online safety training to professionals and local community groups.<sup>71</sup>
- In Central Scotland and Perth and Kinross, multi-agency working groups developed and hosted large-scale public awareness sessions with parents and professionals looking at the risks and vulnerabilities of young people in online settings. More than 2000 people have taken part.

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<sup>66</sup> [www.nationalworkinggroup.org](http://www.nationalworkinggroup.org)

<sup>67</sup> [www.nationalworkinggroup.org](http://www.nationalworkinggroup.org)

<sup>68</sup> [www.nationalworkinggroup.org](http://www.nationalworkinggroup.org)

<sup>69</sup> [http://www.ccclimited.org.uk/south\\_asian\\_communities\\_oct\\_2013.html](http://www.ccclimited.org.uk/south_asian_communities_oct_2013.html) and <http://www.nationalworkinggroup.org/whats-happening>

<sup>70</sup> *Bwise2 Sexual Exploitation:*

<http://www.barnardos.org.uk/bwise2-sexual-exploitation/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1263>

*Nae Danger:*

[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/policy\\_research\\_unit/research\\_and\\_publications/nae-danger/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1661](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/policy_research_unit/research_and_publications/nae-danger/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1661)

Barnardo's research and publications:

[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/policy\\_research\\_unit/research\\_and\\_publications.htm?pub\\_subject=KWD-1756&pub\\_type=&pub\\_phrase=&submit=Search](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/policy_research_unit/research_and_publications.htm?pub_subject=KWD-1756&pub_type=&pub_phrase=&submit=Search)

<sup>71</sup> Police Scotland, letter of 22 November 2013, page 6.

## **Recommendations**

**179. The Committee calls for a national education programme on CSE, with support materials to be delivered in all schools and for higher and further education courses in social work and social care to cover all aspects of disability and child protection.**

**180. It is the view of the Committee that in order to help young people recognise and escape from sexually exploitative situations, specialist and general services must be made available in every region of Scotland.**

**181. Third sector agencies make an important contribution to the support of traumatised young people. Greater recognition of the value and contribution of the third sector is needed. It should be funded to enable it to provide support services. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government take the lead on this.**

**182. The Committee recommends that a programme of training should be co-ordinated across Scotland as part of a national strategy against child sexual exploitation, with child protection committees playing key roles at local level.**

**183. The Committee recommends that the WithScotland network explore how it might best co-ordinate with the NWG to publicise training opportunities in Scotland.**

**184. The Committee recommends that every effort should be made to involve young people in the content of training for adults. It is extremely hard for exploited young people to come forward and talk about what happened to them but initiatives in England using photography and DVD projects with young people to allow them to have their voices and thinking heard by the professionals. These should be studied for possible adaptation in Scotland.**

## PART 5: DISRUPTION AND PROSECUTION OF PERPETRATORS

### **Attitudes to perpetrators**

185. In order to reduce child sexual exploitation effectively, and to protect current and potential victims, it is necessary to take resolute action against the perpetrators of these crimes. Barnardo's Daljeet Dagon explained—

“I have talked about the triangle approach that Barnardo's developed, whereby the focus is on the victim but (where) there is also recognition that there is a child sex offender and a facilitator. We have to flip the triangle over and focus on disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators, and we should identify locations and police them better: so that we protect young people and prevent them from becoming involved in child sexual exploitation.”<sup>72</sup>

186. One of the difficulties in disrupting perpetrators is the attitude of young people and those who witness CSE. Initiatives designed to challenge these attitudes face difficulties, not merely because perpetrators are skilled in operating “under the radar,” but because these are crimes where young people often do not see themselves as victims. Waiting for young people to complain could be an ineffective strategy for catching offenders, since they often protect perpetrators, who initially treat them as special and may offer them alcohol, drugs, money and affection, out of misplaced loyalty, fear or intimidation. Liz Ray of Who Cares? Scotland observed—

“They looked to find like-minded people in the community. Although they were probably less safe with them, and they knew that they were less safe with them, they fitted in. They were not judged, and they were not expected to comply with rules and regulations that they did not understand or agree with.”<sup>73</sup>

187. Sometimes, onlookers including at times care staff, have seen risky interactions not as exploitative but as freely chosen by the young people, especially in the case of stigmatised looked-after children or youngsters already in trouble. This makes onlookers less likely to perceive, let alone report, the crime.

188. Police Scotland said the wider community was pivotal to recognising and reporting CSE, yet as the Committee has already noted there appears to be a significant knowledge gap amongst professional groups and public. Children 1st pointed out—

“As in the recent case in Oxford, organised paedophile rings set up to exploit and abuse children are able to do this in public places and over a long period without anybody questioning or reporting this. ... if it is the accepted norm in our society to see older children as consenting adults who

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<sup>72</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1434.

<sup>73</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1431.

have chosen to be with their exploiters, then it becomes difficult for those with concerns to speak out”.<sup>74</sup>

### **Under-use of legislation**

189. The Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005 creates a specific offence of child grooming, and makes provision to apply to the court for a Risk of Sexual Harm Order (RSHO) where an individual is suspected of involvement in a course of conduct to groom a child.

190. The Committee heard considerable criticism of under-use of provisions in the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 and in the 2005 Act. Although Police Scotland, the Lord Advocate and COPFS did respond to the Committee's questions about their use of legislation, the Committee remained dissatisfied about the depth of understanding the responses gave, both about under-use of certain provision and about the reasons why in many cases prosecution did not take place. It is not adequate simply to list, however comprehensively, reasons why prosecution might not occur, without also giving some information about how, how often and for what reason certain of these decisions were taken in relation to CSE.

191. Barnardo's and others asked why offences around 'grooming' and specific offences of CSE through prostitution or pornography appeared rarely invoked under the 2005 Act. The Committee notes that Barnardo's 2012 Freedom of Information requests found that Lothian and Borders, Strathclyde and Central Police forces had each only ever made two RSHOs.

192. The Committee understands that it can be easier and more successful to prosecute for other offences, but if the intent of the 2005 Act was to give new tools to the police and COPFS to tackle cases of grooming and sexual exploitation it appears to be failing. We would also observe that if the police are charging people with other offences and using other legislation, it becomes much harder to identify gangs and groups involved in CSE. That is why we believe post-legislative scrutiny of the 2005 Act is required.

193. The CELCIS study<sup>75</sup> reported disquiet among the practitioners that the 2005 Act was not well known or well used among police. RSHOs usually have a power of arrest attached and can have other conditions imposed, such as not allowing access to an internet enabled device or the internet, or not allowing unsupervised contact with anyone under 16. Voluntary sector organisations and indeed Police Scotland itself called for RSHOs to be available for children up to the age of 18. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill explicitly states that childhood extends to 18, yet RSHOs only apply up until the age of 16.

194. Children 1<sup>st</sup> also expressed disquiet about low usage of existing legislation. They pointed out that Sexual Offence Prevention Orders (SOPOs) brought in under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, require a sexual offender to register and can also include additional conditions. Yet statistics from the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) show that only 35 SOPOs were granted by the courts in 2009-10. 3062 sex offenders were living in the community in Scotland in

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<sup>74</sup> Children 1st, written submission, page 1.

that year. Children 1<sup>st</sup> observed, “we see that just 1.05% offenders on the Sexual Offenders’ Register had SOPOs imposed by the courts”.<sup>76</sup>

195. Calls in evidence for police to have additional mandatory training to highlight legislative options to disrupt and prosecute CSE offenders, were echoed by Police Scotland itself. Barnardo’s called for the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill to include tackling CSE and joint work with police to disrupt perpetrator activity, as part of the proposals for Children’s Services Plans.

196. As already noted, that Bill is presently being scrutinised by the Parliament and it may be that these suggestions could be considered as part of that scrutiny.

### **Improving intelligence**

197. Another issue to emerge in evidence was the need to improve information and intelligence gained from young runaways. Martin Henry (Stop it Now), a previous chair of the Scottish coalition for young runaways, had been involved in the pilot of return-home interviews for young runaways in Grampian and the follow-up within Grampian Police. An evaluation rated these interviews highly, not just for the young person’s welfare but critically to obtain, if possible, intelligence about experiences during their absence, including possible CSE. The evaluation recommended that return-home interviews of runaway young people should be rolled out across Scotland, yet this did not happen.<sup>77</sup>

198. Martin Henry recommended that the anti-harbours provisions in section 83 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 be strengthened, to send a clear signal to adults that this behaviour would be taken very seriously and followed up.<sup>78</sup>

### *Child protection: artificial divides*

199. Disquiet was also voiced about how perpetrators could be identified and children protected when child protection plans were not normally made for the over-12s and multi-agency processes are geared to address risks only within families. Yet abusers will offend both within and outside families. East Ayrshire Council Social Services commented on this—

“Currently multi-agency child protection processes are used to co-ordinate services between agencies when children are at risk within families. These processes do not easily fit CSE cases as the risk to the young people will often come from an external source that may not easily be identified.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> <http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Sexual-Exploitation-of-Looked-After-Children.pdf> Page 46 of the report.

<sup>76</sup> Children 1st, written submission, page 2.

<sup>77</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1425.

<sup>78</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1427.

<sup>79</sup> East Ayrshire Council, written submission, page 3.

**200. The Committee observes that if such artificial divides do exist then they must be removed. Multi-agency child protection processes must apply when a child is at risk within and outside the family.**

*Third sector exclusion from multi-agency intelligence gathering*

201. Statutory agencies place a high value on multi-agency working, which this Committee welcomes. However, the Committee heard about the failure of these agencies and child protection committees fully to involve the third sector, particularly in collecting and sharing intelligence about perpetrators. Third sector organisations tend to have the closest, most trusting relationships with the young people at risk. This exclusion undermines multi-agency co-ordination of intelligence about perpetrators.

202. Martin Henry told the Committee about the third sector's value in collecting "soft" intelligence. Rosina Macrae described Say Women's current work with the police in Glasgow while Ken Dunbar of Aberlour complained of "lack of respect" for third sector information. There could be increased, funded involvement for this sector in, for instance, supporting structured return interview process, making risk assessments, and supporting young victims through the court process.

203. Daljeet Dagon gave a specific example of third sector exclusion.. After Barnardo's had shared information with police about 30 victims and 10 perpetrators, police assemble a core group to discuss a victim strategy and start to progress interviews. Yet she was only invited to their fourth meeting. She said—

"What I got was, 'I'm really sorry we never invited you, Daljeet. We forgot'" (although Barnardo's had given them the information). "Already sitting there was social work, health and education. There has to be a cultural shift towards valuing the work of the voluntary sector and the key role that we play, both in terms of having the information to begin with and in terms of the relationships that we have with families and children."<sup>80</sup>

## **Criminal Justice**

204. The Committee also heard calls for the police to focus on disrupting perpetrators, rather than on the criminal behaviours of children involved in CSE. Sheila Taylor, NWG, explained how vulnerable sexually exploited young people, through their experiences, readily became involved in aggression or stealing. For example, they may be told to steal vodka, with which they would then be plied by their abusers. Daljeet Dagon, described her experience of the approach of the police—

"(who) have come along very much with the purpose of providing information on the child's criminality instead of thinking about the adult perpetrators... and better ways of disrupting that activity....the police should focus more on disrupting activity on the basis of information from the child on where they are hanging about or who they are hanging about with..."<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1436.

<sup>81</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 11 June 2013, Col 1427.

*Good practice in partnership*

205. The Committee heard that Barnardo's Scotland recently established a partnership arrangement in Renfrewshire with local police service to better protect children who go missing, with a particular focus on CSE. This model of joint work could be replicated elsewhere with the emphasis on information-sharing, service co-ordination and use of a Vulnerable Persons' Operational Group. Daljeet Dagon and others gave the Committee valuable examples of intelligence-gathering including observing perpetrator "hotspots", using harbouring notices, and identifying both young people and perpetrators connected with one another via victim association maps.

206. Glasgow Child Protection Committee has a multi-agency approach to investigating CSE, including development of vulnerable young people's safety plans. While the police lead on the investigation, all agencies contribute to collating information about potential suspects. Interview strategies are agreed and the needs and vulnerabilities of the young person are addressed, with supports put in place. It is recognised that young people may or may not wish to engage with police and may need time before they feel able to talk; information-gathering needs to take place at their pace, which can involve weeks or even months.

207. Police Scotland is optimistic that its single service can ensure a strong Scotland-wide approach for ensuring victims are at the centre of dealing with CSE. The Committee looks forward to this being implemented. Barnardo's is particularly keen that Police Scotland should improve the identification of patterns of exploitation via information on police databases.

*Court and sentencing issues*

208. The Committee was told that another reason why young people are reluctant to report their perpetrators and have cases taken through the criminal courts can be found in unsatisfactory, difficult, even traumatic experiences in the criminal justice system. Barnardo's admitted--

"For some victims the experience of going to court sharing their experiences and facing their abusers can be very traumatic. Many young people as a result avoid giving evidence. There is a particular need to minimise the difficulties faced by vulnerable witnesses within the criminal justice system."<sup>82</sup>

209. The Circle project told the Committee—

"In terms of prosecuting perpetrators one of the aspects I found to be most difficult was supporting a child through the process of giving evidence. It was harrowing for all concerned. There were several children involved and when the case was eventually held in court it was during the time for the young people's examinations. The system itself caused further harm to the children's futures."<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Barnardo's Scotland, written submission, page 5.

<sup>83</sup> Circle, written submission, page 1.

210. Open Secret saw local authority commitment to addressing exploitation, yet barriers when the criminal cases went forward—

“The lack of information given to young people as cases progress (or don't) can be very traumatic. We have seen a recent case where it did not progress past the procurator fiscal, but the young person was not informed”.<sup>84</sup>

211. General suggestions for improvement included using maximum charging and sentencing options, and moving away from relying solely or largely on the often reluctant, distrusting or fearful young people's testimony. Specific suggestions included a call from Police Scotland for specialist courts based on the domestic abuse court model and for extension of automatic entitlement to special measures under the Vulnerable Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2004 to all CSE or sexual crime victims. Children 1<sup>st</sup> called for a named person to support CSE victims throughout the justice process, right up to having someone to support and take them to the trial on the day.

212. In his evidence, the Lord Advocate told the Committee that he was aware of recently issued guidance by the Crown Prosecution Service on its new approach centring on the credibility of the allegation as opposed to the credibility or reliability of the victim. The Lord Advocate told the Committee that this had been the approach in Scotland for some time.”<sup>85</sup>

213. The Committee is aware that the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Bill (recently passed by the Parliament) makes provision to improve and increase the rights and support for victims and witnesses (primarily in relation to criminal cases). Key proposals relating to victim and witnesses include giving victims and witnesses a right to certain information about their cases; creating a duty on organisations and agencies within the criminal justice system to set clear standards of service delivery for victims and witnesses; creating a presumption that certain categories of victim are vulnerable and giving them the right to utilise special measures when giving evidence.

214. The Committee hopes that these measures will go some way to address the concerns we heard about young victims of CSE who come into contact with the justice system.

215. Some issues for future prevention of perpetration through tackling attitudes, particularly towards young women, have been mentioned already in this report. Better support for those who reach the justice system is also required, as is better use of legislation and a greater understanding of perpetrators and their motivations.

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<sup>84</sup> Open Secret, written submission, page 3.

<sup>85</sup> Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 25 June 2013, Col 1500.

## **Recommendations**

**216. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government, Police Scotland and all key agencies adopt a high commitment to disrupting perpetrator activity and identifying those at risk.**

**217. The Committee recommends that consideration is given to having a named person support CSE victims throughout the justice process.**

**218. The Committee recommends that post-legislative scrutiny of the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005 be undertaken to ensure that the intention of this legislation is being delivered and that all possible perpetrators of CSE crimes are being prosecuted .**

**219. The Committee recommends that Risk of Sexual Harm Orders (RSHOs) are used in a much more comprehensive way for the protection of young people in Scotland.**

**220. The Committee recommends mandatory training for frontline and specialist police officers on legislative options to disrupt perpetrators. The Committee also recommends better police analysis and collation of information about and the tracking of abusive networks.**

**221. The Committee recommends that third sector agencies should be fully involved and consulted in multi-agency arrangements for intelligence-gathering and intelligence-sharing in relation to CSE.**

## CONCLUSION: A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR CSE

222. It is clear that despite many individual examples of good practice in different parts of Scotland, the response to CSE is patchy and different aspects of work including training, addressing young people's needs and vulnerabilities, supporting them after CSE and disrupting perpetrators are inadequately co-ordinated.

223. Development of the local protocols suggested in the 2003 sexual exploitation guidance<sup>86</sup> has been patchy. In any case, integrating those various aspects of anti-CSE work effectively into a coherent policy would be a hugely challenging task at local level. Rather, an overarching national strategy is required.

224. The National Working Group agrees. Its report states—

“Across our visits to both statutory and non-statutory agencies, there did not appear to be coherent joined- up thinking taking place in relation to strategic planning and response to CSE. This may be linked to different understandings across agencies about what CSE is and where it should sit strategically in organisations. There appeared to be a lack of information sharing between statutory and third sector agencies, which would contribute to ineffective multi agency working.

“....there are pockets of effective practice happening in small chunks within Scotland but without a national action plan that brings a framework nationally, efforts will continue to be inconsistent.”

225. Police Scotland called for national co-ordination and oversight to keep children safe and a national strategy is a key request of Barnardo's and many other organisations from whom the Committee received evidence. Legislation and guidance are important but they must be placed in the context of a national overarching strategy.

### **Recommendation**

**226. The Scottish Government should develop a National Strategy for tackling child sexual exploitation: a framework for a co-ordinated national approach to tackling and preventing CSE and supporting the victims. The Committee expects the Scottish Government to report regularly to the Parliament on its progress.**

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<sup>86</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1141/0034406.pdf>

## **ANNEXE A: CASE STUDIES**

### **Barnardo's Scotland**

**Case Study 1** - *Roisin 15 years old shared how she became involved in CSE/Online Grooming.*

*Roisin and Amanda became friends in February 2011, although both have attended the same Secondary School in Glasgow since first year. Roisin has stated that 'Eleanor got Amanda into meeting men online, and then Amanda tried to get Roisin into it.'*

*Roisin stated that last summer she and Amanda met Ryan (28 y/o) and his friend (no name given) who was 24 y/o. Amanda met Ryan on Face book and agreed to meet him. She told Roisin to 'bring some condoms.'*

*Roisin went with Amanda to meet an older man, Ryan, and his friend whom she had met on the Internet. The friend whom Roisin had sex with was 24. Amanda still sees Ryan who is 28. Barnardo's worker explored with Roisin why someone in their twenties might want to meet someone much younger. Roisin stating she can't understand it either as they would have nothing to talk about, Roisin clearly suspicious of Ryan's continued contact with her friend. Roisin visibly upset remembering meeting the males, stating she wouldn't have gone through with it if it hadn't been for Amanda.*

*Roisin feeling she would still be a virgin if she had not become friends with Amanda and would not drink as much. Roisin raising concerns about Amanda as she is continuing to meet men she meets on Face book.*

*Roisin has recently disclosed that Amanda had been raped when she was 13 following meeting adult male(s) from online.*

### **Case Study 2 – 'Jessica' – Gangs, peer pressure**

*Jessica is 17 years old and has been supported by one of Barnardo's sexual exploitation projects for 2 years. She was just 14 when she became involved with an older group of children, who introduced her to drugs.*

*'My mum wasn't around, my dad was drinking and spent most of his time internet dating, and my sister had left home. I got involved with a group of friends outside school – they were older – who were drinking and there were drugs,' says Jessica.*

*'I was already drinking when I met them, but I'd never touched drugs before. There was a lot of peer pressure to get involved. At first it was okay – I could get the money from my dad. But after a couple of weeks, I was getting hooked and there wasn't enough money.*

*'My new mates said that it was fine and introduced me to a new boy in the group. They said he fancied me, they said that I should go out with him. I didn't realise what was happening – I was being set up. After I had slept with him – I realised*

*that I'd been used but it was too late. I ended up hooked on drugs. The need and the want became more and more. Next thing was, he made me sleep with one of his friends to clear a drugs debt.....That was only the start of it.'*

*When Jessica was just turning 15 the 'risk' signs were already there. She had family problems, was using alcohol and drugs and was staying out at night. 'I had so many problems. I really needed my mum but she'd gone off with another bloke. Dad didn't care and my sister had gone off and was hardly ever in touch. The drugs seemed like my only escape because I had no one. No one seemed to care for me or be looking out for me. Yes, the situation was frightening – but I didn't know how I could change things,' says Jessica.*

*At that point a Barnardo's worker paid a visit to Jessica's school. She was chosen as part of the group to do a project about the dangers of abusive relationships, how young people could be groomed and the signs to watch out for. The education worker also gave a presentation about the help Barnardo's could offer. Unbeknown to her, Jessica had been identified at school as being a girl 'at risk' of being sexually exploited. No one knew that it had already started.*

*'My situation had got more and more frightening – then one night I was raped at a party because I said no to someone my so called boyfriend had set me up with, as a 'favour'. I didn't know what to do – I was desperate and had nowhere to go. I couldn't go home, I couldn't tell my friends. It was really scary – but I knew I had to do something and I went to the Barnardo's project the education worker had come from', Jessica says.*

*'Luckily there was someone working late and they helped me. I knew that I didn't want to live like this anymore. Even then – I knew that the drugs and abuse wasn't my destiny. So I changed it – with the project's help'.*

*Two years on, Barnardo's have helped Jessica get a place at college, gain qualifications and find her own place to live. The days of drugs and abuse are firmly in the past and she has made her 'escape' thanks to a lot of determination and the support of the project.*

*She says: "They pick on vulnerable, lonely girls like me. They can almost sniff out the needy, lost girls. The girls looking for love, who crave affection and who are desperate to belong to something, anything.*

*'Those words 'child sexual exploitation' they makes me shudder, makes my skin crawl. I know that's what happened to me and there was no way I could recognise it at the time, I was so young and vulnerable.*

*'And what was worse.....there was no way I could have stopped it on my own, without help and without knowing Barnardo's was there for girls just like me.'*

### **Case Study 3 – ‘Sophie’ – Running away, grooming**

*Sophie is 16. The oldest of six children, Sophie grew up caring for her mother who suffered from mental health issues and her younger siblings. The family was too proud to ask for help, so Sophie struggled on lonely and isolated, sacrificing her childhood for others close to her.*

*‘I had a lot to do at home and I admit, sometimes it felt lonely. I started to get into trouble at school for attendance and by the time I was 12, I began falling behind,’ Sophie says.*

*‘I suppose I did feel isolated and I never seemed to get any attention at home.’ Typical of many young carers, Sophie craved attention and it was this vulnerability that would make her the perfect target for an abuser, set on finding another child.*

*‘I was 13 when I met him and it all seemed so exciting. I was invited to my cousin’s 21st birthday party at her house and met this gorgeous guy. He said that he was 18 and we swapped telephone numbers – it seemed so innocent at first,’ Sophie continues.*

*The guy started calling Sophie regularly. He took her to the cinema, bought her thoughtful presents ‘daft bits of jewellery’ and paid her the attention she had never experienced. Within weeks she was ‘hooked’ and there was no going back. ‘At first he really treated me well and it felt so normal, so right. My mum was getting worried, but I did listen to her, I wouldn’t have listened to anyone, I was totally in love,’ says Sophie.*

*‘But then he started to change. He got more aggressive and bad things started happening. He’d hit me, but the next day say he was sorry. I’d always forgive him. He started taking me to parties, he’d give me drink and we’d stay out all night. It just got worse, worse, worse.’*

*Sophie was just 14. Her relationship with her mother was deteriorating rapidly, she wouldn’t hear a word said against her ‘boyfriend’ and she had started to go missing for days on end. Sophie was being dragged into a dangerous world of drugs, alcohol and sex. Still a child, lonely and desperately in love, she was powerless to resist.*

*‘The parties got worse and so did the way he treated me. At first I’d fight back, but it was really hard. Then one night at a party, he took me and some friends upstairs. He made me do things that I didn’t want to do. I was frightened,’ she says.*

*At first Sophie had told her mother that she was staying over with friends. She regularly got grounded, but would then run away to be with her boyfriend. The grip he had over her life was terrifying – Sophie just couldn’t see the danger she was in.*

*‘Friends told me he was older, that he had a police record, but I wouldn’t believe them. I called them a liar, I was still in love with him,’ she adds.*

*But Sophie's regular episodes of running away hadn't gone unnoticed. Her mother had reported the incidents to the police and they became concerned at her relationship with the older man. They began an investigation, interviewing Sophie's friends and then alerted the local Barnardo's child sexual exploitation project.*

*'From then on, every time I went missing the project worker came out to me. She told me straight what he was doing and how it was not only me, but my family that was at risk. Gradually, I began to see what was happening – I realised the danger, that I needed to get out,' Sophie says.*

*With the help of Barnardo's, Sophie plucked up the courage to tell her abuser to leave her alone. It wasn't easy; he followed her, left messages and intimidated friends. But with the support of Barnardo's and the police, she was able to escape the abuse.*

*'Barnardo's helped me realise what was happening, and then they helped me escape. The worker helped me mend the broken relationship with my mum and get the whole family back on track,' Sophie explains.*

**Case Study 4 – 'Emma' – Residential care, running away, parents introducing young person to CSE**

*Emma came into contact with Barnardo's when she was 12-years-old and was living in a children's home. She had a history of running away and it was thought that she had been sexually abused.*

*There were concerns that Emma was being sexually exploited on home visits or when she absconded. It soon emerged that her mother had different men coming to the house, who would often be physically abusive to her. The mother was a known prostitute and the Barnardo's worker believed that she was putting her daughter on the streets, forcing her to sleep with men for money.*

*From the age of 8 or 9, her mother had taken little responsibility for her. However, despite this Emma still loved her mother, felt protective towards her and would put herself in danger to protect her mum. On the occasions that Emma ran away from the care home, she would always head for her mother, even though her flat was being used for "adult prostitution".*

*Once at 'home' Emma would give the different men her mobile number, or go off with them, so that they would leave her mother alone. She was putting herself at risk, but she confided in her Barnardo's worker that she just wanted to see her mum. Emma just wanted to be part of a family, to be loved, to be treated as a child.*

*However, through working with Barnardo's Emma finally came to understand that by running away, she was risking her life. She realised that she couldn't live with her mother, because despite how much she loved her, the mother would put her on the streets.*

*Emma is now 14 and for the first time in years, is attending a specialist school regularly. She has discovered that she really enjoys 'doing well' and talks enthusiastically about doing Karaoke with friends; or her new teachers – in fact all the normal things 14-year-olds chat about.*

**Case Study 5 – 'Zoe' – Running away from home, trafficking**

*Zoe was known to social work services all of her life and started having a drink problem when she was just 11-years-old. Growing up against a chaotic background where her mother was an alcoholic and in violent relationships. Zoe used alcohol to block out the world. Before long she began running away from home – at the time not realising the danger.*

*"No one really cared about me; I don't think they noticed if I didn't come home. I didn't like it when mum's 'boyfriend' was around, I suppose I got scared. So I started going missing for a few nights – I was 11. Then I met this boy, he was 17 and really paid me a lot of attention. He let me stay in his house and I thought he loved me. Then he forced me to have sex, I didn't want this to happen, I said no," says Zoe.*

*Zoe's drink problems accelerated and her 'boyfriend' introduced her to drugs. Before long she had stopped attending school and was self-harming by cutting herself. Eventually Zoe was placed in secure accommodation – but it was only a temporary measure. The 'missing' episodes continued and when Zoe was 14 a friend introduced her to yet another older man, he was 35-years-old and quickly realised the youngster's vulnerability.*

*"He'd pick me up and take me to loads of different places to meet his friends. Sometimes we'd go with other girls. At first it was all right," Zoe adds.*

*Although she didn't know it, Zoe was being groomed. After three months her new 'boyfriend' started getting violent, he'd punch and kick her. Then he'd demand sex and didn't appear to care that he hurt her. Zoe couldn't make him stop. Then one day she was taken to one of the 'regular flats' and he told her to have sex with his friends. Isolated and frightened Zoe said 'no way', but when her 'boyfriend' threatened to beat her, she was forced to do as she'd been told. This was how the pattern of sexual exploitation started. It happened more and more, different towns, different flats. Often she was not alone; other girls were being 'used' too.*

*But Zoe's behaviour and constant missing episodes had raised concerns with social services and at this point Barnardo's became involved. Within three months her missing episodes had dropped from several episodes every week, to one or two per month. Gradually she came to realise that she was not to 'blame' for her own abuse, there had been a complex process of grooming and sexual exploitation. Today Zoe is back in education. She's stopped running away, self harming and has set herself 'life goals'. For many these would seem small steps, but for Zoe her life has been completely turned around.*

*Today Zoe has just passed her Maths and English exams and has applied for a college place to continue her studies. She's moved away from the men who abused her and finally feels safe.*

*'The best thing was just having someone to talk to,' she says. 'Thanks to the Barnardo's staff, I went back to college and have a place to live and now my life is back on track.'*

#### **Case Study 6 – 'Pamela' – Online grooming**

*Pamela is an 18 year old young person who was referred to the service through the local area social work team. Pamela has a diagnosis of a genetic disorder which was assessed by social work as placing her at a functioning age closer to 16.*

*Pamela had recently given birth to a child as a result of an exploitative relationship with an older male she met online. The male posed as 20 years old in his online persona and developed an online friendship with Pamela prior to meeting her. When Pamela met with the male she agreed to go with him to his car to help him with his laptop, despite him being significantly older. Pamela and the male were in contact for a number of months before the relationship was terminated by the male upon learning of Pamela's pregnancy. There were concerns about Pamela's capacity to assess risks, her desire to re-connect with the male, and subsequent long term child protection concerns.*

*Pamela had experienced a considerable amount of trauma and disadvantage throughout her life and in her relationships. , This appeared to impact her sense of self worth and confidence. She expressed feeling at fault for her experiences and was initially protective of the older male.*

*A Barnardo's service worked with Pamela to help Pamela to develop an understanding of exploitation and the process of 'Grooming'. She was also able to think critically of the older male's motivation, and understand her own experience through this lens. This learning was incorporated into a wider understanding of how to identify and respond to risky situations; both online and in person.*

*Pamela also recognized her struggles with confidence, and the impact this had on her autonomy and ability to assert her rights. The service therefore additionally provided work around confidence in order to boost Pamela's sense of capacity and autonomy, and reduce Pamela's vulnerability to exploitative relationships.*

*Barnardo's also attended the Child Protection meetings for Pamela's child, providing advocacy and support to Pamela throughout this process.*

#### **Case Study 7 – 'Vicky' – Online grooming**

*Vicky was referred to the Barnardo's service by CAMHS who had become aware some time ago that there had been incidents of Vicky posting sexual images online. This had been discovered by her mum who had since restricted her home computer use. Social work services had become involved at mum's request but*

*the case was then closed after assessment that risk had been removed. CAMHS remained concerned that Vicky had a lack of awareness of the exploitative nature of relationships that she had had online and was still vulnerable to further exploitation.*

*The service accepted the referral and began weekly sessions at the service base, focusing on the following outcomes–*

- *Knowledge of Sexual Health Strategies*
- *Able to Identify abusive/exploitative behaviour*
- *Recovery from sexual abuse/exploitation*
- *Able to describe safety strategies*
- *Reduction in level of risk/harm*
- *Reduced association with risky adults/peers*
- *Remains in regular contact with the service*
- *Awareness of own rights and those of others*

*During the course of initial work Vicky disclosed an unhealthy peer relationship which had led to further face to face sexual exploitation and it was apparent that she was still at significant risk of resuming online relationships. The service made a Child Protection referral to social work services and we continued to support Vicky during the subsequent investigation.*

*The service progressed work with Vicky – supporting her to identify the grooming process of intentionality and control that she had experienced in her relationships online. In time Vicky's perception of these as being loving relationships changed to where she was slowly able to acknowledge and disclose incidents of blackmail and coercion.*

*Work was undertaken to inform Vicky of the nature of perpetrator behaviours, the grooming process and also the concept of exploitation as abuse, with focus on Vicky's right to protection and safety. But also included input where Vicky was able to identify her motivations for seeking out adult relationships; using the time and space to explore her sense of self, her identity including sexual identity and to articulate her views on her own experiences.*

*By the end of contact Vicky considered she was still at some risk of reaching out for adult relationships but that this was minimal. She felt she had an increased confidence in managing her own emotional needs, and with the additional support that she was now receiving from various services she now had increased protective factors and was participating in age appropriate activities that met her intellectual needs and had focus for her future.*

#### **Case Study 8 – 'Christopher' – Looked after, foster care, homelessness**

*Christopher was referred to a Barnardo's service by his social worker when he was seventeen years old. He had been looked after since he was very young and had recently suffered a breakdown in his long-term foster placement, after he had made an allegation against an older male neighbour. Christopher stated that he no longer felt safe in this placement.*

*Christopher had suffered significant abuse and trauma which resulted in him being accommodated from an early age. He had ongoing mental health issues and was struggling with both his sexuality and his gender and spent a significant amount of time living under a female identity. In addition there were significant concerns regarding Christopher's use of alcohol and drugs, sexual health and risk taking behaviours and his relationships (both with peers and adults).*

*He was referred to the service as workers were very concerned, as he was going out and frequenting bars in the city centre and coming back to his accommodation heavily under the influence. He had also been found by the police in the city centre unconscious on several occasions and has also disclosed several incidents where he alleged that he had been sexually assaulted. Christopher continuously stated that he did not believe that he was at any risk and that he could not understand why workers were concerned about him.*

*The service met with Christopher over a period of four months. Initial contacts were very short and occurred fortnightly, however as Christopher got to know and trust workers, we slowly managed to increase the frequency of these contacts to weekly. During the time that we worked with Christopher, his accommodation broke down which resulted in him becoming homeless and living in unstable accommodation. We tried to link him into another Barnardo's project that could support him to access more suitable accommodation but Christopher was reluctant to meet any more workers and did not follow through with this.*

*More information emerged regarding his involvement in sexual exploitation although Christopher repeatedly stated that he was not at any risk and did not want to acknowledge or discuss this part of his life. His use of alcohol and drugs increased and his mental health deteriorated and he eventually withdrew from engaging with the service and other workers in his care plan. Christopher acknowledged that the service allowed him to be himself and was honest and up front with him regarding his behaviours and experiences. We also consistently challenged him regarding some of his behaviours. This ensured that Christopher was always aware of what he could expect from the service and that workers were there for him if he wanted to talk about anything. We also helped him to put his views across at his meetings, although this became increasingly difficult due to Christopher's own uncertainty regarding who he was, how he felt and what he wanted to happen. The service currently has no contact with Christopher, although we continue to keep a look out for him through street work. It is understood that he is engaging with some workers and has been referred to a suitable accommodation project.*

**Case Study 9 – 'Emily' – Missing from school, use of technology for exploitation**

*Emily is 15 years old.*

*Emily lives with her mother and her younger brother. Emily's mother is a single parent. Domestic abuse had been present in previous relationships, including Emily's father. Emily and her brother had also been hit by partners in the past and*

*when they were young had witnessed domestic violence and a sexual assault of their mother within the family home.*

*Emily's mother was no longer in a relationship, although she was diagnosed with depression and also continued to use alcohol as a coping mechanism, drinking most evenings. Emily's relationship with her mother appears to be more of a 'volatile friendship' than a daughter and the levels of supervision, rules, routines and boundaries have not been appropriate to Emily's age and stage of development for a number of years. Social work did not currently have this as an open case.*

*Emily's school attendance has been poor for a number of years and school have made many attempts to work with mum in regard to this but mum does not follow through with meetings or strategies.*

*Emily bought a Blackberry Messenger phone and through BBM has been indiscriminate in who she contacts and who has her own contact details. Emily's mother has not been monitoring who and where Emily is in the evenings and in the last year Emily has increasingly been hanging out with slightly older friends, drinking and attending parties. On a couple of occasions Emily engaged in underage sexual activity while attending these parties with a 16 year old boy, later Emily would also disclose that she was sexually assaulted by an older male while drunk at a party but that she did not report this.*

*Emily started going out with a boyfriend at school who was her own age. They used their mobile phones for 'sexting'. Initially exchanging text with sexual content but then also exchanging pictures. Emily sent her boyfriend a number of sexually explicit photos of herself. The boyfriend showed these photos to friends of his and then also sent them on. Emily split up with him following this. However, due to the bullying this instigated within the school Emily rarely attended school over a number of months and began to drink more and hang out with older young people in the community.*

*Emily began to be sexual activity with a number of these 'friends' who at the time she did not think were exploiting her but is now aware that she was being groomed. Emily began attending parties on her own and has now disclosed that on a couple of occasions when drunk she slept with not only her 'boyfriend' but also a 'friend'. In addition to this Emily was being increasingly targeted either for bullying through BBM by peers or sexual advances by older 'friends'.*

*Due to the complete disengagement of Emily from school and the lack of response from her mother school put in a Child Concern Report to Social Work. Initial home visits felt that the case was not sufficiently concerning to be opened and that School Community Support Services should be able to engage Emily back in school. However this was unsuccessful and Emily's brother also disclosed concerns to a guidance teacher that he was worried about his sister. This led to a further Child Concern Report and referrals to specialist CSE and alternative to education resources.*

*It took both these services a number of months to build a relationship with Emily and for the above information to be disclosed so that she could be supported with all of these issues. Emily has not returned to school but is hoping to now attend college and is engaged in group work with other young people looking at issues around CSE and work they can do to raise awareness of the risks for other young people.*

**Case Study 10 – ‘Angela and Sarah’ – Going missing from home, chaotic family life**

*Angela and Sarah are aged 12 and 14 and both live at home. They do not have good relationship with their family or peers and do not engage well at school. They were first approached by Barnardo’s CSE service late at night in town when they were seen approaching adult men and asking for cigarettes, they also said they were stranded and couldn’t get home. When it became apparent that these jaunts into town were not just one-off incidents the team invited the girls to the Barnardo’s office to discuss risk-taking behaviour.*

*By this time both girls had stopped going to school, Angela stopped attending after reporting that she had been sexually assaulted in the playground but no action had been taken. Sarah didn’t want to go to school – embarrassed about only having two tops. She had little access to basic needs such as food and clothing. Her elder sister had been arrested on two occasions for shoplifting food.*

*Barnardo’s staff had contact with the girls 2/3 times a week and as their confidence in town grew so did their risk taking behaviour such as running away from home and involvement in sexual exploitation. They were regularly supported to return home and the project workers gained the trust of the girls which enabled them to gather more and more information as they opened up.*

*As it turned out Angela had a very bad relationship with her mother, when she disclosed that her dad had sexually abused her, her mum refused to believe her. Sarah’s relationship with her dad fell apart when she found out he had lied about her mum’s death.*

*Risk indicators for the girls included going missing for long periods of time and their parents didn’t know where. They had no awareness of their rights or the risks associated with their behaviours. They received little communication or warmth from their family, used alcohol inappropriate to their age, did not attend school and both had histories of abuse and neglect.*

**Case Study 11 – James – seeking out a healthy and equal relationship**

*James is 15yo and has grown up in a chaotic home prior to being accommodated. James’ mum suffers from significant mental health difficulties, and has made several suicide attempts, on occasion when James has been present.*

*James has experienced violence from his dad, stepdad and other partners of his mum during his time living at home. James has also witnessed domestic violence against his mum and as the oldest son has tried to protect both her and his*

*siblings from this violence. James became accommodated in a local authority children's unit following a significant incident of violence from one of his mum's partners.*

*James is very protective of his mum and there are indications of a co-dependent relationship between them. James will sometimes share that he feels he hasn't done well to protect his family. James' mum will still seek James' support in times of crisis.*

*James was referred to the service following missing episodes and the disclosure of rape.*

*James identifies himself as gay and his experiences of sexual exploitation began age 15 through making contact with males in social networking and dating sites online.*

*James is quite shy and has difficulty in developing relationships. He felt it would be easier to meet someone, just like him. Someone who wanted to meet other people, maybe a partner, but who like him struggled to start up conversations. Initial contacts involved online chat and trying to get to know these males. James' online profile stated he was older; otherwise he wouldn't have been able to post on the sites. However James was always upfront in chat that he was only 15yrs of age.*

*Some of these conversations progressed to James being invited to meet up face to face. Meetings have taken place in various places - hotels, car parks/parked cars, and at houses in locations across the country. All of these males have been adults – ranging from 20 – 45year of age and have been aware of James age at the time of contact.*

*Unfortunately James has difficulties in assessing risk and judging character – a result of his significant early relationships, causing him to be vulnerable to the skills of perpetrator males in grooming him. James feels now that he has been naive to have believed that these males wanted to have equal relationships rather than the abusive, exploitative relationships he has experienced.*

*James has been raped, contracted STIs, and has been hospitalised as a result of infection. His esteem has been damaged with increased feelings of rejection and he now has an increased sense of vulnerability.*

*James is slight in build and presentation and was told by one of the males who abused him that what appealed to him was James' vulnerable child-like appearance, adding he looked like a 12yo.*

*Since working with the service James has an increased awareness of the motivations of these adult perpetrators to have power and control over him.*

*James is now working with supports to build positive pro-social relationships into his day to day experiences, support in reducing his feelings of isolation and*

*inadequacy and increasing his opportunities to increase his self regard and his confidence.*

*The work is supporting his recovery from child sexual exploitation and developing his skills and confidence to be able to engage in equal relationships in the future*

#### **Eighteen And Under**

**A.** *I am a 28 year old and female. I live in Fife and was involved in sexual exploitation. The exploitation began by peers when I was about 12/13 yrs old, I was pressurised into performing sexual activities. Given drugs and alcohol in exchange for sexual relations.*

*What was helpful? Counselling that was provided whilst awaiting an appointment with a psychologist through the NHS was very helpful. Also helped to put me in touch with other services that were beneficial.*

*Not helpful? One organisation simply sent me away with a business card with a telephone number on with no explanation of what the service was and how it might help.*

*Prevent involvement or escape? Better talks in school about CSE, maybe a tv ad campaign could be beneficial? Simply more awareness about CSE and what forms it consists of. CSE through peer pressure is especially prevalent amongst young girls- more needs to be done to address this in particular, especially through talks in schools, sixth form and colleges etc.*

**B.** *I am a 27 year old male from Angus. I was exploited and I have had a number of friends who were sexually exploited when in care or when they were on the run.*

*Some of my old friends were sexually abused by older foster siblings, attacked or groomed when they were on the run from social care and I heard of a few claims about carers in the social system exploiting young people physically, emotionally and sexually to return favours or maintain their authority through fear and blackmail.*

*I didn't seek support from any support organisation as I felt I didn't need any help. The NHS system wasn't helpful at all. I never heard of a support organisation for boys when I was young.*

*Not helpful? NHS and their psychologists and councillors were too busy labelling my "condition" and forcing me to take all sorts of medication for me to be normal.*

*To help? Listen to them, no PHDs, no meds, no forms to fill in, no fear of not been believed, not waving the bureaucratic system in your face and telling you what you have to do, just listening to the young person.*

**C.** *I am a 27 year old male from Dundee and was involved in child exploitation from the age of 12/13. It started with sleeping with some older women when I was not living at home.*

*Helpful organisations? nothing, there was no organisations for boys and you would not at that age consider such things as exploitation, actually you probably wouldn't at any age unless you were well educated on the subject, or it was an older boy/younger girl of course :P*

*Not helpful to me? sending out the message that only men/boys can abuse people, and only girls/little children can be abused.*

*What would help not getting involved or escaping? healthy families, prevention work (education), confidential services.*

*Also, social work are s\*\*\*.*

**D.** *I am female and aged 22 now. I live in Dundee. When I was 5 or 6 my cousin started to sexually abuse me. It went on for years. I tried to tell but no one believed me. When I was 13 he started forcing me to have sex with his mates and he took money. Things were getting worse and worse but when I was 15 one of my sisters told on my cousin for abusing her. The police asked me and I said it happened to me too but I was too scared to tell it all. It went to court and he was found guilty but was not jailed. When I was 16 he started stalking me and saying he was going to tell about what I had done with men. He tried to get me to do it all again.*

*I went to 18 and Under and they listened and helped a lot. They were confidential and the more I was able to talk, the easier it got. They helped me get a health check and then a lawyer to get advice. They gave practical help too like helping me fill in forms.*

*What was not helpful? I was scared of the social work in case they took me and my sisters away. The doctor offered pills.*

*What would help others? Confidential services that listen. Education at a very young age, someone to trust in.*

**E.** *I am 21 year old girl and live in Stirling. I was taken into care at age 3 because my mother was an alcoholic. I moved from foster carer to foster carer and at age 10 was sexually abused by a carer. I started acting out and got moved again and then got put in a residential unit. While there I was involved in sexual exploitation and all the girls were doing it to get money. The staff didn't care and could not keep us in anyway. I started fire raising and getting really out of control and was put into a secure unit. That was the most abusive place I ever lived. It was worse than a prison, at least in prison you have some rights. I was strip searched, left with no clothes or bedclothes and had to eat with plastic cutlery. 18 and under was helping me by visiting and listening but staff did not always let them in. Staff didn't like that they were confidential.*

*At 18 I was put in a flat in an area I did not want to be in but the through care team for the area I was under was responsible and other teams would not take me. Who Cares and 18 and under helped and supported me. They still do. Social work are useless and obstructive.*

*In the flat I had no skills and was lonely. Mates got me involved in exploitation and that helped financially as I had no money. It soon got out of control and my flat was trashed and I was beaten up.*

*Helpful? The confidential services of 18 and Under who always stood by me and believed in me. They gave practical help when I needed it. They never colluded with other services.*

*Not helpful? Social work, NHS. They call me attention seeking, give me labels and wrote reports.*

*What might help? More services that are independent from the authorities and confidential. Safe places to live and education.*

Who Cares? Scotland

*I was born 22 years ago in Scotland. I was sexually, emotionally, physically and mentally abused and neglected by both of my biological parents. I was sexually abused by my siblings and by other people known to my parents. I was just an infant when the abuse began (my siblings were also abused) and my early childhood has very limited happy memories. I have memories of being abused at a very early age.*

*Recently I have begun going through my social work files and feel very badly let down as it is documented on several occasions that social work had very strong concerns regarding my safety. Others in the community also raised their concerns but I remained in my parents care until I was 5. Before this happened my parents separated and although my mother looked after me, there was a condition that she did not let my father in the family home, but she did and I continued to be abused.*

*My father received a substantial prison sentence with regards to the sexual abuse – and although social work strongly suspected my mother's involvement she was never charged. After I came into care, during contact visits with my mother and siblings, on occasion my siblings continued to abuse me.*

*I was also sexually abused when placed with foster carers. From the age of 7, I had no contact with any of my immediate or extended family, and was given no information about them as social work felt this would be in my best interests, in order to protect me.*

*When I reached 18 years of age, I changed my name in order to sever all links with my past, but at the same time was very curious about my family and made contact with my mum. Unfortunately my oldest brother who lived with my mum took total control over the contact used it to gain control over me. He manipulated all the*

*arrangements and again sexually abused me. I think this was able to happen to me because I just wanted to know my mother, and if possible establish a relationship where I would be able to ask my mother some of the many questions that remain unanswered about my life.*

*Throughout my childhood, right up until I was 17, I did not attend any meetings. No professional ever spoke to me about my past, even when I would try and ask questions. Since then, I have had the support of an advocacy worker from Who Cares? Scotland. I believe strongly that if I had known earlier that I was entitled to an advocacy worker that it would have made a huge difference in my life as I would have had somebody there just for me who could have attended my meetings and spoke up for me.*

*Due to my childhood and care experiences, I have a massive lack of trust around adults. I believe that although young people should be protected from all forms of abuse they should be consulted more and given information about their past when they ask, as this would help them try and understand why decisions were made and why no family contact ever took place. It would also help them make more informed choices when they left care as to whether they wanted to trace their family.*

*I believe that social work and police let me down badly as both agencies had strong suspicions that my 2 older siblings were being abused and then I myself was abused. By then too much time had gone by and all 3 of us had horrific childhoods due to nobody taking action quicker.*

*I strongly believe that early intervention is a must and that the child should be removed at first indication there may be any abuse going on and that only when full police and social work investigation is carried out should the child be able to go back home. Everybody should be responsible for reporting abuse. When I was allowed to attend nursery it is documented in my files that I was very withdrawn and never played. Even with that statement, action should have been taken.*

Miss X

**ANNEXE B: EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE**

**13th Meeting, 2012 (Session 4), Tuesday 18 September 2012**

**Consideration of current petitions: The Committee considered—**

PE1393 by Martin Crewe, on behalf of Barnardo's Scotland, on tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland. The Committee agreed to consider a scoping paper from the Clerk on a future inquiry on the issues raised in the petition.

**15th Meeting, 2012 (Session 4), Tuesday 30 October 2012**

**PE1393 - tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered a paper by the Clerk and agreed to seek an informal briefing from Barnardo's (the petitioner) and the authors of the report Exploring the Scale and Nature of Child Exploitation in Scotland.

**2nd Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 22 January 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee agreed the terms of reference and a ranked list of candidates for appointment as adviser in connection with its forthcoming inquiry into tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland.

**3rd Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 5 February 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee agreed to consider a paper by the adviser at its next meeting.

**4th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 19 February 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered a paper by the adviser and agreed to invite the Minister for Children and Young People and the Care Inspectorate to give evidence.

**6th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 5 March 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee agreed its approach to the inquiry.

**8th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 16 April 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee agreed its approach for the second tranche call for evidence.

**9th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 30 April 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland:** The Committee took evidence from—

Aileen Campbell, Minister for Children and Young People, and Phil Raines, Head of Child Protection and Children's Legislation Policy, Scottish Government;  
Annette Bruton, Chief Executive, and Helen Happer, Head of Quality and Improvement, Care Inspectorate.

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered the evidence heard at agenda item 2. The Committee agreed to invite Police Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Lord Advocate to give evidence at a future meeting.

**12th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 11 June 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland:** The Committee took evidence from—

Daljeet Dagon, Children's Services Manager, Barnardo's Scotland;  
Julian Heng, Service Manager, NHS Open Road;  
Liz Ray, National Learning and Development Lead, Who Cares? Scotland;  
Martin Henry, National Manager, Stop it Now! Scotland;  
Ken Dunbar, Chief Executive, Aberlour Child Care Trust;  
Rosina McCrae, Director, Say Women;  
Linda Thompson, Development Officer, Women's Support Project;  
Anela Anwar, Head of Projects, roshni.

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered the evidence heard at agenda item 2.

**13th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 25 June 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland:** The Committee took evidence from Rt Hon Frank Mulholland QC, Lord Advocate, Alison Di Rollo, Head of National Sexual Crimes Unit, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and Assistant Chief Constable Malcolm Graham, Police Scotland.

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland:** The Committee considered the evidence heard at agenda item 3. The Committee agreed to seek written responses to further questions.

**16th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 1 October 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered its approach to the next stage of the inquiry.

**17th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 29 October 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland:** The Committee took evidence from—

Sheila Taylor MBE, Chief Executive Officer, and Cheryl Stevens, Project Coordinator, National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People;  
Professor Kirsten Stalker, Professor of Disability Studies, University of Strathclyde.

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered the evidence heard at agenda item 2. The Committee agreed to seek further written evidence and consider an issues paper at a future meeting.

**19th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 26 November 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered an issues paper and agreed to schedule an additional meeting to consider its draft report on tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland. The Committee also agreed that consideration of the draft report should be taken in private at future meetings.

**21st Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 17 December 2013**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee considered a draft report and agreed to consider a further draft at its next meeting.

**1st Meeting, 2014 (Session 4), Tuesday 7 January 2014**

**Tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland (in private):** The Committee agreed a draft report.

## **ANNEXE C: ORAL EVIDENCE AND ASSOCIATED WRITTEN EVIDENCE**

### **9th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 30 April 2013**

Written Evidence

[Minister for Children and Young People](#)  
[Care Inspectorate](#)

#### [Oral Evidence](#)

Aileen Campbell, Minister for Children and Young People, Scottish Government  
Phil Raines, Scottish Government  
Annette Bruton, Care Inspectorate  
Helen Happer, Care Inspectorate

### **12th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 11 June 2013**

Written Evidence

[Barnardo's Scotland](#)  
[NHS Open Road](#)  
[Who Cares? Scotland](#)  
[Aberlour Child Care Trust](#)  
[Say Women](#)  
[Women's Support Project](#)  
[roshni](#)  
[Supplementary written evidence from roshni](#)

#### [Oral Evidence](#)

Daljeet Dagon, Barnardo's Scotland  
Julian Heng, NHS Open Road  
Liz Ray, Who Cares? Scotland  
Martin Henry, Stop it Now! Scotland  
Ken Dunbar, Aberlour Child Care Trust  
Rosina McCrae, Say Women  
Linda Thompson, Women's Support Project  
Anela Anwar, roshni

### **13th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 25 June 2013**

Written Evidence

[Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service](#)  
[Supplementary written evidence from Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service](#)  
[Further supplementary written evidence from the Crown Office and Procurator](#)  
[Fiscal Service](#)  
[Police Scotland](#)  
[Supplementary written evidence from Police Scotland](#)

[Oral Evidence](#)

Rt Hon Frank Mulholland QC, Lord Advocate  
Alison Di Rollo, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service  
Assistant Chief Constable Malcolm Graham, Police Scotland

**17th Meeting, 2013 (Session 4), Tuesday 29 October 2013**

[Oral Evidence](#)

Sheila Taylor MBE, National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People  
Cheryl Stevens, National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People  
Professor Kirsten Stalker, University of Strathclyde.

## **ANNEXE D: OTHER WRITTEN EVIDENCE AND CORRESPONDENCE**

The Committee issued its call for evidence in two tranches.

First tranche of written evidence received:

[Eighteen and Under](#)  
[Izzy's Promise](#)  
[18 Plus](#)  
[Zero Tolerance](#)  
[Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project](#)  
[Project No-1](#)  
[Barnardo's Scotland](#)  
[CHILDREN 1ST](#)  
[Caledonia Youth](#)  
[Roshni](#)  
[Children in Scotland](#)  
[Women's Support Project](#)  
[Open Secret](#)  
[Aberlour Child Care Trust](#)  
[EVA Services](#)  
[NHS Open Road](#)  
[NSPCC Scotland](#)  
[Who Cares? Scotland](#)  
[Say Women](#)

Second tranche of written evidence received:

[Break the Silence](#)  
[Safe Space](#)  
[Care Inspectorate](#)  
[Clackmannanshire, Stirling and Falkirk Child Protection Committees and Multi-Agency Partnerships](#)  
[CHILDREN 1ST](#)  
[East Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee](#)  
[SAY Women](#)  
[CELCIS](#)  
[Glasgow Child Protection Committee](#)  
[Superintendent Ricky Mason, Police Scotland](#)  
[Legal Services Agency and Scottish Guardianship Service](#)  
[East Ayrshire Council](#)  
[Police Scotland](#)  
[Circle](#)  
[Dumfries and Galloway Child Protection Committee](#)  
[Who Cares? Scotland](#)  
[Barnardo's Scotland](#)  
[Glasgow Community Safety Services Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance Service](#)  
[Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership](#)  
[Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service](#)

Other correspondence received:

[Minister for Children and Young People, 10 October 2013](#)

[Child Sexual Exploitation Sub Group of the Child Protection Committee Chairs Forum, 1 November 2013](#)

[Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, 20 November 2013](#)

[Police Scotland, 22 November 2013](#)

[Barnardo's Scotland, 22 November 2013](#)

[NWG Network, 28 November 2013](#)

[Minister for Children and Young People, 9 December 2013](#)

[Minister for Children and Young People, 18 December 2013](#)

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