



An Evaluation of Stop to Listen

A pathfinder project aimed at developing and improving responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation

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Introduction

Context and Development of Stop of Listen

Stop to Listen is a two year project funded by RS MacDonald which aimed to develop and improve service responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation. The project was managed by Children 1st in partnership with four local authority pathfinder areas: Perth & Kinross, North Ayrshire, Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The context for the project centred on the following shared concerns:

- A need for a more child centred response to children and young people who are experiencing child sexual abuse and opportunities for them to have more control over the child protection response when they speak out.
- An acceptance that child sexual abuse is under reported with many people affected not speaking out about this until they are adults, if at all. Adults reveal that they were prevented from speaking out due to fears that they may not be believed, shame, humiliation and guilt.
- The process for gathering evidence for criminal trials was not universally child centred and often led to children and young people to retract their evidence, leading some to remain in potentially high risk situations.
- Practitioners lacked confidence in responding to child sexual abuse in an effective and child centred way and were unsure how to speak to children and young people about sexual abuse.
- The individual and societal cost of child sexual abuse is enormous.

The aims of the project

The key objectives of Stop to Listen can be summarised as follows:

- To develop child centred practice enabling children and young people to be heard effectively.
- To raise the confidence of practitioners in dealing with Childhood Sexual Abuse.
- To improve the quality of evidence gathering; through developing patience and a slower pace within the investigation process, and working to reduce the child or young persons fears, which at times lead to retractions of evidence.
- To enable children to tell what has happened to them at their own pace.

The funding award has resourced the post of development manager to drive forward these aims in the four pathfinder areas; North Ayrshire, Glasgow, Perth & Kinross and Renfrewshire. This has involved a combination of policy and influencing around some of the broader themes as well as assisting the pathfinders to identify, implement and evaluate the changes to practice and processes in the local areas.

The project was overseen by a steering group made up of representatives from Police Scotland, Child Protection Committee Scotland, Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service, Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration, Social Work Scotland, Education Scotland, Health and Third Sector organisations.

This report details the journey of Stop to Listen from planning to implementation and evaluation. It will focus on the changes the pathfinders applied in their localities and the learning captured from evaluating this.

Pathfinder Implementation & Evaluation

During year one the Development Manager focused on ensuring commitment with key senior managers in the pathfinder areas. This would form the basis of a partnership which would support progress towards the key aims of Stop to Listen. This involved a range of engagement activities such as presentations at child protection committees', conferences and meetings to create a dialogue and begin the process of consultation with staff in the local areas to shape their individual pathfinder plans.

Sarah Nelson a researcher and writer on child sexual abuse was commissioned to develop practitioner leaflets detailing the current research on child sexual abuse and exploitation offering further insight into the complexity facing children and young people affected by this issue. The leaflets were promoted widely among staff in the pathfinder areas and can also be used in a training context.

Promotional posters previously developed to raise awareness about child sexual abuse were adapted and the logo used to promote Stop to Listen in the pathfinder areas. Pathfinder areas also developed their individual project and communication plans in order to disseminate information in the locality areas.

Trauma focused joint investigative interview training

In Scotland children and young people who have experienced abuse or harm may be subject to a joint investigative interview (JII), the purpose of which is twofold; to gather evidence for any criminal prosecution and to inform any assessment of risk and the need to protect the child/young person. These interviews are visually recorded and can be used as evidence in criminal trials.

Susanne Goetzold is a Lecturer/Practitioner with Napier University. In 2015 Susanne conducted a study of the impact of current joint interview training, with emphasis on the child's free narrative element of the guidance and wrote a briefing paper which explored the importance of the child's free narrative in the interview context. This suggested that police and social workers tasked with interviewing children and young people required more extensive training and ongoing support to ensure that the quality of practice was of a sufficient standard. In 2015 the Evidence and Procedure Review, a judicially led review also reported on the need to make improvements in the practice of taking evidence from child and vulnerable witnesses in Scotland. Further to this review, a dedicated project team is currently working on making these improvements to joint investigative interviews in Scotland.

The four Stop to Listen pathfinder areas were interested in improving practice in joint investigative interviewing, but did not want to either duplicate or stray too far from the work of the Evidence and Procedure Review working groups. In consultation with the local areas, the pathfinders decided to participate in piloting trauma focused training for experienced joint interview practitioners from police and social work, and Susanne Goetzold was commissioned

by Stop to Listen to deliver the training. The aim of the training was to explore the impact of trauma on the child and consider some of the dynamics in sexual abuse which affect a child/young person's ability to share their experiences within the interview context. See Appendix 1 for fuller details of the aims and learning outcomes of the training.

A total of 40 social workers and 18 police officers were trained across the four pathfinder areas between June and September 2017. A detailed breakdown of this by area is given below:

Renfrewshire	Police: 6	Social Work: 9
Glasgow	Police: 2	Social Work: 18
North Ayrshire	Police: 6	Social Work: 7
Perth & Kinross	Police: 4	Social Work: 6

In some of the areas numbers of participants who attended on the day were affected by operational commitments, which is said to be a common challenge in delivering training for these particular groups of staff. In addition it should also be noted that although the selection criteria for participants was for 'experienced' joint interview practitioners, this was not reflected across all attendees, which negatively impacted the evaluation of the effectiveness of the training.

Renfrewshire was the first area to pilot the training and after analysis of the evaluation and helpful observations from the local Interagency Child Protection Development Officer, the training was adjusted - this mainly centred on removing the skills practice session and extending the input on trauma and sexual abuse.

Participant's were asked to complete a pre-course questionnaire to offer a baseline of their knowledge and skills in the areas of trauma, child sexual abuse and current knowledge about research in these areas. In some of these elements it would appear that police participants felt more confident about their skills and knowledge than social workers. This may reflect the opportunity that police have to be involved in a greater number of interviews and consequent greater confidence in the procedure;

“process appears to be effective in that I have a good success rate of disclosure from witnesses” (police participant).

It is interesting to consider how 'success' is measured in the interview setting and whether this is based on the outcome of the child/young person making a disclosure or in viewing the interview as part of a holistic continuum of a child centred care and protection plan.

In other areas police and social workers scored themselves more evenly in feeling less confident about knowledge and skills, which for some seemed to reflect less direct experience of practice in interviews. Others commented on the difficulty in keeping up to date with contemporary approaches to practice -

“I feel that this is an area in which I require further learning. I have not had the opportunity to look at research/policy developments therefore my knowledge is limited” (social work participant).

There were some positive observations about current practice and the impact interviewers have on the child/young person, in terms of getting the best evidence but recognition that there are often practical and process driven challenges which affect the quality of the interview.

Examples of this were environment, the developmental stage of the child, adequate preparation for the child and family and a lack of follow up support post interview.

Following the training participants were asked to complete a post course questionnaire to consider the immediate impact of the training on their skills and knowledge. Most participants reported a broadly positive learning experience when compared to their baseline skills and knowledge. In particular they noted that it was useful to focus less on the structure and process of the interview and reflect more on the experience of the child/young person;

'more victim and witness focused' (police participant)

"training was more focused on the importance of the rapport stage with emphasis on treating each child on a case by case basis, a less generalised approach" (police participant).

Some appreciated the input on trauma, citing the need to consider how this might manifest for individual children in the interview context, but recognised that other factors such as a poor interview environment might inhibit the child/young person -

"making the entire process more child centred would undoubtedly help children who have experienced abuse" (police participant).

Both social workers and police participants spoke of their concerns regarding the perceived resources required to make practical and procedural changes to ensure a child centred approach -

"having a smaller pool of trained staff in a better setting would help but anticipate challenges in time, venue, cost to improve preparation and post interview support" (social work participant)

"Foresee difficulties in acceptance of, for instance not wearing suits during interviews and procuring finance for improved facilities" (police participant).

Focus groups

After a suitable time lapse the Development Manager was assisted by the pathfinders to facilitate four focus groups with staff in each of the areas who participated in the training to consider any changes to practice.

Participants said that they valued the training with their local colleagues as this was really helpful in terms of relationship building. They reflected on the gradual move over the years to a more 'sterile' environment in terms of venues for conducting interviews and wondered if this was a shift in terms of perspective to make this more forensic and evidentially driven. The training had offered opportunities to think about what this feels like from a child and young person's viewpoint and they pondered whether it was time to re-evaluate this more broadly.

A police officer spoke about the different approaches for adult victims of sexual assault;

"we work hard to build up trust over a long period of time with a woman going at her own pace yet we often expect children to talk to us in one opportunity and without much preparation for the process" (police officer participant).

He suggested that we needed to consider how the child/young person perceives the interview and that it is often driven by the system and not the child/young person's individual needs. Another officer agreed -

"We really stick to a rigid framework for JII's which is completely at odds with what we know about children, child development and their ability to engage with such a bizarre structured environment and engage the parts of the brain that allow for good memory recall"
(police officer).

A social worker also talked about the need to build up trust with a child before they will share experiences, something which is core to any other work they do with children and young people and a central aim of Stop to Listen. This was echoed by other police participants who spoke of pressure of work and operational requirements which mean that the child/young person gets lost and there is a sense powerlessness to reflect on this and contribute to change.

Most focus group participants shared common concerns regarding the environment and practical issues relating to interviews. In one area the local public protection unit moved to another building and the fixed site venue for conducting interviews deteriorated significantly. Local police officers viewed this as a step backwards, given the current focus on improving the process of gathering best evidence from children.

Perth & Kinross senior managers attended the Justice for Children Conference in 2016 where they learned more about the Barnahus children's house model, a purpose built multi-disciplinary facility for children affected by violence and abuse. They were inspired by the Norwegian Barnahus and secured a small amount of money to make cosmetic changes to upgrade their fixed site. This was done in consultation with local young people and photographs charting these changes can be seen in Appendix 2. Staff talked about the improvements this has made;

"The feedback from the child and young people is that the interview room is much better now. You notice how the kids are more relaxed – lying back on the sofas – we have tactile rugs etc. Before we kept too close to procedure / guidance - rooms has to be empty – clinical spaces. It's a tangible improvement" (Social worker).

A number of people commented on learning more about the physiological impacts of trauma on the child/young person and practical tips about what might help if a child is anxious and struggling. They spoke of the need for an individual approach to interviewing, gathering detailed information on the child and having a toolkit to help devise different strategies to assist the child in the interview context;

"It was good to have research and evidential support around the positive effects (if done properly) of multiple JII's – that we should not just accept that this is traumatising for children. In fact, this could be a more beneficial way of working with children through a JII process and actually this process could be therapeutic." (police officer).

Participants did note that for interviewers to be able to adapt to children/young people's immediate needs they need to develop confidence and a level of expertise which might lie in specialist teams. They felt that if interviewers regularly work together then relationships are improved and therefore the quality of their practice is better.

Some participants felt that while the input on trauma was useful, it needed to be more in-depth. One participant felt that current systems and processes are not trauma informed and this needs to be addressed by senior managers;

“what does trauma look like, can we see it? We need to ask ourselves this more”
(social worker).

Areas which require to be addressed include; the role of staff who the child disclosed to, pre-interview briefings, preparing children and young people for interview, de-briefings, follow up meetings with the child/young person and quality assurance. The urgent need for this is poignantly summed up by one social worker;

“the training gave me hope; children deserve more than we give them” (social worker).

In some areas quality assurance was raised as an issue;

“there is no sense that interviews are reviewed and so we are not aware of the quality of interviews” (police officer).

In other areas there are well established systems for this, highlighting inconsistencies in practice and a lack of development opportunities for staff to improve their practice. It was noted that managers also need to access this type of training and two participants spoke about offering this type of training to those who work in legal services, as they may well be involved in taking evidence on commission from children and young people.

In one area social workers raised concerns that police were reluctant to interview children/young people with complex needs and very young children. For these children there is the suggestion that they may not be able to communicate effectively in the interview context. In an attempt to address this Glasgow intend to pilot the use of a pre interview assessment tool for children with complex needs and for pre school children. It is hoped that this will build competence and confidence of interview staff and allow these children the opportunity to be heard.

In conclusion, most participants felt that they benefited from the joint interview training. The information shared suggests that they particularly valued the interactive and reflective nature of the training, with less emphasis on procedure. Participants said that training together with local colleagues was enjoyable and helped to create trusting relationships which they perceived would have a positive impact on the quality of interviews. However, the information gathered in the focus groups suggests that even across the four pathfinder areas there is a distinct lack of consistency in practice, with different areas highlighting positive features as well as challenges. It would be important that the Evidence and Procedure project team tasked with driving forward improvements in JII's address this.

For future training participant's still felt that there was a clear gap in knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- A shared language and understanding of trauma
- Child development
- Opportunities for social workers to undertake interviews and develop skills
- Specific local issues
- Understanding the barriers and challenges in multi-agency forums
- Complex needs and pre-school children

Susanne Goetzold has also provided her own observations of the training across the four pathfinder areas and these can be found in Appendix 3.

North Ayrshire

North Ayrshire completed 'whole school' workshops to 130 staff in three local primary schools including janitorial, catering and school support staff and multi-agency workshops with social workers, police officers, health and other associated staff. This was developed and facilitated by the local Stop to Listen Steering Group. The workshops focused on child sexual abuse and the Stop to Listen Approach. The aim was to improve staff confidence and competence by reflecting on current practice and engage in dialogue around making improvements. This was a key recommendation identified by the report by the Children's Commissioner in England "*all schools take the necessary steps to implement a whole-school approach to child protection, where all school staff can identify the signs and symptoms of abuse, and are equipped with the knowledge and support to respond effectively to disclosures of abuse.*"

Following the workshops, the steering group developed and facilitated a practitioner forum which created a physical space to encourage conversations about challenges and improvements and encourage sustainability of the approach. A suggestion by staff at the workshop led to 'I Stop to Listen' badges being created for school staff, encouraging children to approach staff if they needed to speak out about an issue.

Leaflets were developed for parents explaining the context of the pathfinder and were followed up with a parent/carers awareness session facilitated by Jan McLeod from the Women's Support Project. The steering group also made links with a local third sector organisation that supports adult survivors, to ensure that the voice of the child is heard within any ongoing approach and are currently considering how best to proceed with this.

Information has been gathered on the impact of Stop to Listen in North Ayrshire from a series of staff surveys and focus groups. This included practitioner's and managers from CAMHS, police, social work, family support, teachers, education support staff, domiciliary staff in schools and health visitors. The local Steering Group in North Ayrshire was consulted regarding their views on the impact of Stop to Listen.

Participants who attended the whole school and multi-agency workshops were asked to complete an initial evaluation on the day and an online survey some time after the event, to consider any impact this had on their practice. 73% of participants rated the workshops as good or excellent. A number of people commented on information provided in the workshops on the potential prevalence of child sexual abuse in North Ayrshire, data which was gathered locally from the pathfinder scoping exercise in partnership with the NSPCC referred to later in this report;

"statistics are startling" (workshop participant),

"Statistics took me by surprise, the actual number is frightening. Does really highlight the problem and the need for something to be done not just in North Ayrshire but in all local authorities" (workshop participant)

A role play scenario was used to illustrate the impact of child sexual abuse on the family. Participants felt that this was a powerful reminder of the differing perspectives for each family member;

“very thought provoking, made me aware of how it felt to be the child, the sense of panic”
(workshop participant).

In terms of additional areas for future learning some participants highlighted the need to talk to children about keeping safe;

“what information or tools are used in Education to inform children about healthy relationships and sexual abuse? At what age? And how is delivered to children? Staff require more time set aside in our day to reflect and think about our work with children” (workshop participant).

18 education participants completed the online survey which provided information that suggested people had improved awareness of child sexual abuse. They felt that they learned most about the ways in which education staff can listen, observe and support children affected by child sexual abuse. This indicates that the workshop may have had the desired effect of increasing staff awareness and confidence immediately following the workshop. Those who completed the survey also felt that they still have some concerns when they have suspicions about child sexual abuse but the child has not spoken out;

“Still anxious about knowing what and when to pass on information but I know it's better to pass on information even if nothing comes of it” (workshop participant).

This and information discussed in the focus groups suggests that there is still a gap in supporting education staff in managing these types of concerns and perhaps a role for multi-agency staff to support this moving forward.

Information provided on the use of the Stop to Listen badges was positive overall, as it served as a visual reminder for the children that they could speak to staff about issues, although this was not restricted to child sexual abuse. One participant felt that they acted as a good prompt to open up discussions with the children, while another felt that they already had good relationships with the children and were therefore not necessary. The badges will be discussed further in the context of the focus groups with staff. The majority of those who completed the survey said they were not aware of the practitioner forum, which suggests perhaps communication about this did not reach everyone. Those who were aware of it commented that they enjoyed the multi-agency aspect of this, learning about others roles and found it useful.

Participants were asked about areas that they felt still required to be addressed and some people commented on supporting staff after a child had spoken out about sexual abuse. The response from other agencies was also seen as being a priority, to ensure the child's needs are met. Regarding the impact on practice some people felt that it had not made any difference to their practice as they already felt they had enough training and policies in place. Others felt that it had definitely raised awareness of the issue and increased awareness of the importance of making time to listen more to children, as well as an understanding of some of the behavioural indicators of child sexual abuse.

A separate survey was designed for non teaching staff and staff in agencies such as police, social work, health, youth services etc. This was completed by 14 staff members with 57% and 36% indicating that they had learned a lot or a little respectively. Similarly to their education

colleagues, they felt that they had learned most about how staff can listen, observe and support children affected by child sexual abuse, followed by why children find it difficult to speak about sexual abuse.

Participants indicated that pressure of work was a key factor that concerned them in responding effectively to children and young people affected by sexual abuse;

“The time pressures within a busy classroom mean that you often miss opportunities to attune with children and build the relationship that encourages effective communication and understanding” (workshop participant).

This highlights the current challenges in resources and competing operational demands in agencies requiring more time to reflect on meeting key responsibilities for children’s wellbeing. Perhaps incorporating tools such as Kitbag into lesson plans could make this seem less onerous and embedded in the class and school culture *“Kitbag can be used as a collective resource to help introduce more compassion, caring and responsibility into the way that relationships are managed in the school community, including with staff and parents.”*

While most of the survey respondent’s were aware of the Stop to Listen badges, they were less clear about the impact of them. Some staff indicated that they wore the badges but that the children did not seem aware of them or it did not generate discussion with the children. This will be discussed further later in the report. Regarding the practitioner forum once again pressure of work was a factor although those who were able to attend found this useful;

“I have enjoyed being part of the practitioner’s forums, and feel that they offer a range of support and advice from different areas of the council. They are a good arena for information sharing and seeking guidance.” (workshop participant).

Respondent’s also indicated that they would like to see more multi-agency training to share practice experience and consider further improvements as well as more input on effective communication and attunement with children. Those who completed the survey felt that the workshop had impacted on their practice by raising awareness about self reflection and listening to and observing children in order to be able to respond effectively to their needs. One participant also highlighted the lack of local services after a child has spoken out about abuse;

“I am also more aware that there is not much support available for families after abuse has been disclosed and so I have started putting a resource pack together to help better support families I work with who have been affected” (workshop participant).

This worker should be commended for taking a creative approach in the current context of a lack of formal services in the local area. It might be helpful to make use of practitioners’ forums to share and develop this practice in a multi-agency way.

Focus groups

Throughout January 2018, three multi-agency focus groups were organised with staff and one education focus group, regarding Stop to Listen in North Ayrshire, in conjunction with the local steering group. A total of 6 staff attended the multi-agency focus group and 56 education staff attended the single agency focus group. The focus groups reflected on the impact of the workshops on the practice of staff having had a suitable time between attending the training and

the focus group. In addition the local Stop to Listen Steering Group in North Ayrshire was also consulted to gather their views about pathfinder impact.

In the multi-agency focus groups practitioners spoke about the workshop helping them to be self reflective in their practice and considering how to approach children exhibiting distress. They felt that the workshop had increased their confidence in speaking to children, reassuring them and giving them permission to speak about all sorts of issues. There was some discussion regarding the different agency roles and people's understanding of this, for example, timescales for police in gathering evidence and recognition that there is still work to be done around this especially when everyone is busy.

In general focus group participants felt that the Stop to Listen badges had been beneficial and spoke about both children and adults asking about what the badges represented. This created an opportunity for dialogue to spread awareness of Stop to Listen more widely, as well as encouraging parental engagement. There was some concern that not all participants wore the badges and a comment was made that it might have been helpful for all agencies to wear them to encourage a common shared approach for children. Steering group members also noted that an area of learning was the need to make the link for the children and to be more explicit in describing the purpose of the badges. Perhaps clearer aims, preparation, and more robust evaluation of the impact of the Stop to Listen badges is needed, if this were considered in the future.

Participants reiterated some of the findings from the staff surveys regarding the practitioner forum. This idea originated from the initial workshops, however attendance was an issue as well as practical issues around timing of the forum and adequate notice for staff. Some staff felt that it was a great resource helping them to find solutions to real practice issues;

"it gave me access to resources and research" (focus group participant)

but commented that they were voluntary and operational demands took priority for some staff. Local Steering group members also felt that the forum perhaps lacked a purpose and structure and with hindsight suggested that a multi-agency launch might have helped to promote this locally. They also felt that using premises such as local schools and libraries might have been more accessible for staff.

Regarding more general learning a police participant highlighted that the workshop might have been more helpful for community officers, as opposed to those in the Public Protection Unit, as they are often first responders in the community. Others felt that it would have been more beneficial if the training had been fully multi-agency to share each others practice and increase understanding of agency role in the area of child sexual abuse.

Health staff felt that the workshop was more of a refresher, but did highlight specific behavioural indicators which were helpful such as a child being withdrawn or over familiar with people they did not know well. Those in the role of health visitor struggled to see a more defined role regarding sexual abuse, as their focus is with babies or pre school children. They felt that this was more about working with the parents/carers or in passing on concerns. They were clear that they did not have a remit to ask questions and felt that this should lie either with education or social work/police. They recognised their role in picking up patterns of behaviours and in recording and passing this on to other agencies where appropriate. However, health visitors are in a unique position in working with parents/carers on their child's health and wellbeing issues. It might be helpful to consider more targeted awareness and training which considers the

interface of health within multi-agency responses to child sexual abuse for this specific group of staff.

Regular continuous professional development in this area was seen as key, as was the need to access multi-agency forums to share practice and experience to ensure the right response. The local practitioner's forum was a good idea, but health staff could not attend due to workload. Focus group participants felt that the badges were helpful for primary aged children, but not for pre school children and there was some discussion about developing a soft toy equivalent that very young children could identify with. This led to a suggestion about a public awareness campaign similar to the 'Ask Angela' campaign in pubs and clubs, for those who feel threatened and/or intimidated. Children and young people could co-design this and learning from other campaigns could be shared to consider what works best.

Staff from Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) stated that they view children and young people affected by sexual abuse as in need of a 'specialist' service. They felt that this did not meet their specific referral criteria for treatment unless there are also clinical indications of a mental health issue too;

"trauma is not a mental health issue" (focus group participant).

However this is not necessarily reflected in other agencies perceptions of available support for these children and young people, as demonstrated in the NSPCC Right to Recover Report. Some agencies identified CAMHS as the primary service which they believed children and young people affected by sexual abuse would be referred to for support. Moreover, it is concerning that the majority of alternative support available is in the third sector, often inconsistently provided and subject to short term funding.

In the education focus group participants overall felt that the 'whole school approach' had been helpful and their awareness had been raised about child sexual abuse. People commented that the team approach helped and improved consistency in terms of key messages, and reported increased confidence in dealing with concerns and indicators which might manifest in behavioural changes

"it was a powerful reminder and helped to walk in the child's shoes" (focus group participant).

Most participants felt that the badges were effective in promoting discussion with children in general, however some felt that there should have been more awareness raising and preparation for the children prior to these being rolled out as echoed by the previous focus groups. For education staff the practitioner forums were more challenging to access because they happened during the school day and they suggested that twilight sessions held at a school base might have encouraged better attendance by education staff.

In terms of further gaps it is clear from discussions that teaching staff still lack confidence in knowing what words to use when responding to a child who makes a disclosure;

"I am not sure about what to say or ask" (focus group participant).

They highlight that their procedures and policies often mitigate against taking a 'Stop to Listen' approach and that they are told to immediately pass on any concerns to the Head teacher. Classroom assistants spoke about their role with children and the fact that while they are often the person supporting the child, information about known risks is not shared with them making it

more difficult to understand the child's needs. A further concern raised was the perceived lack of support for children during school holidays periods. Most highlighted the need for induction and refresher training on child sexual abuse on an ongoing basis stating that it should be an area for continuous professional development.

Please refer to Appendix 4 for aims and objectives of the North Ayrshire Stop to Listen Training Workshop.

North Ayrshire also ran three sessions for local parent and carers to raise awareness of child sexual abuse. The average number of parents/care givers at each session was three. Although the numbers were small it would appear those who attended felt that this was a useful session. The primary messages received independently from all groups were that the reference to sexual abuse would have been an inhibitor for a number of parents who would therefore choose not to attend. It was recognised that child sexual abuse is a sensitive and often emotive subject and in planning the session this was taken into account. However, the steering group was keen that the subject matter was clear and transparent, therefore, offering people the choice about whether to attend.

It is recognised that this mirrors societal culture around child sexual abuse; that society would rather not face up to what is a distressing and unpalatable issue unless forced to address this via public inquiries and media coverage of such allegations. This only further highlights the reason for the Stop to Listen pathfinders – how to discuss or address sexual abuse, bringing the conversation into public spaces and finding ways for children to recognise and communicate what is happening for them. The way forward to address this is discussed in the future steps section of the report.

Perth & Kinross

In Perth & Kinross they have developed a local CSA/CSE Directory of Trauma Support Services for practitioners; with a further directory/guide being developed for children, young people and families. In partnership with young people they have made significant improvements made to their child interview room (visually recorded interviews) facility at Almondbank House, Perth including improved lighting, decoration, seating and soft furnishings, making it a more safe and comfortable environment for interviewing child victims.

Linked to this police and social work services have worked together to improve the preparation, planning and child-centred rapport building stages of joint investigative interviewing. Perth & Kinross have reviewed their local joint investigative interview training to ensure that sufficient attention is paid to the pre-joint interview stage.

They have delivered multi-agency staff learning and development sessions on trauma informed practice and continue to work with a local third sector organisation Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (RASAC) on developing further trauma informed practice resources, multi-agency training and briefing sessions. Local focus groups and follow up questionnaires demonstrated that participants valued the training on trauma informed practice and the Stop to Listen approach and highlighted the benefit of reflecting on current and future practice.

A Young People's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Advisory Group has been established which is now providing advice and opinion from a young person's perspective on child sexual abuse CSA/CSE and working towards developing creative and innovative media resources around

CSA/CSE. This group designed and completed a CSE Survey in Perth & Kinross Council Secondary Schools. 574 young people responded and provided information on their knowledge levels of CSE; how and where they currently obtain and would like to obtain information on CSE in the future, and what they would do if they were affected by or worried about CSE.

Local steering group members are presently collating a CSA/CSE/Stop to Listen case study publication to raise better awareness and understanding of such matters within Perth and Kinross, which will be included in all future CSA/CSE staff learning and development opportunities.

The local multi-agency screening group (MASG) made improvements by identifying CSA/CSE cases deemed appropriate for the Stop to Listen approach. They involved local youth workers in the MASG and improved their inter-agency referral discussions (IRD) processes by implementing an aide memoire, which included a specific requirement to consider responses to CSA/CSE.

At the beginning of the pathfinder Perth & Kinross explored a peer mentoring approach, an idea which originated from young people themselves, during a young person's 'speak up innovation lab' on child sexual exploitation. This was originally explored as a wellbeing mentoring programme and discussion took place about the possibility of including this as part of the Stop to Listen pathfinder, with a focus on child sexual abuse and exploitation. This ultimately presented some challenges and met with strong resistance from external stakeholders. They were specifically concerned with; the impact on the mentors health and wellbeing, training requirements, the potential for mentors to be cited as witnesses in any criminal prosecutions and pathways to support and services for both those affected by CSA/CSE and the mentors themselves. These concerns could not be allayed and this led to a change in direction with the development of the Young People's CSE Advisory Group.

While these concerns may be legitimate, young people themselves had requested this type of support and further exploration and consultation with young people would likely have been planned before proceeding with this proposal. Research suggests that often young people are likely to confide in a friend and so perhaps this was a missed opportunity to develop peer led support. This may reflect wider societal concerns about the need to 'protect' young people from these issues when in reality they may already be well aware of this among their friendship groups. The Perth & Kinross Young People's CSE Advisory Group may re-visit this at some point in the future and the importance of peers was reflected in the focus group discussion below.

The Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG) very kindly agreed to meet for a facilitated discussion on their views about CSE and the way forward for children and young people. A total of five local young people participated in the focus group, four young women and one young man. Please see Appendix 5 for a visual representation of the groups aims.

Group members explained that there were a number of reasons for getting involved in the group, for example, some were interested in the youth award that participation offered, others came at the suggestion of their youth worker and friends. Although they have one young man currently participating, they recognised that it remained difficult to attract boys to the group due to the perception of boys about the issues;

"young men do not feel it is relevant or that it can happen to them. It can." (member of YPAG)

The young people felt that discussion needs to happen much sooner than it does presently, that this should start in primary school. They felt some of the barriers are due to gender inequality which needs to be addressed and some felt that this should be considered at nursery age, with others feeling that learning about these issues at primary school age is sufficient. They also felt that there was a lot of peer pressure for boys and perhaps appealing to groups of boys might be a way forward;

“I think friends are a bigger influence and could help us get them into the group. I think it is easier if you are in a pack or a group”. (YPAG member).

The YPAG members felt that they were working well as a group. They noted that the recent CSE survey they completed in all Perth & Kinross secondary schools was a key achievement which might also lead to new group members being recruited. They were clear that they aimed to influence policy makers and to raise awareness of CSE in the local community. The analysis of the survey results will lead to the next phase of the group work plan and they noted the variation in responses across schools and the fact that 53% of those completing the survey stated they did not know if CSE was an issue locally, with 18% stating that it was a concern.

The group members spoke about children and young people learning about CSA and CSE in schools but felt that teachers are not necessarily the right people to deliver this;

“not teachers for sure. They do not always cover the full range of CSA and CSE”
(YPAG group member).

They talked about the need to get a dialogue about these issues for children and young people in order to minimise the risk. They were particularly keen to highlight that it is not always those considered the most vulnerable that are affected by CSA/CSE, that it can happen to anyone which sometimes makes it harder for people to come forward. Often the images used in public campaigns by organisations that provide support to children and young people perpetuate this myth, which some children and young people may not identify with. Regarding those affected by CSA/CSE coming forward the group members felt that it remains very difficult for children and young people to speak out about abuse;

“it is still a struggle for somebody to come forward. You could be called a liar. It is hard to prove. If somebody is found not guilty in a court then you would be left with the problem”
(YPAG member).

They highlighted that the children’s hearing system is also problematic for children and young people, with young people feeling that they are not always heard and it is especially difficult if the abuser is in the family home or extended family. The group members said that they would speak to their friends if they were affected by CSA/CSE;

“I would speak to my best pal... it’s best to tell someone who is close to you and who knows you. Maybe, a teacher but your friends first as they are less judgmental.” (YPAG member).

This resonates with the learning from young people’s innovation lab and the suggestion that some form of peer mentoring might be worth exploring at a future point. Consideration should be given to bystander approaches to ensure that children and young people who may be seen as ‘confidantes’ can get access to the right support. The concluding quote from one group member strikingly illustrates that young people are absolutely clear about what needs to happen to address CSA/CSE;

“Publicity and a lot of it. It needs to be real; we need to show the truth and not sugar coat it. We need to tell people’s stories. We need to make kids more street wise for their future life, we need adverts and pop ups in all our schools, we need drop in sessions. CSA and CSE is serious stuff and in some cases can lead to someone committing suicide” (YPAG member).

Please see Appendix 6 for Perth & Kinross Child Protection Committee Report Stop to Listen local evaluation report.

Glasgow

The local Stop to Listen Steering Group developed and rolled out Stop to Listen multi-agency Practice Guidance for practitioners with a focus on the child protection responses at the point of a young person making a disclosure of sexual abuse or exploitation. This offered information and context to Stop to Listen as well as guidance re-affirming best practice for agencies tasked with supporting the young person including; the initial referral discussion, child protection case discussion/vulnerable young person’s case discussion, planning the joint investigative interview, responding to the health needs of the young person and post investigative support.

Glasgow developed and delivered Stop to Listen briefings for key staff including child protection advisors in the child protection unit, who then disseminated this to health staff. Social work locality sessions were delivered in three areas in Glasgow, as well as development sessions for child protection leads in education. The education leads were then responsible for delivering a programme written by the Stop to Listen steering group and delivered to all secondary and primary schools at the commencement of the new term in-service day in August 2017.

A briefing was also delivered to 80 partnership nurseries attended by representatives and then cascaded to staff. A total of over 9000 Glasgow staff across agencies were briefed on the Stop to Listen approach and child sexual abuse.

The local steering group have also been reviewing their joint investigative equipment and facilities. Following the trauma focused JII training delivered as part of the pathfinder and the report of the JII workstream of the Evidence and Procedure Review, Glasgow are considering reviewing their training and approach and will incorporate the trauma focused JII training in their annual JII refresher training for social workers and police officers.

Glasgow has experience of working with large scale child sexual exploitation (CSE) investigations and along with the central Social Work Services Child Protection Team identified lead Assistant Service Managers (ASM’s)for CSE in each of three locality areas. These investigations promoted a stop to listen approach. At the time of the pilot the three CSE locality ASM’s were utilized to chair meetings where it was felt a Stop to Listen approach would be beneficial.

To consider the impact of the practitioner guidance in Glasgow an individual interview was arranged with one of the Assistant Service Manager’s with a strategic lead for CSE in a locality area. This manager noted their concern about the different responses that sexual abuse and exploitation seemed to elicit for practitioners, for some this was very emotive with a desire to rush out and rescue the child/young person or for others it seemed to have a paralysing effect, neither of which was particularly child centred. They also felt that the joint investigative interviews often felt like a conveyor belt ‘one chance only’ approach, losing sight of the

child/young person needs - as reflected elsewhere in this report. They welcomed the opportunity to test out an approach which centred on reaffirming best practice in the area of sexual abuse and exploitation.

This manager ensured that the Stop to Listen approach was embedded into local processes and was an agenda item at team meetings and management meetings. They were keen that practitioners identified with the approach and could therefore make a link to the children, young people and families they were working with. The manager felt they were reasonably successful in achieving this within the locality area.

The Assistant Service Manager (as did the other locality leads) took a lead role in chairing all case discussion/case conferences where this merited a Stop to Listen approach which was widely communicated to all staff. The manager had responsibility for arranging operational planning meetings which differed from other planning meetings, as the invitation was limited to a smaller group of people in the team around the child/young person and those who knew the child/young person best. This meeting would identify the investigating social worker, considered issues like gender and whether the investigating worker should be the allocated social worker or another worker. It also considered who the key people were who informed decision making about the child/young person, the next steps in their response and any investigation, for example, the role of residential workers or education staff. This was also critical in identifying any pre and post support person for the child/young person. Next, they considered who would make the initial introductions of the investigating social worker if they are not known to the child/young person. This demonstrated a slow paced planned rapport building prior to any joint interview taking place if appropriate.

From the group of Glasgow Stop to Listen JII trained staff six, social workers were identified to undertake Stop to Listen investigations in the locality areas and were drawn from different age ranges and gender to offer children/young person more choice and control.

Regarding some of the challenges in adopting the approach, the manager identified that there were still some issues in the local police response. While it is clear that senior officers who attended the steering group meetings were committed to the Stop to Listen response there seemed to be a gap in this being communicated to the local divisions. They cited examples where they had called to arrange a planning meeting and Police were unable to offer a consistent officer to plan for the response to the child/young person. Often the officers had not heard about Stop to Listen and this may be compounded by more senior staff moving on to other roles. This may also be a resource and operational issue for the police. In practice this meant unnecessary delays while the police try to identify a suitable officer to attend.

Attempts were made to resolve this and a senior manager in child protection at Glasgow met and shared these concerns with a local Chief Superintendent who was sympathetic to the issues, but who then moved post and therefore there was little change in response.

By and large the manager feels that there has been a positive response across other agencies like education and health. The biggest benefit has been the shared multi-agency decision making process in managing risk and not rushing out immediately, often in a clumsy way and compounding problems, in an effort to protect the child/young person. It was recognised that this can be uncomfortable for practitioners but having a safe space to share this has been helpful and increased their confidence.

The Assistant Service Manager felt there were still issues where a young person falls into the transition category between the ages of 16-18. The manager cited a case where the young person's vulnerability was not obviously apparent and as they were 16 years of age and claimed that it was a consensual relationship, agencies felt there was nothing that they could do. They felt that this needed further exploration via local multi-agency forums.

While improvements had been made in responses to child sexual exploitation, the manager felt that there are still gaps in knowledge which impact on practice. The Scottish Government policy drive on child sexual exploitation means that people are now more aware and comfortable when dealing with this particular form of sexual abuse, but are less so when thinking about this in the context of children/young person being sexually abused in a family and community setting;

"More needs to be done in relation to the basic attitudes, values and power issues and this needs to be driven by the Government to inform people about how big a societal issue this is"
(Social Work Assistant Manager).

The Assistant Service Manager identified that they would like to see specialist training for investigators working with children under 5, specialised training in sexual abuse and the development of information being provided for parents and carers who are supporting a child/young person through the process.

Please see below case study provided by this manager which charts the process for two young people.

A is aged 16 years and has had a long history of social work involvement, presently living in a settled kinship placement with her grandparents due to parental drug use. B, also 16 years was not known to social work services, but her father and brother had frequent police and criminal justice services involvement.

Concerns were reported to social work by education staff, having been approached by the mother of B. She advised that a friend of the young women had informed her that they were frequenting a flat some distance away with two older Asian males, who were supplying them with alcohol and drugs.

Following initial agency records checks an initial referral discussion between police, social work and health agreed that a Stop to Listen approach was required. A professionals' child protection case discussion was then convened which considered:

- Family background; adversity/vulnerability/strengths; communication and language development; personality/interests; support network; immediate safety/risks*
- A social worker and police officer were identified to undertake the investigation*
- A key professional for each young woman was identified to undertake introductions and provide support for them throughout the process*
- The approach to be taken with family members was planned*
- Rapport- and relationship-building took place over several weeks, with the young women being seen at home and in their education placements*

- *Joint Investigative Interviews were eventually undertaken with both young women*
- *Neither made any disclosure, though admitted to knowing the men and having used substances whilst in their company*
- *From the limited information given, it was not possible to identify the males or the property*
- *The young women were offered advice and guidance, and referred to a support service*
- *The Investigating Detective Sergeant from the Child Abuse Investigation Unit maintained contact with A & B over a period of six months building a relationship and rapport with them*
- *A & B were then able and ready to talk about their experiences and participate in a joint investigation.*
- *This led to the instigation of a larger operation and a number of charges being brought against a number of males who had perpetrated abuse against A & B and other young females*
- *A & B disclosed information that led to two males being charged with offences including rape and sexual assault*

This was a complex case with A presenting as far more open to the investigative process and to speaking to social work and police staff. This was possibly due to her familiarity with agencies, having had involvement since birth. Her primary carer was supportive of the process, and encouraged A to meet with and talk openly to staff.

B was more resistant, and frequently avoided appointments. She had had little personal experience of agencies other than universal health and education. Her family's attitude was unhelpful at times. Despite being the one to raise and report concerns initially, her mother later attempted to retract her statements and supported her daughter's avoidance. Some family members expressed hostile attitudes to the police, likely due to their involvement in criminality.

During the second phase of the investigation it became apparent that, when the young women were first interviewed, they were still in contact with their abusers and in fact considered themselves to be in relationships. They viewed the perpetrators as their boyfriends and saw the sexual activity as consensual.

The case study above highlights the complexity which agencies face when dealing with child sexual abuse and exploitation. This illustrates the need to slow down the pace of work to allow practitioners to attempt to develop trusting relationships with young people, in order to overcome some of the barriers which prevent young people from coming forward.

A & B benefitted greatly from the Stop to Listen approach, support and interventions offered from services and individuals during the time from the initial investigation which allowed them to work through their experience and challenge what had been happening to them, leading them to be able to acknowledge and talk about their experience of being sexually assaulted and exploited.

Renfrewshire

In Renfrewshire they developed and delivered training updates for teaching staff on child sexual abuse and the Stop to Listen approach. They also provided mandatory training updates for social work children and families and criminal justice staff on child sexual abuse and the Stop to Listen approach.

Renfrewshire had previously considered developing some raising awareness materials for children however, as the Scottish Government was reviewing the curriculum and materials in Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood, they decided not to pursue this at this time. They also recognised that raising awareness would also mean the need to upskill other staff, for example, teachers, social workers, police and other support services in preparation for response to any increase in children coming forward. It was felt that it would be unrealistic to achieve this within the pathfinder timescale.

Social work participants were asked to complete an evaluation following the training and the majority agreed that they would be able to use the learning from this training to develop their practice;

“this was the best child protection training I have been on. It was interactive and could actually help me with my practice” (training participant).

Some participants felt that signposting to research and other information was helpful;

“this training provided me with a better awareness of tools that can help me support children with disabilities, we read and downloaded information on Dan Hughes and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation” (training participant).

More experienced staff felt that this was more of a refresher but still enjoyed the session.

Education participants were asked to complete a retrospective survey to consider any impacts on their practice following their training updates. 71% of teaching staff felt that they had learned a lot from the briefing with 14% stating that they had learned a little. As only 14 people completed the survey we need to be cautious regarding how representative this is. Of those who completed the survey, most agreed that they had learnt most about the impacts for the child or young person followed by role of teaching staff in listening, observing and supporting children and young people affected by sexual abuse and exploitation.

Most participants noted that they worried most about their response to children where they had suspicions of abuse but the child had not made a disclosure. This resonates with the findings from the North Ayrshire education focus groups who also highlighted this as their greatest concern and could be addressed by further training/staff development. In terms of the impacts on direct practice the survey indicated that participants were split equally between those who felt that this was a refresher and therefore had little impact and those who felt more aware;

“more aware of how to support a child if we suspect or if they disclose” (training participant).

For future training participants identified that they would like more information on how to best support children and young people where there is no definitive closure on their situation for example, where it does not meet the evidential threshold for criminal proceedings. Education staff were unclear how to respond to the child/young person’s questions regarding this. They

also pointed out that it might be useful to look at consulting with children and young people regarding best practice and what helped them in this situation;

“more information on how the child reacted in a situation and what helped them to speak out, calm themselves, talk through their emotion” (training participant).

Policy Work and Wider Learning

Observations and evaluation of the impact of Stop to Listen on broader themes have been made below, particularly in relation to involvement with the PROMISE Learning Exchange and the policy work around advocacy for a Barnahus children’s house model, as well as partnership working with the NSPCC and West of Scotland Managed Clinical Network for Child Protection.

Barnahus Children’s House Model

In 2016 the Stop to Listen Development Manager was invited to participate in the PROMISE Learning Exchange: a European Union funded project aimed at promoting child-friendly multi-disciplinary and interagency services supporting child victims and witnesses of violence, providing them with access to justice, avoiding re-victimisation and ensuring high professional standards for recovery.

The project refers to the Barnahus (Children’s House) model, and similar models such as the Children’s Advocacy Centres, embracing cooperation between all services involved with the child or young person and therefore links directly into the overall aims and objectives of Stop to Listen. This represented a significant opportunity to learn from best practice and highlight the issues faced by children and young people affected by sexual abuse and exploitation in Scotland.

In October 2016 the campaigning group Justice for Children hosted ‘Getting it Right for Child Witnesses’ Conference at Police Scotland Training College, Tulliallan. The Stop to Listen Development Manager had a lead role in co-ordinating this event which brought together delegates from across services such as Police, Social Work, Crown Office, Courts & Tribunals, Scottish Reporter’s Administration, Third Sector, Health and the Scottish Government. The conference considered support for child witnesses in Scotland, many of whom will be affected by child sexual abuse as well as other forms of abuse such as physical and domestic abuse.

A therapist and police officer from the Barnahus in Oslo, Norway delivered a keynote presentation at the conference, along with further presentations on the use of Intermediaries in England and Wales and current developments for child witnesses in Scotland. This also included contributions from Lord Carloway, Lord President and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice. The conference evaluated highly and offered an opportunity to reflect on current practice in Scotland and highlight contemporary approaches in other European states.

In June 2017 Children 1st facilitated a visit to the Barnahus in Reykjavik, Iceland, pioneers of the first European Barnahus. This was attended by the Early Years and Education Minister, Cabinet Secretary for Justice as well as the Children’s Commissioner and Senior Managers in Social Work and Police Scotland.

The Scottish Parliament then hosted a visit by Bragi Guobrandsson in September 2017 Director General, Government Agency for Child Protection, Iceland and founder of the Reykjavik Barnahus. This facilitated more dialogue and learning around the possibility of a Scottish model of the Barnahus, the Justice Secretary later gave a commitment to a pilot of Barnahus in the future.

The Joint Interview work stream of the Evidence and Procedure Review, started by considering vulnerable adults and child witnesses, and reviewed the way in which evidence is taken from children and vulnerable adults in Scotland. The group concluded that the joint investigative training should be overhauled and this seen as a 'specialist skill'. Further recommendations have been made to reduce the number of practitioners trained and development of quality assurance processes as well as ongoing continuous development for those conducting interviews. Stop to Listen as well as other stakeholders have made a significant contribution to these positive changes for children and young people in Scotland.

Looking ahead to future developments, Police Scotland and Social Work Scotland are working in partnership with the Scottish Government to take forward recommendations of the Evidence and Procedure Review to improve the quality and consistency of Joint Investigative Interviews (JIIs) of children. The aim is that JII statements can be used as Evidence in Chief and contribute to the range of improvements being made to remove the need for children to give evidence in court and so reduce the potential of further trauma for child victims and witnesses. The project team will create a new model for JII, a new training programme and make recommendations for revised statutory guidance. It is hoped that this will be completed by the end of 2018.

Police Scotland have secured funding to cosmetically improve and upgrade fixed sites where children and young people are interviewed within local areas which will be distributed via child protection committees. There is also funding to replace the equipment for capturing video recorded evidence during JIIs. While this is noteworthy, it remains a concern that some fixed sites remain in police buildings and a more child centred approach would require this provision to be in a neutral environment. This was raised in the JII training focus group discussion across the four pathfinder areas.

New development of standards by Health Care Improvement Scotland for children and adults who have experienced rape or sexual assault and require forensic medical services should also help to transform health responses and ensure that practice is trauma informed.

Partnership working with the NSPCC 'Right to Recover' report

As part of the overarching aim of Stop to Listen, the Steering Group were keen to scope out recovery services for children and young people affected by sexual abuse and exploitation in the pathfinder areas. This would offer a baseline of services available should children and young people speak out about their experience of abuse and require support to move on from this.

Around this time the NSPCC in Scotland embarked on a piece of research which also focused on scoping out recovery services for children and young people across in the West of Scotland and the West of Scotland Managed Clinical Network for Child Protection in health had already begun a scoping exercise in relation to services. As the NSPCC was a Steering Group member

it was decided to pool resources and work in partnership to offer the pathfinder areas an opportunity to scrutinise their current service landscape, with an individual report being produced for each area.

The research took the form of mapping services via surveys and facilitated discussion groups with professionals including social workers, police officers and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). While it is largely accepted that children and young people find it difficult to speak out about sexual abuse, it was felt useful for the pathfinder areas to have some sense of the challenge locally. An attempt was made to consider figures of 'known' numbers of children and young people affected by sexual abuse by collecting data from social work, health and police in the areas, in order to offer an indication of prevalence. This proved difficult due to issues around definitions and the way in which this is recorded differently on information systems by agencies. Ultimately this meant that it was not possible for agencies to easily access the requested data, making it impossible to gather accurate data around the number of children and young people in the pathfinder areas, who had reported or been referred for support as a result of, sexual abuse. This has raised issues that the pathfinder areas are keen to address for future, to enable accurate capturing of data about child sexual abuse and exploitation. It is recognised this is likely to reflect a widespread issue for agencies nationally which requires urgent review.

The Child Protection Improvement Programme has a data and evidence work stream and the strand for child sexual exploitation sits with the National Child Sexual Exploitation Group and others. It is important that any work to develop data sets around child sexual exploitation encapsulates sexual abuse that occurs in a familial and community setting as recommended by Galloway, Love and Wales (2017) '*...the Scottish Government should investigate how to fill the gaps in knowledge about the population prevalence and incidence of child sexual abuse in Scotland and maximise the potential of existing data sources to help our understanding of the nature of child sexual abuse and the contexts in which it takes place.*'

It is understood that the Scottish Government have recently announced funding to commission research on the incidence and prevalence of child sexual abuse and will consult on the parameters of this research. This will be very helpful in understanding child sexual abuse in a Scottish context and subsequently target resources in the right areas.

The individual pathfinder reports highlighted the following gaps as reflected in the wider West of Scotland Right to Recover report:

- services for younger children under the age of 12
- tailored provision for children with complex needs including communication difficulties
- provision for children and young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours

Each pathfinder area has considered their reports with the information presented at Child Protection Committee or other multi agency forums, to support discussion about the implications at a local level.

A key principle of Getting it Right for Every Child is the focus on putting the child at the centre of planning and gaining access to the right services, at the right time. These pathfinder reports as well as the full Right to Recover report highlight a need for more early intervention for those who have been able to overcome barriers to speak out about child sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as those who are displaying problematic sexual behaviours. The need for an effective assessment of the child's needs is imperative, as each child and their wider family will have their

own individual context to be considered. However, investment in existing and new trauma informed therapeutic services is also required to meet the demand for these services. This needs to be considered in light of any findings from the research into incidence and prevalence of child sexual abuse in Scotland.

National Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Working Group

Stop to Listen formed two actions on the National CSE Working Group Action Plan which was developed to deliver on the National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation.

There is no doubt that we need to continue to address child sexual exploitation (CSE) via prevention, policy, training and responses to perpetrators. The National Action Plan has a central focus on this particular form of sexual abuse, yet research indicates that the risk of sexual abuse is more likely to be in families and in the circle of trust around the child. Indeed, given the lack of research around both child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in Scotland, there is currently no firm baseline from which to plan our responses. A more wide ranging strategy which fully incorporates sexual abuse within family and community settings would be advantageous.

Evaluation Summary

A key aim of Stop to Listen was to ensure that children and young people affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation received a more child centred approach and were heard more effectively.

The engagement of the pathfinder areas from the inception of the project has offered opportunities to consult with local multi-agency forums to reflect on their current practice, policy and culture in responding to child sexual abuse and exploitation. This has been demonstrated more fully above in the evaluation of different aspects of the changes tested out by the pathfinder areas.

The trauma focused joint interview training for social workers and police officers across the four pathfinder areas has offered practitioners the opportunity to reflect on their current practice, and, consider different approaches, tools and current research in making the interview process driven from the child/young person's perspective. It is clear that having highly skilled trauma informed staff with strong local multi-agency relationships will lead to better standards of evidence. More focus on preparation and building rapport with children and young people will develop trust, respect and reassure them about the purpose of the process. There is strong evidence from the JII participants that more in depth training in these approaches would be beneficial.

The practitioner guidance in Glasgow has been shown to have been successfully adopted by one area in this report. The findings from this conclude that this has had an encouraging impact as directly evidenced by the case study, highlighting the positive outcomes for the young people and the benefit of strong multi-agency relationships, common definitions and purpose. It is also reasonable to accept that this has helped to increase partner agencies confidence in managing

shared risk, by agreeing a more measured planned response to the young person's needs, allowing them to share their experiences when they are ready to do so.

The impact of the wide ranging training adopted in some of the pathfinders showed that most practitioners benefited from this increased awareness and after the training were more aware of the issues in relation to child sexual abuse and exploitation. Again, there is an indication that for most participants this has had an impact on increased confidence in dealing directly with children and young people affected by this. In North Ayrshire the specific training for the whole school staff group in education had added benefit of creating a common language for shared definitions and increased awareness in the school setting, whilst also linking to the multi-agency training for the other local agencies ensuring a consistent approach.

Other initiatives such as the Stop to Listen badges, practitioner forums and community engagement sessions had more mixed results. However, incorporating some of the learning from Stop to Listen and making some minor adjustments may lead to a greater impact if considered in the future.

A significant achievement was the development of the Young People's CSE Advisory Group in Perth & Kinross. This is to be celebrated as it brought the voice of the child and young people to Stop to Listen as well as offering young people the opportunity to develop leadership skills and contribute to the local responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation. This is an excellent legacy and one which could be replicated in other areas. Equally the changes Perth & Kinross made to their interview suite in consultation with young people demonstrated the significance of making simple practical differences, which did not require vast investment.

In Perth & Kinross Stop to Listen was highlighted as a good practice example during their recent Joint Inspection of services for children and young people in their community planning partnerships.

In terms of wider themes, the Justice for Children Conference in 2016 promoted shared learning and influencing to promote the children's house model to support child witnesses. While the interest in Scotland in this model originated from a Justice perspective, there is considerable learning to be gained in reflecting on our child protection responses in Scotland for police, health and social work as well as provision of therapeutic services for children and young people. Stop to Listen's work with the NSPCC and the West of Scotland Managed Clinical Network for Child Protection on research into therapeutic services advocates for more investment and better assessment processes for children and young people affected by sexual abuse, all of which should contribute to a best practice model of responses.

Stop to Listen featured as a case study in the State of Children's Rights in Scotland report by Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) in Chapter 8, under Special Protection Measures. This details the work of the pathfinders in striving for a child centred approach to sexual abuse and exploitation. A PhD student is also currently planning a research project on consulting with young people on their views regarding the response of services to child sexual exploitation, which she intends to link to Stop to Listen. This will continue beyond the life of the project and will ensure that children and young people's voices are heard and considered in any future planning.

Future Steps

Participation in the PROMISE Learning Exchange has allowed us to consider practice in Europe in the development and implementation of services across services for children and young people affected by sexual abuse. This promotes a children's rights based approach with planning and operations being led very much by the needs of the child, young person and their family and resonates fully with the core aims of Stop to Listen. There is still much to do in ensuring that children and young people are not made to fit into a process which fails to take into account their individual, developmental and support needs as evidenced by the findings in this report. No doubt some of this will be addressed by the current project team who are working on improving joint investigative interviews.

A national practice model for child sexual abuse which specifically considers abuse which occurs in a familial and community setting would be hugely beneficial and could draw on some of the lessons in Stop to Listen. Areas for consideration could include:

- **Prevention** - via Relationships Sexual Health and Parenthood in the school curriculum, also linking this to other aspects of children's life such as involvement in sport, leisure, religious, community and youth organisations. This must include dialogue with children and young people at a developmentally appropriate time around the possibility of abuse by those in caring/supportive relationships and roles; this should incorporate materials for those with specific needs such as disability and communication needs. There should be further investment in services available to work with those adults who may identify as being a risk or who are known to have committed abuse. National training and awareness briefings for multi-agency staff, similar to that delivered in Stop to Listen with the addition of further specific training as identified, for example, for education staff on managing suspicions and/or where there is no resolution via criminal proceedings.
- **Early identification of need** – investment in awareness, training and pathways to services for those displaying problematic sexual behaviours, in order that these children get the right support and to prevent escalation. Bystander and peer support/mentoring approaches should be explored to ensure that those close to children and young people have an understanding about how to get the right advice and support. A public awareness campaign could help to raise awareness of the risk of child sexual abuse and how to access support for both children and adult survivors. Tools could be developed such as an app where children and young people could access information and be signposted to help anonymously.
- **Trauma recovery** – development of a more consistent approach to trauma recovery which offers children, young people and their families a range of bespoke supports to move on from their experiences.

Most of the elements above would most likely be addressed if we progress to pilot a Scottish version of the Barnahus children's house model which encompasses children and young people's wider health and wellbeing needs.

Consulting with children and young people on these issues would ensure a more child centred co-produced strategy to address child sexual abuse and exploitation. But it is vitally important that we open up a national dialogue which allows for a greater understanding of the nature and

prevalence of child sexual abuse in Scotland, thus permitting more people to come forward without feeling stigma, shame or that this experience singularly defines them.

Appendix 1

Trauma focused practice with child victims and witnesses of CSA

Overall Aim: To examine developments in investigative interviewing of victims of child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation and apply learning to practice.

Learning Outcomes: On completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- describe the potential impact of trauma on children's memory, their presentation and support needs;
- evaluate current research on childhood sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation;
- apply their learning to a simulated practice situation;
- analyse the potential impact of current policy developments in relation to child witnesses;
- identify changes they can make to their own practice in order to support children and young people through the disclosure process

Draft Programme:

Based on groups of 15-18 participants. Groups should consist of social workers and police officers who are experienced in conducting joint investigative interviews of child witnesses in Scotland.

09.30 Welcome and introductions

09.45 What we know already - Experiences of working with victims, families and perpetrators

Small group reflective discussion and feedback

Practitioners will discuss their own experiences of working in this area of practice. Particular challenges, what works, joint working practices. Reflection on learning from JIIT course and how this translates into practice.

10.30 How children tell

Guidance on Joint Investigative Interviewing of Child Witnesses vs Reality
Comparison exercise in small groups

Barriers to disclosure, impact of relationship with abuser, the role of friends, the importance of relationship-building between professionals and children/young people, the impact of trauma on memory.

Does the format of JIIs fit with what children need from us (eg the push for single interview, being interviewed by a stranger, the chronological approach to evidence).

- 11.00 Break
- 11.15 Feedback from group work
- 12.00 What the research says
Presentation and discussion
The impact of trauma on memory; supporting children and young people through the investigative process; developmentally sensitive interviewing
- 12.30 Lunch
- 13.00 Speaking to children and young people
Case study-based skills practice in triads
- 14.30 Feedback
- 15.00 Break
- 15.15 The Evidence and Procedure Review – potential implications
Presentation and discussion
This input will focus on the main recommendations from the JII workstream and how these may support children and young people. The input will link directly into the next exercise, in helping practitioners explore how new guidance may enable them to be more creative in their approaches, taking account of how best to support children who have been traumatised by their experience – as well as those who do not perceive their experiences as abuse..
- 15.45 More than just a joint investigative interview! What can I do?
Planning exercise in pairs focusing on identifying opportunities for relationship building
- 16.15 Feedback
- 16.45 Evaluations
- 17.00 Close

Appendix 2

Perth & Kinross were inspired by the Norwegian Barnahus and secured a small amount of money to make cosmetic changes to upgrade their fixed site. This was done in consultation with local young people – these photographs show the site before changes were made



The following photos are taken after changes were made:-



Appendix 3

Summary of CPD session provided by Edinburgh Napier University

Trauma Focused Practice with Child Victims and Witnesses of Child Sexual Abuse

Number of training days: 4

Locations: Renfrew, Renfrewshire
Perth, Perth & Kinross
Glasgow, Glasgow
Irvine, North Ayrshire

Numbers attending: 15-22

Target Group: Experienced joint investigative interview staff from police and social work.

This course was developed as part of the Children 1st “Stop to Listen” campaign and aimed at increasing participants’ awareness of the impact of trauma on the interview process. Learning Outcomes: on completion of this course, participants will be able to

- Describe the potential impact of trauma on children’s memory, their presentation and support needs;
- Evaluate current research on childhood sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation;
- Apply their learning to a (simulated) practice situation;
- Analyse the potential impact of current policy developments in relation to child witnesses;
- Identify changes they can make to their own practice in order to support children and young people through the disclosure process.

The programme followed the learning outcomes with timings flexible to allow for local adjustments:

- What we know already – experiences of working with victims, families and perpetrators;
- The impact of trauma
 - Stress response systems
 - Barriers to recovery
 - What helps
 - Implications for joint investigative interviews
- The importance of rapport building in the process of disclosure
- Helpful/unhelpful aspects of interview environments
- The impact of trauma on memory
 - The impact of compromised stress response systems on memory

- Use of single vs multiple interviews
- Delays, non-disclosure and partial disclosure
 - Dynamics of abuse
 - Benefits and risk of disclosure
- The Evidence and Procedure Review
 - Summary of recommendations
 - Application to practice
 - Actions to be taken forward

Summary

- The course was aimed at experienced interviewers although in practice participants ranged from those who had been in numerous interviews, over a long period of time, to staff who had only recently completed the JIIT. A large proportion of the participants had conducted either a very small number of interviews or none at all. Several participants were in management positions and attended the course with a view to understanding current issues and exploring ways of improving the interview experience for children. Those who had conducted interviews spoke at length about the many challenges they had encountered, for example, in relation to equipment, interview venue, rushed time-scales etc.
- Participants had a basic understanding of the stress response system, but had thought less of how this may be connected to trauma and in turn, how it might impact on the interview process. Through discussion, they recognised that even small changes to their practice and to the interview environment could make a difference (eg greater focus on rapport, cushions, fidget toys, fizzy water).
- Discussion in the previous section linked to exploration of the importance of rapport building. This was recognised by all participants, but there was less clarity about how this could be extended to before and after the interview. Participants had also not considered the added importance of rapport building with reluctant/resistant children and young people.
- The interview environment had been discussed early on, and this part of the course looked more concretely at what participants and their agencies could do until such time as changes were made on a national basis. Perth & Kinross had already consulted with young people and made significant positive changes to their main interview venue. Surprisingly, there was considerable discussion about the use of Therapets (<https://www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk/therapet>), which was initially seen as completely impossible but, through discussion, became an idea that may be an option for children and young people who would otherwise struggle to contribute to a joint investigative interview. The recognition of this as a possibility became a turning point in discussions about more conventional supports (eg soft seating, longer time for preparation, etc).

- Some of this was a refresher of teaching participants received on the initial JIIT course, but introduced the concept of fragmented memories and how these may impact on free narrative and the advantages of follow-up interviews where appropriate. Use of tools such as Life Grids or Life Paths was also explored.
- Reasons for delays, non-disclosure or partial disclosure were explored, focusing particularly on the dynamics of abuse and how they may impact on the risk and benefits dilemma for children and young people. The dynamics were further explored through use of a sculpt, which highlighted not just the isolation for the child, but also lack of control over information or processes. Debriefing this exercise brought participants back to the importance of rapport building throughout the whole investigation process.
- Prior to updating the groups on the Evidence and Procedure Review, participants compiled a “wish list” of what they would like to change about investigations. The vast majority of responses focused on equipment, interview environment and time restraints. However, there were also some new ideas, eg linking into school assemblies to speak to children about what happens when children tell, having a poster competition linked to this, targeting “friends” (eg peers who may know about abuse happening), asking young people in residential units to design interview suites, etc. Managers/supervising officers took notes of these discussions, so suggestions could be taken forward. On the whole, participants were pleased with the recommendations in the report, but also fairly cynical about implementation in a climate of very limited resources.

Overall, participants engaged well with the materials. For those with little or no experience, it was difficult to contribute meaningfully to the discussion at times, but it was evident that they picked up on many of the challenges and were, on the whole, not positive about the contribution they could make to the process. Three of the groups had presented as lacking overall confidence in their ability to conduct good quality interviews, while the other group presented as very confident, often dismissing messages from research or good practice examples as “it’s what we do anyway”. However, that was not supported by their responses during the day.

All groups were very positive about the training they had received previously and indicated that there was an expectation that interviewers would attend annual refresher training. It was clear that there was no real enforcement of this and some interviewers had had little or no training after their initial JIIT course. Participants recognised the need for regular involvement in interviews in order to keep their practice up to date, but also highlighted that many of them did not benefit from this type of exposure.

Evaluations for the sessions were collected by Children 1st, however unfortunately, two different forms were used, so it was difficult to analyse the data. Verbal feedback across all sessions indicated that participants had experienced the day as very child-focused, in contrast to the process focus of the JIIT course. This should perhaps be addressed in future revisions of the initial JIIT training.

Appendix 4



North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee Stop To Listen Pathfinder Training Plan

Aims of Stop to Listen:

- Early identification and targeted intervention
- Slowing down the pace of how we work with children and young people and offering them more control over what happens when they share their experiences
- Ensuring processes and systems are child friendly
- Working in collaboration and making best use of skills
- Building confidence and knowledge to work with child sexual abuse and exploitation
- Providing high quality trauma and recovery services

Aims of Training Plan:

Four workshops to be facilitated to focus connected to the above aims of Stop to Listen
Whole school approach and two multi-agency days for staff linked to the schools

- **Workshop One: Decoding the Cues and Signals: Non Verbal Communications and Indicators for Children who are experiencing Abuse**

Reading children...and thinking about signals we give out as adults as to how receptive we are to hearing what is being said/not said. Shared 'language'/communication. Developing a therapeutic 'toolkit'.

- **Workshop Two: Sexual Abuse...How does it Happen...?**

Cycle of offending
Grooming
Accommodation Syndrome

- **Workshop Three: Being the First Responder: The Golden Hour...and Weeks and Months...**

Golden hour within physical health responses.
Emotional injuries
Communication
Responding therapeutically i.e. working with feelings and at the child's pace...

- **Workshop Four: Safeguarding the Safeguarders: Support, Systems and Self Care**
Supporting staff to 'Stop and Listen'.
Identifying potential triggers
Signposting support
Outlining role of consultation in safe practice.



Appendix 5

Who are we?

We are the Young Peoples' CSE Advisory Group; we will meet every fortnight on a Wednesday from 5-7pm the group will start up again on the 7th of February 2018 at @Scott St.

Young People's CSE Advisory Group

What have we done so far?

We have looked at the council's leaflets talking about CSE that were targeted towards younger people, and on the whole we came to the conclusion that the way that the leaflets were presented was not friendly towards young people at all; they were far too wordy and the language used was too complex for the average young person to understand. We came up with ideas for how to redraft them and make them more appealing to young people.

Our Aims

- To raise awareness about CSE in the community.
- Encourage young people to speak out more openly about CSE.

team work

At some point, we plan to set up a Skype network with a group in Pitlochry due to difficulties in travel. We also intend to create a logo for the group in order to brand the group since we are often shown to be part of Perth and Kinross Council; we are not

We made a survey which was sent out to schools across Perth and Kinross. The purpose of the survey was to find out how much young people knew about CSE and if they thought it was an issue in their communities. All of the questions were of our own design; and so far we have had 127 responses from young people.

Appendix 6



**Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC)
In partnership with Children 1st**

Stop to Listen (STL) Pathfinder

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

31 March 2018



Protecting Children and Young People: It is Still Everyone's Job

Describe how partners have worked together in terms of Stop to Listen (STL) and what prompted this innovation or change?

Background / Introduction / National Context

Stop to Listen (STL) is the national, multi-agency approach, led by Children 1st, which aims to develop and improve prevention, early intervention and child-centred responses to children and young people who may be at risk of, or have experienced sexual abuse (CSA) and exploitation (CSE).

The aim of this work is to improve the way in which we work alongside children and young people by building strong and trusting relationships, through which children and young people, who have experienced sexual abuse and / or exploitation, are able to have more control over, and involvement in, the process of disclosure, investigation and recovery. It also aims to ensure that the multi-agency response process goes at their pace as far as possible; responds to their own fears about disclosure and gains trust; whilst offering them support throughout and after the process of disclosure.

Perth and Kinross Context

Following strategic approval and publication of the Perth and Kinross Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Work Plan on 1 April 2015, Elected Members, Chief Officers and Community Planning Partnership (CPP) partners committed themselves to a *zero-tolerance approach to abuse and exploitation* and to *ensuring a hostile environment* to such behaviours across Perth and Kinross and have since recorded that *there is no place for abuse and exploitation in our communities*.

Our CSE Work Plan, which reflects the National Action Plan to Tackle CSE, contains four workstreams: *Prevention; Intervention; Disruption and Prosecution and Recovery*; all of which support STL.

Simultaneously, as part of our partnership approach to CSA / CSE and our commitment to improving our single and multi-agency early intervention and child-centred responses, Perth and Kinross was successful in its application to become a national STL National Pathfinder area together with Glasgow, North Ayrshire and Renfrewshire.

Perth and Kinross STL Steering Group

Working in partnership with Ruth Sills, Stop to Listen Development Manager at Children 1st, we established the Perth and Kinross Multi-Agency STL Steering Group (chaired by Jacquie Pepper, Chair of Perth and Kinross CPC) with clear Terms of Reference and we developed our STL Pathfinder Project Plan.

This Working Group has worked alongside the Perth and Kinross CSE Working Group and provided regular written update reports and briefings to the CPC, the Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP – Chief Officer Group) and to Perth and Kinross Council (Elected Members).

These reporting arrangements provided our STL work with strong strategic leadership, direction, support, challenge and scrutiny. All meetings of the STL Steering Group have been minuted and the Project Plan has been subject to robust scrutiny by way of regular update and progress reports.

Perth and Kinross Practice / Culture Areas Identified for STL Change and Improvement

Following a number of key briefings; joint workshops; steering group meetings; a young people's speak-up innovation lab; a leadership summit and a CSE masterclass, we identified and agreed collectively the following practice areas which would benefit from change and improvement via the pathfinder:

- ***Joint Investigative Interviewing and Training;*** and
- ***Peer Mentoring / Young People's Advisory Group.***

What do you feel Stop to Listen (STL) has achieved and what challenges has this presented at a local and / or a national level?

Joint Investigative Interviewing and Training – Achievements

This was an area of practice we identified quickly for the STL change and improvement pathfinder work.

Within Perth and Kinross, all Child Concern Reports are considered via the multi-agency screening group (MASG) and children and young people at risk of CSA / CSE are considered through an Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) and very often go on to be jointly interviewed by police and social work staff who have undertaken joint investigative interview training to national standards. Historically joint investigative interview training has been delivered at the Scottish Police College or locally at a Tayside-wide level.

Within Perth and Kinross we have an Interview Suite at Almondbank House, Perth where the majority of our joint investigative interviews (visually recorded interviews) take place. Mobile recording equipment also allows for joint investigative interviews to take place remotely.

Through the STL Pathfinder discussions we recognised that aspects of our joint investigative interviewing could be improved significantly. As a result the following work has been completed or is under completion.

- *identification of local case studies to demonstrate prevention, intervention, disruption and prosecution.* We have collated a number of short, anonymised case studies for publication and to use as part of workforce learning and development. This will ensure the context of our CSA / CSE training is kept both real and relevant to local practitioners;

- *identification of individual cases appropriate for the STL approach.* We supported the identification of individual cases of children and young people at risk of CSA / CSE by improving our multi-agency screening group (MASG) arrangements. By involving staff from our integrated Services for Young People in our multi-agency screening arrangements, we enhanced and expanded the range of responses to young people at risk. We also improved our IRD processes by implementing an aide-memoire, which now includes a specific requirement to consider CSA / CSE;
- *enhanced preparation, planning and child-centred rapport building opportunities prior to joint investigative interview.* We have improved this by reviewing and refreshing the local joint investigative interview training programme to ensure a sufficient emphasis and attention is paid to these key stages pre-joint investigative interview.;
- *enhancement of our interview facility and environment.* Following our multi-agency representation at the Children 1st Getting it Right for Child Witnesses Conference at the Scottish Police College on 12 October 2016, we made significant improvements to the child interview room at Almondbank House, Perth. Working with local young people, this included improved lighting, decoration, seating and soft furnishings; making it a more safe, child-centred and comfortable environment for the joint investigative interviewing of child victims. Further improvements are being made to the recording equipment and to the wider interview suite facility environment (being funded via Police Scotland);
- *trauma-informed practice training for our joint investigative interviewers (police and social work).* Working with Children 1st, we arranged for 4 police officers and 6 social workers to jointly undertake trauma informed practice training in August 2017. This joint training, commissioned by Children 1st, was delivered by Susanne Goetzold, Napier University. It was evaluated very highly (on-the-day exit evaluations) and showed significantly increased practice knowledge and confidence post this training course; and,
- *impact of trauma-informed practice training.* This joint training was further evaluated by way of a Focus Group and Follow-Up Questionnaire in January 2018. All ten participants took part in this follow-up evaluation which confirmed that attendees very much valued the opportunity to learn more about trauma-informed practice and welcomed the safe space to consider and reflect upon current and future practice arrangements.

Joint Investigative Interviewing and Training – Challenges

Overall, there have been few challenges with this aspect of our STL change and improvement pathfinder work.

We were quickly able to include changes to strengthen our MASG arrangements and IRD processes. We were able to identify suitable case studies and develop these accordingly with care. We were able to make significant improvements to our interview suite facility and improve our local joint investigative interview training, all within our existing funding. We are waiting additional funding via Police Scotland to make further improvements.

We have also had to take into consideration, and be mindful of, the potential impact of the ongoing Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) Evidence and Procedure Review and the emerging National Joint Investigative Interview Practice and Training requirements.

Further local work remains to be undertaken to develop a Quality Assurance and Evaluation Framework for all Joint Investigative Interviews. Extracting police and social work staff for enhanced trauma-informed practice training and participation in the follow-up focus group and evaluation processes presented some limited logistical challenges in terms of staffing cover.

Peer Mentoring / Young People's Advisory Group – Achievements

This was an area of practice we also identified for the STL change and improvement pathfinder work.

Working in partnership with our Services for Young People colleagues and with other external partners via @scott street (the Perth City base for young people), we initially explored the possibility of establishing a group of young people to act as peer mentors for CSA / CSE. We considered the various opportunities and challenges; types of other local models already in existence; the required support, supervision and training requirements and concluded that the best approach was to establish a Young People's CSE Advisory Group.

By applying the STL change and improvement pathfinder approach, we recognised the rich potential to have young people's voices at the heart of all our CSA / CSE work. Following a number of initial / exploratory meetings and discussions we developed this work further and this has included:

- *establishment of the Young People's CSE Advisory Group.* This Group has now met on at least 12 occasions since June 2017. The Group continues to grow in size and is representative of young people from across Perth and Kinross including groups of young people who feel marginalised and others who may have experienced CSA / CSE;
- *providing them with a Group Name.* We supported and facilitated this Group to develop its own unique identity and branding and as a result they rejected the proposed name by re-naming themselves as the Young People's CSE Advisory Group. The Group has gained local notoriety and is now formally included as one of the bespoke young people's groups in the new Perth and Kinross Youth Voice arrangements which can directly influence policy and decision makers at the highest level. For example, locally the Group has been invited to be part of the CPC Annual Development Day in May 2018 and an opportunity has arisen for them to also be part of the wider Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative work. Outwith Perth and Kinross a number of other CPCs have expressed an interest in learning more about the work and activities of this Group;
- *providing them with a Group Remit.* As the Group has evolved they have significantly amended their Group Remit and defined it more accurately to reflect their current and planned activities;
- *supporting the Group to develop a Young People's CSE Survey.* Having developed this survey themselves, the Group implemented and completed it in Perth and Kinross

Council Secondary Schools in December 2017. A total of 574 young people responded to this survey and provided information on their knowledge levels of CSE; how and where they currently obtain information about CSE; where they would like to obtain information about CSE; what they would do if they were affected by or worried about CSE and were asked if they thought CSE was a problem in their community (Responses: Yes – 18.1%; No – 28.4% and Don't Know – 53.5%);

- *examining the CSE survey results.* The Group is providing individual school reports and planning a further and much larger CSE survey in Autumn 2018;
- *examining the Perth and Kinross CSE Webpages.* The Group is in the process of re-drafting information and advice leaflets and other materials for young people;
- *planning a further CSE publicity and information.* The Group is currently developing key messages and a short video film for posting on social media platforms via the CPC;
- *participating in a Focus Group.* Representatives from the Group took part in a STL Focus Group on 21 March 2018. Facilitated by Ruth Sills, 6 members of the Group took part in these discussions which focussed on the establishment of the Group (opportunities and challenges); experience of the Group; key achievements of the Group; awareness of CSA / CSE and what next for the Group.

Peer Mentoring / Young People's Advisory Group – Challenges

This particular aspect of our STL change and improvement pathfinder work initially presented us with a number of challenges.

Initial attempts to establish a group of young people as CSA / CSE peer mentors were met with opposition from some of our partners who cited concerns about risks to their emotional health and wellbeing; levels of supervision and support; extent and length of training requirements and possible organisational risks. There were also concerns raised about the potential for peer mentors being cited as significant witnesses in any future CSA / CSE criminal investigations and / or proceedings. This resulted in a change of direction for our pathfinder work.

Once the Young People's CSE Advisory Group was established, some funding challenges were quickly realised and the CPC provided a small amount of funding to help with transportation / travel / refreshment costs for those attending the Group from across Perth and Kinross. Like any new Group, the Young People's CSE Advisory Group is following Tuckman's model of group development (forming, storming, norming and performing) and certain dynamics have been addressed accordingly. There is also a recognition that the Group would benefit from more male members and they are actively working to achieve a gender balance.

The development of the Survey Questionnaire also presented some unexpected challenges as key questions were initially ruled-in and then ruled-out. The roll-out of the survey link to all Secondary Schools was relatively easy, however universal take-up was not consistent across all Secondary Schools as the survey was competing with other school curriculum demands and / or pressures.

Perth and Kinross STL Pathfinder – Additional Activities

In addition to the above, Perth and Kinross took part in the following STL Pathfinder Activities:

National STL Data Collection Exercise and Trauma Scoping Mapping Exercise

Led by Children 1st and the NSPCC, this dual national mapping exercise took place in October 2016 and examined the rate of CSA / CSE and the provision of therapeutic support levels for CSA / CSE across Perth and Kinross, by seeking key information from third sector, health, police and social work databases.

There were a number of limitations and constraints with this national mapping exercise which recognised the unreliability of service / agency databases; different recording practices, variable definitions and thresholds; elements of under-reporting and the absence of any reliable Scottish CSA / CSE prevalence studies.

However, by benchmarking and some extrapolation, it provided indicative information in respect of CSA / CSE prevalence and the availability / gap in our therapeutic support services in Perth and Kinross, particularly for those aged under 12 years of age and for young people with a disability.

This has since resulted in the publication of the Perth and Kinross CSA and CSE Directory of Support Services (for Practitioners) with a further Directory (for Children, Young People and Families) currently under development by RASAC Perth and Kinross. RASAC are also carrying out a further more in-depth mapping exercise as we attempt to deliver a more coordinated therapeutic and recovery approach to CSA / CSE in Perth and Kinross.

Trauma-Informed Practice Training

Following on from the trauma-informed practice training (for joint investigative interviewers) described earlier, working in partnership with RASAC Perth and Kinross, the CPC piloted an initial Trauma-Informed Practice multi-agency training course in June 2017, which was again evaluated very highly.

Recognising the clear culture and practice benefits in this approach, the Adult Protection Committee (APC) and the CPC has subsequently commissioned RASAC Perth and Kinross to deliver a Trauma-Informed Training Package comprising a Multi-Agency Resource Booklet; Training Sessions and Workshops for staff and Briefings Sessions for Managers.

In the interim, on 15 March 2018, a Practitioner Conference entitled *Addressing the Effects of Trauma Throughout Life* took place at Perth Concert Hall supported by the CPC, Adult Protection Committee and Violence Against Women Partnership. This event has also been evaluated very highly.

How has Stop to Listen (STL) improved the wellbeing of children and young people and what further work needs to be undertaken to ensure a child-centred response to child sexual abuse and exploitation?

STL by its mere definition has ensured we take time, stop to listen and ensure a child-centred approach and response to CSA / CSE. As a pathfinder area, we have re-examined our prevention, early intervention and investigation pathways. We have improved our multi-agency screening group arrangements and IRD processes to ensure the impact of CSA / CSE is carefully considered. We have further developed some of our joint investigative interviewers to ensure their interviewing practice and approach is trauma informed and child-centred.

We have significantly improved our interview suite facility and we have created a more welcoming and comforting environment for disclosure, interview and investigation and we did so in consultation with young people. Working in partnership, we have improved our response and support to children and young people at risk of, and / or who have been the victims of CSA / CSE and we have published a directory of support services to support their longer term wellbeing needs. We have also identified case studies which evidence our very good multi-agency partnership working and better outcomes for children and young people at risk of, and / or who have been the victims of CSA / CSE.

We have also supported the establishment of a Young People's CSE Advisory Group, which may be the first of its kind in Scotland. Young people themselves have developed the group's name and remit; worked to increase its membership, reach and influence and as a result of their survey, heard first hand from their peers across Perth and Kinross about their experiences and awareness of CSA / CSE.

This survey confirmed that children and young people had a very good awareness and understanding of CSA / CSE; new where to find information and where they would like to find information and knew who they would contact if they were worried about CSA / CSE. The group is currently developing creative and innovative ways of promoting awareness and understanding of CSA / CSE for young people and is now actively influencing our practice and policy approach.

Feedback from both our joint investigative interviewing practitioners and from the Young People's CSE Advisory Group has been very honest and positive and they report an increased awareness and understanding of the STL change and improvement pathfinder approach in terms of joint investigative interviewing, trauma-informed practice and the need to consider the wellbeing needs of children and young people.

However, we are not complacent and recognise that there is still much more work to be undertaken.

We plan to develop the STL practice and culture approach further; we have embedded trauma-informed practice into the local joint investigative interview training programme and working in partnership with RASAC Perth and Kinross, we plan to embed trauma-informed practice into our workforce development programmes. Further improvements are also planned for the wider interview suite facility.

Finally our commitment to the Young People's CSE Advisory Group will continue indefinitely and we are confident it will continue to grow and develop into an effective and influential CSA / CSE advisory group with a greater reach and footprint.

Perth and Kinross STL Pathfinder Sources of Evidence

- CSE Work Plan and Update Reports for COG and CPC;
- CSE Information and Advice Leaflets (Various);
- STL Steering Group – Membership / Contact List;
- STL Steering Group – Terms of Reference;
- STL Steering Group – Minutes of Meetings;
- STL Pathfinder Project Plan and Update Reports for STL SG and CPC;
- CSA / CSE Case Studies;
- MASG Procedures and IRD Aide Memoire;
- Interview Suite – Before and After Photographs;
- Trauma Informed Practice Training for JII Officers – Exit / On-The-Day Evaluation Report;
- Trauma Informed Practice Training for JII Officers – Focus Group Evaluation Report;
- Trauma Informed Practice Training for JII Officers – Survey Questionnaire Evaluation Report;
- Trauma Informed Practice Multi-Agency Training Pilot Course – Evaluation Report
- Trauma Informed Practice – RASAC Perth and Kinross – Approved Proposal for CPC;
- Joint APC and CPC Practitioner Conference – Evaluation Report;
- Young People's CSE Advisory Group – Minutes, Notes of Meetings and Remit;
- Young People's CSE Secondary Schools Survey – Evaluation Report (s);
- Young People's CSE Advisory Group – Focus Group Evaluation Report;
- National STL Data Collection Exercise and Trauma Scoping Exercise – Perth and Kinross PowerPoint Presentation and Evaluation Report;
- Perth and Kinross CSA and CSE Directory of Support Services (Practitioners); and
- Selection of various STL Presentations and Inputs.

Ross Drummond
Child Protection Inter-Agency Coordinator
Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee
10 April 2018

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