

Child sexual exploitation

A reading list of key research into child sexual exploitation

Melrose M (2012) Twenty-First Century Party people: Young People and Sexual Exploitation in the New Millennium. Child Abuse Review Vol 22 (2013). The research explores the types of sexual exploitation that practitioners had worked with in the preceding year and LSCBs responses to young people's sexual exploitation. The paper suggests that in order to provide young people with the most appropriate support, practice responses need to be developed from the conditions in which young people are subject to sexual exploitation, rather than applying abstract 'models' that fail to capture the lived experience of the young people concerned. The findings indicate that there is confusion in relation to identifying CSE and that several models of sexual exploitation may be operating simultaneously in any one place and at any one time.

Threat assessment of child sexual exploitation and abuse. (PDF)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, 2013

Examines threats posed to children in the UK from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and the threat to children abroad from UK nationals. Looks at what the threats are and how it is believed they will develop over the coming year, in order to enable CEOP to set its strategic priorities for the year ahead. Lists four key threats: the proliferation of indecent images of children, online child sexual exploitation, transnational child sexual abuse and contact child sexual abuse. Reports that children aged 13 and 14 years represent the largest single victim group in reports to CEOP and explores how child sex offenders use technology online.

Giving victims a voice: joint report into sexual allegations made against Jimmy Savile. (PDF)

Metropolitan Police Service and NSPCC, 2013

Report from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the NSPCC, detailing the work of Operation Yewtree, the police investigation into allegations of sexual abuse made against Jimmy Savile and others. Key figures include: 600 people came forward with information, 450 relating to Jimmy Savile; 214 criminal offences have been recorded against 28 police forces; of his victims, 73% were children under 18. Key outcomes include: a significant rise in the level of reporting of past sexual abuse of children, increasing awareness about the importance of support for victims, collaboration between charities including NSPCC, NAPAC and CEOP, offering opportunities to develop further understanding and best joint working practices when dealing with victims of child sexual exploitation.

Sexual Exploitation of Vulnerable Young People Looked After and Accommodated in Glasgow (Rigby and Murie, 2013)

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=15275&p=0>

A scoping study was commissioned to provide an estimate of the prevalence and risk of sexual exploitation amongst the looked after and accommodated population in Glasgow. Primarily designed to provide a baseline for future research, policy and practice developments to begin identifying young people's pathways into exploitation and more effective and appropriate models of care across all vulnerable groups, the study is the first in Scotland to utilise a case file analysis approach to identify issues. A number of recommendations were made to develop responses in Glasgow.

Exploring the Scale and Nature of Child Sexual Exploitation in Scotland, Scottish Government (2012) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/10/9300>

The study aims to review existing research, policy and practice literature from the UK regarding the scale and nature of CSE; to review key Scottish statistics regarding the scale and nature of CSE in Scotland; and to gather preliminary and exploratory information from key professionals regarding their perceptions of the scale and nature of CSE in Scotland. Findings indicate that establishing the prevalence of sexual exploitation is very difficult. The problem is not visible, and its existence is difficult to uncover. Specific problems include: growing but still limited awareness of the issue; differences in the ways in which the issue is defined by young people, parents and carers and professionals; and differences in the way in which policy and practice is developed at local level. The research evidence indicates vulnerability across a range of deprived groups, including those excluded from school, those looked after and those who are delinquent or gang-involved.

Cutting them free: how is the UK progressing in protecting its children from sexual exploitation? (PDF).

Barnardo's, 2012

Report setting out the progress of Barnardo's Cut them free campaign and presenting the findings from a survey of their services in the UK. Focuses on what is still needed to protect and support children and young people for sexual exploitation. Outlines progress in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Considers in detail how far the campaign calls have been met in England, following on from Puppet on a string (2011).

Research into gang associated sexual exploitation and sexual violence: interim report. (PDF) Beckett, H. et al

University of Bedfordshire, 2012

Outlines the progress of research into gang-associated sexual exploitation and sexual violence in England, commissioned by the Office of the Children's Commissioners for England as part of their Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups. Key interim findings explore: features of sexual violence and exploitation that are unique to, or exacerbated by, the gang environment; gender differences among victims and perpetrators; reasons that gang-associated sexual violence and exploitation are rarely reported.

'I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world': the Office of the Children's Commissioner's inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups: interim report. (PDF)

Berelowitz, S. et al, Office Of The Children's Commissioner, 2012

Reports on number of known victims of CSE as perpetrated by groups and gangs, based on data submitted from police forces, children's services, health agencies, youth offending teams, and voluntary sector organisations who work with victims. Contains a list of warning signs for professionals, parents, carers, and society in general to identify victims, which includes: children going missing, substance/alcohol misuse, physical injuries, offending, and self-harming

All of our concern: commercialisation, sexualisation and hypermasculinity. (PDF)

Family Lives, 2012

Report on the commercialisation and sexualisation of children; discusses the progress made since the publication of the Bailey review (2011) and identifies areas which still require policy makers and parents' attention. Focuses on how boys are affected by commercialisation and sexualisation and how to engage them in preventative strategies. Also examines peer-on-peer sexual exploitation and violence, exploring the consequences of extreme gender identification and hypermasculinity, which is associated with sexual violence against girls. Includes recommendations for parents and policy makers.

Out of place: the policing and criminalisation of sexually exploited girls and young women (summary).

Phoenix, J. Howard Institute for Penal Reform, 2012

Analyses the decision-making processes of police, youth justice and non-statutory specialist sexual exploitation service providers in prosecuting and using criminal justice sanctions against girls and young women in prostitution related offences in England and Wales. Also looks at the experiences of sexually exploited young women and how they are policed. Findings include that England and Wales have tried to adopt a victim-oriented approach but this is undermined by the disjuncture between the law and policy. Emphasises that girls who are sexually exploited must always be treated as victims, never as criminals. Recommends the removal of the legal possibility of prosecuting a child for prostitution-related offences (i.e. age restricting any prostitution related offence to those over the age of sexual consent); and the development of clear guidance from central government to distinguish sexual exploitation from youth prostitution.

Still hidden? Going missing as an indicator of child sexual exploitation. (PDF) Sharp, N.

Missing People, 2012

Review examining the links between going missing and child sexual exploitation, including: the nature of links between going missing and child sexual exploitation; push and pull factors related to child sexual exploitation; missing from care; trafficking for child sexual exploitation; missing from home; abduction and kidnapping; and the need to go missing to escape from sexual exploitation. Highlights the importance of greater vigilance and more rigorous reporting of 'missing' incidents to protect children from serious exploitation and abuse.

Caught in a trap: the impact of grooming in 2012.

Turnbull, M., Davies, R. and Brown, C. ChildLine, 2012

Reports on children's experiences of sexual grooming in the UK. Looks at the number of contacts received by ChildLine about sexual abuse, the number in which a child specifically described aspects of sexual grooming; and the characteristics of victims of sexual grooming. Looks at the grooming process and the impact it has on the children involved. Includes a number of case studies.

Puppet on a string: the urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation. (PDF).

Barnardo's, 2011

Examines what is known about the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation, and provides evidence from Barnardo's services on the developing trends. Considers issues such as child trafficking, internet grooming and peer exploitation. Policy recommendations are focused on England only, but the report draws on experiences in each of the nations to show that this is a UK-wide issue that needs to be taken seriously by governments across the UK. Includes case studies.

Out of mind, out of sight: breaking down the barriers to understanding child sexual exploitation. Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, 2011

*Investigates street grooming and child sexual exploitation, and aimed to establish whether patterns of offending, victimisation or vulnerability could be identified. Refers to 'localised grooming' only and does not include online grooming or trafficking. Provides an outline of trends, themes and patterns based on six months of research. It looks at prevalence, patterns, interventions, and makes recommendations to improve interventions and reduce risk to children in the future. Found that more than 2000 children were victims of child sexual exploitation. Also available: **executive summary (PDF)**.*

Briefing document: CSE and youth offending. (PDF)

Cockbain, E. and Brayley, H.

UCL. Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science, 2011

Summarises key findings from research into the association between child sexual exploitation (CSE) and youth offending in Derby. Explores patterns of offending, along with their implications for policy and practice. Found that nearly 40% of CSE victims in Derby were involved in offending behaviour and 70% reoffended. Suggests that youth offending may reduce the likelihood of reporting CSE and affect witnesses' credibility. Concludes that although findings suggest that CSE and youth offending are closely intertwined, the available data did not indicate that CSE routinely causes offending behaviour.

This is it. This is my life... female voice in violence: final report on the impact of serious youth violence and criminal gangs on women and girls across the country. (PDF)

Firmin, C. Race on the Agenda, 2011

Final report of the Female Voice in Violence (FVV) project which assessed the impact of serious youth violence, gangs and serious group offending on women and girls. Draws on research from interviews and focus groups involving over 300 women, girls and males across four cities in England and highlights that the impact of serious youth and gang related violence (including sexual violence and sexual exploitation) should be recognised as a child protection issue and addressed in policy and practice. Also identifies examples of good practice by voluntary organisations.

What's going on to safeguard children and young people from sexual exploitation? How local partnerships respond to child sexual exploitation. (PDF).

Jago, S. et al. University of Bedfordshire, 2011

A report reviewing the ways Local Safeguarding Children Boards are protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation. Findings include: LSCBs are failing to protect young people and the current thresholds for intervention through child protection procedures are set too high. Recommendations include: review how the court process impacts on young people, and ensure training for professionals working with young people covers the issue of child sexual exploitation.

The protection of children online: a brief scoping review to identify vulnerable groups. (PDF)

Munro, E. R. Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre, 2011

Examines what is known about the protection of children online. Covers a wide variety of issues, including: cyber-bullying, sexual solicitation and grooming, and pornography and other harmful content. Outlines recommendations for areas in need of further research, including: factors that make some young people more vulnerable than others; how risk and protective factors influence outcomes; and how services can better protect children from online harm.

Young people and sexual exploitation: 'It's not hidden, you just aren't looking'.

Pearce, J. J. Routledge, 2009

Explores the difficulties that arise for researchers and practitioners working with sexually exploited young people. The first part explores the historical context of sexual exploitation, identifying how it arose from child prostitution. It looks more closely at current policy framework within the UK, identifying the range of interventions that can be used to support sexually exploited young people. Considers the needs of trafficked children and young people and addresses the links between sexual exploitation and domestic violence, and working with adolescents in violent relationships. Part two looks at risk factors and resilience in sexually exploited young people, and research and young people's participation in the field of sexual exploitation. Explores the therapeutic needs of sexually exploited children and young people.