

Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton (HIPS) Child Exploitation Newsletter

Quarterly professionals update from the HIPS Child Exploitation Group - Spring 2021

As the Covid-19 pandemic progresses, the HIPS partners continue to work together to tackle child exploitation and the different risks to children that the pandemic has brought. This newsletter keeps professionals in all four areas up-to-date with issues and progress discussed in the HIPS Child Exploitation meetings and to flag up local and national campaigns.

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***Are You Listening?* A film to tackle CCE**

Leicestershire Police have produced a short film, *Are You Listening?* which helps practitioners spot some signs that can indicate that children need help around criminal exploitation. The film focuses on four stories, which although fictional, are typical of the types of criminality children become involved in. For more information and the film, please see [Leicestershire Police](#).

We need you!

Do you have an example of a time when you've captured a child's voice and worked with them to improve your service? The Voice of the Child will be the theme of the next HIPS Child Exploitation Group meeting, and examples of good practice will help to inform this discussion. If you can help, please email hscp@hants.gov.uk

Thank you!

At the HIPS Child Exploitation meeting of 19 January 2021 the Partnership areas and Hampshire Constabulary updated on progress with their delivery plans with a focus on children who go missing:

Hampshire Partnership – continue to coordinate a Hampshire multi-agency review of child exploitation and this includes oversight of the local delivery plan within its methodology. Key highlights included; the strong working relationship between the Willow and METT police, tracking of the missing cohort and associated processes, sharing progress on the work of Op Salvus and Willow's delivery of training and information sessions. The MASH have undertaken a peer review of missing information which focused on strengthening child and parent/ carer involvement.

HIPS Missing Task & Finish Group— The group have met three times and have shared each Local Authority's (LA) process around missing children. It was highlighted that there is some challenges around how out of area LA children are supported and that this can lead to gaps in intelligence between LA's especially if knowledge about their presence in the LA is not up to date. There was an agreement and action set in the last meeting to escalate these concerns to area directors. The group are exploring the viability of introducing systems that support sharing of intelligence across geographical areas. The group have supported the development of succinct lunch time learning sessions on missing children, these will be offered to professionals across HIPS via the Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

Isle of Wight - school attendance on the Island is improving; however, there have been a decrease since the latest lockdown with COVID [at the time of writing] spreading fast across the island. Regular MET training is available to professionals and there has been some good work between the police and Isle of Wight ferry companies when children go missing.



There was an issue around return conversations and the recording of details as to when this was offered and took place. On the Island it is relatively easy to identify where the hot spots areas, and where children who often go missing are likely to be.

The MET Group is on track and the terms of reference have been updated. This group provides a useful overview of missing issues on the Island. Return interviews are shared with police and it is likely that any concerns would be shared with schools; however, the fully detail of the return interview is not shared. This will be further discussed at the HIPS Missing T&F group. If a child from the Island is placed out of area it is still the responsibility of the social worker to conduct the return interview. There was some concern that education staff may not be best suited to carry out these interviews.

Portsmouth – Where the lead professional is a social worker the return conversation will be completed by them, regardless of whether the child is placed in or out of the city. There has been a focus on timeliness of return conversations, and this has resulted in 83% being completed in 72hours. Information gathered through return conversations is shared through planning meetings and strategy discussions.

Southampton – the MET Hub undertake the majority of missing interviews across the city (face-to-face or phone) and this is working well. All children who go missing are offered an interview and 75-80% accepted. In October there were 86 missing episodes, November there were 101 and December there were 50. Southampton will share some information with schools, with the child's consent, and where appropriate they will share details with other agencies.





The new Lurking Trolls campaign 'The Peril of the Possessed Pets!' aimed at children in Key Stage 2 is due to launch in June 2021. As well as having the online safety messages from the original award winning campaign, it will focus on an additional 6 key issues that children may face as a result of spending time online - bullying; anxiety; self-image; exploitation; fake news; and radicalisation.



The campaign will be supported by a new book, teacher resources packs, 5 two minute length animations and a website. There are also 5 amazing Trolls costumes that have been made to be used in interactive assemblies. If you would like any more details or a preview of any of the resources, please contact Lucy Rylatt, Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnerships Manager at lucy.rylatt@portsmouthcc.gov.uk.

An update from the Youth Commissioners

Hi all,

I hope everyone is staying positive and testing negative! It has been a real privilege to become a part of these HIPS meetings and hearing the progress everyone is making towards a better future for young people. I am very much looking forward to hearing about the voice of the child in the next meeting and if there is any work which you would like a young person's perspective on or collaborate with us on any upcoming projects, then please do let us know. We are more than happy to help in any way we can. That being said, we would like to ask for everyone's support in sharing the Youth Commission Big Conversation where we gather the opinions of young people on our priorities. We use this to inform our Exploitation Recommendations which you can find below.

The thoughts and experiences of young people, relating to exploitation, were consistent throughout all quarters. It appeared that the respondents were aware of different types of exploitation, mentioning gang exploitation, county lines, child sexual exploitation, and online grooming. Many responses noted that social media helped to facilitate these different types of exploitation; in particular some respondents stating that they had been asked, or persuaded, to send intimate images online. As the pandemic progressed, responses highlighting social media and online exploitation appeared more frequently; this could be due to the increased amount of time that young people were spending online and therefore the increased exposure to online risks, such as grooming and requests for intimate images. Additionally responses also addressed the negative effect of exploitation on victims' mental health, especially because many victims either do not know where to go, or feel too ashamed, to access help and support if they believe that they are being exploited.

Recommendations

- Increased awareness of, and signposting to, services which support victims of exploitation. Although not mentioned in the Big Conversation, the awareness could be achieved through campaigns, social media posts and posters in education establishments and public places.
- Education establishments should ensure that young people are aware that exploitation is a real issue and are able spot the signs of exploitation, both individually and in their peers.
- Some young people did state that they would like to hear about real life experiences, either from police or victims, in order to raise awareness of the issue.
- Educate trusted adults, such as parents, carers, teachers and youth workers, about exploitation and how to have conversations, addressing the issue, with young people.

See you next time,

Amelia & Julia



CPI update

CPI submissions continue to show strong growth as more partners recognise the value and have increased confidence in the process. For January 2021 round 500 CPIs were received across Hampshire compared with less than 400 in January 2020. For the Southampton area alone 122 CPIs were submitted this January compared with January 2020 when a total of 98 were submitted showing an increase of over 24%. Below are some examples of CPIs received in January that led to positive action:

- A CPI containing information on a high risk CSE child greatly assisted an ongoing operation in relation to child abduction. This has led to the thorough police investigation that resulted in the arrest of the male suspect, who was subsequently charged and the child involved being moved to a location outside of local authority area to prevent further risks to them.
- A CPI contained the first piece of intelligence on a young male, at high risk of CCE, who had just been released from prison. There was a lot of concerning information with regards to the state of his mental health. Police were previously unaware of his deteriorating mental state prior to this information. This resulted in additional safeguarding measures being implemented jointly through Children Social care and the neighbourhood policing team to support the male in the community.
- A young adult male was said to be having extremist views, but not engaging with mental health services. There was no previous indication on Police systems that the male has any links to extremism or mental health. This has resulted in Counter Terrorism Police now being engaged with other partners to effectively safeguard him and the community he resides in, as well as address the male's struggles with mental health.

Hampshire Constabulary recognise that without this level of fantastic engagement from partners the CPI process could not work. Many thanks to all of the partners and we look forward to building on this in 2021.

Safeguarding in Transition

Young people who are identified having vulnerabilities and risk factors (particularly around CCE, mental health, homelessness, returning home after leaving care or high intensity services users) need to be supported as they move to adulthood, particularly as the children's legislation no longer applies and Care Act criteria are sometimes not met. A task & finish group has been set up to look at safeguarding in transition, to create a multi-agency framework for young people with the above vulnerabilities. Attendees will be brought together from Local authority safeguarding teams, LSAB/LSCP partnerships, Public Health, Children's Services, Adult MASH services and mental health teams, Police, CCGs and Education. The group will seek views from children in care, care leavers, Independent Futures, CAMHS, the Willow Team, Youth Offending Teams, the Probation service, health providers, MIND/Voiceability and Care Ambassadors.



The T&F group is meeting between January and April, and guidance will be finalised by the end of May. It is hoped that following ratification at LSABs and HIPS, the guidance will be published in July with a launch and staff training between July and September (with a rolling programme of training).

If you'd like more information on the work of the T&F group please contact Debbie Key, Southampton Safeguarding Partnership Manager at Deborah.key@southampton.gov.uk

Your wellbeing



Working with safeguarding issues can be challenging, and during the pandemic, it is more important than ever to reach out, speak to friends and colleagues and remember that support is available. Check out

[Information & support from MIND](#)

[Wellbeing through nature with Forestry England](#)

[5 steps to mental wellbeing from the NHS](#)

And don't forget that support will be available from your organisations too. All at the HIPS Child Exploitation Group would like to say "thank you" for your hard work and dedication during this difficult time.

Contact us:

Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, hscp@hants.gov.uk or call 01962 876355