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NWG Assessment Tool

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NOTA Conference Cardiff
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TACKLING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Workshop Aims and Objectives

- Introduce CSE Response Unit and NWG.
- Context for the development of the assessment tool.
- Process for development of the tool.
- Detailed explanation of the tool and it's features.
- Discussion on children and parents voice in assessment process.

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The NWG

- Network of professionals founded in 2011.
- Responsible for collating resources and facilitating shared learning experiences.
- Membership has grown to over 14,000 professionals
- NWG provides training and lobbies on behalf of members.
- Chosen via single tender process to deliver national taskforce.

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The Response Unit's Aims and Objectives

- Provide operational support to practitioners from all disciplines
- Offer strategic support for organisations and partnerships
- Develop and maintain link between practice and decision makers at local and national level
- Development of register of skills and knowledge to support work of the unit

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How the Response Unit Works

- Engagement is on a voluntary basis
- Individuals/organisations contact unit by phone or email to commission unit
- Reporting on the unit's work is anonymised – only shared where safeguarding concerns require disclosure
- Not another layer of inspectorate
- Gain members views for ongoing priorities via regional events

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Response Unit's Achievements (so far)

- 8256 individuals supported by response unit
- 926 unique enquiries to the unit.
- 15 regional forums delivered attended by 235 professionals
- Say Something if you See Something (SSSS) revised material
- Commissioning guidance
- Operational/strategic support for investigations

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Next Steps

- More proactive work with agencies
- Drive national debate on key issues such as taxi licensing and CICA
- Further work on transition and support for 16/17 year olds
- Develop strategic partnerships
- Ensure research is accessible for practitioners

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Response Unit Consultation

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- Information sharing
- Definitions
- Education and prevention
- Risk assessment
- Strategy - disconnect to operational activity
- Community awareness
- Marginalised groups i.e. BYM, LGBTQ , Travellers, BAME, Learning Difficulties
- Scrutiny/Independent oversight/Escalation procedures

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Drivers for this work

Chief SW letter (March 2015)

Jay Enquiry

No government prescription

NWG consultations

NWG practice knowledge

Discussion

What are the challenges surrounding CSE assessment?

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Challenges – current tool(s)

- Used to determine professional judgement/action (NB scoring based tools)
- Professional understanding of risk – how consistent is this and what does L, M + H risk mean?
- High risk used to describe children who are being sexually exploited
- Early identification of vulnerabilities
- How to support workforce not to work to a narrow stereotype of abuse (NB some children show no obvious indicators of risk/harm)
- Female centric tools e.g. repeat terminations, sexualised dress
- Some children are victim and perpetrator

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What research tells us...

- Lack of good quality research evidence on the indicators of risk and protection from CSE
- Need a large scale population methodologically rigorous research
- 2 factors increase the risk of becoming a victim
 - Being disabled
 - Being in residential care

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Improving the effectiveness of the child protection system – EIF, June 2017

“Good assessment does not in itself guarantee successful outcomes for children, but greatly increases the likelihood that children get appropriate help matched to their needs at the right time.”

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What we wanted to achieve

- A tool that supports professional practice (as opposed to determines it)
- Promote better use of professional judgement including “interaction” of risk + protective indicators on an ongoing basis
- Support practitioners to be more analytical and holistic in their assessment of need and risk
- Promote practitioners to engage with + listen to young people
- Promote a “culture” change in how tools are used
- Child focused practice i.e. promotes SMHM framework

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How we developed the tool

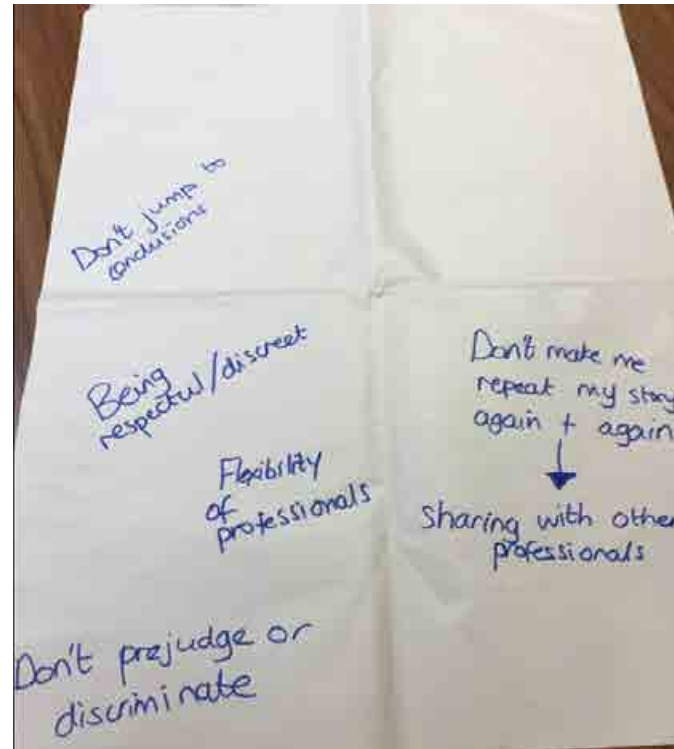
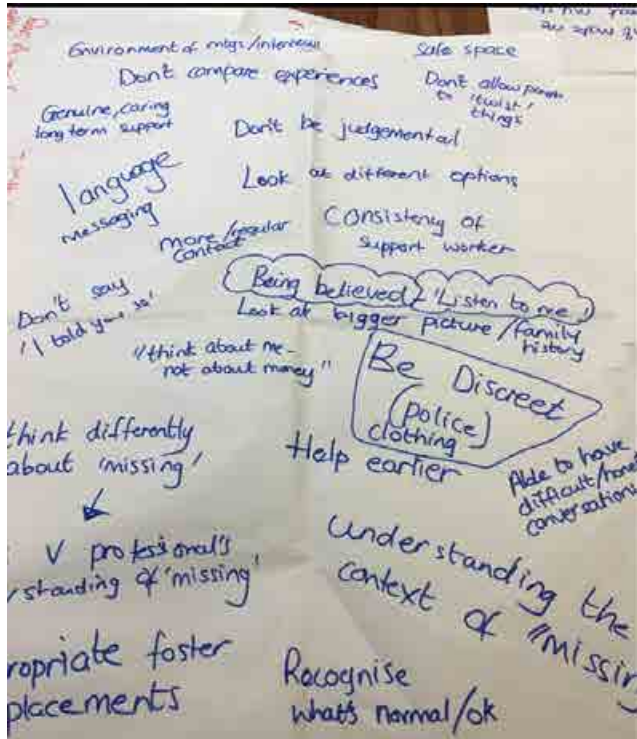
- Desk top review of research/tools
- Project group
- Feedback from NWG Consultation events + consultation NWG coordinators forum
- Consultation PACE Parent Action Group
- Consultation young people
- Piloted on 10 cases
- Review of completed tools and follow up discussion with 7 professionals
- Engagement with Not Just a Thought project (NJAT)

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What young people told us



‘See Me Hear Me’

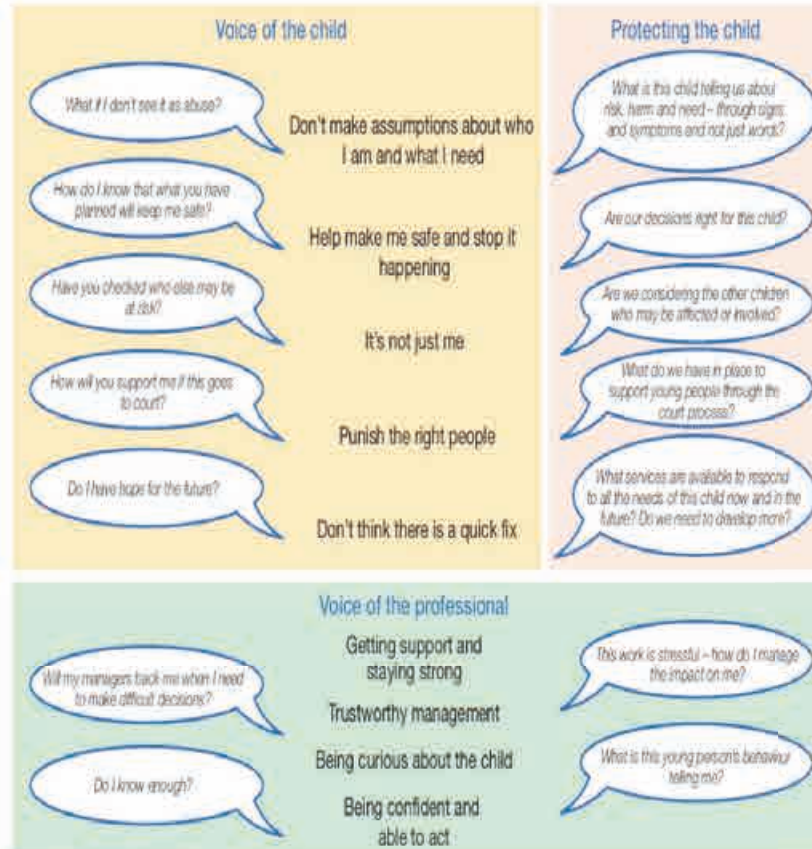
“A child-centred Framework focusing above all, on ensuring that children and young people ... are seen, heard, attended to and understood.

It is about making their needs and experiences the central and driving force behind all decisions and actions.

**It is about making the child visible”
(OCC 2013)**

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See Me, Hear Me
 A Framework for protecting children
 Figure 10: Getting the focus right



Underpinned by Children Act 1989, LAMCNC Articles 2, 12, 18, 24, 34-39
 Seven Principles: 1) The child's best interests must be the top priority, 2) Participation of children and young people, 3) Enabling relationships and support, 4) Consistency, problem-solving, 5) Effective information-sharing with and between agencies, 6) Supervision, support and training for staff, 7) Evaluation and audit.

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Big Up The Bill!

TOP TIPS FOR POLICE FROM YOUNG PEOPLE			
1. No matter what your job is, think of the SAFETY OF CHILDREN FIRST.	2. SEE AND TREAT A CHILD OR A YOUNG PERSON AS IF THEY ARE IN TROUBLE. not as if they are a trouble.	3. DON'T JUDGE THE YOUNG PERSON, but try your best to understand what's going on. Judge and assess risks, suspicious people or circumstances - not a young person.	4. COMMUNICATE WELL. Speak to young people as normal human beings, make small conversations before asking big questions, and use simple language to explain things.
5. KNOW HOW TO STAY CALM even if a young person isn't - and learn how to calm a challenging behaviour without having to restrain a young person.	6. KNOW THE LAWS AND SIGNS OF A CHILD BEING GROOMED OR EXPLOITED.	7. UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT. The trauma of being abused or exploited can have on child's mental health and behaviour.	8. UNDERSTAND CONFIDENTIALITY and the importance of keeping a young person updated about the progress of their case.
9. WORK WELL WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS to help get the best outcomes for a young person.	10. TREAT YOUNG PEOPLE HOW THEY WISH TO BE TREATED.		

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What parents told us

- *Grooming causes a breakdown in the protective ability of parents/carers*
- *Grooming changes the child's behaviour and so focusing on the child's behaviour as "risk factors" is meaningless*
- *CSE Assessment is not about assessing parental capacity to safeguard*
- *Assessments should have a greater focus on suspects/perpetrators and whether there are indicators of **coercive** behaviour*
- *Assessments should be informed by trauma theory as this will mean it is more likely that the complexity of the child's needs will be identified*
- *Professionals need to work alongside rather than support the family - parents need somebody to answer questions, guide and tell them what to do – "somebody alongside them". Specialist advice/ dedicated professionals for parents makes a difference*

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What professionals told us

“Preferred new tool – partly in terms of layout - as not enough space in tick boxes on existing NWG tool. The pilot version flows a little better – sections naturally flow. Found triangle useful”

“Made sense and covers what you need to know”

“Preferred statements. Can't just label young people as LMH – so much more behind these labels”

“Pilot tool allows the space for more detail and the reader (of a completed assessment) would be able to better understand what is going on for the child”

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What professionals told us

“Like that it identified what support needs - this is one of best features. Also liked short and long term focus”

“Covers a wide range of options – need to be applied on a case by case basis”

“Don't think need a C+F SW assessment as well as this assessment. You can analyse the child's needs more in this tool than current CSE assessment tool”

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What professionals told us

“Need to be experienced or have good understanding of CSE to complete a good assessment using the tool”

“Pleasantly surprised. Million times better than old tool”

“Good tool, liked it better. Could fill out with a child and their parent – will take longer but need the info it contains”

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Key features of the assessment tool

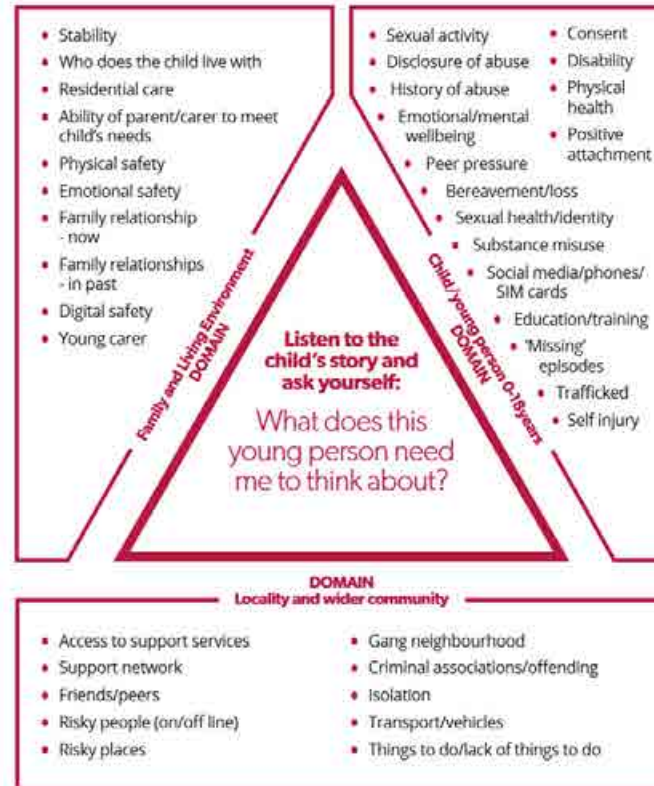
Principles of engagement and assessment

The following principles underpin effective assessment and promote the engagement of children/young people and their families in the assessment process:

- Assessments should be holistic in approach, examining risk and protective factors and addressing the child's needs within their family / living environment, their peer group, their school and wider community
- Assessments should understand the unique needs of each individual child and avoid 'one size fits all' assumptions about different groups of children
- Assessment should adopt a broader perspective than cases of intra-familial child abuse and should not be limited to an assessment of parental capacity
- Assessments should recognise that grooming can cause a breakdown in the protective ability of parents/carers
- Assessments should be underpinned by professional curiosity and not simply rely on checklists, disclosures or what is or is not known. If something is not known, professionals should not assume that it may not be happening
- Assessments should provide an analysis of the information gathered, drawing on professional judgement
- Assessments should consider the impact of the issues identified in the assessment on the child and identify the support that is required to meet their needs
- Assessments should focus on outcomes, not process
- Assessments should avoid any suggestion of judgement or blame in respect of either the child or the parent/carer
- Children/young people and their parents/carers should be actively engaged in the assessment process. Children who have been abused have already experienced a loss of control and the assessment process should be managed so that the child can meaningfully participate
- Children/young people and their parents/carers will require time to develop trust and relationships that underpin effective assessment; assessment should therefore be an ongoing process and young people should feel like you have all the time they need
- Children/young people and their parents/carers should be afforded the opportunity to tell their story rather than respond to a series of questions i.e. assessments should happen through conversation rather than as a response to a list of questions
- Children/young people should be told that you are worried about them and why; this will help the child to understand that you will take seriously any information that they do share
- Children/young people should be asked what is happening rather than told what you think is happening
- Children/young people should receive a comprehensive explanation as to what will happen with the information gathered

Key features of the assessment tool

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Key features of the assessment tool

Child/Young Person and Parent/Carer views

- What are the child's views about their needs and the risks they face?
- What do they want for the short and longer term future?
- What are the parent(s)/carer(s) views about the child's needs and the risks they face?
- What do they want for the child's short and long term future?

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Key features of the assessment tool

Assessment

Based on the assessment above, please provide your professional opinion of risk by selecting ONE of the boxes below:

- No concerns of sexual exploitation/concerns relate to behaviours associated with age appropriate child/young person behaviours
- Evidence² of vulnerability to sexual exploitation
- Evidence² of being groomed or targeted for the purposes of sexual exploitation
- Evidence² that child is being sexually exploited
- Evidence² of other form(s) exploitation e.g. drug trafficking, trafficking, modern day slavery
- ²On the balance of probability

Key features of the assessment tool

Questions on

- Trafficking
- Learning disability
- Other children who may be risk/being exploited
- Risky locations
- Alleged perpetrators/suspects

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Key features of the assessment tool

Planning

What does this child/young person need to make them safer and meet their needs; also consider the support needs of the parent/carer and how they can be involved in the protection of their child.

- Short term:
- Long term:
- How will you know that the risks to the child/young person are reducing?
- What support do you need as a professional working with this child need to promote their safety?

Key features of the assessment tool

Planning (Continued)

Consider which of the following actions should be taken following completion of assessment (not an exhaustive list):

- Dial 999 to secure an immediate police response
- Discuss with Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead
- Contact local CSE Coordinator
- Provide single agency support
- Coordinate multi-agency early help support
- Refer to MASH/Children's Social Care
- Share intelligence with Police
- Request/arrange a multi-agency meeting e.g. strategy meeting, Child in Need Meeting or other meeting as required by local CSE pathway
- Explore/address suitability of child's living arrangement
- Arrange a GP review
- Arrange a sexual health assessment/review
- Contact School Nurse
- Secure services to meet the health needs of the child or their parents/carers
- Address any issues in relation to the child's education
- Refer to specialist CSE team (if applicable)
- Refer to specialist CSE services e.g. voluntary sector project
- Refer to National Referral Mechanism (to be actioned by First Responder)
- Seek legal advice or ask Local Authority to seek legal advice
- Consider disruption options (that you or others can take)
- Deliver preventative work to a group/setting
- Agree date for review of assessment
- Step down or closure

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Questions?



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Next steps – Targeted promotion

- 27th July - Regional CSE Coordinators
- 21-22nd Sept – NOTA (National Organisation for Treatment of Abusers) annual conference
- 26th September – NWG BYM Forum
- 17th October – South West Strategic Governance Group (SGG)
- 24th October – NWG Health Forum
- 31st October – North Yorkshire Strategic Governance Group (SGG)
- 22nd November – AILC (Association of Independent LSCB Chairs) national conference
- TBC – ADCS
- TBC - APCC
- TBC – Public Health

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Next steps - Training

- Any tool relies on professionals having appropriate knowledge, training and sharing a definition and understanding of CSE
- Revised tool is supported by a suite of training
- NWG training offer:
 - **E-learning**
 - **NWG Foundation course** (knowledge base)
 - **NWG Advanced course** (trauma, reflective practice, skills based)
 - **NWG Assessment Tool course** (case study, Fixers film, use of tool)

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Next steps

Evaluation

The evaluation should capture:

- How will it impact on the outcome of the child? / What difference is it making to that child?
- How was the process for them?
(want to improve perspective of parents)

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Next steps

Launch – Friday 1st December 2017 – NWG Resources Library

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Message from young people

“We want to get professionals who work around CSE to be more understanding and to believe our story and not jump to conclusions when talking about our situation, and to change their way of working because we have experienced CSE and had various professionals not believe what we were saying or listening to us when we knew what could have been best for us and what was going on in our lives (thus dangerous or risky situations escalating) so that other young people who go through abuse or CSE and access services don’t have to go through the negative experiences like we did.”

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Questions?



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