

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation

Action Plan

Department for
Education

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Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan

Ministerial Foreword

Introduction by Tim Loughton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families



The vast majority of children in this country grow up safe from harm. However, the Barnardo's report *Puppet on a string: the urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation*, published in January 2011, was a wake-up call for all of us. It emphasised that children are being sexually exploited here and now and that this appalling form of child abuse is more prevalent than most people could ever imagine.

The Barnardo's report called for a national action plan to tackle child sexual exploitation. As Minister responsible for children and families, I asked my officials to lead the development of this action plan and I am grateful to the many national and local organisations and other Government Departments which have contributed to it over the last few months.

Recent cases – most notably, the series of prosecutions and convictions following Derbyshire Police's *Operation Retriever* – have highlighted some very effective joint working by the voluntary and community sector and statutory agencies. These examples underline the need to intervene earlier to increase awareness among young people of the risks and enhance their resilience when finding themselves in risky situations. They also highlight the need for all those who come into contact with children to be aware of the possible signs of child sexual exploitation and to know what to do if they suspect a child is being sexually exploited, or groomed for sexual exploitation.

It is clear that this abuse can be perpetrated by individuals from all sections of society, and can be targeted at boys, girls, older and younger children, from stable and affluent homes as well as from less advantaged backgrounds, in urban and rural communities. We also know that certain factors in a child's life, such as running away from home or experience of domestic violence, can make them more vulnerable to being sexually exploited. The links in particular between children going missing and being sexually exploited are well documented.

It is important to acknowledge the huge contribution already being made by many partner organisations to tackle this problem. Safe and Sound in Derby, Barnardo's, the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults, the Coalition for the Removal of Pimping and many more have been doing tremendous things in recent years.

The thematic assessment *Out of Mind, Out of Sight: breaking down the barriers to understanding child sexual exploitation*, published by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) in June 2011, has added significantly to our understanding of this type of offending. In October 2011 the University of Bedfordshire, supported by Comic Relief, published findings from its major research project exploring the extent and nature of the response of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to the 2009 Government guidance on

safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation. The Office of the Children's Commissioner also launched in October its two-year Inquiry into *Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups*, which I am sure will enormously increase our knowledge and help in the fight against sexual exploitation.

This action plan recognises the University of Bedfordshire findings that far too few LSCBs are implementing existing guidance effectively and that awareness of child sexual exploitation remains low among young people and their parents and carers. Progress is also hampered because many incidents go unreported, as victims are reluctant to come forward – or possibly unaware of the extent or implications of their abuse. The action plan acknowledges, as does the University of Bedfordshire research, that there is nonetheless existing good practice which needs to be shared. The action plan highlights areas where more needs to be done, and sets out specific actions which Government, local agencies and voluntary and community sector partners need to take, or already have underway, to address this horrific form of abuse. This will help to ensure that the wide range of work currently taking place on child sexual exploitation is complementary and comprehensive.

The action plan was developed in the context of the Munro review of child protection. Like Professor Eileen Munro's final report, and the Government's response to her review, the action plan emphasises the important role of LSCBs at the centre of local multi-agency arrangements to help and protect children and young people. It is also child-centred, as was the Munro Review, trying to see sexual exploitation from the point of view of the child or young person, as he or she goes through the different stages which might occur. Throughout, the action plan reflects views which have been put forward by young people themselves including a group from projects run by The Children's Society who came to see me in September to share their experiences and ideas.

Child sexual exploitation is horrific and has no place in this, or any other, society. It is a serious crime and must be treated as such, with the perpetrators pursued more rigorously. We can only tackle it successfully by looking at every aspect of the problem: raising awareness and understanding; effective prevention and detection; securing robust prosecutions; and improving support for victims and their families. This action plan brings together for the first time actions already being taken and actions which will be taken forward in the future. Much work is currently underway and more will take place over the coming months; so this is by no means the end of the story.

This work is of paramount importance. I am determined that everything which can be done is done to make our children safer from sexual exploitation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Loughton', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Tim Loughton
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Part 1: Introduction

“ For children over 10, sexual exploitation is the most pressing and hidden child protection issue in this country.”(Anne Marie Carrie, Barnardo’s)

What is child sexual exploitation?

1. Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse (“child” being defined as anyone under 18 years of age). It is complex and can manifest itself in different ways. A full definition can be found at **Annex A** but essentially it involves children and young people receiving something – for example, accommodation, drugs, gifts, or affection – as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It can occur without physical contact, when children are groomed to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

2. In all cases those exploiting the child or young person have power over them, perhaps by virtue of their age or physical strength. Exploitative relationships are characterised in the main by the child’s limited availability of choice, compounding their vulnerability. This inequality can take many forms but the most obvious include fear, deception, coercion and violence.

Categories of child sexual exploitation

3. The Barnardo’s *Puppet On A String* report defined three broad categories of child sexual exploitation. These were described as:

- Inappropriate relationships;
- ‘Boyfriend’ model of exploitation and peer exploitation; and
- Organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking.

4. There is some crossover between the first two categories. They both involve an imbalance of power, which perpetuates the abuse and undermines the will of the victim to the extent that they feel unable to remove themselves from the position they are in. Examples of these two categories might include:-

- A 15 year old girl with a 'boyfriend' of 20 who has displayed violence to her in the past and threatened to harm himself or others should she attempt to end the relationship. This leads to the victim submitting to unwanted sexual advances and suffering physical and emotional abuse.
- A gay 14 year old boy is introduced by one of his school friends to a man in his 20s whom the friend had met on the internet. The man takes him to his flat for alcohol and drugs and subsequently introduces the boy to a number of other men, who want sex in return for money, alcohol and cigarettes.
- A 48 year old man who befriends a 13 year old girl and exposes her to sexualised behaviour in an attempt to de-sensitise her. He proclaims his love for the victim, who genuinely believes she is in a loving relationship with him and readily accepts his sexual behaviour.
- A 72 year old man who allows schoolchildren to use his home, where he provides alcohol and cigarettes for them in return for him taking abusive photographs of them.

5. In relation to the third category, court cases following police investigations into child sexual exploitation by organised criminal groups (for example, Derbyshire Police's *Operation Retriever* and West Mercia Police's *Operation Chalice*) have received considerable media attention over the past year. This abuse is often more complex than the patterns of offending mentioned above but it appears to have some typical features. The victims are often, although by no means exclusively, female and from difficult home circumstances. The thematic assessment *Out of Mind, Out of Sight* published by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) in June 2011 suggested, however, that the extent of sexual exploitation of boys is not fully reported or recognised.

6. Sometimes victims of child sexual exploitation are moved around geographically to cater for the needs of the group and they may even be trafficked into, within and out of the UK. CEOP compiles information on the trafficking of children into and within the UK and its *Child Trafficking Update* published in October 2011 notes that "Overall, sexual exploitation is the most prevalent form of exploitation ...". In October 2011 the Department for Education and the Home Office jointly published updated practice guidance on safeguarding children who may have been trafficked.

7. Victims may be used as agents to recruit other children and young people, and instructed by offenders on the types of children they should recruit – giving rise to situations where the same young person may be seen as both victim and perpetrator of sexual exploitation. These groups are usually well organised with strong communication networks, often staying in close contact by mobile phone.

8. Group associated sexual exploitation is carried out by more than one perpetrator and can involve individual or multiple victims. Sexual exploitation can also occur within, or between, gangs generally consisting of young people but often of adults as well. Gang associated sexual exploitation can take a number of forms, including girls and young women being exploited by young men as a rite of passage or to repay gang debts. The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into *Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups* which began in October 2011 will be looking closely at both categories of behaviour, including 'peer on peer' exploitation, where children and young people are abused by other children and young people – often as a result of having been exploited by adults to do so.

9. Across the different categories of child sexual exploitation, the link between children being sexually exploited and children going missing is very strong. Some 140,000 children go missing from home or care each year and it has been estimated that running away places around a quarter of these young people at risk of serious harm. There are particular concerns about the links to children running away and the risks of their exposure to sexual exploitation. This can be a complex issue but we know that children who go missing are at heightened risk of sexual exploitation and also that sexual exploitation can be one of the 'push' factors leading to children running away.

10. Both the CEOP thematic assessment and the *What's Going On* University of Bedfordshire research project, funded by Comic Relief and published in October 2011, found that sexually exploited children frequently go missing from home or run away for varying periods of time. It seems clear that any actions which can be taken to reduce the numbers of children going missing are likely to help prevent sexual exploitation taking place. A key example of this is the interviews with such children after 'missing' episodes to discover and work on the causes. Such interviews should provide a thorough assessment of the reasons why the child ran away and what additional support needs they have, to inform any children's services assessment of the child and the family.

11. The Government will be publishing shortly a cross-Government strategy for missing children and adults. Missing children and young runaways are a key part of that work. In addition, the Government will be working with key interested parties to review and reissue the current statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home, published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in 2008. In doing so, it will consider how local authorities and other agencies could be helped towards a clearer understanding of their duties and priorities in this area.

12. The CEOP thematic assessment and the University of Bedfordshire research both also found that a disproportionate number of sexually exploited young people were looked after by the local authority, before or during exploitation. CEOP found that "Of the 896 children in the dataset whose living situation was known, 311 were already in care at the time of the exploitation and a further 43 children were moved into care following intervention." The University of Bedfordshire was concerned about the number of such children placed in residential care. (See paragraph 85 below.)

Common myths about child sexual exploitation

“The reality is that any child or young person, from any social or ethnic background, can be exploited. Boys and young men can be at risk as well as girls and young women.” (Barnardo’s, “Puppet on a string”)

13. There are a number of myths about child sexual exploitation which need to be dispelled. In particular:

Myth:

Child sexual exploitation is something that is done to girls and young women.

Fact:

There are male victims too. Research suggests that they are fewer in number but, as mentioned above, numbers may be under-reported.

Myth:

Child sexual exploitation only happens to children who are in care, who come from a ‘bad’ family, or are of a particular race or religion.

Fact:

Any child, from anywhere, can potentially be a victim. It is true, however, that young people are more vulnerable to becoming sexually exploited as a result of long term social exclusion, poverty and deprivation.

Myth:

Child sexual exploitation is very rare and only happens in a few places.

Fact:

It is much more prevalent than most people imagine. But it may often be hidden and can only be uncovered by people being vigilant and reporting their concerns.

Myth:

A lot of these children are over 16 and have consented to sex. Social workers need to concentrate on real child abuse.

Fact:

The sexual exploitation of young people is just as much child abuse as is sexual abuse experienced by younger children in the home. Young people may initially agree to sex but they cannot consent to exploitation.

Recognising the existence of child sexual exploitation

“Nobody warned me about sexual exploitation, nobody warned me that there are lads who drive round in their posh cars and loud music, and try to groom girls. I didn’t warn my daughter. I want other parents to be aware.” (Parent, quoted by CROP)

14. A key difficulty in tackling child sexual exploitation is the fact that all too often victims do not themselves recognise or acknowledge that they are being exploited. As set out below, an important aspect of this action plan is to try to raise young people’s awareness of risks, and of what to do to combat them.

There are a number of signs which should cause both parents and professionals to consider whether a child or young person is a victim, or potential victim, of child sexual exploitation.

15. Several organisations have produced checklists of 'telltale signs' that a child may be being groomed for sexual exploitation or is already being exploited. Such lists can play an important role in raising awareness of both parents and professionals, although it is important to recognise that many young people will often display one or more of these behaviours without being a victim at all.

16. The 2009 statutory guidance *Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation* included a list of such indicators. The following checklist, which is not intended to be comprehensive, is based on advice to parents and carers published by Barnardo's in August 2011:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions (often new mobile phones);
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse;
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

The role of LSCBs in tackling child sexual exploitation

“Sexual exploitation is not limited to particular geographical areas and all LSCBs should assume that it is an issue in their area.” (Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation, HM Government, 2009)

17. LSCBs have the key responsibility for ensuring that the relevant organisations in each local area co-operate effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The *Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation* statutory guidance emphasised the importance of LSCBs ensuring that the needs of children and young people who have been, or may be, sexually exploited and their families are considered as they:

- plan and commission services;
- develop policies and procedures;
- ensure that appropriate training is in place;
- communicate and raise awareness; and
- monitor and evaluate the work that is being done.

18. LSCBs accordingly have a central role in overseeing much of the work set out in this action plan. The University of Bedfordshire research, however, found that many LSCBs have not identified child sexual exploitation as a priority issue in their area. (See paragraph 49 below.) The Government believes that LSCBs will want to assure themselves that local services are based on a robust assessment of need in the locality, taking account of the statement in the statutory guidance that every LSCB “should assume that sexual exploitation occurs within its area unless there is clear evidence to the contrary”. They will also want to assure themselves that local services are designed and delivered effectively to tackle the issue where it arises.

19. As set out in paragraph 55 below, the Government will, in the context of the Munro review of child protection, consider how LSCBs can be supported in this key role and helped to spread the good practice that exists in tackling child sexual exploitation.

Understanding the scale and nature of the problem

“Several practitioners used the expression ‘If you lift the stone, you’ll find it’ and this was a major theme arising from the interviews.” (Out of Mind, Out of Sight” – CEOP)

“It’s not hidden, you just aren’t looking” (Young victim, quoted by University of Bedfordshire)

20. Both the Barnardo’s *Puppet on a String* report and the CEOP thematic assessment emphasised the need for a stronger evidence base in relation to child sexual exploitation. The University of Bedfordshire research found that over half of LSCBs reported that they recorded no data on the nature and prevalence of child sexual exploitation in their areas. The CEOP report helpfully identified some gaps in current knowledge and indicated key areas for further research and analysis. The Government welcomes the Inquiry being undertaken by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner, which will be working with experts in the field and with children and young people who have experience of sexual exploitation to identify where gaps in knowledge and understanding exist.

21. The CEOP thematic assessment raised the possibility that most incidents of child sexual exploitation are currently unrecognised. It rightly warned that local areas cannot conclude that it is not an issue for them in the absence of a proper assessment. Although existing recorded data provides some of the necessary information, it is clear that LSCBs need to supplement it with relevant information from all their local partners. The CEOP thematic assessment, in its 'Best Practice' section, refers to the excellent work being done by Lancashire Constabulary, working in partnership with relevant agencies, in proactively gathering intelligence about child sexual exploitation in the area.

22. Although some LSCBs are known to have good risk assessment procedures, the University of Bedfordshire research indicated that data collection was often piecemeal and inadequate. In connection with that research, the University will shortly make available a new data collection model which LSCBs can use to obtain information on the nature and prevalence of child sexual exploitation in their areas.

23. The Government believes that robust and reliable risk assessments by LSCBs of the nature and extent of child sexual exploitation in each area are fundamental to tackling the problem. It will work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People, a UK wide support group for individuals and service providers working with children and young people who are at risk of, or are experiencing, sexual exploitation, and with LSCBs to encourage the sharing of good practice in the use of such risk assessments. The issue of risk assessments is covered in paragraph 50 below.

24. The Barnardo's *Puppet On A String* report and the more recent University of Bedfordshire report both highlighted the need for data on the nature and prevalence of child sexual exploitation to be reviewed at a national level. The Government believes that locally collected data on this issue should be made available to national organisations, such as CEOP, which have a role in providing periodic national assessments on a range of child protection issues.

Part 2: The Child's Journey

“I’m not stronger than anyone else, don’t think that’, I tell them. ‘It’s just that I hit my rock bottom, and I couldn’t fall any more. I had to come up again, or die, and bad though I felt, I really did want to go on living. Maybe it’ll be the same for your daughter, but everyone’s got a different breaking point.’”
(Emma Jackson, “The End Of My World”)

25. This action plan considers different aspects of child sexual exploitation from the perspective of the young person. It begins with the risks of growing independence, then considers how children and young people can be helped out of exploitative situations when they occur. It looks at how the child can be supported in the criminal justice system and at how children who have been victims of sexual exploitation can be helped to recover from what has happened to them.

26. All the evidence indicates that child sexual exploitation can affect any family. It cannot be over-emphasised that the fact that it takes place in a particular family does not mean that the family is a 'bad' one or that the parents have failed. Nor does it mean that parents or carers need feel powerless, because there are things that they can do to minimise risks. It is very important to remember that child sexual exploitation, at each of the stages of the child's journey set out below, impacts on the whole family.

(i) Growing independence – managing risks

“Young people want to think the best of people, they want to trust. This is exactly what the perpetrators exploit. All I can say, both to parents and young people, is be vigilant. And if the child does start to go missing for the odd night here or there, find out what’s happening – before it’s too late.” (Barnardo's service manager)

27. Part of growing up is learning about risks. From a very young age, children learn not to stick their fingers into power sockets, not to touch hot pans, and not to take sweets from strangers – all in an age-appropriate way.

28. As children grow older, the risks change. They need to be helped to learn to understand the dangers and to take sensible decisions, not least in respect of friendship groups and first relationships, as they grow to become more independent and parents or carers have less control over them.

29. It is important that all young people develop the knowledge and skills they need to make safe and healthy choices about relationships and sexual health. This will help them to avoid situations that put them at risk of sexual exploitation and to know who to turn to if they need advice and support.

30. Schools have an important role in protecting young people by spotting the first signs of abuse and making appropriate referrals. They also have the opportunity to deliver age-appropriate information to children and young people that will enable them to understand and manage risks and make informed positive choices, helping to prevent sexual exploitation taking place

and instilling resilience. This information will not necessarily always be presented to pupils by teachers; the voluntary sector has a key role in providing children with information about related risks and how to keep themselves safe. Organisations like Barnardo's, the Children's Society, Safe and Sound Derby, and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation are experienced at going into schools and undertaking preventative work. CEOP also provides education materials to schools and awareness opportunities through its ThinkUKnow programme.

The Children's Society runs programmes working with young runaways and children at risk of sexual exploitation, all of which provide 'prevention' sessions to primary and secondary schools as well as to pupil referral units, youth centres and children's homes. These sessions focus on reasons why children run away from home; the harm that they face on the streets; how they can keep themselves safe; and where to get help. The Children's Society has also developed free Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and citizenship resources for teachers and youth workers.

31. Children can benefit enormously from high quality PSHE which supports them in making safe and informed choices. Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is part of the internal Department for Education Review of PSHE education. The review, which was launched in July 2011, is considering the core outcomes and body of knowledge and awareness that pupils should achieve from PSHE education. A summary of the evidence considered in the review, and of representations made to the review by the closing date of 30 November 2011, will be published and subsequent proposals made available for public consultation.

32. A useful approach to raising young people's awareness of the risks of sexual exploitation is for these important messages to be delivered by other young people. One example was Brook working with young people in the Contact Theatre company and other young people's health agencies in 2009 to create *Crystal Kisses*, a piece of theatre aimed at raising awareness amongst the most vulnerable young people in a way that would enable them to safeguard themselves. Young people saw the performance in small groups before taking part in a workshop with actors and staff from Brook and the NHS. The Department for Education is keen to facilitate other examples of young people addressing other young people about the dangers of sexual exploitation.

"Don't let guys groom you. If they give you lots of stuff, or buy you drinks, don't think that means they love you. Or if they take you to a hotel for the night, and they're paying for it, it's because they want something for it. I felt so lonely, I had no one to talk to, and that's how I ended up with bad people, and bad things happened to me." (Young victim, quoted by Children's Society)

33. Children and young people leaving care are potentially vulnerable to sexual exploitation and their safety and welfare are extremely important. The Government expects the local authority providing care leaving support to visit young people on a regular basis, to see that they are settled in safe, suitable

accommodation with the right support. New guidance and regulations emphasise the importance for local authorities of responding to the individual needs of care leavers to ensure that they continue to receive support until they are ready to become independent.

34. The need for information about the dangers of sexual exploitation goes wider than young people themselves, however, and organisations like the Coalition for the Removal of Pimping, Barnardo's, CEOP, and The Children's Society provide information intended to raise the awareness of parents and professionals as well. The Government also recognises that it has an important role in encouraging the dissemination and take-up of such information. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety's *Click Clever, Click Safe* campaign, for example, contains useful messages to parents about how they can help keep their children safe online; and CEOP's *ThinkUKnow* website contains a wealth of information about internet safety for children of different ages, parents and carers, and for teachers and trainers.

35. Some parents are concerned that increased pressure on children to become consumers and the sexualised world they grow up in may lead children to be more susceptible to the dangers of sexual exploitation. *Letting Children be Children: the Report of an Independent Review of the Commercialisation and Sexualisation of Childhood*, published in June 2011, called on businesses and broadcasters to play their part and protect young people from the increasingly sexualised 'wallpaper' that surrounds them.

36. The University of Bedfordshire report echoed the CEOP thematic assessment in emphasising the importance of training in raising the awareness of professionals. It recommended that it should be a statutory requirement for child sexual exploitation to be on the curriculum for all professionals who work with young people and that all LSCB Chairs and Directors of Children's Services receive training on the subject.

37. It is the responsibility of the LSCB to ensure that single agency and inter-agency training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is provided to meet local needs. LSCBs are expected to decide on their priorities for training locally and in doing so need to be aware of the importance of child sexual exploitation. Relevant action is already in hand in relation to the training of police officers and of health workers (see paragraph 39 below).

38. As far as social workers themselves are concerned, the Social Work Reform Board has a programme of work underway to improve initial education and ensure that it addresses the realities of social work practice and specific needs of service users. At the same time the College of Social Work is developing the Professional Capabilities framework to define expectations of social worker skills and knowledge at various stages of their careers, and ensure that appropriate support and development are available. This includes defining expectations of specific roles, including for those involved in child protection, as recommended by Professor Eileen Munro.

39. The actions set out below are largely concerned with awareness-raising and with prevention of child sexual exploitation. They cover not only the crucial raising of awareness of young people but that of parents and service providers too.

Actions

- The Department for Education will work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and other partners to **promote awareness and understanding of existing materials** targeted at children and young people, at parents and at frontline services; and will encourage signposting to sources of advice for them. Attention will be paid in particular to the role of non-Government organisations in awareness-raising.
- The Department for Education, as part of the current internal review of Personal Social Health and Economic Education and following the public consultation which ends on 30 November 2011, will consider how to simplify the statutory **Sex and Relationships Education** guidance to schools. This will include teaching young people about sexual consent; strengthening the priority given to teaching about relationships; and the importance of positive parenting.
- The Home Office will work with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) on **training for frontline police officers** in recognising child sexual exploitation and responding appropriately.
- ACPO will also work to ensure that all police officers receive **appropriate training** on child sexual exploitation issues. ACPO have established a **'task and finish' group** to consider the learning and development issues for policing identified in the CEOP thematic assessment. ACPO will, by summer 2012, produce **an action plan** that enables improvements in partnership working, victim prevention and protection, pursuit of offenders and overall service delivery.
- The Home Office's *Review of Effective Practice in Responding to Prostitution*, published in October 2011, highlighted the importance of identifying and tackling child sexual exploitation in preventing people from becoming **involved in prostitution**. The Review is intended to help local authorities and practitioners solve local issues; and the section on "Prevention" includes effective practice in identifying child sexual exploitation.
- The Home Office will also consider how child sexual exploitation issues can be embedded into wider workstreams – for example, in relation to **Integrated Offender Management**; the **Positive Futures** programme, focused on supporting young people aged 10-19 to avoid becoming involved in crime; and the **Choices** programme which is focused on preventing and reducing substance misuse and related offending by vulnerable groups of young people aged 10 to 19.
- Building on the commitments in the Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan, the Home Office will continue to support the work of the Metropolitan Police **Healthy Relationships Training (HEART) Programme to safeguard teenage girls at risk of sexual violence** and help those being abused to escape their perpetrators.

- The Home Office is also re-running a **Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign**, aimed to prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive behaviour in relationships. The campaign was launched by the Minister for Equalities and Criminal Information in September 2011 and is running on a variety of social media, in films, on TV and in youth magazines.
- The Home Office will **implement communication plans** to increase understanding of the true nature of rape; improve information for victims; and raise awareness of the Sexual Offences Act, particularly amongst young people.
- As part of its new lead role in relation to **missing children**, CEOP will bring its child protection expertise to bear on this issue, ensuring that the links with missing children and child sexual exploitation are understood and identified. This role will be further enhanced with the creation of the National Crime Agency and the inclusion of CEOP within it.
- CEOP will continue to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and associated issues through **the ThinkUKnow programme**.
- The Government's **new strategy on missing children and adults**, to be published shortly, will also highlight 'missing' as an indicator of vulnerability and highlight the importance of agencies' response to this issue.
- The Department for Education will work with key interested parties to **review and reissue the current statutory guidance** on children who run away or go missing from home, published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in 2008.
- The Department of Health will continue to work with stakeholders and key partners to identify where existing **training and guidance** for health professionals on child sexual abuse and other forms of violence against women and children can be expanded. The Department, in discussion with representatives of the relevant professional bodies, has reviewed the content on violence against women and children in relevant training curricula. The Department is considering if more could be done to improve the content to reflect the particular needs of children who are being, or have been, sexually exploited; and, if so, will urge the professional regulators to approve amendments to curricula accordingly.
- The Department of Health will also use networks and information portals for NHS staff, such as NHS Choices and the DH website, to **promote information** on tackling child sexual abuse.
- The Department for Education will ask the Social Work Reform Board and The College of Social Work to consider how best to ensure that child sexual exploitation is adequately addressed in the **training and continuing professional development of social workers**.

(ii) Getting out of and combating child sexual exploitation

*“I just hoped that one day one of the men would be a real boyfriend, that he’d like me for the real me and that he’d want to save me. But it never happened.”
(Young victim, quoted by Barnardo’s)*

40. It is essential that there is an effective response from services when child sexual exploitation is identified in order to help victims get out and to deal with perpetrators. Victims need a helpful, swift, understanding and supportive response, coordinated across partners – in particular children’s services, health and enforcement, but drawing on voluntary and community sector expertise where available. Victims also need to be helped to understand how they will be helped now and in the future.

41. Perpetrators need to face an equally swift, robust and coordinated response which stops their abusive behaviour, limits their influence over victims and others, and has a determined focus on bringing them to justice. Action also needs to be taken to try to prevent subsequent re-offending.

42. Getting the response right first time is a real challenge in cases of child sexual exploitation. There is a danger that victims who have been used to engage other young people in exploitation, or who have been involved in other forms of offending, will be seen as offenders and their needs as victims will be overlooked. Vulnerable children may struggle to find the words to express what has happened to them and professionals may themselves be uncomfortable about asking the necessary questions when they suspect that sexual exploitation has taken place.

43. In many cases, persistent efforts will be needed before victims will feel able to reveal the truth about what has happened to them. They will need to feel that they are being believed and not judged. Some young people have commented that what they need is one sympathetic adult to engage with rather than a team of different people.

“Young people have said to me “I’m sick of telling my story to the YOT worker, the drugs worker, the sexual health worker, the social worker, you, the Connexions’.” (Practitioner, quoted by the University of Bedfordshire)

44. Nevertheless, there are many examples of responses which have been effective. These include cases where voluntary and community sector organisations played a key role - as in *Operation Retriever*, where the actions of Safe and Sound Derby in alerting police to what was happening were of enormous importance. The University of Bedfordshire research confirms that there are “pockets of good practice ... usually as a response to a child death or through the commitment of a local ‘champion’” and that “these areas of active practice demonstrate that young people can be protected from child sexual exploitation and abusers can be prosecuted”. The University’s research found that co-located units, where key practitioners from children’s services and police work together in a team, were seen as the best way of protecting and supporting young people at the same time as investigating and prosecuting their exploiters.

45. Working in partnership is crucial to tackling child sexual exploitation. All professionals working with young people should have a shared understanding of the risks they face, including a shared language and view of the boundaries of normal behaviour. Brook, for example, is, with Department for Education funding, developing an evidence-based resource for professionals to use to assess sexual behaviour which is outside acceptable boundaries. Practitioners can also learn useful lessons from the progress that has been made in improving the questioning of victims of domestic violence. The University of Bedfordshire research found that a significant number of sexual exploitation victims had also been victims of domestic violence and that a higher number had seen it taking place.

46. A high proportion of girls who are victims of sexual exploitation may become pregnant and have some involvement with health care professionals. They may show signs of sexual exploitation – perhaps being brought in by an older man or a very controlling partner. Early in pregnancy all women, including teenagers, will continue to be asked if they are experiencing domestic abuse (which includes sexual abuse), irrespective of whether they show signs of it. Routine enquiry about domestic abuse and the provision of information contributes to helping these vulnerable women access the support they choose; and asking all pregnant women avoids stigma and inappropriate judgements.

47. In relation to mental health settings, the National Mental Health Development Unit *Violence and Abuse Mental Health Policy* states that “after training, staff should:

- routinely ask about violence and abuse in child and/or adulthood in all mental health assessments (first contact and reviews);
- suitably respond to disclosures; and
- provide ongoing therapeutic support to survivors of abuse through care-planning processes.”

48. Of course, local child protection arrangements are not a matter of ‘one size fits all’, so there will be a range of different local systems and different people involved according to local needs. The University of Bedfordshire research indicates, for example, that just over one-third of LSCBs have a specific sub-group to address child sexual exploitation; and one-quarter have current protocols with co-ordinators overseeing this work. Others may recognise the issue but have chosen not to set up sub-groups.

49. In some cases, however, the research shows that LSCBs have not identified child sexual exploitation as a priority issue in their area, notwithstanding the strong belief of many in the sector that child sexual exploitation exists in some form in every area. This prompts the question of whether LSCBs have reached the conclusion that child sexual exploitation is not an issue for them through thorough risk assessment or simply past experience of an absence of such abuse being found.

50. As indicated in paragraph 23 above, the Government believes that LSCBs and statutory agencies should *a/ways* undertake risk assessments of the extent of the problem in their area. They need to ensure that they have the best possible data and look closely at past cases, to learn lessons and compare their situation with their neighbours. Local voluntary and community service organisations may be well placed to assist LSCBs in establishing the type and extent of exploitation which is taking place and to help them prioritise some of the more hidden forms of abuse and harm.

51. The University of Bedfordshire report emphasised the importance of Ofsted inspections taking account of multi-agency work involving children's services, police, education and health to safeguard young people from sexual exploitation. Following the Munro review of child protection, Ofsted has consulted on a universal programme of unannounced inspections of child protection services from 2012. This will, as Professor Munro recommended, consider the whole of the child's journey and the effectiveness of the contribution of all agencies.

52. Inspectors will look at individual case files, observe direct practice, and meet children themselves, their families, front-line professionals and managers. Many victims of child sexual exploitation are, of course, already known to services locally – perhaps health services, as a result of sexually transmitted infections or terminations of pregnancy, or the police following criminal behaviour. Where inspection activity identifies concerns about child sexual exploitation, there will be an important role for Ofsted in considering how it is being tackled locally.

53. Disruption techniques should be a key part of local strategies for responding to child sexual exploitation. The University of Bedfordshire research, however, found that although the police are taking the lead in some areas, LSCBs are not generally proactive in disrupting offenders and seeking their prosecution. Each LSCB should develop a disruption plan and establish relationships with other agencies to deliver it.

54. A disruption plan might involve a number of activities, from observation of an individual's activities to the use of restraining orders. Child abduction notices can also be used to disrupt exploitation while other activities are taken to safeguard the child. It is, of course, important to ensure that when abuse is identified, the need for intelligence does not override the need to intervene to prevent continued exploitation and abuse.

Actions

55. The Department for Education is considering how to strengthen LSCBs following the Munro review of child protection. It will give particular attention to how - working with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and with local partners – it can help LSCBs to prioritise child sexual exploitation and to:

- **map the needs of their own area** to identify levels of child sexual exploitation and locations or circumstances where children are particularly at risk (and repeat the exercise periodically);

- put in place systems to **monitor ongoing prevalence and responses** to child sexual exploitation within their area, making use of existing monitoring tools like the one developed by the University of Bedfordshire if they find it helpful to do so;
- develop **an effective local strategy ensuring there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response** to child sexual exploitation, based on a robust, thorough risk assessment of the extent and nature of child sexual exploitation locally;
- **increase understanding of child sexual exploitation**, in the professional and wider community (for example, contributing to public campaigns in the local area, talking and listening to children's views on welfare services, locally-led engagement with faith and minority communities and wider public). Where appropriate, they might seek to raise awareness through race and faith networks, based on agreed messages and materials;
- **safeguard and promote the welfare of groups of children who are potentially more vulnerable** than others and are at increased risk of child sexual exploitation, by:
 - establishing effective communication channels between the LSCB and partner agencies, including specialist services which have an important role to play;
 - attending voluntary and community sector conferences to increase personal knowledge;
 - providing briefing to social care teams; and
 - arranging multi agency training days/courses;
- consider whether it is appropriate to set up a **working group or sub-group on child sexual exploitation**, either on a short-term or standing basis, and appoint a **lead officer** who provides a co-ordinated response across statutory authorities and the voluntary sector; and
- develop **links with neighbouring authorities** and meet them on a formal basis and as required where there are cross border concerns.

56. In addition, the Department for Education will:

- work with Ofsted to consider how, in developing the detailed inspection framework by the end of December 2011, **Ofsted's guidance for inspectors** can reflect the complex nature of child sexual exploitation and the need to understand the possible implications of contact with different services as the child journeys through the system;

- raise the awareness of frontline professionals who work in child protection by re-releasing the 2009 statutory guidance document *Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation*, accompanied by a **new short 'step by step' guide for frontline professionals** on what to do if they are worried that a child is being sexually exploited. It will do this by spring 2012, emphasising when it does so the strong links between child sexual exploitation and children running away from home or care;
- ensure that further **research to improve understanding of child sexual exploitation and effective responses**, like the Office of the Children's Commissioner Inquiry and further planned Barnardo's research, feeds in to ongoing work to tackle child sexual exploitation; and
- work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children to raise awareness of **effective approaches to risk assessment by LSCBs** in relation to child sexual exploitation and encourage the sharing of good practice between local areas.

57. The Home Office will:

- build on existing **arrangements for managing sex offenders** by ensuring that they are not able to exploit any loopholes in the notifications system. The Home Office will continue to empower parents and carers to protect children through the **child sex offender disclosure scheme** and by supporting the work of voluntary and community sector partners like the NSPCC and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation in providing support to manage the behaviour of sex offenders and those whose behaviour is of concern;
- work with organisations such as Rape Crisis, The Survivor's Trust and local Sexual Assault Referral Centres to improve **services for young people suffering sexual abuse by gang members and other violent offenders**. Over the next three years it will make an additional £400,000 per year available to improve services to support children and young people under 18 suffering rape and sexual abuse – including from gangs. Proposals, to be developed with the new Home Office Sexual Violence Forum, will be published shortly; and
- establish a working group which will include representatives from Government, the voluntary and community sector and the criminal justice sector to develop proposals to address **violence against women and girls and female involvement in gangs** (including in the context of child sexual exploitation). This group will report to the Inter-Ministerial Group on Ending Serious Youth Violence.

58. The Department for Education and Department of Health will:

- continue to work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People on **‘task and finish’ groups within children’s services and health** to consider: why agencies do not recognise or respond appropriately to child sexual exploitation and what might enable them to do so; the priority to be given to victims; what the duty of care is once they have been recognised; and any other ways in which agencies can be encouraged to tackle the issues victims face.

(iii) Getting justice for victims and their families

“People don’t go to the police because when you go to the police it makes the situation 150 times worse. You have to go through it again and again.” (Young victim, quoted by CEOP)

“Going to court was worse than the abuse.” (Young victim, quoted by National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People)

59. For a case of child sexual exploitation to get to the stage of arrest, charge and prosecution, relationships need to be managed well from the start of the process. From the point of first contact with victims, frontline agencies and partners must take this crime seriously, and take victims seriously. If victims’ trust and confidence are undermined early on, it is much harder to regain it later.

60. In pursuing justice, it is necessary to recognise that every case is different. Cases can involve single or multiple victims, as well as single or multiple perpetrators. The individual stories of victims can include a number of factors which should have indicated vulnerability to child sexual exploitation early on, or, on the contrary, may include none of these factors. There is common ground, however, that factors like criminal activity, drug and alcohol dependency, going missing or running away, experience of domestic violence, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections and suffering from learning difficulties are linked to vulnerability to child sexual exploitation.

61. Once perpetrators have been identified, it is necessary to build the case against them. There are circumstances in which a prosecution can be brought without the need for the victim to give evidence, so long as all the elements of a criminal offence can be proved with sufficient other corroborating or supporting evidence. Where the victim has made a complaint and a statement to the police but is frightened of giving evidence, there are limited circumstances in which the victim’s statement can be admitted as evidence in court without the victim being called to give oral evidence. In such cases the prosecutor must make an application to the court to admit the evidence under hearsay rules and it is for the court to make the decision.

62. Where young people who have often been traumatised by their abuse do need to provide oral evidence in a court case, the difficulties they face are

clearly apparent. The Ministry of Justice is working with the police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), judges, magistrates and voluntary agencies to ensure that young victims are fully supported throughout the criminal justice process. That support needs to be sustained throughout the whole process of reporting the crime, making a statement, pre-trial preparation, going to court and after the trial. The challenge this presents cannot be overestimated.

63. The University of Bedfordshire report called for an “urgent review [of] how the court process impacts on young people who are victims of child sexual exploitation, learning from the experiences of recent prosecutions”. There is a range of published research on support for child witnesses giving evidence in court, including the 2007 Office for Criminal Justice Reform Consultation *Improving the Criminal Trial Process for Young Witnesses* and the 2009 NSPCC *Measuring Up* research. In addition, the Ministry of Justice is currently reviewing victims’ services to ensure that those affected by crime are supported in the best way possible, and will be publishing proposals in a consultation document before the end of 2011.

64. It is particularly important that the needs of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses are identified as early as possible during the criminal justice process. Emotional support and counselling may be necessary, both before and after a trial. The *Provision of Therapy for Child Witnesses prior to a Criminal Trial: Practice Guidance* issued in 2001 by the CPS, Department of Health and the Home Office provides assistance for children’s services professionals and lawyers involved in making decisions about the provision of therapeutic help for child witnesses prior to a criminal trial. The guidance makes it clear that the best interests of the child are paramount when deciding whether, and in what form, therapeutic help is given.

65. Early identification and effective inter-agency working to support vulnerable and intimidated witnesses will improve the quality of the investigation by helping them give information to the police. It will also help them give their best evidence in court. This is most easily achieved where local criminal justice agencies work together, and with other agencies, to develop effective networks and local protocols for sharing information, as well as comprehensive awareness raising and training.

66. Concern is sometimes expressed about group or gang-related cases where there may be multiple defendants and the young victim may face separate cross-examination by barristers representing each of them. Trial judges are expected to consider whether there is a need for repeat cross-examination on similar points in such cases and there may be scope to restrict cross-examination from each defence advocate. However, the judge will have to balance the victim’s rights against the right to a fair trial for each defendant, who is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

67. More generally, judges and magistrates are expected to take an active role in the management of cases involving young and vulnerable witnesses. Courts can help to ensure that arrangements and reasonable adjustments are in place for young witnesses in advance of the trial to alleviate some of the stress of giving evidence. A pre-trial visit to the court building is an opportunity to identify and address any potential difficulties for the witness.

68. Where appropriate, all judges and magistrates should use their powers to compensate for any disadvantages vulnerable witnesses might suffer without causing prejudice to the other parties. This might include ensuring that there are frequent breaks when the witness is giving evidence; arranging the order in which evidence is heard so that witnesses are not kept waiting any longer than necessary; as well as stopping questioning which appears to be unnecessary, improper or oppressive.

69. There are also a number of 'special measures' available to support vulnerable and intimidated witnesses and help relieve some of the stress associated with giving evidence. Children and young people under 18 are automatically eligible for special measures. Measures available for use singly or in combination at the discretion of the court include:

- live links – allowing a witness to give evidence from outside the courtroom or from a remote location;
- screens – to ensure that the witness does not see the defendant when giving evidence;
- evidence in private – allowing the courtroom to be cleared of people who do not need to be present while a witness gives evidence. (The measure is only available in a case involving a sexual offence or when the court is persuaded that someone has tried to intimidate, or is likely to try to intimidate, the witness.);
- removal of wigs and gowns worn by judges and lawyers;
- communication aids – to assist a witness overcome physical difficulties with understanding or answering questions (for example, alphabet boards and sign boards);
- intermediaries – someone approved by the court to communicate to the witness the questions the court, defence and prosecution ask, and then communicate the answers the witness gives in reply. The intermediary will be allowed to explain questions and answers if that is necessary to enable the witness to communicate; and
- video recorded "evidence in chief" – allowing an interview with the witness, which has been video recorded before the trial, to be shown as the witness's main evidence. (See paragraph 74 below).

70. The Witness Intermediary Scheme was set up by the Ministry of Justice to implement the intermediary special measure. It provides police forces and the CPS with Registered Intermediaries – specially trained professional communication specialists accredited by the Ministry of Justice. The Witness Intermediary Scheme is available in all 43 police forces and CPS areas in England and Wales and to date has assisted in over 5,500 cases involving vulnerable witnesses, many of which would not have otherwise gone to trial.

71. There is a presumption in the special measures legislation that child witnesses will usually give their evidence by way of an 'Achieving Best Evidence' interview which is recorded and played to the jury. (See *Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance on interviewing victims and witnesses, and guidance on using special measures*", issued by the Ministry of Justice in March 2011.) If the child is required to attend court to answer further questions, a live link facility will normally be available to assist the witness in giving their evidence.

72. The Ministry of Justice has recently amended the special measures provisions to:

- raise the upper age limit of child witnesses automatically eligible for special measures from 17 to 18;
- provide child witnesses with more choice and flexibility about how they give their evidence;
- make special provision for the presence of a supporter to the witness in the live link room;
- extend the automatic eligibility for special measures to witnesses in certain gun and knife crimes; and
- relax the restrictions on a witness giving additional evidence after the witness's video-recorded statement has been admitted as evidence.

73. To support these amendments, the Ministry of Justice has improved and recently published two sets of key practitioner guidance: *Achieving Best Evidence* and *Vulnerable and Intimidated Witnesses: a Police Service Guide*. Both sets of guidance are targeted at those responsible for conducting video-recorded interviews with vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, as well as those who prepare and support such witnesses during the criminal justice process. The guidance manuals include prompts to assist police officers in identifying such witnesses as well as advice on action once identification has been made. In addition, the Ministry of Justice is running in November 2011 a training seminar for criminal justice system practitioners to share knowledge and skills in this area and promote good practice.

74. One special measure which is yet to be implemented and which could further assist vulnerable witnesses is the provision for pre-trial video recorded cross-examination and re-examination. It provides that where a video-recording is to be admitted as "evidence in chief" (that is, evidence given by a witness for the party who called them) any cross-examination and re-examination may also be recorded and admitted as evidence. This would help relieve some of the stress vulnerable witnesses suffer while awaiting the trial by enabling them to give all of their evidence earlier in the criminal justice process. The provision has not yet been implemented because there are a number of practical and procedural issues which need to be resolved. The

Ministry of Justice is actively working closely with a wide range of practitioners to address these problems and identify effective solutions.

75. If victims of child sexual exploitation and their families are to receive justice, the appropriate sentencing of convicted offenders is clearly important too. Rape and assault by penetration both carry a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Offences involving the abuse of children through prostitution and pornography have maximum penalties of 14 years imprisonment or, in cases involving paying for sexual services of a child under 13, life imprisonment. The serious offences of meeting a child following sexual grooming and causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity have maximum penalties of 10 and 14 years imprisonment respectively.

76. On 26 October 2011, the Secretary of State for Justice announced a new sentencing regime to replace indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP) and the youth equivalent – the Detention for Public Protection sentences. This new regime includes new mandatory life sentences for anyone convicted of a second very serious sexual or violent crime. The category of the most serious sexual or violent offences includes serious child sex offences. The new mandatory life sentence does not apply to young people. We also expect more life sentences to occur as a result of abolishing IPPs and the most serious sexual and violent crimes carry a maximum life sentence.

77. Other serious sexual and violent offenders will be sentenced to a new determinate extended sentence whereby they will spend at least two-thirds of their sentence in custody. The most serious categories within this group will be subject to Parole Board assessment and will only be released before the end of their sentence if the Parole Board deems it is safe to do so. The courts will also have the discretion to apply extended licence periods of up to five years for a violent offence and eight years for a sexual offence. Provisions are being taken forward through the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill.

78. Where sentences are not mandatory, sentencing in individual cases is, of course, a matter for the independent courts, which will assess the culpability of the offender and the harm the offence caused in order to decide on an appropriate sentence. The Attorney General has the power to ask the Court of Appeal to review Crown Court sentences in respect of certain offences, including rape and certain other sexual offences, which he thinks are “unduly lenient” – that is, outside the range of sentences that a judge, taking account of all the relevant factors, could reasonably consider appropriate. If the Court of Appeal considers that the sentence is unduly lenient it can increase it.

79. The Sentencing Council was established under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 to produce sentencing guidelines and promote greater consistency in sentencing, whilst maintaining the independence of the judiciary. It is undertaking research into whether the current sexual offences sentencing guidelines need revision. Offences connected with child sexual exploitation, such as indecent images and meeting a child following sexual grooming, will be covered by this work.

80. Within the criminal justice system, the Government is determined to provide the best support for the most seriously affected, vulnerable, persistently targeted victims of crime. As part of this work, the Ministry of Justice will provide over £15 million in grant funding over the next three years through the Victim and Witness General Fund to voluntary sector groups which provide support to victims. A number of groups that support child victims of sexual exploitation have made successful applications to the Fund. Safe and Sound Derby, for example, is receiving over £240,000 over the three years ending March 2014 to support its work.

Actions

- The Home Office will work to ensure that the police continue their efforts to **secure prosecutions** and **maximise opportunities to disrupt child sexual exploitation locally** – supported nationally by strategic threat assessments, the National Crime Agency (when operational), and the continued role of CEOP.
- The Ministry of Justice will continue to work closely with the police to promote a **more proactive and effective response to witness intimidation**, through improved training and guidance which includes identification of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, raising awareness and promoting more effective use of special measures.
- A Ministry of Justice working group is actively considering implementation of section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999, which provides for **pre-trial video-recorded cross-examination**. If implemented, this would further assist vulnerable and intimidated witnesses to give their best evidence. However, there are a range of complex practical problems to be overcome to ensure that the provision can work in practice.
- The Ministry of Justice will continue to work with the police, CPS, judges, magistrates and voluntary agencies to ensure that young victims and witnesses are **fully supported throughout the criminal justice process and are able to give their best evidence in court**.
- In summer 2011, the Ministry of Justice implemented amendments to existing **‘special measures’** provisions to assist vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, including children, to give their best evidence in court and help relieve some of the stress and anxiety associated with giving evidence.
- The Ministry of Justice is currently **reviewing victims’ services** to ensure that those affected by crime are supported in the best way possible, and will be publishing proposals in a **consultation document** later in 2011.
- The Crown Prosecution Service will work to **improve the effectiveness of prosecutions**; promote within its organisation **examples of good practice** in relation to child sexual exploitation; and work to **increase the use of ‘special measures’** in appropriate cases.

- In line with recommendation 18 of Baroness Stern's Review on *how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales* (Home Office, 2010), the CPS will seek to re-establish **effective voluntary arrangements with local authorities to ensure that the protocol on exchange of information is adopted and used to best effect.** (The protocol relates to "third party material" held by local authorities; voluntary disclosure of this material will ensure that information which may undermine a prosecution can be dealt with effectively at an early stage in the proceedings.)
- The Ministry of Justice will introduce, through the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, a **new sentencing regime** which would replace indeterminate sentences for public protection and include **mandatory life sentences for anyone convicted of a second very serious sexual or violent offence, including child sex offences.** Life sentences which currently exist for the most serious sexual and violent crimes would continue to be available. Other serious sexual and violent offenders would be sentenced to a new extended determinate sentence whereby they would spend at least two-thirds of their sentence in custody. The courts would be able to apply extended licence periods of up to eight years for a sexual offence and five years for a violent offence.

(iv) Getting help to deal with what has happened and looking to the future

"What most people don't realise is that it scars you for life. It still affects you years later." (Young victim, quoted by CEOP)

81. Victims of child sexual exploitation are vulnerable individuals who require specialised, appropriate support. They can suffer long-term physical and psychological damage, which results in both a social and an economic cost to society. In September 2011 Barnardo's, working with Pro Bono Economics, published a research briefing *Reducing the risk, cutting the cost* which assessed potential savings from Barnardo's interventions for young people who have been sexually exploited. Based on assumptions made about how young people's level of risk changes in the absence of an intervention, the research found that there is an estimated potential saving of £12 for every £1 spent on providing the intervention, additional to the non-costed reduction in the risk of sexual exploitation.

82. Victims may face a range of difficulties in rebuilding their lives. They may:

- find it difficult to have healthy, lasting relationships;
- become pregnant or suffer from sexually transmitted infections, or mental health problems which may be long term;
- have been involved in crime, and therefore find it hard to obtain appropriate employment;
- be drug or alcohol dependent, needing medical/therapeutic intervention;
- have gaps in their 'development' and learning as a result of having become runaways or missed education;
- lack support networks, having no trusting adults they can turn to; or
- face an increased risk of further abuse, such as domestic violence or sexual assault in adulthood ('revictimisation').

83. There is, therefore, likely to be a need for statutory agencies and voluntary organisations to support victims and their families in picking up their lives once the exploitation has ended. Because the effects of child sexual exploitation can last well into adulthood, such support may be needed over a long period of time. There need to be effective links between child and adult services such as local authority social care, education and health services, the voluntary and community sector, local police and youth justice structures.

84. Many children and young people who have been victims of sexual exploitation will be "in need" as defined in section 17 of the Children Act 1989. That means that they are vulnerable and unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, unless they are provided with services. Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need and therefore have an important role to play in helping victims of sexual exploitation begin their lives again.

85. The University of Bedfordshire report was concerned about the "availability and appropriateness" of accommodation provided by local authorities for looked after children who have experienced sexual exploitation. Individual local authorities are primarily responsible for identifying the most appropriate accommodation for the children they look after and safety and security will be paramount considerations in selecting placements. Plans for children's care must be kept under review by the Independent Reviewing Officer and each review must consider whether a child's placement remains suitable.

86. The Government recently introduced a new statutory duty requiring authorities to take strategic action to secure a sufficient range of accommodation for all their looked after children and care leavers. This would include having the capacity to access accommodation able to protect young people from sexual exploitation.

87. In addition, the Department for Education is developing placement capacity in a number of ways to support a flourishing, diverse sector for all children, and especially the most vulnerable such as children who have experienced sexual exploitation. The Fostering Network has been given a grant to support fostering services in improving the recruitment of foster carers, which will help local authorities ensure that they have sufficient carers with the right skills. The Department is also supporting foster carers to develop the skills they need to support young people whose care presents particular challenges.

88. The voluntary and community sector has an important role to play in helping victims of child exploitation recover from their experiences. The Department for Education is, for example, currently funding a Barnardo's programme to ensure that young people who have been sexually exploited or trafficked are kept safe from harm. This is achieved by working with local authorities to provide safe accommodation as well as quality assured training.

89. Another example is Brook, which has a number of programmes across the country supporting young people who have been exploited. These programmes work with young people to stop the exploitation but also to repair the damage that has been done to them and enable them to maintain safer relationships in the future.

90. The cross Government Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan has a clear focus on the prevention of violence, which includes violence in the context of child sexual exploitation. The Department of Health's Taskforce on Violence Against Women and Girls commissioned a consultation in 2009 to hear from children who had suffered different forms of sexual abuse about what health professionals might do to make their services more child focused. The consultation findings amplified how difficult it is for children to disclose sexual abuse, with the result that they can be denied the support services they need to recover. It found that health professionals have a key role to play in assisting children who have been sexually abused to grow into secure, emotionally and physically well-adjusted adults. The young people felt that:

- There needs to be a change in the attitude and approachability of health professionals;
- Health services need to think about what they can do for children in a more holistic way, and "not just send them to their mental service";

- Most health professionals provide a medical service/diagnosis but little support on a social or emotional level. If something becomes “too difficult” or a child becomes “stuck”, services can be withdrawn leaving no support available;
- There is a need for more specialist third-sector projects where counsellors follow-up missed appointments. Longer term support is needed compared with what is available (for example, counselling services);
- More awareness of the needs of affected children is required – for example, on handling emotional trauma. This should be done via joint training with relevant agencies;
- Children might prefer to disclose in writing and hand a note to a teacher or GP because it is “really hard to get the words out”;
- Children want to be asked direct questions as part of general questions being asked, to make it “easier to talk about”. Health professionals should ask parents for permission to speak to a child alone.

91. There is a very important role for the NHS to play here. A multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach is vital to an effective response, and should include GPs, accident and emergency departments, genitourinary medicine clinics, Sexual Assault Referral Centres, maternity and antenatal services, as well as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), other psychological and therapeutic services, counselling and support services.

92. The Government has prioritised children and adolescents’ mental health through its plans to expand access to psychological therapies to children and young people. The key aim is to transform existing mental health services for children and young people by adopting those elements of the *Improving Access to Psychological Therapies* programme which will help improve outcomes for children and young people, providing treatment which is based on best evidence, and is outcome focused and client informed. The therapeutic support provided through this project will help children and young people with mental health problems, some of which might have their roots in sexual exploitation and abuse.

93. In addition, the NHS Operating Framework 2011/12 states that NHS organisations should properly identify women and children affected by sexual violence or abuse and ensure that suitable care pathways are in place to provide sensitive, ongoing care. It further states that it expects the NHS to “continue to build on the improvement to date in this area and ensure that statutory duties and partnership working arrangements are maintained and handed over to new organisations in good order”.

Actions

- The Department of Health, as part of its work programme on violence against women and children, will work with its partners to see whether more can be done to **highlight the particular needs of children who have been sexually exploited.**
- The Department of Health has a programme of policy work in place to **improve development of Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services** as they are positioned within the new NHS commissioning and public health structures. It is also working to improve education and training to increase the pool of competent forensic physicians available to victims.
- The Department of Health will liaise with those responsible for commissioning **Sexual Assault Referral Services** to draw attention to the special circumstances of children who have been sexually exploited.
- The Department for Education will continue to support by a voluntary and community service grant over the two years ending March 2013 a **Barnardo's project developing specialist foster care placements for victims of child sexual exploitation and trafficking.**
- The Department for Education will encourage LSCBs and local authorities to **promote existing counselling and ongoing support services more widely** (for example, educational support for those returning to school; help in finding housing, when needed; and help in finding jobs).
- The Department for Education will also work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and local partners to help **local authorities share their good practice in making provision for children and young people who are recovering from sexual exploitation.**

Part three - next steps

“I know it’s not enough to sit around talking about it. When people say to me, ‘Oh, it’s awful, how terrible, how you must have suffered’, I feel like saying, ‘I don’t want your pity. I’ve survived, I’m fine now and I’m gonna have a good life. What we need is action, and fast.’” (Emma Jackson, “The End Of My World”)

94. The Government is determined that this action plan should not be a document which is published, read and then forgotten. It is not in any sense the end of the story. Much work is already underway and more will take place over the coming months. The Government has a clear role in trying to ensure that this work is comprehensive; that good practice is widely shared; and that the actions of different partners are complementary.

95. The Government recognises that this action plan will be effective in tackling child sexual exploitation only to the extent that the actions in it are implemented. The actions in the plan need to make a difference, helping to prevent child sexual exploitation occurring and, where that is not possible, disrupting the activities of offenders and helping victims to cut free from the exploitation and recover. As indicated above, it is also very important that justice is obtained for victims and their families, and that the processes involved are as supportive to the young people involved as is possible.

96. Paragraphs 17 to 19 above referred to the central role of LSCBs in relation to this action plan and to the previous Government’s statutory guidance *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation*, issued to support LSCBs and other local agencies in their work. That guidance was, and remains, generally well regarded and there is much in it which is still good guidance; although the present Government believes that the length and complexity are counter-productive.

97. Implementation of the guidance has, however, been patchy, with the University of Bedfordshire research indicating that only a quarter of LSCBs are implementing it. The Government believes it is essential that LSCBs take full account of the main messages contained in that document and act in accordance with them.

98. As stated in paragraph 56 above, the Department for Education accordingly intends to reissue that statutory guidance document but will do so in Spring 2012 under cover of a new, more accessible, short ‘step by step’ guide. **At the same time, the Government will, after reviewing progress being made in putting this action plan into effect, issue a progress report on its implementation.**

Annex A - Definitions

“Sexual Abuse”

The sexual exploitation of children and young people is a form of child sexual abuse. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2010) describes sexual abuse as follows:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, include assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

“Child sexual exploitation”

The 2009 statutory guidance *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation* uses the following definition, which came from the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People:

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Annex B - summary of actions

The Government will, after reviewing progress being made in putting this action plan into effect, issue a progress report on its implementation by Spring 2012.

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
Growing independence – managing risks	The Department for Education will work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and other partners to promote awareness and understanding of existing materials targeted at children and young people, at parents and at frontline services; and will encourage signposting to sources of advice for them. Attention will be paid in particular to the role of non-Government organisations in awareness-raising.	DfE/NWG	Ongoing.
	The Department for Education, as part of the current internal review of Personal Social Health and Economic Education, will consider how to simplify the statutory Sex and Relationships Education guidance to schools. This will include teaching young people about sexual consent; strengthening the priority given to teaching about relationships; and the importance of positive parenting.	DfE	Public consultation ends 30 November 2011.
	The Home Office will work with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) on training for frontline police officers in recognising child sexual exploitation and responding appropriately.	HO/ACPO	Ongoing. Training for frontline police officers will be part of a programme of continued professional development and education.
	ACPO will also work to ensure that <u>all</u> police officers receive appropriate training on child sexual exploitation issues. ACPO has established a ‘task and finish’ group to consider the learning and development issues for policing identified in the CEOP thematic assessment. ACPO will produce an action plan	ACPO	The ‘task and finish’ group will develop an action plan by

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	that enables improvements in partnership working, victim prevention and protection, pursuit of offenders and overall service delivery.		summer 2012.
	The Home Office's <i>Review of Effective Practice in Responding to Prostitution</i> , published in October 2011, highlighted the importance of identifying and tackling child sexual exploitation in preventing people from becoming involved in prostitution . The Review is intended to help local authorities and practitioners solve local issues; and the section on "Prevention" includes effective practice in identifying child sexual exploitation.	HO	Published October 2011.
	The Home Office will also consider how child sexual exploitation issues can be embedded into wider workstreams – for example, in relation to Integrated Offender Management , the Positive Futures programme focused on supporting young people aged 10-19 to avoid becoming involved in crime; and the Choices programme which is focused on preventing and reducing substance misuse and related offending by vulnerable groups of young people aged 10 to 19.	HO	Ongoing.
	Building on the commitments in the Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan, the Home Office will continue to support the work of the Metropolitan Police Healthy Relationships Training (HEART) Programme to safeguard teenage girls at risk of sexual violence and help those being abused to escape their perpetrators.	HO	The HEART pilot programme began in January 2011 in three London boroughs (Lewisham, Newham and Waltham Forest). The workshops programme began in June 2011 and the mentoring in September 2011.

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	The Home Office is also re-running a Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign , aimed to prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive behaviour in relationships. The campaign was launched by the Minister for Equalities and Criminal Information in September 2011 and is running on a variety of social media, in films, on TV and in youth magazines	HO	Campaign was launched in September 2011. Ongoing until December 2011.
	The Home Office will implement communication plans to increase understanding of the true nature of rape; improve information for victims; and raise awareness of the Sexual Offences Act, particularly amongst young people	HO	Ongoing.
	As part of its new lead role in relation to missing children , CEOP will bring its child protection expertise to bear on this issue, ensuring that the links with missing children and child sexual exploitation are understood and identified. This role will be further enhanced with the creation of the National Crime Agency and the inclusion of CEOP within it.	CEOP	CEOP assumed the lead role on missing children on 1 July 2011. The NCA will come fully into being in 2013, with some key elements becoming operational sooner.
	CEOP will continue to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and associated issues through the ThinkUKnow programme.	CEOP	Ongoing.
	The Government's new strategy on missing children and adults will also highlight 'missing' as an indicator of vulnerability and highlight the importance of agencies' response to this issue.	HO	To be published before the end of 2011.
	The Department for Education will work with key interested parties to review and reissue the current statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home, published by the DCSF in 2008. The Department of Health will continue to work with stakeholders and key	DfE DH	Ongoing. To be reviewed by Spring 2012.

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	<p>partners to identify where existing training and guidance for health professionals on child sexual abuse and other forms of violence against women and children can be expanded. The Department, in discussion with representatives of the relevant professional bodies, has reviewed the content on violence against women and children in relevant training curricula. The Department is considering how more could be done to improve the content to reflect the particular needs of children who are being, or have been, sexually exploited; and, if so, will urge the professional regulators to approve amendments to curricula accordingly.</p>		
	<p>The Department of Health will also use networks and information portals for NHS staff, such as NHS Choices and the DH website, to promote information on tackling child sexual abuse.</p>	DH	Review progress by Spring 2012.
	<p>The Department for Education will ask the Social Work Reform Board and The College of Social Work to consider how best to ensure that child sexual exploitation is adequately addressed in the training and continuing professional development of social workers.</p>	DfE	Ongoing.
Getting out of and combating child sexual exploitation	<p>The Department for Education is considering how to strengthen LSCBs following the Munro review of child protection. It will give particular attention to how - working with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and with local partners – it can help LSCBs to prioritise child sexual exploitation and to:</p>	DfE/NWG	Ongoing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • map the needs of their own area to identify levels of child sexual exploitation and locations or circumstances where children are particularly at risk (and repeat the exercise periodically); 	LSCBs	Ongoing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put in place systems to monitor ongoing prevalence and responses to child sexual exploitation within their area, making use of existing 	LSCBs	Ongoing.

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	<p>monitoring tools like the one developed by the University of Bedfordshire if they find it helpful to do so;</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an effective local strategy ensuring there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation, based on a robust, thorough risk assessment of the extent and nature of child sexual exploitation locally; 	<p>LSCBs</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase understanding of child sexual exploitation, in the professional and wider community (for example, contributing to public campaigns in the local area, talking and listening to children’s views on welfare services, locally-led engagement with faith and minority communities and wider public). Where appropriate, they might seek to raise awareness through race and faith networks, based on agreed messages and materials; 	<p>LSCBs</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safeguard and promote the welfare of groups of children who are potentially more vulnerable than others and are at increased risk of child sexual exploitation, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ establishing effective communication channels between the LSCB and partner agencies, including specialist services which have an important role to play; ○ attending voluntary and community sector conferences to increase personal knowledge; ○ providing briefing to social care teams; and ○ arranging multi agency training days/courses; 	<p>LSCBs</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider whether it is appropriate to set up a working group or sub-group on child sexual exploitation, either on a short-term or standing 	<p>LSCBs</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	basis, and appoint a lead officer who provides a co-ordinated response across statutory authorities and the voluntary sector; and		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop links with neighbouring authorities and meet them on a formal basis and as required where there are cross border concerns. 	LSCBs	Ongoing.
	In addition, the Department for Education will:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with Ofsted to consider how, in developing the detailed inspection framework by the end of December 2011, Ofsted's guidance for inspectors can reflect the complex nature of child sexual exploitation and the need to understand the possible implications of contact with different services as the child journeys through the system. 	DfE/Ofsted	Ongoing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> raise the awareness of frontline professionals who work in child protection by re-releasing the 2009 statutory guidance document <i>Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation</i>, accompanied by a new short 'step by step' guide for frontline professionals on what to do if they are worried that a child is being sexually exploited. It will do this by spring 2012, emphasising when it does so the strong links between child sexual exploitation and children running away from home or care. 	DfE	Spring 2012.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that further research to improve our understanding of child sexual exploitation and effective responses, like the Office of the Children's Commissioner Inquiry and further planned Barnardo's research, feeds in to ongoing work to tackle child sexual exploitation. 	DfE	Ongoing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children to raise awareness of effective approaches to risk assessment by LSCBs in relation to child sexual exploitation and encourage the sharing of good practice between local areas. 	DfE/NWG	Ongoing.

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	<p>The Home Office will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="432 325 1532 576">• build on existing arrangements for managing sex offenders by ensuring that they are not able to exploit any loopholes in the notifications system. The Home Office will continue to empower parents and carers to protect children through the child sex offender disclosure scheme and by supporting the work of voluntary and community sector partners like the NSPCC and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation in providing support to manage the behaviour of sex offenders and those whose behaviour is of concern. <li data-bbox="432 624 1514 911">• work with organisations such as Rape Crisis, The Survivor’s Trust and local Sexual Assault Referral Centres to improve services for young people suffering sexual abuse by gang members and other violent offenders. Over the next three years it will make an additional £400,000 per year available to improve services to support children and young people under 18 suffering rape and sexual abuse – including from gangs. Proposals, to be developed with the new Home Office Sexual Violence Forum, will be published shortly. <li data-bbox="432 927 1525 1134">• establish a working group which will include representatives from Government , the voluntary and community sector and the criminal justice sector to develop proposals to address violence against women and girls and female involvement in gangs (including in the context of child sexual exploitation). This group will report to the Inter-Ministerial Group on Ending Serious Youth Violence. <p>The Department for Education and Department of Health will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="432 1182 1498 1326">• continue to work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People on ‘task and finish’ groups within children’s services and health to consider: why agencies do not recognise or respond appropriately to child sexual exploitation and what 	<p></p> <p>HO</p> <p>HO</p> <p>HO</p> <p></p> <p>DfE/DH</p>	<p></p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p></p> <p>Ongoing.</p>

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	might enable them to do so; the priority to be given to victims; what the duty of care is once they have been recognised; and any other ways in which agencies can be encouraged to tackle the issues victims face.		
Getting justice for victims	The Home Office will work to ensure that the police continue their efforts to secure prosecutions and maximise opportunities to disrupt child sexual exploitation locally – supported nationally by strategic threat assessments, the National Crime Agency (when operational), and the continued role of CEOP.	HO/ACPO/CEOP	Ongoing.
	The Ministry of Justice will continue to work closely with the police to promote a more proactive and effective response to witness intimidation , through improved training and guidance which includes raising awareness and promoting more effective use of special measures.	MoJ	Ongoing.
	A Ministry of Justice working group is actively considering implementation of section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999, which provides for pre-trial video-recorded cross-examination . If implemented, this would further assist vulnerable and intimidated witnesses to give their best evidence. However, there are a range of complex practical problems to be overcome to ensure that the provision can work in practice.	MoJ	Ongoing.
	The Ministry of Justice will continue to work with the police, CPS, judges, magistrates and voluntary agencies to ensure that young victims and witnesses are fully supported throughout the criminal justice process and are able to give their best evidence in court .	MoJ	Ongoing.
	In summer 2011, the Ministry of Justice implemented amendments to existing 'special measures' provisions to assist vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, including children, to give their best evidence in court and help relieve some of the stress and anxiety associated with giving evidence.	MoJ	Amendments made summer 2011.
	The Ministry of Justice is currently reviewing victims' services to ensure that	MoJ	Consultation document by

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
	those affected by crime are supported in the best way possible, and will be publishing proposals in a consultation document later in 2011.		end 2011.
	The Crown Prosecution Service will work to improve the effectiveness of prosecutions ; promote within its organisation examples of good practice in relation to child sexual exploitation; and work to increase the use of special measures in appropriate cases.	CPS	Ongoing.
	In line with recommendation 18 of Baroness Stern's Review on <i>how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales</i> (Home Office, 2010), the CPS will seek to re-establish effective voluntary arrangements with local authorities to ensure that the protocol on exchange of information is adopted and used to best effect . The protocol relates to "third party material" held by local authorities; voluntary disclosure of this material will ensure that information which may undermine a prosecution can be dealt with effectively at an early stage in the proceedings.	CPS	Ongoing.
	The Ministry of Justice will introduce, through the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, a new sentencing regime which would replace indeterminate sentences for public protection and include mandatory life sentences for anyone convicted of a second very serious sexual or violent offence, including child sex offences . Life sentences which currently exist for the most serious sexual and violent crimes would continue to be available. Other serious sexual and violent offenders would be sentenced to a new extended determinate sentence whereby they would spend at least two-thirds of their sentence in custody. The courts would be able to apply extended licence periods of up to eight years for a sexual offence and five years for a violent offence.	MoJ	Subject to Parliamentary approval, provisions would come into force in autumn 2012.

Theme	Actions	Action by:	Timing
Getting help to deal with what has happened and looking to the future	The Department of Health, as part of its work programme on violence against women and children, will work with its partners to see whether more can be done to highlight the particular needs of children who have been sexually exploited.	DH	Ongoing.
	The Department of Health has a programme of policy work in place to improve development of Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services as they are positioned within the new NHS commissioning and public health structures. It is also working to improve education and training to increase the pool of competent forensic physicians available to victims.	DH	Ongoing.
	The Department of Health will liaise with those responsible for commissioning Sexual Assault Referral Services to draw attention to the special circumstances of children who have been sexually exploited.	DH	Ongoing.
	The Department for Education will continue to support by a voluntary and community service grant over the two years ending March 2013 a Barnardo's project developing specialist foster care placements for victims of child sexual exploitation and trafficking,	DfE	April 2011 – March 2013.
	The Department for Education will encourage LSCBs and local authorities to promote existing counselling and ongoing support services more widely (for example, educational support for those returning to school; help in finding housing, when needed; and help in finding jobs).	DfE	Ongoing.
	The Department for Education will also work with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People and local partners to help local authorities share their good practice in making provision for children and young people who are recovering from sexual exploitation.	DfE	Ongoing.

Annex C – Useful Resources and other information

Useful reading

Department for Education

Working together to safeguard children, 2010

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00305-2010

Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2009

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00689-2009

Statutory guidance on children who run away and go missing from home or care, 2009

www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguarding/a0066653/young-runaways

Letting Children be Children - Report of an Independent Review of the Commercialisation and Sexualisation of Childhood, 2011

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/CM%208078

Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked - Practice guidance 2011

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00084-2011

Munro review – reports and Government response

www.education.gov.uk/munroreview

Department for Health

Resources and publications related to violence against women and children

www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/ViolenceagainstWomenandChildren/Resources/index.htm

Taskforce on the Health Aspects of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children - consultation with children, 2009

www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_113821.pdf

Resources and information relating to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Mentalhealth/CAMHS/index.htm

The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Mentalhealth/Psychologicaltherapies/index.htm

Crown Prosecution Service

Resources to support children and young people who are victims and witnesses

www.cps.gov.uk/victims_witnesses/young_victims/index.html

Home Office

Baroness Stern Review into how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales, 2010

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-end-violence-women-girls/government-stern-review

Effective practice in responding to prostitution, 2011

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/responding-to-prostitution

Teenage relationship abuse resources

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/teenage-relationship-abuse

Ministry of Justice

Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings - Guidance on interviewing victims and witnesses, and guidance on using special measures, 2011

www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/docs/achieving-best-evidence-criminal-proceedings.pdf

Vulnerable and Intimidated Witnesses - A Police Service Guide, 2011

www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/docs/vulnerable-intimidated-witnesses.pdf

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

CEOP thematic assessment 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind – breaking down the barriers to child sexual exploitation', 2011

www.ceop.police.uk/Publications

The executive summary is available from:

www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/ceop_thematic_assessment_executive_summary.pdf

Child Trafficking Update, 2011

www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/child_trafficking_update_2011.pdf

Thinkuknow - Guide to internet safety and safe surfing for young people

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)

'Click Clever, Click Safe Code'. It's just three simple things to remember that can help keep you safe when you visit your favourite websites.

www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/HealthAndRelationships/Bullying/DG_184893

University of Bedfordshire

The research, *What's going on to safeguard children and young people from sexual exploitation*, funded by Comic Relief, was carried out by Sue Jago and Professor Jenny Pearce from the International Centre for the Study of Sexually Exploited and Trafficked young people.

www.beds.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/121873/wgoreport2011-121011.pdf

University College London

Research into the links between child sexual exploitation and youth offending.

www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk/blog/2011/06/13/64/child-sexual-exploitation-and-youth-offending-ucl

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Measuring Up - Research and follow-up briefing on the experiences of young witnesses by the NSPCC in partnership with the Nuffield Foundation

www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/Findings/measuring_up_wda66048.html

Barnardo's

Reducing the risk, cutting the cost: An assessment of the potential savings on Barnardo's interventions for young people who have been sexually exploited, 2011

www.barnardos.org.uk/an_assessment_of_the_potential_savings_from_barna

[rdo s interventions for young people who have been sexually exploited - full research report final .pdf](#)

Puppet On A String - the urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation, 2011

[www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/policy_research_unit/research_and_publications/puppet-on-a-string-reveals-the-urgent-need-to-cut-children-free-from-sexual-exploitation/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1454](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/policy_research_unit/research_and_publications/puppet-on-a-string-reveals-the-urgent-need-to-cut-children-free-from-sexual-exploitation/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1454)

Spot the signs – New advice for parents, professionals and young people on the signs of sexual exploitation and how to keep safe

www.barnardos.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/cutthemfree/aboutcutthemfree/spotthesigns.htm

'Whose Child Now?' report, 2009

www.barnardos.org.uk/resources/research_and_publications/whose-child-now/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1466

Office of the Children's Commissioner

Call for evidence in phase one of the inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_536

Welsh Government

Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation, 2011

www.wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/publications/exploitation/?lang=en

Emma Jackson

The End of My World: The shocking true story of a young girl forced to become a sex slave

ISBN: 0091930529

Useful contacts for further information and resources

Government departments:

The Department for Education

www.education.gov.uk

The Department for Health

www.dh.gov.uk

The Home Office
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

The Ministry of Justice
www.justice.gov.uk

Other organisations:

All Party Parliamentary Group on runaway and missing children and adults
<http://www.missingpeople.org.uk/missing-people/professionals/all-party-parliamentary-group-for-runaway-and-missing-children-and-adults>

Association of Chief Police Officers
www.acpo.police.uk

Barnardo's
www.barnardos.org.uk

Brook
www.brook.org.uk

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)
www.ceop.police.uk

The Children's Commissioner for England
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The Children's Society
www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Coalition for the Removal of Pimping (CROP)
www.cropuk.org.uk

The College of Social Work
www.collegeofsocialwork.org

The Crown Prosecution Service
www.cps.gov.uk

Lucy Faithful Foundation
www.lucyfaithfull.org

Missing People
www.missingpeople.org.uk

The NHS Choices website
www.nhs.uk

The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People

www.nationalworkinggroup.org

NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice and Information Line (CTAIL)

www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/ctail/ctail_wda84866.html

The Northern Rock Foundation

www.nr-foundation.org.uk

The Railway Children

www.railwaychildren.org.uk

Rape Crisis

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Safe and Sound, Derby

www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk

The Safe Network (safeguarding information on activities outside the home)

www.safenetwork.org.uk

The Social Work Reform Board

<http://www.education.gov.uk/swrb>

The United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC)

www.soca.gov.uk/about-soca/about-the-ukhtc

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)

www.education.gov.uk/ukccis