Annex E

Key Documents

Key Document 1

University of Luton Draft Final Evaluation Report

University of Luton

'There are lots of places to talk and I feel safe':
Tackling Prostitution – What Works? (Young People)

An Evaluation of Young People's Projects in Bristol, Sheffield and Rotherham:
Draft Final Report

Report 3
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What have we learned about 'what works' with young people abused through prostitution?
Summary of key findings

- There are more young people involved in all three areas than had been previously imagined
- More resources are required over the long term for both statutory and voluntary sector agencies to enable them to work together effectively to provide holistic and seamless services to the young people
- The work and services provided by the projects need to be mainstreamed in order to attract the resources needed. A means of achieving this is by incorporating the commercial sexual exploitation of children into Crime and Disorder strategies
- The young people need a great deal of support and need to be able to feel 'safe'. They are often desperately vulnerable and drug use is a major complicating factor in attempting to engage and work with them
- Professionals at all levels in statutory and voluntary sector agencies need training and awareness raising around this issue
- Statutory and voluntary sector agencies need to work together on a principled basis to ensure the welfare and best interests of the child. In order to do so, consistent definitions and appropriate protocols and procedures need to be established and adhered to
- Achieving prosecutions against the men involved is likely to be very difficult unless all criminal justice and other agencies work together to this end

CRP: Reducing Crime and Disorder Associated with Prostitution

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Draft Final Report (Report 3)

June 2002

Young people abused through prostitution: 'What Works'? An evaluation of young people's projects in Bristol, Rotherham and Sheffield

Section I: Introduction

The Home Office Crime Reduction Programme '*Reducing Crime and Disorder Associated with Prostitution*' has provided funding for three projects to support young people involved in prostitution. These projects are located in Bristol, Sheffield and Rotherham. Although each of the projects is concerned to support young people who are at risk or involved in commercial sexual exploitation, each has a slightly different focus. Two of the three projects are concerned to work directly with young people while the other is concerned to focus on the men who are allegedly involved in 'pimping' and 'grooming' them into prostitution. Similarly, two of the three are concerned to provide training and awareness raising for other professionals around the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of children. A description of the work of each of the projects has been provided in previous reports and is attached here as Appendix 1.

This report provides a discussion of what has been learned in terms of preventing crime and disorder associated with prostitution as these issues relate to young people. It begins by discussing the importance of the language and terminology in which we talk about young people involved in prostitution and then moves on to describe the methodology employed by the evaluation team. Subsequently, the discussion explores the successes achieved by the projects as well as the challenges to their success and, where these were encountered, how they were overcome. The report then reflects on the impact of the projects on their target groups and the cost-effectiveness of the interventions. Following this, the discussion considers what has been learned about

[1] I would like to thank my colleagues, Professor David Barrett, [redacted] and [redacted] for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this report.

'what works' in terms of working with young people at risk or involved in commercial sexual exploitation and concludes by looking at the emerging findings from the evaluation.

The socio-economic context in which commercial child sexual exploitation occurs, the 'macro' factors that underpin young people's involvement and the nature and extent of the problem in Britain were discussed in the previous report (Melrose 2001b). Equally, the socio-economic and demographic contexts in which projects are operating were considered in the interim process report (Melrose 2001a). These discussions will not therefore be repeated here except in so far as they may relate specifically to the work being undertaken by the projects in each area.

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Section II: What's in a Name?

New Government Guidance in relation to the treatment of and response to young people involved in prostitution was introduced in 2000 (DoH/HO/DFES 2000). Since this time, there has been a shift in the way that these young people are perceived, and concomitantly, in the language we employ to talk about them (see Melrose forthcoming). This shift in language and perception represents a significant advance for those working in this field and concerned with the protection of children[2]. The new guidance establishes that these young people should be responded to and treated as 'children in need' (Children Act Section 17) who are suffering or likely to suffer 'significant harm' (Children Act Section 47). The guidance acknowledges that when children and young people become involved in prostitution, their involvement does not result from a 'free economic or moral choice' (Section 4.5) but is usually indicative of 'coercion or desperation rather than choice' (Section 2.1).

The guidance defines the men who pay for sex with children and young people as 'child abusers who are breaking the law' (section 4.5) and recommends that the primary law enforcement effort must be against the men who exploit and abuse them by paying for the sexual services they provide. What it does not do, unequivocally, is define these young people as *victims of abuse* (Melrose and Ayre 2002). Instead, it

[2] 'Children' and 'young people' are used interchangeably in this report to refer to young people under the age of 18. The terms are used to refer to children and young people as legally constituted by The Children Act 1989.

recommends that young people should be provided with support from a variety of agencies to protect them from further abuse and to enable them to exit from prostitution.

On the other hand, however, in certain circumstances the guidance allows for young people involved in prostitution to be processed through the criminal justice system in the way that other young offenders are (Section 2.5). This is when they have been provided with opportunities to exit from prostitution but they are deemed by agencies involved in their care to be 'persistently and voluntarily' returning to it. When all agencies concerned with the care and welfare of the child have satisfied themselves that the young person is returning to prostitution 'genuinely of their own volition' the young person may be judged to be unworthy of further care and protection. As this writer and others have previously pointed out, it is precisely those who are most in need of care and protection who are most likely to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer further abuse (Melrose and Ayre 2002, Melrose 2001b, Melrose and Barrett 2001, Melrose and Barrett 1999). In our view, therefore, punishment of these young people is not an appropriate alternative to care and protection.

The new guidance, to some extent, represents something of a paradigm shift (Ayre and Barrett 2000) in the way these young people are defined in official discourse and treated by official agencies. This paradigm shift from the 'punishment' to the 'welfare' model has come about primarily as a result of pressure exerted by various voluntary sector agencies and interest groups who are concerned with the welfare of children and young people. It has necessitated a redefinition of these young people from 'villains' to 'victims' and thus the language we use to talk about them has changed. Previously, euphemisms such as 'young sex workers' were employed to talk about these children. Such terms were intended to reduce the stigma that attaches to people, young or old, involved in the sex industry. However, as Pitts (1997) has pointed out, although kindly meant, such terms served only 'to mask the enormity of the violation to which these young people were subject'. It is now more common therefore, to describe these children as 'young people involved in commercial sexual

exploitation' (Pearce 2000a, Pearce 2000b) or 'young people who are abused through prostitution' (see for example, Barnardos 1998)[3].

This is important when considering the crime reduction outcomes associated with the young people's projects. These projects have been concerned primarily with preventing or reducing the crimes committed *against* these children and young people rather than with crimes committed *by* them.

Language is also important in terms of the way practitioners conceptualise and define the work they do. As the previous report pointed out (Melrose 2001b), there has been some obfuscation in the project work between young people involved in sexual exploitation (for example young women in relationships with older boyfriends) and young people at risk or involved in *commercial* sexual exploitation. Those involved in the former are often believed by practitioners to be at risk of involvement in the latter. This perception is connected to the models practitioners use to explain to themselves and colleagues how young people become involved in commercial sexual exploitation.

Many agencies involved in the project work in the different areas employ a 'pimping and grooming' model of young people's entry into prostitution (see for example Barnardos 1998). On the one hand, this model is important in acknowledging that becoming involved in prostitution is a *process*. On the other hand, however, this model is limited because it tends to deny the agency of the young people themselves and to characterise them as asexual, innocent, vulnerable and/or helpless (Melrose forthcoming). Evidently this model does explain how *some* young people become involved, however, it is important to recognise that it does not necessarily tell the whole story (Melrose *et. al.* 1999). This model derives from a *discourse* of childhood that originates in the nineteenth century and which is particularly associated with the work of the National Vigilance Society of the 1890s (Brown and Barrett 2002). It is employed by practitioners particularly to explain the involvement of young women rather than young men. Crucially, many practitioners do not appear to be critically aware of this *as a discourse* and while their attention is focused on 'pimps' and 'the

[3] For the purpose of this report, this is the terminology that will be employed and these terms will be used interchangeably.

grooming process' they may be missing many young people who become involved in prostitution through sheer (economic /emotional) desperation (Melrose *et. al.* 1999). It is important to bear in mind that the young people we are talking about are not abstract objects to be shaped and manipulated by others but materially embodied subjects. These materially embodied subjects can and do make decisions for themselves – albeit that these decisions are often 'inimical to their best interests' (Pitts 1997).

As a result of this modelling of young people's entry into prostitution, practitioners tend to focus on trying to 'save' or 'rescue' the child from the 'pimp'. All these projects, whatever their specific focus, share the aim of preventing young people from becoming involved in prostitution, and particularly in relation to young women, by 'disrupting' the 'grooming' process and with moving those already involved away from it. In practice, this often means working with the young woman to 'help' her to recognise the exploitative nature of the relationship(s) in which she is involved. Prevention work is notoriously difficult for evaluators to measure because when something has been prevented evaluators are by definition measuring a 'non-event' (Crawford 1998). In this sense, evaluating something that has been prevented involves discussing an abstract concept and is rather like talking about something primarily in terms of its absence. Of course, preventative work also makes the assumption that if a particular intervention had not taken place then the child or young person would have followed a particular course of behaviour – this may or may not be a correct assumption.

– BUT SOME PROJECTS ENGAGED IN ~~BEE~~ SUPPORT WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE OR TARGETING MEN WHO COERCE THEM INTO PROS. THIS IS EASIER TO EVALUATE IN TERMS OF CONCRETE OUTCOMES

Section III: Methodology adopted in the evaluation

The evaluation team has employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches in its research. Quantitative data has been collected in relation to the numbers of young people being worked with in each project, statistical evidence provided by the police where it has been available, and key data required for the cost-effectiveness analysis. This has included data about the costs of employing workers, of paying for premises, equipment costs and other running costs for the various projects.

Qualitative data has been gathered by interviews[4], most of which have been conducted face-to-face and some of which were conducted over the telephone. Interviews have been conducted with key personnel and professionals involved in the projects at each site – some of whom have been interviewed twice. Initial interviews were undertaken to provide information in relation to the perceptions of key personnel regarding how well the projects were achieving their goals, what they thought caused young people to become involved and any difficulties encountered in implementing the multi-agency approach (Melrose 2001b). Subsequent interviews have been conducted as retrospective overviews of what the professionals concerned consider the projects have achieved in their lifetime. In addition to this data, we have drawn on documentary evidence provided by minutes of steering groups and other meetings at each site and evaluation forms completed by those participating in training and awareness raising events. The research team has also gathered evidence by attending and observing meetings and training events and by observation of sex market sites where these are visible on the street.

The research team has also met with some of the young people who have been involved in the projects in order to interview them. Our aim in meeting the young people was to explore what the young people felt they had gained as a result of their involvement in the projects and how they had benefited from project interventions. The numbers of young people we have met, however, has been disappointingly small and gaining access to them has been extremely difficult and frustrating. To date, just 4 interviews have been conducted in Bristol (3 young people – one has been interviewed twice) and 4 in Sheffield. This is not due to a lack of effort on the part of researchers involved in the evaluation work. It primarily results from concerns on the part of practitioners about exposing the young people they are working with to researchers and a feeling on their part that they need to be at a certain level of working with the young people before asking them to participate.

Various objections to our access to the young people have been raised. These have ranged from such things as fear that in some way participating in an interview would be detrimental to the young person's well-being; that participating in an interview

[4] The interview schedules employed are attached in Appendix 2.

may constitute further exploitation of the young person; that consent for an interview may be difficult to obtain and/or that the 'chaotic' lifestyles that the young people lead would make organising an interview difficult if not impossible. The experience of the research team suggests that it is not uncommon to encounter difficulty in accessing such young people but given time, trust and confidence in researchers usually evolves and access is eventually achieved. Our experience also suggests that treating young people as young adults with something valuable to contribute helps to increase their sense of self confidence. This is demonstrated later in the report.

While the research team understands many of the reasons for the concerns expressed by practitioners, we feel that in some instances professionals have been over-protective in terms of the young people with whom they are working. Project workers have seen copies of the questionnaires, and, where it has been requested, copies of the interview schedule we propose to use with the young people. This however, does not seem to have allayed the anxieties of project workers and has done little to further facilitate access.

As a result of the difficulties we have encountered in accessing young people directly, and in the hope that we might receive at least some feedback from them, we have developed questionnaires which, at the time of writing, have been distributed with pre-paid envelopes to two of the three sites. The response to these has again been extremely disappointing. Out of approximately 30 distributed in Sheffield and 20 in Bristol, we have received only two replies – both from the same site (Bristol)[5]. We suspect that when professionals are meeting with or working with young people, their priority (quite rightly) is to deal with the immediate problems confronting the young person rather than to ask them to complete questionnaires on our behalf. It is also fair to say that where outreach is the primary form of contact with young people – as in Bristol for example, this is not particularly conducive to arranging interviews or distributing questionnaires. In addition, we have been told that some of the young people in Sheffield have refused to participate in interviews.

[5] An example is provided in Appendix 3.

The issue of access to young people has been raised in a previous report (Melrose 2001b). Although we are aware that the team at the Home Office has reminded projects of the importance of co-operating with evaluators, we feel that the issue of access to young people might have been emphasised more strongly. The research team feel that in future, if further funding is made available to the projects, they should be required to provide the Home Office with a written undertaking that, for the purpose of the evaluation, they will allow researchers access to the young people with whom they are working. If projects should fail to comply with these conditions, consideration should be given to ceasing funding on a previously stipulated managed basis (i.e. HO funding escape clause).

The research team believes that it is the views of the young people about the services and support they have received from the projects that would provide the best testimony as to their success or otherwise. In the absence of any substantial data from young people for this report, however, we have been forced to rely primarily on the accounts provided by professionals at each of the sites in an attempt to determine the success or otherwise of the projects. In our estimation, this is far from ideal and therefore the data lacks some elements of triangulation. However, we continue to pursue direct access to the young people themselves and maintain our hope that we will have been able to access data directly from the young people (either through interviews or questionnaires) in time for the final report.

Section IV: The shape and accountability structures of the projects

Practitioners working 'on the ground' have recognised for a long time that the problem of young people involved in commercial sexual exploitation is so complex and multi-faceted that it is beyond the scope of one agency to respond to it alone (O'Neill and Barberet 2000, Barter 2001). This recognition is reinforced in the new Government guidance (DoH/HO/DFES 2000). It recommends that where there are concerns that a young person is at risk or involved in commercial sexual exploitation, statutory and voluntary sector agencies, such as the police, social services, youth services and education services work together 'to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child' (Section 3.1). To this end, all the young people's projects funded under the Home Office CRP initiative involve a variety of agencies to address this problem and respond effectively to the needs of the young people. Many of the difficulties

involved in partnership working were described in the previous report (Melrose 2001b). These will not therefore be repeated here but some general observations are offered below and the extent to which any difficulties encountered were overcome are discussed in relation to each project.

It has been suggested that partnership working represents one of the most significant developments in crime prevention in the past decade (Crawford 1998). It has also been argued, however, that a 'partnership' is a vague and imprecise term that may often be used interchangeably with 'team' (Harrison *et. al.* 2002). There are, nonetheless, some important differences between 'partnership working' and 'team working'. Perhaps the most important of these is that a partnership, as opposed to a 'team', has no clear leader unless members of the partnership agree to elect someone to that role. Equally important is the fact that in a partnership no one has the power to exercise authority over other members of the partnership unless the partnership members agree to grant that authority to an individual in the partnership (Harrison *et. al.* 2001). In this sense, hierarchies in partnerships may be ill defined and operate implicitly rather than explicitly. Where members do not elect a leader or grant authority to someone in the partnership, this can mean that partnerships are often working in a state resembling anarchy which can be both daunting and challenging for the agencies and individuals involved in the partnership. The above suggests that in partnership working clearly defined management and accountability structures may be difficult to detect.

Partnership working involves bringing together representatives from different agencies in pursuit of a common goal (Crawford 1998). The collective purpose of the partnership does not necessarily over-ride the goals of the individual agencies concerned but it does allow a holistic approach that is problem focused rather than bureaucratically driven (Crawford 1998). These agencies come from different value bases, bring together different sorts of expertise and may often have different goals.

The difficulties for agencies with different value bases working together to achieve a collective goal may be especially pronounced in partnerships that aim to address and meet the needs of young people. The different agencies involved may work with different definitions of 'young people'. The youth service, for example, may provide

services to young people up to the age of 25 and social services up to the age of 21 for young people leaving care. Conflicts may also arise between child protection and harm minimisation approaches. In such circumstances, there is obviously a need to build trust between the agencies involved in the partnership if they are to work effectively together to achieve their goal. This issue will be discussed further in relation to the specific work being undertaken in each of the projects.

There are different models of partnership working that represent 'ideal types'. Here it is useful to distinguish between 'inter-agency working' and 'multi-agency working'. In the former there is some degree of loss of organisational autonomy for the agencies involved because these types of partnership involve collaboration and interdependence and entail some degree of 'fusion and melding' between the different agencies involved (Crawford 1998). In multi-agency partnerships, on the other hand, agencies come together without it significantly affecting the work they do within their own organisations. 'The same tasks are conducted in co-operation with others but the role of various partners remains distinct' (Crawford 1998). When key representatives of agencies or institutions come together in multi-agency work, 'core tasks remain unaltered because multi-agency work is grafted on to existing practices or existing practices are redefined' (Crawford 1998).

Of course, in the real world, most partnership work will fall somewhere between these two ideal type models. In terms of the partnerships involved in the CRP initiative for young people, these would most appropriately be described as multi-agency, rather than inter-agency, partnerships.

Given what has been said above about the complexities and challenges of partnership working, the role of the co-ordinator is often key to the successful achievement of partnership work. The co-ordinator should ideally be available to facilitate relationships between partner agencies when difficulties or conflicts arise. The co-ordinator would also ideally collate information centrally so that an overall, rounded picture of the project work can be achieved rather than the work and achievements of individual agencies being reported separately. None of the co-ordinators involved in the project work were paid for that role and because it is so crucial to the success of

the work of the projects we would suggest that in future these posts should be fully funded and dedicated only to this work.

Below, the work of each project, their success and challenges to success are discussed in terms of each of the projects.

Section V: The Bristol Pandora Project

Overall, the Pandora project aimed to achieve improvements in multi-agency working and improvements to the system of referrals through the vigorous co-operation of the various agencies involved. It was intended that the project would act as a conduit through which increasing numbers of vulnerable young people could be directed into the system as a result of which they could be provided with quicker access to appropriate services. In addition, the project aimed to work with the young people to achieve improvements in their self-confidence and self-esteem and to help them to develop a sense of understanding about why they were involved in prostitution. Further to these aims, the project hoped to achieve a reduction in associated reported crime and a reduction in complaints to the police in relation to disorder in the areas directly targeted by the CRP initiative.

One or two relatively minor changes have been made to the original planned intervention. Changes to the provision of health services were detailed in the previous report (Melrose 2001b). This minor change has resulted in a more efficient use of resources and means that the services of the doctor are available when they are needed rather than keeping the doctor on 'stand-by' as it were.

There have also been some changes made to the provision of outreach services. These have arisen primarily as a result of difficulties in negotiating the multi-agency approach to the problem of young people involved in commercial sexual exploitation and conflicts of values that have emerged between child protection versus harm minimisation approaches adopted by different agencies. The previous report detailed tensions that had arisen between THT, ONE25 and Barnardos. Some of these remain between THT and Barnardos although they have been resolved to some extent with ONE25. ONE25 now has a youth worker specifically to provide services to young people. The agency has also developed 'a proper system for dealing with the situation

if we suspect or discover that they are under 18. [W]henever we see someone we now report it to social services, Barnardos Base and the child protection team and the police' (Project worker ONE25).

The worker at this agency however felt, 'I've been both angry and sad that all this time's been wasted' (while the child protection policies were examined). Similar difficulties have also arisen between Barnardos BASE and Bristol Drug Project (BDP). The view from one of the Barnardos workers is that, 'There is a lot of bandwaggoning going on' and that 'tacking on' services for young people to adult services ultimately results in a 'disservice to young people'. Barnardos BASE no longer employs an outreach worker partly because of these difficulties in working with other agencies but also because her contract had expired before the project became aware that it was to receive an extension to its funding.

The tensions and conflicts that have arisen in this project clearly demonstrate the problems that can arise when one agency in a partnership assumes it has the 'lead' role or the 'best' way of working within a partnership. It is perhaps as a result of these frictions and conflicting value bases that Barnardos has only received referrals from statutory agencies (social services and the police) and not from any of the other agencies involved in the Pandora partnership.

The role of the co-ordinator would evidently have been crucial in resolving the difficulties that arose between agencies in the course of the Pandora work. In this project, however, the co-ordinator's post was not funded through CRP monies and was therefore a role that was performed on top of a 9-5 'day job'. To this extent, we believe that the work required of the co-ordinator was under-estimated from the outset. In addition, the co-ordinator in Bristol unfortunately experienced periods of sickness absence and it was therefore necessary to delegate responsibilities to others; this left something of a vacuum in terms of co-ordination of the project.

In spite of the tensions experienced between individual agencies, representatives from statutory agencies (for example social services and the police) felt that the Pandora project had 'enthused the partners to work together'. As a result of working together, they had created 'a very good intelligence network'. This social services manager felt

that in Bristol they were 'streets ahead' of other local authorities in terms of working together and that the Pandora project had enabled some 'amazing work' to take place. Representatives from the police told us that 'you feel more confident if you know someone or if you've met someone you can just pick up the phone and just talk something through with them [...] I think certainly through Pandora there's been a lot more sharing of information'. Apart from feeling better equipped and more confident in dealing with the problem as a result of their involvement in Pandora, practitioners also testify to the fact that they have become more aware of the issue of young people abused through prostitution. One police officer told us, 'Five years ago as a police officer I can say we didn't realise there was a problem, that was through ignorance because we weren't all talking together as agencies. [....] but if you start looking you think, "Oh my god, what on earth are we going to do about this?" With this, there isn't actually an easy answer apart from putting in lots of support'.

Success stories

In spite of the friction some of the agencies have encountered in working together, the Pandora project has achieved some relative success in terms of engaging and working with the young people concerned. In total, the project has worked with 149 young people who have been provided with a range of services, for example, sexual health services, referrals to drug treatment services and counselling services in the course of the year.

A number of young people have been contacted through outreach work[6]. In the period March 2001- March 2002, Barnardos BASE made 132 contacts through outreach work. These were mainly contacts with young women who ranged in age from 13-18 years (Barnardos BASE 2002). ONE25 contacted 77 young women (16-21 years) in the period August 2001-March 2002 and informed them of the services available to them through the Pandora project. Similarly, THT made 87 contacts (through outreach) in the course of the year. The workers at BASE, ONE25 and THT believe that the number of young people becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation is 'constantly increasing'. The agencies acknowledge however that this is impossible to measure with any accuracy because the outreach sessions are conducted

[6] See Appendix 4 for example of typical outreach report

Tuesday –Friday for four hours every night (8-12pm) and therefore provide just 'a 'window' onto the street at any one time' (Horton 2002). The police confirm this view. One officer told us, ' I think there's lots of young people who we haven't got a clue about who are working from within houses and flats and who never get seen'. The officer went on to explain that,

> *'In October 2000 we had 'Operation Predator' looking specifically at children being sexually exploited. At the beginning of that I think we had 7 young people who we had concerns about. It only ran for six weeks...but at the end of that six weeks instead of the 7 identified there were 22 young people identified'.*

The young people we met in Bristol have found the service provided through Pandora immensely valuable as these remarks from Phillip[7], an 18-year-old who has been provided with support from THT and a statutory drug service (not BDP) illustrate. Phillip had originally been interviewed in [redacted] At that time he spoke very highly of the service he had received from Pandora through THT in contrast to the lack of support he had previously received from Social Services and agencies such as the Salvation Army (Melrose 2001b). He was interviewed again in [redacted] The researcher was struck by the very positive change she noticed in him. His appearance had improved, he was much more alert and appeared much more confident in his conversation with the researcher.

In contrast to the first visit, on the second meeting, Phillip had begun to come to terms with his sexuality (he identifies as gay now) and also spoke openly about the fact that he had been involved in prostitution. At the time of the second meeting, a referral to a statutory drug agency had been effected through THT and Phillip was preparing to do a 'detox' programme. He was being maintained on methadone in the meantime. He was no longer involved in sex work. Phillip had this to say about the service he had received:

> *[redacted] (THT worker) is good. I can phone him up whenever I like. He also, if he thinks I need support because I've got to go and do something, if I ask him he'll come out and give me moral support for it. Normally if you get a worker*

[7] Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

it's strictly a job, but when I see [redacted] *he's like a friend as well now, it's not just, it's a bit more social as well now and cos it's more social I feel a lot more relaxed around him, it helps me more*'

Similarly, Katie, a young woman with whom Barnardos Base had been working testified to the value of the service she had received. Katie was 17 when researchers met her in [redacted] According to her support worker, she had been 'failed completely' by social services. She had been using crack and heroin for the past three years, had been raped several times and had been involved in sex work in order to finance her drug use. She told us,

'*When my boyfriend went into jail I was like into heroin and I didn't want to do crimes and stuff, em, and well, I was just addicted to heroin and anyway I couldn't just get money so I started working the streets. All the Yardies were there and it wasn't all about doing it for the money really, mostly it was just with them for drugs*'.

At the time of our meeting, Katie had stopped using heroin but admitted that she occasionally still used crack but was also trying to stop that. She was hoping to get into college to train as a hairdresser. When asked what she felt about the project, Katie told us,

'*There are lots of places to talk and I feel safe*'

When she was asked what she thought she might be doing if she had not become involved in the project, Katie said,

'*I think if this wasn't here for me I'd probably be dead. I was putting myself into situations when I started getting into drugs. I was getting beaten up, raped, I was robbing off people. I was putting myself in danger a lot. Sometimes, if I didn't come here I don't know what would have happened. I would probably be dead*'.

These two young people demonstrate the Pandora project has achieved positive outcomes in the short term that are bound to pay dividends in both the intermediate and long term. The immediate impact of the project in relation to these young people has been to move them away from sex work and to raise their self-confidence and self-esteem. In so doing, the young people's image of themselves has improved

enormously. As in the work of the pilot projects in Wolverhampton and Nottinghamshire (Brain *et. al.* 1998), the projects have engaged these young people in an 'exit' process. By working with them to reduce their drug taking, the project has provided health benefits, and in the case of Katie, potential educational benefits for the future. These might be viewed as intermediate benefits of the project intervention. In the long term, these gains will hopefully enable them to lead fulfilling lives.

Challenges to success

In spite of their success in working with the young people, all practitioners involved in the work in Bristol suggest that as a result of the increase in availability of crack and heroin (and its relative cheapness) the problems with young people becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation look set to increase (Melrose 2001b)[8]. Two police officers we spoke to suggested that because the problems with drug dealing and drug use are so entrenched, the only feasible way to reduce the problems associated with them is to make the drugs available in a controlled environment. The Home Affairs Committee (22nd May 2002) has subsequently recommended this. The officers suggested that at the same time opportunities for treatment could be provided if and when these were required. It would not be too much of an overstatement to say that these officers appeared overwhelmed by the scale of street crime that is associated with drug use and drug dealing. The suggestion that the drugs should be made available was not a counsel of despair but rather what these officers regarded as the most effective way to tackle the problem. They acknowledged that as soon as one drug dealer is locked up there is another waiting to take over.

Locally, the police in Bristol launched 'Operation Atrium' in 2001 to tackle the problem of drugs in the area. National initiatives have also attempted to tackle the drugs problem and in particular the increasing availability of drugs such as cocaine, crack and heroin in Britain (President of the Council 1998, Parker *et. al.* 2000, Melrose 2001c, Edwards 2002). Locally, this initiative had a successful but limited impact on the problem (see Melrose 2001b). The impact is necessarily limited because of the national and international context in which drug markets operate (Bean 2002, Edwards 2002).

[8] Young people appear to be migrating to the area from surrounding regions such as Swansea, Cardiff and Cheltenham.

During observational work in the area, researchers noted that the area in which sex/drug markets are located is quite derelict (with boarded up and dilapidated buildings etc.). It is also very intimidating in the sense that drug dealing appears to take place very openly in the area. The main drug market appears to be in St. Paul's and two sex markets are located immediately adjacent to this area. These sex markets are predominately female – the male markets appear to be found in slightly more discrete locations. These drug/sex markets are located in an area where there is a concentration of ethnic minority groups and other sorts of associated deprivation, high unemployment and so on (see Melrose 2001a). It is therefore obviously a challenge for the police to control these activities effectively and at the same time to maintain the confidence of the communities and local populations being policed.

Researchers did not see any visible CCTV presence and as far as the professionals we spoke to are aware, there is no CCTV in these areas. A police officer we spoke to told us,

> *'In St. Paul's I would imagine there isn't any* (CCTV). *I can't imagine it would last very long, I wouldn't see that as viable really'.*

There is, however, according to this officer,

> *'...quite a lot of money being put into the St. Paul's area, redevelopment, regeneration type of thing, certainly there is money available and there is work being done'.*

This certainly wasn't visible to researchers. In time, however, regeneration strategies at a local level, combined with national policies that invest in preventing these social problems and responding to them appropriately when they arise, may have significant impacts on the nature and scale of the problem of both drug use and sex work (Burroughs and Barrett 1998).

Associated Crime

The Crime Reduction Programme is concerned with the crime reduction outcomes that may result from the investment they have made in the projects. The primary aim of the projects, as we have seen, is to prevent crimes being committed against these children and young people. In Bristol, most practitioners we spoke to in 2001 predicted that because of the changed nature of the drug market in the area, the

problems associated with prostitution were bound to increase (see Melrose 2001b). By 2002, a majority of practitioners interviewed for a second time reported that things had in fact for worse rather than better. Police statistics for the period July 2001 to March 2002, appear to bear this out. Of course, the figures presented below may represent a change in policing priorities in the area and/or increased police activity in relation to these specific crimes. It is important to bear in mind that they do not unproblematically suggest an increase in these crimes.

	July – Sep 2001	**Oct. 2001 – Mar 2002***
Crimes Committed by Sex Workers	6 (of which 3 under 18)	19 (7 under 18)
Arrests of Sex Workers	5	12 (2 under 18)**
Complaints Re: nuisance	6 (all under 18)	11 (8 under 18)
Crimes against Sex Workers	5 (2 under 18)	8 (1 under 18)

Source: Bristol Police Vice Liaison Officer 2002

* All data refer to under 21 year olds.

** Both the under 18s who were arrested were bailed for a decision to be made by the child protection team about how to deal with them. One was 16 and had not previously come to police attention. She was put in touch with appropriate services and no further police action was taken. The other young woman was 17 years old and well known to the police for loitering/soliciting and had also committed other offences. She was aware of appropriate agencies and was going to be cautioned under the young offenders' scheme. At the time of writing, however, she had failed to answer her bail at the police station.

The police had also targeted kerb crawlers in Bristol. In the period July – September 2001, 5 kerb crawlers had letters sent and 6 were reported for summons. In the period October 2001 – March 2002, 32 kerb crawlers were arrested (Bristol Vice Liaison Officer 2002).

A significant development in Bristol is that child prostitution and sexual exploitation of children and young people is now part of the Crime and Disorder strategy. This will ensure that the issue is 'mainstreamed' and that appropriate resources will be available in order to tackle it. – this is perhaps a principle that could be employed elsewhere.

Summary

There are, to some extent, conflicting messages emerging from the evaluation in Bristol and so far the following points can be made On the one hand, the Pandora project is successfully engaging the young people concerned and in many instances working with them effectively to promote change in their lives. This work needs to continue over the long term in order to achieve this. On the other hand, however, it appears that the problem of young people becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation is increasing as is associated crime and disorder. In the view of practitioners, this is a consequence of the changed nature of the drug market in the area (in particular the explosion of crack-cocaine use). Many of the young people involved in commercial sexual exploitation are using crack and/or heroin. Some practitioners appear to believe that there is a deliberate attempt on the part of drug dealers (who are often apparently Jamaican nationals) to lure young women into drug use and then force them into prostitution. The issue of drugs cannot, therefore, be overstated. None of the young people we spoke to however, spoke of being forced into sex work – instead they spoke of 'swapping' sex for drugs. There are also reports of young women being raped and even gang raped by these men. The practitioners are clear that something 'needs to be done' about these men in order to effect any significant change. A social services manager told us she thought these men need to be 'driven out, deported, arrested, shot – who cares?' However, as we have seen, a more measured approach is making some progress.

Section VI: The Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Project

In addition to awareness raising and training for professionals, youth work based interventions and strategy co-ordination and development, this project also hoped to provide a facility to work with young women in schools, to ensure that data relating to young missing persons was recorded and disseminated accurately, to offer support to

parents whose children are involved in commercial sexual exploitation and to prosecute offenders for child abuse/abduction. Further, the project hoped to make full use of interagency procedures and to trial a missing person's scheme through a police database.

The project hoped that its work would result in raised awareness amongst professionals, consistent referrals of young people to services – particularly the facility provided by the youth service ('*Taking Stock*'). Ultimately, it hoped to encourage young people to exit from commercial sexual exploitation – and where this was not possible, to influence a harm reduction approach with the young women. Young women have to be referred in to the project – they cannot self-refer and the project does not provide drop-in or outreach facilities.

The project in Sheffield has developed an extensive definition of sexual exploitation and distinguishes between young women who are involved in sexual exploitation (the 'grooming' process) and those who are considered to be at risk of becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation (prostitution) (Lucas 2002). As we noted in the previous report, there is some danger here of expanding the definition to the extent that all young women who are involved in 'risky' sexual practices – e.g. relationships with older men, promiscuity and so on, are considered to be at risk of involvement in prostitution. This may or may not be the case (Melrose 2001b).

Minor changes have taken place to the planned intervention in Sheffield. The original intention was to provide a group work based facility through the youth service. It quickly became apparent however, that this was not the most effective way of working with these young women because some were more involved than others and it would not have been appropriate to put them into one group. Instead of group work, therefore, it was decided to work with the young women on a one-to-one basis. This obviously has resource implications - it is more time consuming, for example, and would mean that fewer young people could be provided with youth work services than had originally been intended. As well as the one-to-one work with young women, the youth service facility has undertaken group work sessions with young women in a residential unit and preventative work with young women in a school. The planned drop-in facility for young women who had already engaged in direct

work offered by the youth service has not as yet been developed. Drug advice sessions have been provided by SHED and parents have been offered support through CROP (Campaign to get Rid of Pimping) who are represented on the Practitioner Group.

Success Stories

At the time of writing, the project has had 67 young people (66 young women and 1 young man) referred in the period February 2001 – March 2002 (Lucas 2002). The youth service provision has worked with 12 young women on an individual basis while the others were referred to what was considered to be the most appropriate service to meet their needs. Some, for example, were referred to the NSPCC for counselling and support. Some of the young women do not appear to understand why they are considered to be at risk and tend not to see themselves as in need of any intervention. Their attitude is predominately, 'Nothing's going to happen to me' (Project worker, Sheffield).

One-to-one contact with youth workers takes place on a weekly basis and progress is reviewed after six weeks. Contact with the young person, however, continues for longer than this if necessary and if the young person wants it to. The youth work contact offers the young women a confidential service. The young people we have spoken to in Sheffield find this enormously helpful in enabling them to take stock and reflect on their lives as is demonstrated below in the testimony of Charlene and Janice.

Charlene is a 15- year-old girl who had been referred to the project because she had stopped attending school where she was being bullied. She was also self-harming. Additionally there were concerns about the relationship in which she was involved. She had refused to meet researchers from the evaluation team before [redacted] but agreed to do so in [redacted] Her youth worker regarded this as a very positive development. Charlene was however very uncommunicative – the researcher was not sure if this was because she had learning difficulties or just that she was painfully lacking in confidence. Charlene had this to say about the ways in which she thought the project had helped her:

'*It's helped me feel better, more positive. I'm not self-harming now. I'm going to start college, looking into it.* [redacted] *(the youth worker) helped with that*'.

When asked what it was about [redacted] that she liked, Charlene said,

'*I don't know really. She's kind, listens, helps you, patient. She can sort things out, I just like her. I like meeting her*'.

Charlene was asked whether she had begun to reconsider her behaviour and lifestyle as a result of her involvement in the project. She told us,

'*I don't know, yes, I have. I don't self-harm now. It's helped to have someone to talk to about that. I think it's silly to do that now*'.

Janice is a seventeen-year-old who had been referred to the project by SHED because she was involved in commercial sexual exploitation. When she was younger, [redacted] Janice also had a drug habit and had been using heroin for nine months. At the time of our meeting, Janice had not used heroin for two weeks 'and I'm having treatment'. Janice was being prescribed subutex, an alternative to methadone, which she said was 'brilliant'. She was living with her sister at the time of our meeting but was looking forward to getting her own flat, ' What I want is my own flat, independence, normal life'. Her aspirations were therefore completely conventional – as has been found in other research with young people who are socially vulnerable and/or excluded (see Dean and Taylor-Gooby 1992, Dean and Melrose 1997, Dean and Melrose 1999, Melrose 2001c).

She explained that she had become involved in prostitution as a result of her drug use and had been introduced to both (heroin and sex work) by her friend. She explained:

'*Well I can't blame no one else. It's not on, is it, dumping it on somebody else? But* [redacted] *you see, she was out working on the streets, she was supplying us both. One day she said, 'I can't keep doing this, I can't keep it up working for both of us' [....] I knew I had to get some drugs, I was desperate, so I did*'.

Janice was initially reluctant to engage with the project,

'*I thought at first, 'No, I don't want to come here'. Thought they'd be do-gooders, you know the type, but it's been good. I'm glad I came*'.

In spite of this reluctance, Janice found the support she received extremely valuable. She told us,

> '[redacted] *been on the case with everything. Most of all she's provided me with support, she's up to date on things and with others, you can't always talk to them. I can talk to her about everything*'.

When asked what she thought was the best thing about the project, Janice told us,

> '*I think it's that* [redacted] *she does little things, like when she's at home, when I know she's not working she'll keep in touch, ring me just to see how it's going. I love that, I really do, it's, I don't know, it makes you feel that you're not just a job, you really matter. [...] I always know that she'll make me feel worth something. [...] It's just a good place to come (the project) and I'd tell anyone that*'.

Janice felt that as a result of her involvement in the project, she had been able to change her lifestyle:

> '*I want to put it all behind me, no more shoplifting, no more drugs, no more prostitution, the end. So my lifestyle has changed. It's normal having a boyfriend, next I want a flat, some more independence, then a job. It's a different lifestyle altogether*'.

These young people demonstrate that the work of the project in Sheffield has achieved considerable success in terms of effecting change in the young people's lives. The work will provide positive outcomes in both the short and long term. In Charlene's case for example, there is the potential for longer-term educational gains if she returns to college as well as the immediate gain of stopping her self-harming behaviour. This is a very positive immediate outcome that can only promise better things for the future. In Janice's case, she has been encouraged to reflect on and reassess her lifestyle and behaviour and has been successfully encouraged to cease her drug use and to exit from prostitution.

As well as working successfully with young people, the project has also provided 5 multi-agency training events (4 for practitioners and 1 for managers) in order to raise their awareness of the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of young people in Sheffield. These events were both well attended and well received. An increased

number of referrals in the period since the project has been operational demonstrates that awareness amongst a number of professional groups has been successfully raised.

The strategy meetings held in Sheffield in relation to the young women who are the subject of a referral to the project have enabled multi-agency plans to be put in place to meet the needs of the young women. These meetings have also allowed for the systematic gathering of intelligence in relation to the young women, their associations with each other and their associations with adult offenders. This has enabled the police to identify targets for prosecution. The police data-tracking system also means that young people who have been referred to the project are immediately flagged up as vulnerable if they should go missing. This ensures that the police will immediately search for them. The police have also undertaken to provide training and awareness raising sessions for front line officers in relation to the commercial sexual exploitation of young people and the significance of young people going missing. The use of the Child Abduction Act is set to become part of the police general orders thus ensuring that this legislation is used consistently. Standard letters warning offenders that they face prosecution if they continue their associations with young women identified as vulnerable have been developed and a procedure for serving them by police or social services has been agreed. Links have also recently been established with the CPS and the project will be working with them on methods to achieve prosecutions against adult offenders without the young women being required to make a complaint (Lucas 2002).

In addition to these achievements, the project has also established a 'fast track' to the GU clinic for young women considered to be at risk or involved in sexual exploitation. A representative from GU medicine regularly attends practitioner group meetings that are held once a month. The young person's substance misuse service (SHED) has also prioritised work with young women who are involved or at risk of involvement in commercial sexual exploitation.

Challenges to Success

The Sheffield project has made a great deal of progress in this area of work during the year. It needs now to consolidate that work and, in particular, to develop a strategy for ensuring that prosecutions can be brought against offenders without the young women

being required to make a complaint. To this end, the intelligence gathering exercise would need to be continued. In addition to continuing to work with young women on a one-to-one basis, we consider that it would also be advantageous to develop an outreach and drop-in facility to which young people could self-refer. These 'street-based', young person centred facilities have been shown to be the most effective in terms of working with young people who are very often 'hard to reach' and difficult to engage (Barrett 1997, Wellard 1999, Melrose 2001d). A range of services could then be provided in one location – for example, drug advice, needle exchange, counselling services, careers and educational advice and so on. Fundamentally, however, this service would need to offer long term (and intensive) support to the young people. This would obviously have serious resource implications.

There is some anecdotal evidence that young men, as well as young women, are involved in commercial sexual exploitation in Sheffield. This suggests an area of unmet need as far as current service provision is concerned. We would suggest therefore that the project should consider becoming more inclusive by extending its services to meet the needs of young men.

Associated Crime

At the time of writing, we do not have data for Sheffield but for South Yorkshire as a whole. Recorded sexual offences show that in the period 1st January to 31st October 2001 the following crimes were committed:

Offence	**Number Recorded**
Attempt rape of female under 16	1
Buggery/attempt by male 18-20 with male under 18	1
Gross Indecency with boys under 16	4
Gross Indecency with girls under 16	24
Indecent assault on girls under 16	167
Indecent assault on male under 16	54
Kerb crawling	29
Rape of female under 16	41
Rape of male under 16	7
USI with girl under 13	2
USI with girl under 16	12

Source: South Yorkshire Police

Summary

The Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Project has achieved a great deal in the course of its lifetime. In this project, the difficulties that have emerged in terms of multi-agency

working have been less apparent than in other areas. The training sessions for practitioners and managers have led to a raised level of awareness in relation to the problem of young people sexually abused in prostitution and practitioners are now clear about the procedure to follow should they consider a young person to be at risk. This has resulted in an increased level of referrals to the project from a variety of agencies. The young people have been supported to make significant, and in some instances radical, changes to their lifestyle and behaviours. Their engagement with the project has enabled them to feel valued and as a result, they have begun to value themselves. Improvements have therefore been made in terms of their self-confidence, self-esteem and self-image. These changes if continued can only produce positive outcomes in the short, medium and long term.

Section VII: The Rotherham Risky Business Project

The Rotherham project has a slightly different focus than the other two that have been described. As we have seen, projects in Bristol and Sheffield aimed to work directly with young people to support them to move away from prostitution and often as a by-product of that work, to target men involved in abusing them. The Rotherham project on the other hand has focused on targeting men who are believed to be responsible for 'pimping and grooming' young people into prostitution. The young people concerned are supported through the 'Risky Business' project, which is not part of the CRP funding initiative.

In undertaking this work, the project aimed to achieve a reduction in the number of missing persons and an increase in prosecutions against men alleged to be involved in pimping the young women. Through training events, the project hoped to raise awareness within the CPS of the issue of young people abused through prostitution and in particular, the use of the Child Abduction Act to secure successful prosecutions. The project also hoped generally to raise awareness of the issue with other local agencies, parents and carers and staff working in residential care by providing training and awareness raising sessions.

In order to produce enhanced evidence on which it might be possible for the police to act, case studies of the 10 young people identified as at risk were undertaken. These case studies were chosen at random from those on the books of the Risky Business

project. A question must be raised here about whether this was the most appropriate method of moving forward with the work. Given that the intention was to effect prosecutions against the men concerned, case studies might have been selected from those that promised the best chance of achieving prosecutions – i.e. where the compliance of the young person concerned could have been secured. In some of the case studies selected, the young women disengaged from the Risky Business project and refused to co-operate with the research and development worker.

The case studies show that these 10 young women range in age from 13-21 years with the majority (6) being 15 and 16 years old. 4 of the young women who were the subject of case studies were known to be involved in prostitution and two were considered to be at risk of involvement. Of the other four, two were not involved and it was not known about the other two. The case studies also revealed that 8 of the 10 selected were, or had been, involved with one male (as 'girlfriends') identified as an alleged perpetrator of abuse against these young women.

The evaluation team has concerns that the majority of the events to which the case studies referred had occurred before the implementation of the CRP funded initiative. They did not indicate any outcomes (in terms of young women being prepared to give evidence or men being targeted by the police) which might lead us to believe that there was potential to achieve successful prosecutions against the men concerned. At the time of writing, the police appear to be pursuing their own investigation that is not based on information they have been supplied with through the CRP funded work.

The case studies demonstrated that these were young women who were frequently going missing from home or care and who were frequently involved in relationships with older men. They also suggested that when a young person was reported missing, the response from the police and social services was often less than adequate. For example, Kerry, a 15-year-old, lived at home with her mother. She frequently went missing. In [redacted] the young woman went missing again:

> *'Her mother made another missing person's report, the only one to be formally logged by the police. The FRCT telephoned the police when no response had been received. They were told that the young person's mother*

should "go and get her herself if she knew where she was". The young person's mother therefore followed this advice and went to the house where she believed her daughter was being held. An Asian man answered the door and claimed that the young woman was not there. A young man believed to be perpetrator number 1 eventually allowed the young woman's mother in but would not allow her into the bedrooms. The mother telephoned the police and waited outside the house for one-and-a-half-hours. Incredibly when she telephoned again she was told that if she was causing a public disturbance she would be arrested and charged with a public order offence. The police arrived at the house shortly afterwards but no further action was taken to recover the young person from the house as "she was not in any danger". The young woman's mother was told that it was not the role of the police to run around after 14-year-olds' (Weir 2002 from case study H).

The police in Rotherham have recently reviewed their procedures for dealing with missing persons in line with South Yorkshire Police Missing Persons and Joint Protocol Children Missing from Care (1999). However, these revised procedures still suggest that young people who go missing remain at significant risk. The protocol identifies different levels of risk to which young people may be subject and suggests a risk assessment be undertaken in the case of each young person to determine the action to be taken in relation to them. The more often a young person goes missing, the less at risk they are deemed to be. This is also related to the age of the young person: as the young person gets older and goes missing on numerous occasions she is deemed to be at less risk than a younger person who may have gone missing for the first time. In our view, and based on knowledge from research with young runaways (Stein *et. al.* 1994) the more often a young person goes missing, the more at risk they become. Young people do not usually run away without a good reason and those who repeatedly abscond can be assumed to be running away *from* something or *to* something or someone. The more frequently they go missing, the greater is the likelihood that they will become involved in commercial sexual exploitation in order to survive while they are 'on the run' (Melrose *et. al.* 1999).

The work of the project in Rotherham has also identified different levels of risk amongst the young women involved in the Risky Business project. Three levels have

been distinguished. At level one, are young people 'at risk of being exploited' because they experience social isolation and/or low self-esteem 'which in turn makes them vulnerable to attention and displays of affection commonly used by abusive adults in the grooming process' (Weir 2002a). These young women are likely to experience a range of problems ranging through mental health issues, substance misuse issues, eating disorders, self-harming behaviour, difficulties in forming relations with peers and/or family conflict/breakdown. At level 2, are young women who are sexually exploited through their relationships with older men 'where the relationship is obviously an unhealthy one for the young person concerned' (Weir 2002a). This level represents the majority of the young women with whom the Risky Business project works. At level 3 are young women who are exploited through being 'coerced into prostitution'. It is the experience of Risky Business workers that 'high numbers of young women are forced into exploitation by violence or threats of violence by an older adult who then becomes their pimp' (Weir 2002a).

In addition to work that has sought to target the men believed to be coercing these young women into prostitution, the Rotherham project has undertaken formal and informal training with a variety of professionals groups, for example, youth workers, foster carers and residential workers. Informal training has taken the form of 'talking to teams' (Weir 2002c). Informal training has been delivered to the following:

- A local drug project
- Youth Offending Team
- Residential Workers
- Foster Carers Support Group
- Schools
- Drop-in Clinics
- Regional Groups

Formal training has been provided to the following:

- Foster Carers
- Residential Workers
- Youth Service
- Multi-agency

- Educational Welfare Officers, Learning Mentors and Personal Advisors (Connexions)

The evaluation forms completed for the formal training sessions indicate that the professionals concerned have found the sessions useful. The evaluation sheets however appear to suggest that for the most part, training has been delivered to discrete groups of professionals – for example, youth workers on one day, residential workers on another. We would suggest that as a multi-agency approach is essential to tackle this problem, it might be appropriate to provide more training for mixed groups of professionals. In this way, practitioners from different agencies with different value bases and so forth, can be brought together to enhance their understanding of each other's perspective and role.

The project has also successfully recruited and trained 4 specialist foster carers so that safe accommodation and emergency accommodation can be provided for the young women when this is required. 4 young women have been placed with these carers in the course of the project. Seven premises, including the 4 foster carers, have been provided with 'keep-safe' equipment and have appreciated this as a valuable resource.

Success Stories

Evaluation sheets from the training sessions that have been delivered by the Rotherham project suggest that other professionals are now more aware of the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of young people. The project has also led to Social Services reviewing its use of bed and breakfast hostels for young people leaving the care of the local authority. The work undertaken as part of the case studies revealed that the family who are allegedly involved in 'pimping' the young women into prostitution have links with the hostels. As a result of a complaint received from the project, Key Players and a Children's Rights Officer, Social Services have now reviewed their practice and no longer place vulnerable young women in these hostels (Weir 2002a).

The work of the project has also led to the police reviewing its practice in relation to missing persons. Generally, awareness of the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of young women also appears to have been raised within the police. Previously, it appears that the police did not consider that sexual exploitation of young people in

Rotherham was a problem but they have now created the post of 'Sexual Exploitation Co-ordinator' (the first in the country) (Weir 2002d). The project has also worked with the Crime Reduction Partnership and as a result it has been proposed that sexual exploitation be included in the Crime and Disorder Audit in future. This will mean that this area of work will become 'mainstreamed' in the future and become a policing priority to which resources will be allocated accordingly (Weir 2002d).

Challenges to success

In Rotherham, difficulties appear to have arisen within the project between the research and development worker and the management committee of CROP/RB. These appear to have arisen as a result of project procedures not being followed appropriately. In addition, there appear to have been some difficulties between the project and statutory organisations, such as the police and social services, which in turn have generated tensions between the project and the local authority. This has created a number of pressures within the team. A member of the management committee of RB told us that with hindsight, 'With CROP, service level agreements, partnership arrangements would have been useful' because 'their lobbying role isn't in keeping with the policies of Rotherham Borough Council'. At the time of writing, it appears that these difficulties have prevented the research and development officer from carrying out her role effectively.

Since its inception, there have also been disputes in the project about where to locate the ICT database (Weir 2002a). This has unfortunately impeded the development of the database. At the time of writing, the database is housed in the premises used by RB but the social services department has apparently refused to allow any of its data to be entered into it. The database, however, is running and it demonstrates the usefulness of this type of facility. It is, however, the view of development consultants and the evaluation team that it would have been more appropriate from the beginning of the project for the police to handle the intelligence that was available and for them to have developed the ICT database. At the time of writing, our information suggests that the police are pursuing their own investigation that is not based on data gathered by the research and development officer – the post funded by CRP monies. There would therefore appear to be some degree of duplication of work between the project and the police.

Also according to our sources, the police have been seriously hampered in doing the work they were expected to do for/with the project by a number of factors:

- The lack of a vice squad or dedicated team
- Disbelief that Rotherham has a problem with sexual exploitation
- Judgmental moral attitudes towards the young women involved
- Lack of resources

From the beginning of this project, the development consultants advised the managers that the early involvement of the Crown Prosecution Service was fundamental to its success. The grounds for this were that any progress towards prosecuting the men concerned for procurement, abduction, or any other sexual offences relating to the project's subjects, could only be successful if the CPS were fully supportive of the means by which the evidence was adduced. This is after all a notoriously difficult area for the criminal law (Davis *et. al.* 1999). It is therefore a disappointment to note that the involvement of the CPS was only being established towards the end of the project and that we are unable to say how successful that relationship can now be.

Another difficulty appears to have arisen with the proposed letters that were to be sent to the men involved in relationships with the young women. Although these were developed at the start of the pilot, it was felt that 'the response of the police and the SSD were too inconsistent to introduce them' (Weir 2002d). These inconsistencies meant that serving the letters would place the young people at further risk. Three such letters have been developed: one for use by social services, one for use by the police and one for use by legal services that the young girl or her family may be involved with (Weir 2002d). We would suggest that one such letter should be agreed and, as in the case of the Sheffield project, police and/or social services should develop agreed procedures for serving the letters. Our most recent information suggests that one such letter has now been served.

In Rotherham, we have been unable to access any young people and we are therefore unable to say what they have gained from involvement in the project.

Associated crime – Please see discussion under Sheffield

Summary

A number of learning opportunities have presented themselves in this project. Some small steps forward have been achieved as a result of work undertaken in Rotherham. Police have been encouraged to review their practice and procedures in relation to young missing persons and social services, as we have seen, have reviewed their use of hostels. Many practitioners are now more aware of the issue of child sexual exploitation and understand what they should be looking for to attempt to identify and respond to it. There is clearly, however, a great deal more work to do. At the time of writing, the schedule of law remains incomplete and we have not had sight of the promised 'Practitioner's Guide'. We have no indication that any of the men identified as involved in the exploitation of young girls are to be prosecuted and in this aspect, the project has therefore been unable fully to achieve its aims. At the time of writing, the Home Office had chosen to 'stand down' the evaluation team. The evaluation team agrees that this is the most appropriate course of action in the circumstances.

Section VIII: Cost Effectiveness of the Projects[9]

To date, two of the projects, Bristol and Sheffield have submitted the data requested for the cost effectiveness analysis. It is important to say that both have achieved a great deal with limited resources in a relatively short time span. Both projects are concerned with preventative work with young people and this is extremely difficult to attach a value to since we are talking about the young person's whole future life. As Tilley (2001:90) has pointed out, 'there is no means of measuring a prevented homicide or rape'. The monetary value of outcomes is extremely difficult to attribute since it is difficult to place a monetary value on a young person's life and future.

Data provided by the projects yields the following analysis:

2 prostitution prevention interventions (Bristol and Sheffield)[10]

Bristol B1 = £101,653.06

[9] We should note that there has been some delay in delivery of the software necessary to complete this element of the evaluation.

[10] Please see Appendix 5 for more detailed costings

Sheffield B2 = £86,236

B1 works with 149 young people in the course of the year

B2 refers/works with 67 young people in the course of the year

B1= £101,653/149 = £682.23 average cost of each young person worked with

B2 = £86,236/67 = £1,287 average cost per young person referred/worked with (Dhiri and Brand 1999:13).

The above would suggest that the Bristol project (B1) is the more cost effective. The limitations of this type of analysis, however, are that it cannot take into account the fact that young people in B2 may have had more complex problems that may have required more intensive resources in order to respond effectively than those in B1. Young people in the latter may have had more entrenched social/emotional/health problems, they may have been more difficult to engage and moving them away from prostitution may have been a more complex task than for those in B1. Alternatively, those in B2 may have been at a different stage of involvement than those in B1. There are various reasons why young people remain in, or move away from, prostitution (Melrose *et. al.* 1999). These may be related to wider life experiences and it may be that project interventions coincide with these wider life experiences to effect change at a critical moment in time. We cannot therefore conclude that because the average unit cost of working with a young person in B1 is cheaper than in B2 that the former is more cost-effective.

On the other hand, the cost/benefit of the intervention can be calculated in the following terms:

Assume average cost to society of a single prostitute child = £1 million (this would not be too high given, for example, Criminal Injuries Compensation for a human life) and that 10% of those worked with are successfully moved away from prostitution

Input costs (B1) = £101,653

Outcome Quantity = 15 young people (10% of 149)

Outcome Value = 15 x £1 million = £15 million

Net Economic Benefit = £15 million - £101,653

Benefits outweigh costs by approximately £14,9000000 (Dhiri and Brand 1999:14).

This provides a costs/benefits ratio of 1:150.

The same assumptions applied to the Sheffield project (i.e. that 10% of those referred are successfully removed from prostitution) produces a costs/benefits ratio of 1:81.

Calculation of the 'costs of crime' in terms of child commercial sexual exploitation is much more complex than, for example, car crime or burglary. The costs to the young people can be seen in the short term (e.g. health costs) and long term (e.g. self-image, self-esteem). There may also be inter-generational costs in terms of becoming entrenched in cycles of violence and abuse. The costs to young people are numerous and include:

- lack of education
- emotional damage
- drug addiction/alcohol problems
- health problems (e.g. HIV, early pregnancy, long term psychiatric care)
- lack of employability
- violence/assault/abusive relationships
- reduced quality of life

Prostitution also involves costs to the legal/formal economy because transactions in prostitution tend to transfer money from the formal/legal economy into the informal/illegal economy.

It is also important to bear in mind that beneficial outcomes may not be recognisable until late in the intervention process. In order to identify how long such beneficial outcomes may last, the rate at which they may diminish and the point at which they may disappear (Dhiri and Brand 1999:29) longitudinal research would be required to 'track' the young people concerned over a period of time. This is unfortunately beyond the scope of the analysis presented here but the current evaluation team is ideally placed to undertake such a study.

Section IX: Conclusions: Emerging findings from the evaluation[11] – What have we learned about 'What Works' in relation to young people abused through prostitution?

The CRP funded initiative to support young people involved in prostitution has provided learning opportunities for many agencies, for example, social services, the police, education services, youth services, health services and so on. In addition, the work in both Bristol and Sheffield in particular has produced positive outcomes for many of the young people with whom they have been working. It is important to bear in mind however that, 'where programmes are found to be effective this does not mean that they can be expected to have the same results elsewhere' (Tilley 2001:87). Additionally, 'performance in one place is not an adequate guide to performance in another place' (Tilley 2001:89). It is also important to bear in mind that prior to the CRP initiative there were no dedicated resources to tackle the problem of commercial child sexual exploitation in any of these areas. As previous work of this nature has found (see for example, Brain *et. al.* 1998), **the scale of the problem in all areas has been found to be greater than had previously been anticipated** in relation to both boys and girls. Practitioners believe that they have been able to reach and work with just a small proportion of all those involved. The evidence from project work therefore suggests that **there is a real need for such dedicated resources** to respond effectively to this problem.

We have seen from the evidence presented here that the young people concerned **are desperately in need of the support they have received from projects.** In fact, they could not have enough support – as Janice from Sheffield told us, 'I think they couldn't give me enough attention and time right now'. The young people are very often emotionally fragile, if not traumatised, socially isolated, lacking appropriate support from families and associated with peers that tend to encourage self-destructive and ultimately self-defeating behaviour (Melrose 2001c). For these young people, the 'relationships and networks that might ordinarily prevent their drift into self-destructive or self-defeating behaviour are absent' (Pitts 1997). The report has shown that **the complex and inter-related difficulties and problems that these young people experience require holistic services that are intensive and provided**

[11] Discursive themes that emerged in the research were discussed in the previous report (Melrose 2001b). These should be read as complementary to the themes discussed here (see Appendix 6).

over the long term in order to respond effectively to them (Melrose and Brodie 1999). These services **need to be non-judgmental if they are effectively to engage young people**. We have also seen the value to the young people of **having a consistent named worker** they can contact when they need to and the needs the young people have to feel valued in themselves. The evidence from young people in Bristol and Sheffield shows that when a young person feels they are valued and respected by their support worker, *they come to value and respect themselves*. This in turn leads to improvements in their self-confidence and self-esteem, which promises positive outcomes for their futures.

There is a pressing case for mainstreaming the types of services that have been developed in the CRP funded projects. In terms of preventative work and awareness raising with young people, this could be mainstreamed into the school curriculum (*PHSE*) and into youth service based provision (*Connexions*). In terms of training and awareness raising amongst professionals, this issue should be mainstreamed so that it becomes a core part of training for those working in education, health services, youth services, social services, the police and the judiciary and so on. In this way, agencies will be equipped to respond effectively and consistently to these issues when they are confronted with them. It is encouraging that in Bristol and Rotherham, work with young people involved in commercial sexual exploitation is to be mainstreamed through incorporation into the Crime and Disorder Strategy. This will ensure that this will become a policing priority and resources to tackle the problem will be allocated accordingly. This is perhaps an approach that could usefully be adopted elsewhere. We would also suggest that **it would be appropriate for the police and social service workers to develop protocols and receive training in relation to young people who go missing and young people abused through prostitution on a regional basis**. This would ensure that there are no variations in practice between police from different divisions within the same region.

The report has also shown that practitioners need to persevere and be purposeful in their attempts to engage and work with the young people in order to effect change in their lives. **This process of engagement may take a considerable amount of time as frequently the young people have been failed previously by services and/or**

find it difficult to trust adults. It is also possible that young people will not engage with projects because they are frightened of possible repercussions from 'pimps'. In relation to engaging and working with the young people, it is evident that in the areas in which CRP initiatives have been implemented, **drug use, especially the use of crack and/or heroin represents a major complicating factor in attempting to work with these young people.** It is also the case that **drug services specifically for young people remain relatively underdeveloped** and require a great deal of additional resources. It is evident that the earlier the intervention with the young person begins, the greater will be the chance of moving them away from sex work and/or drug use and the greater will be the future gains. **Once the drug use has become entrenched, young people may be much more reluctant to move away from sex work** and much more difficult to engage.

Not only does drug use complicate the work with the young people, the nature of street crime and street cultures appears to change radically with the arrival of crack cocaine. Where crack is readily available, the 'street scene' appears to become both more violent and more volatile. This presents a huge challenge for policing – especially in an area such as Bristol – where the task remains to maintain good relations with local communities while at the same time to police open drug markets effectively.

In addition to the need for holistic services and an obvious need for drug treatment services for young people, **housing and appropriate accommodation for vulnerable young people was consistently identified across all regions as an area of desperate need.** Very often, young people are placed in inappropriate accommodation, bed and breakfast hostels, for example, where they are potentially vulnerable to predatory men. On the other hand, many practitioners felt that when they did manage to work effectively with young people, this work was often quickly undone when they returned to the same living conditions that they may have left in order to move away from drug use and/or sex work. As Phillip from Bristol told us, he was 'alright' when he was living in an area on the outskirts of the city but when he returned to the area in which he grew up, he was tempted to use drugs again. This housing crisis for young people is exacerbated by housing benefit regulations that

deny people under 26 the right to housing support at the same level as those over 26 (Dean 1997, Melrose *et. al.* 1999).

There is also **a need to ensure that consistent definitions of 'young people' are employed across services and agencies**. The Children Act (1989), for example, legally constitutes a 'young person' as anyone under the age of 18. Local authorities are able to make provision for young people leaving care up to the age of 21. The youth service works with young people up to the age of 25 while Connexions provides for young people aged 14-19 and, as we have seen above, housing benefit regulations define a 'young person' as anyone under 26 years of age. These inconsistent definitions of 'young person' may create difficulties in multi-agency work because a 'young person' for one agency may not be recognised as a 'young person' for another.

It is also important that **practitioners work with consistent definitions of 'at risk', 'engagement', 'working with'** and so on. When work is taking place in a multi-agency context, these definitions need to be developed and agreed in a multi-agency forum so that the various agencies involved are not working to different definitions or at cross purposes. Such consistent definitions, developed at the outset of the project would ensure that conflicts between, for example, child protection and harm minimisation approaches would be less likely to arise and make statistical comparisons between projects more meaningful.

There is also a **need to develop and agree protocols and procedures for sharing information in relation to vulnerable young people in a multi-agency context**. It is important that practitioners *always* follow the agreed procedures thereby avoiding the sorts of operational challenges that have arisen, for example, in the Rotherham project. Additionally, in work with young people there is a need to strike a balance between the need to provide them with a confidential service on the one hand and the need to share information about them with other practitioners on the other. This is a delicate balance and in multi-agency fora, the circumstances in which information will or will not be shared with other practitioners need to be clearly and consistently defined and agreed.

Partnership

Another significant and consistent theme to emerge from the research was in relation to the **short-term nature of the funding** projects had received. Because gaining the trust of these young people often takes a considerable time before practitioners are able effectively to work with them, **projects need to be long-term**. Practitioners often mentioned that they were concerned about the ethics of engaging these young people when there was a possibility that the project would stop after a year and the young person would once again be left with no support. In relation to this issue, the fact that projects did not know until the very last minute that they were to receive an extension to their funding also created considerable difficulties. In some instances, workers on short-term contracts left the projects because they were unaware that funding was to be continued. In circumstances such as these, if a new worker is recruited to the post, the process of getting to know the young person and building a relationship of trust with them has to begin all over again. If a young person engages with one worker it cannot be assumed that they will just as easily engage with another. As Tilley (2001:91) has pointed out, 'It is how human agents engage with programmes that comprises the medium through which they do or do not have their effect'.

Resources

It is also worth considering the fact that this sort of work is stressful and draining for the practitioners concerned (Melrose 2002 forthcoming). Some thought should therefore be given to the types of support practitioners may need and the most effective ways of delivering that support. In an ideal world, project teams would be well staffed and provide workers with time for 'remission' (Lee 1993) - i.e. time away from 'frontline' work - if and when this might be required (Melrose 2002 forthcoming).

Finally, we need to acknowledge that young people's engagement in sex work does not occur as a result of the pathology of the young person but is often a consequence of 'past negative experiences and reduced circumstances' (Pitts 1997). They frequently come from areas of neighbourhood decline, family poverty and social insecurity. In order to address these 'macro' factors that underpin young people's involvement in sexual exploitation, there is a need to generate alternatives to street cultures through policies of neighbourhood renewal and regeneration. Children's protection is far too important to be the responsibility of any one agency or profession

(Barter 2001). In order to protect them effectively, there is a need to 'solicit the investment of all stakeholders – families and youth who are disadvantaged and in need of assistance, child protection officials and their agencies, other child serving organisations and their officials, and citizens and their communities – to work together' (Barter 2001:262). In this way, children can be protected from abusive adults *as well as* from the 'social, economic and political forces' that affect them, their families and communities (Barter 2001:263).