



Welcome to July 2016 CPC newsletter

Child Sexual Abuse

Protecting Children From Harm” Report from the Children’s Commissioner in England

This report – published in November 2015 – looks at the issue of sexual abuse within family settings. It is based on research carried out in England on behalf of the Children’s Commissioner, but there is no reason to suppose that the situation would be any different in Scotland. There has been a focus in recent years on child sexual exploitation and online sexual abuse that happens outside the family – this report clearly says that most children and young people are sexually abused within the family and that it is estimated that only 1 in 8 victims of sexual abuse come to the attention of the statutory authorities. The report makes the important point that we rely on children and young people disclosing abuse, which is relatively rare. The very fact that children are being harmed in a family setting means there are barriers to disclosure. Disclosure led responses are demonstrably failing the majority of victims of child sexual abuse. The report argues that victims are likely to exhibit some signs or indicator, though in some instances it is acknowledged that this will not always be obvious or conclusive. Evidence examined by the Commissioner suggested that child sexual abuse often comes to the attention of statutory and non-statutory agencies as a result of a secondary presenting factor which becomes the focus of intervention. Child sexual abuse which may be the underlying issue may not be identified.

The Report goes on to make some recommendations that are in the main specific to the Safeguarding Services in England. However it does make an important point about the prevalence and under recognition of sexual abuse in the family that will be relevant to services in Shetland. In Shetland we rarely place children names on the CP register due to sexual abuse. This raises concerns that child sexual abuse is not being recognised and reported.

Web link to full report and executive summary

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/protecting-children-harm>

Useful web link with information on child sexual abuse

Preventing child sexual abuse – http://www.stopitnow.org.uk/files/stop_booklets_preventing_child_sexual_abuse01_14.pdf

Sexual Abuse: Signs, symptoms and effects – <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/>

Child Sexual Abuse – http://www.children1st.org.uk/media/244125/child_sexual_abuse.pdf

Simple Conversations to keep you child safe from abuse – <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/the-underwear-rule---guide-for-parents-new-brand.pdf>

Sexual Abuse: Facts and statistics – <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse/sexual-abuse-facts-statistics/>

Dealing with the aftermath – <http://www.reconstruct.co.uk/docs/dl/208DealingwithaftermathCSASep2013.pdf>

