

## Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation

**NOTE: If you have specific concerns about the safety of a child or young person, follow the link: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/report-concerns>**

**or call Norfolk County Council Children's Services on 0344 800 8020.**

### Introduction

A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This does not necessarily involve physical contact and it can happen online. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a subset of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), involving situations and relationships where young people receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing sexual activities.<sup>1</sup>

### Summary

In 2014/15 there were 575 victims of CSA reported to Norfolk police. National research suggests that the incidence of CSA is increasing, by applying research to the Norfolk population it is estimated that 6,600 of Norfolk's children aged 0-18 experienced sexual abuse in the last year. In 47% of cases of contact CSA in Norfolk, both the victim and perpetrator were under 18 - highlighting the need for youth engagement. Sexual abuse has both immediate and lifelong consequences on the mental and physical wellbeing of the child.

### Headlines

National survey data suggests 0.6% of under 11s and 9.4% of 11–17 year olds have experienced sexual abuse in the past year (including contact and non-contact offences). If these percentages are applied to the current Norfolk population it would equate to around 680 children aged 0-11 and 5,950 aged 11 to 17. This means we can estimate 6,600 of the 177,000 children aged 0-18 in Norfolk have experienced sexual abuse in the last year.<sup>2</sup> Nationally the number of sexual offences recorded against children under 16 is increasing, but it is not known whether this relates to a genuine trend, or an increasing in reporting/recording.<sup>3</sup>

In 2014/15 there were 575 children and young people reported to Norfolk police as victims of CSA. Four in five of these cases were 'contact' sexual abuse, the remainder related to pornography, grooming and voyeurism. Research suggests that only around one in eight children who are sexually abused are known to police and children's services.<sup>4</sup> Survey data has reported the average duration of CSA is seven years and the average lapse of disclosure is nearly eight years.<sup>5</sup>

Consistently throughout the literature, across nearly every measure and across all age groups, females report higher rates of sexual abuse than males. In Norfolk, 86% of the victims in 2014/15 were female. Just under a third were aged 0-12 (31%), half were aged 13-15 (49%) and 20% aged 16-17. However, other groups of victims may not be reporting abuse and therefore not truly represented.

A third of victims (35%) had been exposed to domestic abuse within the home environment, either as a victim, witness, complainant, domestic party of child at risk, which is a similar proportion to national research. Just under 1 in 5 of these victims (18%) experienced repeat sexual abuse.<sup>6,7</sup> See figure 1 below.

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<sup>1</sup> NSPCC definitions

<sup>2</sup> Radford, L (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children (NSPCC) <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/child-abuse-neglect-uk-today-research-report.pdf>  
Research applied to the ONS mid-2015 population estimates for Norfolk.

<sup>3</sup> NSPCC (2016) How safe are our children? The most comprehensive review of child protection in the UK 2016. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/how-safe-children-2016-report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Children's Commissioner (2015) Protecting Children From Harm: Looting into child sexual abuse in the family network [https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Protecting%20children%20from%20harm%20-%20version%20for%20young%20people\\_1.pdf](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Protecting%20children%20from%20harm%20-%20version%20for%20young%20people_1.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Allnock, D., & Miller, P. (2013). No one noticed no one heard: a study of disclosure of childhood abuse (NSPCC)

<sup>6</sup> Data supplied by Norfolk Constabulary

<sup>7</sup> Radford, L (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children (NSPCC) <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/child-abuse-neglect-uk-today-research-report.pdf>

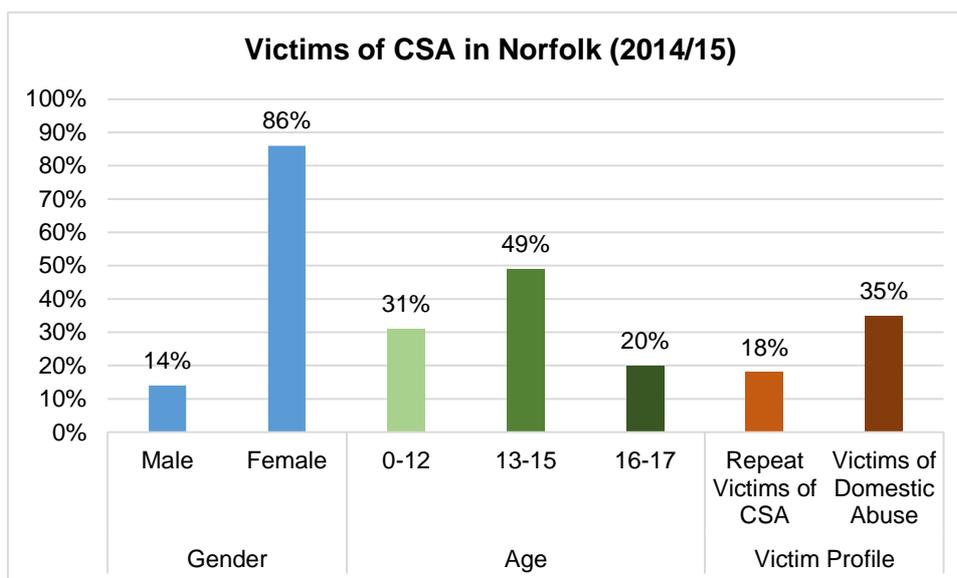


Figure 1: Profile of CSA victims in Norfolk 2014/15. Source: Norfolk Constabulary.

In 2014/15 Norfolk Constabulary identified 203 perpetrators for these CSA crimes, 94% were male. The majority (84%) were older than the victim - however 47% of perpetrators were under the age of 18. A quarter (27%) were themselves identified as victims of sexual abuse.<sup>8</sup> Research suggests that two-thirds (68%) of male offenders had been sexually abused as children (contact and non-contact).<sup>9</sup>

It is more common that victims of CSA know their attacker than the offender be a stranger - parents/guardians neighbours or family friends were the most frequently reported perpetrators of contact sexual abuse by adults. 73% of the Norfolk offences were “extra familial”, and of the interfamilial offences, 36% were committed by siblings.<sup>10</sup> However, research suggests that two thirds of sexual abuse occurs within the family, so this may suggest that children are more likely to report extra familial abuse.

### Child Sexual Exploitation

There were 199 crimes in Norfolk in 2014/15 which were recorded as ‘Child Sexual Exploitation’ by police (a CSE indicator was added to the crime record). Over half (54%) of the offences were ‘Sexual Offences’ and a further 39% were ‘Crime Other’ offences (which includes ‘taking or making indecent images of children’ and ‘possession of indecent images of children’). A total of 49 offenders identified for these crimes. A high proportion of grooming takes place online which then leads to sexual exploitation. Almost half of the victims (49%) did not meet the offender in person and the offence was entirely online. A high number of CSE incidents were found to involve drugs and alcohol, either as a way to inhibit the victim or to entice them to meet the perpetrator.<sup>11</sup>

In addition there were 963 Child Protection Investigations by Police (aka ‘child at risk’ reports or C39Ds). These related to 642 different addresses with 122 locations having more than one report - schools accounted for 13% of the addresses and Children’s Care Homes for a further 11%.<sup>12</sup>

The most common characteristics of victims of CSE are that they regularly go missing from home and that they are Looked After Children (LAC). Other characteristics include self-harm, witnessing domestic violence, suffering a loss of a parent or family member, and lack of supportive parenting.

Regionally 43% of CSE victims have been identified as previously been reported as missing to the police. In Norfolk 158 children (under 18) had more than one report of them going missing during 2014/15 and the

<sup>8</sup> Data supplied by Norfolk Constabulary

<sup>9</sup> Elliot, M., Browne, K. and Kilcoyne, J. (1995). Child sexual abuse prevention: what offenders tell us. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 19(5): 579- 594.

<sup>10</sup> Data supplied by Norfolk Constabulary

<sup>11</sup> Data supplied by Norfolk Constabulary

<sup>12</sup> Data supplied by Norfolk Constabulary

highest number of reports for one child was 34. There were 69 individuals who were reported missing three times in 42 days and over half (57%) of these were missing from care. There were a total of 116 locations which made more than one report of a missing child during the period, the most common locations making a report were Children's Care Homes, Supported Accommodation or Short Stay Schools.<sup>13</sup>

Of the 9,353 child protection assessments carried out in Norfolk in 2015/16 there were 259 (2.7%) where CSE was identified as a factor and 490 (5.2%) where CSA was a factor. In 2015/16 735 children became subject to a child protection plan, of these 33 (4.5%) had sexual abuse identified as the primary reason. These proportions are similar to national average<sup>14</sup>

## Influences on Health and Wellbeing

Experiences of abuse and neglect may affect individuals differently. It has often been observed that the impact may be externalised, meaning that a young person "acts out" and the maltreatment affects their behaviour, as well as internalised, meaning that a young person may be depressed, withdrawn or isolated. Research suggests that all forms of abuse in childhood are generally associated with poorer mental health and elevated delinquent behaviour. Radford found that the 11–17 year olds surveyed who had been severely maltreated by a parent or guardian were over six times more likely to have current suicide ideation, and almost five times more likely to have self-harm thoughts than were the non-maltreated young people in this age group.<sup>15</sup>

## Social, environmental, population context

While children from any background can experience abuse, and the majority of children living in poverty will never experience it - national studies do show that children who grow up in lower socioeconomic groups are more likely to experience all type of child abuse, including sexual abuse, than their more affluent peers.<sup>16</sup> Analysis of Norfolk crime and referral data showed a correlation between areas of deprivation and CSE.

## Current services, local plans and strategies

Every Local Authority has a Local Safeguarding Children Board to make sure that children are protected from harm and that their welfare is promoted. In Norfolk, the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) is multi-agency partnership made up of statutory and voluntary partners who work with families and children. The NSCB has a strategy to 'Prevent, Identify and Tackle Child Sexual Abuse'. The strategy has three main strands: Awareness raising, Training and development and Practice (access to services).<sup>17</sup> The NSCB also undertake Serious Case Reviews (some of which relate to CSA), develop action plans and share learning amongst partner organisations.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) which has been subject to significant national attention due to high profile cases that revealed the extent of the issue and the impact it has on victims. Key safeguarding partners have frequently had their response criticised for not identifying or meeting the needs of children and young people affected. In response, there has been a significant investment by services to bridge gaps and improve service delivery. From a policing perspective, CSE/A has been designated a strategic priority placing it on the same footing as terrorism and organised crime across all forces in England and Wales.

The Norfolk Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has a dedicated Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) team to review and risk assess all referrals and to help victims recognise this type of offending and secure support to escape this type of abuse. If a young person is identified to be at risk of CSE by the MASE team then a referral is sent to the Reaching Out on Sexual Exploitation (ROSE) Project, which is a voluntary organisation that is part of the Magdalen Group.

<sup>13</sup> Data supplied by Norfolk Constabulary

<sup>14</sup> Department for Education (2016) Characteristics of Children in Need 2015/16

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2015-to-2016>

<sup>15</sup> Radford, L (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children (NSPCC)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/child-abuse-neglect-uk-today-research-report.pdf>

Research applied to the ONS mid-2015 population estimates for Norfolk.

<sup>16</sup> Radford, L (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children (NSPCC)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/child-abuse-neglect-uk-today-research-report.pdf>

Research applied to the ONS mid-2015 population estimates for Norfolk.

<sup>17</sup> NSCB Strategy to Prevent, Identify and Tackle Child Sexual Abuse [http://www.norfolkscb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/NSCB-Child-Sexual-Abuse-Strategy\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.norfolkscb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/NSCB-Child-Sexual-Abuse-Strategy_FINAL.pdf)

The ROSE Project offers befriending or targeted support work to the young people and Return Home Interviews (RHI's) to young people who have gone missing more than once, are looked after children (those living in local authority residential accommodation are offered this service by Barnardo's), have a high risk missing episode or there are concerns around CSE. The service is for young people throughout Norfolk, including young people from out of county who have been placed within Norfolk and is delivered on a voluntary basis.

Between September 2015 and August 2016 the ROSE project received 138 CSE referrals and were made aware of 718 missing episodes relating to 291 young people – equating to 367 different individuals in total:

- 76% were aged 14-17 year olds.
- 68% were female.
- 29% were looked after children.
- 64% were active to Norfolk Children's Services.
- 7% were active to other local authorities.

Over the last year the ROSE project delivered 438 befriending/targeted support work sessions to 75 young people and 137 RHI's were conducted for 88 individual young people.<sup>18</sup>

The Magdalen Group also run the Jigsaw Education Programme which is delivered to children, young people and professionals in schools, care homes and youth groups throughout Norfolk. This education programme provides one off sessions as well as small group work short courses covering a range of topics including online and offline grooming, child sexual exploitation, internet safety, sexting, healthy relationships, rape, consent and how to keep yourself safe. They also deliver the Child Sexual Exploitation training to professionals as well as the Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP) 'Think u Know' course.

Norfolk Constabulary offer dedicated resources to children and young people through the Safer Schools Partnership. There are 9 High Schools with a full-time Safer School Partnership officer and 42 High Schools that have a Safer School Partnership PCSO within their school one day a week. The Safer Schools Partnership delivers the following inputs in all state secondary schools during the school year:

- Internet Safety (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) to Year 7
- Sexting
- Healthy Relationships to Year 8
- CSE to Year 9
- Teenage Relationship Abuse to Year 10<sup>19</sup>

In Norfolk the Safer Homes and Young People Protocol (SHAYPP) sets out how the Police and Children's Residential Homes will work together to safeguard children, this is improving the relationship between the two organisations and establishes what enquiries a Care Home worker should undertake prior to reporting a child missing to the Police.

Norfolk Constabulary and Ormiston fund an Independent Family Support Worker (IFSW) to assist with parents / carers where the young person is medium / standard risk. This is a three-year project.

## Considerations for Health and Wellbeing Board and Commissioners

NSPCC's PANTS campaign is recommended for Early Years and Key Stage 1 school children, this can be delivered by teachers using the NSPCC's resource pack available online. Commissioners should consider how to encourage schools to make use of these materials.

Consider development of a strategy for engaging with parents, guardians, professionals and members of the public surrounding the physical, emotional and verbal signs of CSA and reporting mechanisms. CSA perpetrated by under 18s and between peers contributes a large proportion of both recorded crime and survey data highlighting the importance of youth education and engagement. Any awareness raising campaign must be broad in appeal, not just focussing on the known victim/perpetrator cohort, be appealing to men and women

<sup>18</sup> Data provided by The ROSE Project

<sup>19</sup> For more information see: <https://www.norfolk.police.uk/advice/child-protection/safer-schools-partnerships>

from a range of age groups. The campaign should emphasise methods of disclosure and points of contact aiming to increase public confidence in the police and external agencies.

Return home interviews for missing children are an important tool in identifying CSE and should be properly promoted to children and families.

Sharing information between services working with children and families is crucial for tackling CSA. There is a recognition of the importance of improving liaison between police and children's homes in particular to address CSE. However, safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and must be addressed in partnership.

## References and information

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board Child Sexual Abuse Resources

<http://www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/child-sexual-abuse-resources/>

Radford, L (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children (NSPCC) <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/child-abuse-neglect-uk-today-research-report.pdf>

The Magdalene Group ROSE Project

<http://magdalenegroup.org/rose-project/>

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