**Exploitation research:**

**Transitional safeguarding from adolescence to adulthood** published by Research in Practice in 2018

This brief report from Dez Holmes identifies:

* the **increased focus** on violent crime, gang culture, domestic abuse, modern slavery, trafficking and sexual exploitation requiring local areas to adapt and innovate in how they safeguard young people and adults.
* the **experience of adversity in childhood** can make some adolescents particularly vulnerable to harm and that the effects of such harm can persist into adulthood. This means that there will likely be a proportion of adolescents who either need to transition directly into receiving support from Adults’ Services, or who are more likely to require them later in life.
* that research shows that **unresolved trauma** can increase risks later in adulthood, and we know that not responding to harms in early adulthood can mean that people have more difficult and painful lives, and may need more expensive support later.
* that it is increasingly hard to justify the current binary approach to safeguarding, where childhood reaches an abrupt end and services withdraw from young adults based on **arbitrary markers such as birthdays**.
* that perpetrators do not withdraw when a victim reaches 18 years old – but that professional services often do.
* some studies suggest that emotional regulation and executive functioning in the brain are still developing well into the 20s (Sawyer, et al 2018).
* some important **differences in children and adult services**. For example, the children’s system is more focused on welfare and emphasises protection of children from harm and risk management approaches. Whereas for adults, the focus is arguable more oriented to wellbeing and includes the concept of risk enablement.
* the so called ‘**cliff edge’** exacerbated by mismatched thresholds
* many young adults **will not qualify for a safeguarding response** as they do not have an identified care and support need, yet evidence shows that they can experience a range of harms and threats which can lead to increased adversity over time.

<https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/all/news-views/2018/august/transitional-safeguarding-from-adolescence-to-adulthood/>

**Improving awareness of sexual exploitation among adults** published by Research in Practice 2018

Rosie McNamara article on Research in Practice explores the topic of sexual exploitation by looking through the definitions, identified risk factors and effects. This brief article identifies:

* Sexual exploitation of adults is **not new**, but of late there seems to be a **greater drive to discuss and understand** it
* **Identified factors that increase the risk of sexual exploitation in adulthood** include:
	+ homelessness
	+ use of drugs or alcohol
	+ lack of mental capacity to consent to sexual activity
	+ human trafficking
	+ sexual abuse during childhood.
* When providing support, it is important to remember that those who exploit are always misusing their power (whether financial, physical or psychological) to abuse.
* An individual who has been sexually exploited as an adult or in childhood is **more likely to experience poor mental health**.
* Lack of awareness and misconceptions around the sexual exploitation of adults can contribute to ongoing trauma for those affected by it; but the right information, advice and support has the potential to be the first step towards safety, healing and prevention.

<https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/adults/news-views/2018/may/improving-awareness-of-sexual-exploitation-among-adults/>

**The quest to understand the sexual exploitation and mental health of adults** - published by Research in Practice 2018

Jessica Eaton’s article on Research in Practice website suggests they are committed to moving towards a **trauma-informed model** of working with people in need.

* Adults will have experienced **cumulative traumas**, oppression and discrimination, dangerous environments and exploitative contexts that led to trauma responses, coping mechanisms and survival behaviours.
* A trauma informed approach promotes the **reduction of stigma** and **victim blaming** of adults who have experienced traumas and exploitation by refocusing practitioners on the exploitative context and oppression the adult tried to survive within.
* It also helps to deconstruct the misunderstanding that adults can ‘**consent’** or ‘**choose’** to be sexually exploited.
* There was very **little research** exploring the best way to work with adults who had experienced trauma in sexual exploitation and much further research was needed.

<https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/adults/news-views/2018/may/the-quest-to-understand-the-sexual-exploitation-and-mental-health-of-adults/>

**Sexual exploitation and mental health: Frontline Briefing** published by Research in Practice published in 2018

This Briefing from Research in Practice looks like it might be very good but it is not a free resource (£12). It suggests sexual exploitation ranges from so-called ‘survival sex’, in which a person may perform sexual acts for basic needs such as food, shelter, water, clothing or transport, right the way through to adults who are in exploitative contexts such as sex work, prostitution and escorting, mail-order bride services, ‘revenge porn’, domestic servitude and human trafficking for the purposes of sex.

<https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/adults/publications/2018/march/sexual-exploitation-and-mental-health-frontline-briefing-2018/>

**Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance** published Home Office in September 2018

This Home Office guidance is primarily aimed at frontline staff who work with children, young people and potentially vulnerable adults.

This guidance is intended to explain the nature of this harm to enable practitioners to recognise its signs and respond appropriately so that potential victims get the support and help they need.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

**Exploitation does not stop at 18’: chief social workers highlight gap in support for young adult victims** – Community Care Article published in March 2020

This article states - A lack of understanding and restrictive interpretations of the Care Act mean support often falls off a cliff for victims of criminal or sexual exploitation when they reach adulthood.

This article quote Samantha Keith - “The Care Act states it’s for adults with ‘care and support needs’, so people who have difficulties with personal care, managing within the home and within the community; that means if you’re somebody who’s been abused and exploited as a young person, you don’t qualify explicitly as someone with care and support needs.”

This article also quotes Des Holmes whose recent research suggests adolescence extends to the mid-20s.

<https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2020/03/24/exploitation-stop-18-chief-social-workers-highlight-gap-support-young-adult-victims/>

**Chief Social Workers’ annual report: 2019 to 2020** published March 2020

The Chief Social Workers annual report states “it has been positive to see this subject aired more widely, but we still have some way to go in adult social care to understand how to respond to sexual and criminal exploitation.

It is important to remember this does not stop at eighteen and is not an issue which children’s services can tackle alone - our safeguarding services need a different response. Unfortunately, they are often configured in ways which do not support young people after the age of eighteen unless they have a disability.

We need to be well-educated about trauma-informed practice. Over the coming months, we will:

* hold a roundtable event with national experts to discuss this growing issue
* produce a practice note for social workers
* produce guidance for adult safeguarding teams”.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-social-workers-for-adults-annual-report-2019-to-2020/chief-social-workers-annual-report-2019-to-2020>

**Sexual Exploitation the Journey into Adulthood it does not stop because you turn 18** published by NWG in 2018

This report identifies the key findings from the Summary of (C)SE Transition between Children and Adult Services forms which were returned to the NWG by members of the electronic working group on transition.

In 2018 it found:

* there is a need for areas to review and develop transitional arrangements between Adult and Children’s services for those who are victims of, or who are at risk of sexual exploitation.
* that vulnerable children and young adults are not getting the support that they need and are potentially “falling through the net”.
* Numbers across the country making the transition are very low and demonstrates the need for this area to be a priority.
* There was a sense of frustration from both Children and Adult Services that current transitional practice needs to improve but legislation and traditional ways of working were not helpful.

<http://www.nwgnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/NWG-Report-Sexual-Exploitation-the-Journey-into-Adulthood-May-2018-1.pdf>

**A Joint Serious Case Review to consider and learn from sexual exploitation involving children and young adults in Newcastle** published by the Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) and the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) in February 2018

This Review highlighted

* the complex nature of Sexual Exploitation - the extreme and long-lasting impact it has on victims; the difficulties in identifying and preventing the exploitation; the intense and lengthy support that is required to gain the trust of victims to help them understand that what they have experienced is exploitation and enable them to talk about their experiences.
* Tackling sexual exploitation must address the perpetrators – not only preventing their activities but understanding their motivation.

The Review made 18 recommendations for local implementation and 15 recommendations for National consideration and implementation.

<https://www.nscb.org.uk/joint-serious-case-review-concerning-sexual-exploitation-newcastle>

**Boys and Young Men at Risk of Sexual Exploitation – A Toolkit for Professionals** published by The Childrens Society, Victim Support and National Police Chief Council in March 2018.

This toolkit explores some of the factors relating to the sexual exploitation of boys and young men. It considers risks and vulnerabilities they face, the barriers they may face in engaging with interventions and presents practice tips to improve identification, reporting and protection. The guide will be useful for professionals when working with children and young people, their families and communities. It can be used to inform good practice and support regional strategies and action plans in relation to sexual exploitation.

<https://www.csepoliceandprevention.org.uk/sites/default/files/Boys%20and%20Young%20Men%20Toolkit.pdf>

**Resources**

**Exploitation Strategies**

**Harrow** - **Community Safety, Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy 2019 – 2020**

Produced by the Community Safety Partnership board – 81 pages

Covers High Harm Crime - Youth Violence, Weapon Based Crime, Vulnerability & Exploitation, Modern Slavery, Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic and Sexual Abuse, Drug and Alcohol Misuse and Extremism and Hate Crime.

<https://www2.harrow.gov.uk/documents/s156674/Community%20Safety%20VVE%20Strategy%20Annual%20Refresh%202019.pdf>

**Luton** - **Ending Adult Exploitation Strategy**

Joint strategy Adult Safeguarding Board and Community Safety Partnership. Only 8 pages!

<https://www.luton.gov.uk/Community_and_living/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Adult-exploitation-strategy.pdf>

**Northumberland -Sexual and Criminal Exploitation Strategy for Northumberland 2019 - 2022**

Produced by the Children’s Board and the Adult’s Safeguarding Board – 29 pages.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/Safeguarding/Sexual-and-Criminal-Exploitation-Strategy-for-Northumberland-2019-2022-1.pdf>

**Manchester’s Complex Safeguarding Strategy 2020 – 2023 - Manchester Safeguarding Partnership**

Produced by Manchester Safeguarding partnership which I think is the LSCP and SAB. 16 pages.

Complex Safeguarding is a term used to describe Criminal Activity (often organised), or behaviour associated with criminality, involving children and adults where there is exploitation and/or a clear or implied safeguarding concern. This strategy sets out Manchester’s way of working and tackling the exploitation of children and adults in Manchester.<https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/msp-complex-safeguarding-strategy-2020-2023-published/>

**Tackling Violence and Exploitation Wolverhampton’s Strategy**

Published by Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) and Adults and Children Safeguarding Boards. 20 pages.

<http://www.saferwolverhampton.org.uk/documents/TVE%20Wolverhampton%20Strategy.pdf>

**Solihull All Age Exploitation Reduction Strategy 2020- 2022** – soon to be published

From the SAB, LSCP and CSP. Made up of three documents – the strategy, a delivery Plan and some Case studies. The strategy document is 22 pages.

**Other resources**

**Solihull Language Matters - Changing the way professionals discuss and record their work with exploitation**

This document can be used by professionals when discussing the exploitation of individuals, including when escalating intelligence and delivering training.

<https://ssab.org.uk/publications/information-leaflets-83.php>

**Newcastle –** **Sexual and/or Criminal Exploitation Language Guidance for Professionals Working with Adults**

This guidance can be used by professionals when discussing or recording information about the exploitation of adults at risk, including when escalating intelligence and delivering training.

<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Agenda%20Item%205%20-%20Expolitation%20Language%20Guidance.pdf>

**Appropriate Language: Child Sexual and/or Criminal Exploitation – Guidance for professionals** from The Childrens Society, Victim Support and National Police Chief Council.

This document can be used by professionals when discussing the exploitation of children and young people, including when escalating intelligence and delivering training.

<https://www.csepoliceandprevention.org.uk/sites/default/files/Guidance%20App%20Language%20Toolkit.pdf>

**Criminal, Civil and Partnerships Disruption Options for Perpetrators of Child and Adult Victims of Exploitation** – NWG

This toolkit is divided into sections covering powers to protect child victims and adult victims of exploitation, powers to pursue and disrupt offenders and powers to target harden and secure locations used to exploit individuals.

<https://ssab.org.uk/media/upload/documents/NWG-Disruption-Toolkit-v3-1.pdf>

**A brief guide to... sexual exploitation – RiPfA**

<https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/media/2576/ripfa_a_brief_guide_to_sexual_exploitation_web_oct17.pdf>

**Vulnerable Adult Risk Management (VARM) – Derbyshire SAB**

A vulnerable adult risk management (VARM) process to manage risks which may arise within specific circumstances when working with adults deemed to have capacity to make decisions for themselves, but who are at risk of serious harm or death through:

* self-neglect (Care Act 2014)
* risk taking behaviour / chaotic lifestyles or
* refusal of services.

There are lots of resources on the Derbyshire SAB website about VARM

<https://www.derbyshiresab.org.uk/professionals/vulnerable-adult-risk-management.aspx>

**Vulnerable Adult Risk Management (VARM) – Herefordshire SAB**

A framework to facilitate effective working with vulnerable adults who are at risk of significant harm due to their complex needs, and the risks cannot effectively be managed via other processes or interventions, such as section 9 care and support assessment or section 42, safeguarding enquiry.

<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/media/8381/varm-guidance-final.docx?bcsi_scan_3316d075d5e073ed=RWlsaseRSNfHklAr5EtMDCfi5u9FAAAAGFwbNg==:1>

**Solihull Adults’ exploitation screening tool**

<https://www.ssab.org.uk/professionals-practitioners.php>

**Newcastle Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Procedural Flow Chart December 2015**

<https://www.nscb.org.uk/sites/default/files/Sexual%20Exploitation%20Procedural%20flowchart%20Dec%202015.pdf>

**On the horizon – a Vulnerable Adults Bill?**

Autism Together, the Association for Real Change, and lawyer Alex Ruck-Keene of 39 Essex Chambers have submitted to the Law Commission a proposal for a Vulnerable Adults Bill.

The bill aims to establish a set of principles that would underpin interventions to protect vulnerable people who, although capacitated, are at risk of coercion and duress. The decision whether to proceed with drafting a bill is awaited from the law commission.

**Other**

**Wolverhampton** have a **team called power2** who will support younger adults (18 -25) who don’t have “care and support needs” and so would usually not fall into adult services, but they are “vulnerable” due to past exploitation or trauma - e.g. CSE, grooming etc. Team is multi-disciplinary and based on trauma informed approached.

Funding for this team has come from the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

**West Midlands Childrens Regional Exploitation Policy/procedure**

<https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpzs/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-affected-by-exploitation-and-trafficking-including-gangs>

**West Midlands Region – Exploitation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Questions 🡺Areas 🡻 | Adult or joint adult & children **Exploitation Strateg**y | Adult or joint adult & children exploitation **screening tool** | Adult or joint adult & children exploitation **risk assessment tool** | Adult **exploitation pathway** | Other **adult exploitation tools** | A **lead in your Local Authority for Adult Exploitation** | A **joint team in your Local Authority for adult & child exploitation** |
| Birmingham |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coventry | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Dudley | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Herefordshire | No | No |  | No | No | No | Care leavers only (18-25) working towards all age |
| Sandwell | In development | No | No | In development | No | No | No |
| Shropshire | In development | No - AdultsYes - Children | No Yes Children | No | No | Yes | No |
| Solihull  | YesNot yet published | YesSeparate adult & children ones | No | YesDraft | Capability Framework & Language Matters | Yes | No |
| Staffordshire | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Stoke |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Telford & Wrekin | No | Yes | No | Yes - It is part of the safeguarding pathway. |  | Yes | No |
| Walsall | In development | Yes |  | Yes |  | No | Yes |
| Warwickshire | In final stage of development | No | No | No | No | Yes | No – Children only |
| Worcestershire(Research project with University) | Yes | No | No | In development |  | Yes | No |
| Wolverhampton | Yes Serious Violence and exploitation strategy | Joint Children &Adults in development | May be incorporated into screening tool | In development | Adults looking to create a directory of exploitation support services available | No | Setting up an exploitation hub |

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