



Changing the Culture

Warwickshire's Response to Child Sexual Abuse

28th April 2026





Arrival and Registration

Good morning and welcome!

Please ensure you have signed in.

Please ensure you have collected a name badge & delegate pack.

We will begin at 09:30.



Welcome and Purpose of the Day

Charlie Naughton

WCSP Delegated Safeguarding Partner for Warwickshire Police





Housekeeping

Fire Assembly Point is the green concourse directly outside. No drills planned.

Toilets (including accessible) are right outside the main hall.

Oak Tree Room is available as a quiet and private space, if needed.



Agenda

09:30	Welcome & Purpose of the Day	13:45	Trauma Responsive: Connection Counts
09:55	Scale and Nature: CSA Centre	14:45	Practice Leads: Jo Sabin
10:45	Impact of CSA: May Baxter-Thornton	15:15	CSA Strategy: John Coleman
11:30	Break	15:45	Break
12:00	Learning from Local Reviews: Nicki Pettitt	16:05	Embedding Learning: John Coleman
13:00	Lunch	16:30	Evaluation & Close



Centre of
expertise
on child
sexual abuse

Keynote:

**The scale and nature of child sexual abuse
Overcoming the challenges in practice**

Natasha Sabin

Practice Improvement Advisor

29 April 2026

What we will cover today



The scale and nature of child sexual abuse



The challenges in practice



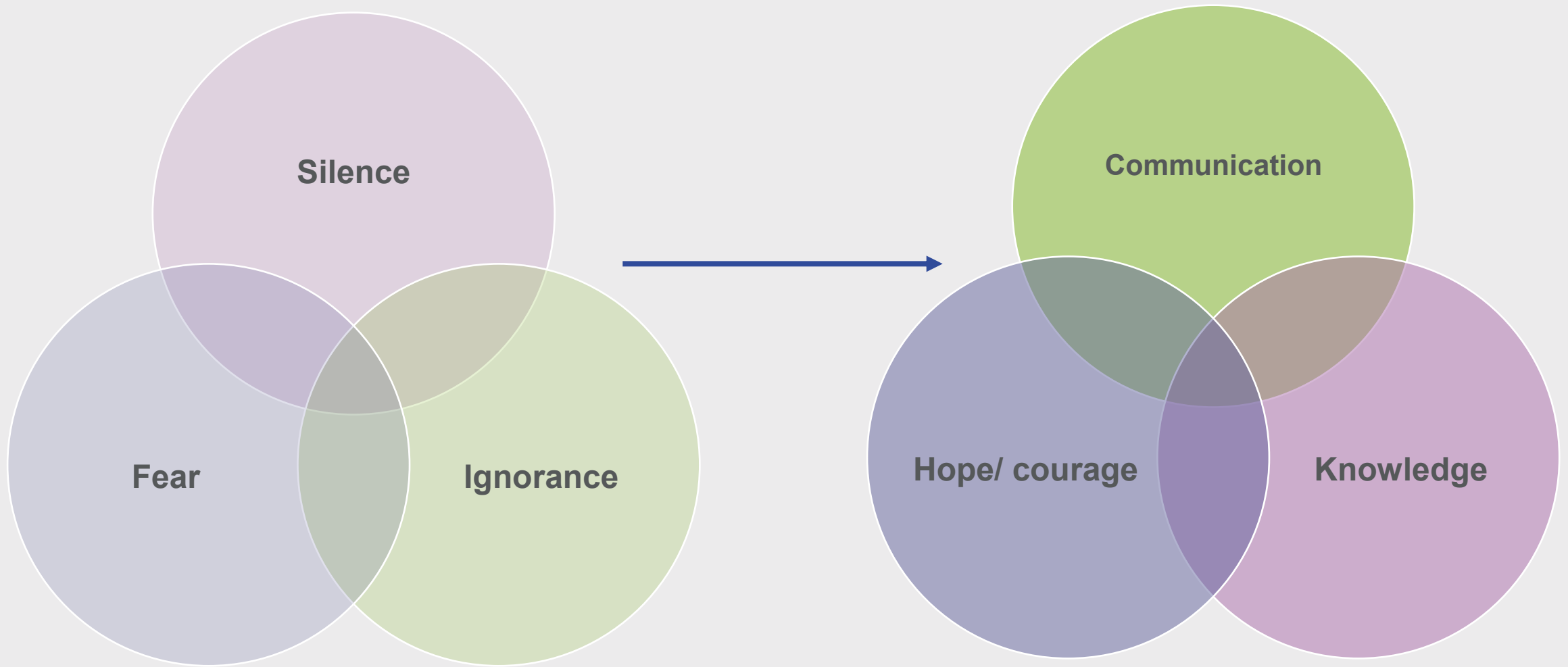
What we can ALL do about it

“Why did nobody ask me?”
(Simon, care leaver, aged 20)

We, as professionals, are being held back by...



When we need hope, communication and knowledge



Understanding the different contexts of offending

**Child sexual abuse within
the family environment**

**Child sexual abuse through
attack by an unknown person**

**Child sexual abuse through
trusted relationships outside
the family environment**

**Child sexual abuse through
a personal connection**

**Child sexual abuse through
an intermediary**

**Child sexual abuse arranged
and perpetrated for payment**

**Child sexual abuse through
online interaction**

**Child sexual abuse through
groups and networks**

**Child sexual abuse through
viewing, sharing or possessing
images**

The scale and nature of child sexual abuse

What *do* we know?

More than one in ten children has been sexually abused by the age of 16 – and this is much higher for girls than for boys

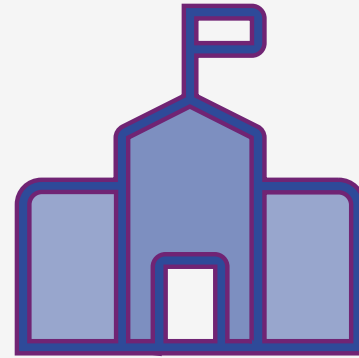


Most common contexts of abuse

The most serious and repeated offences are more likely to be committed by known persons

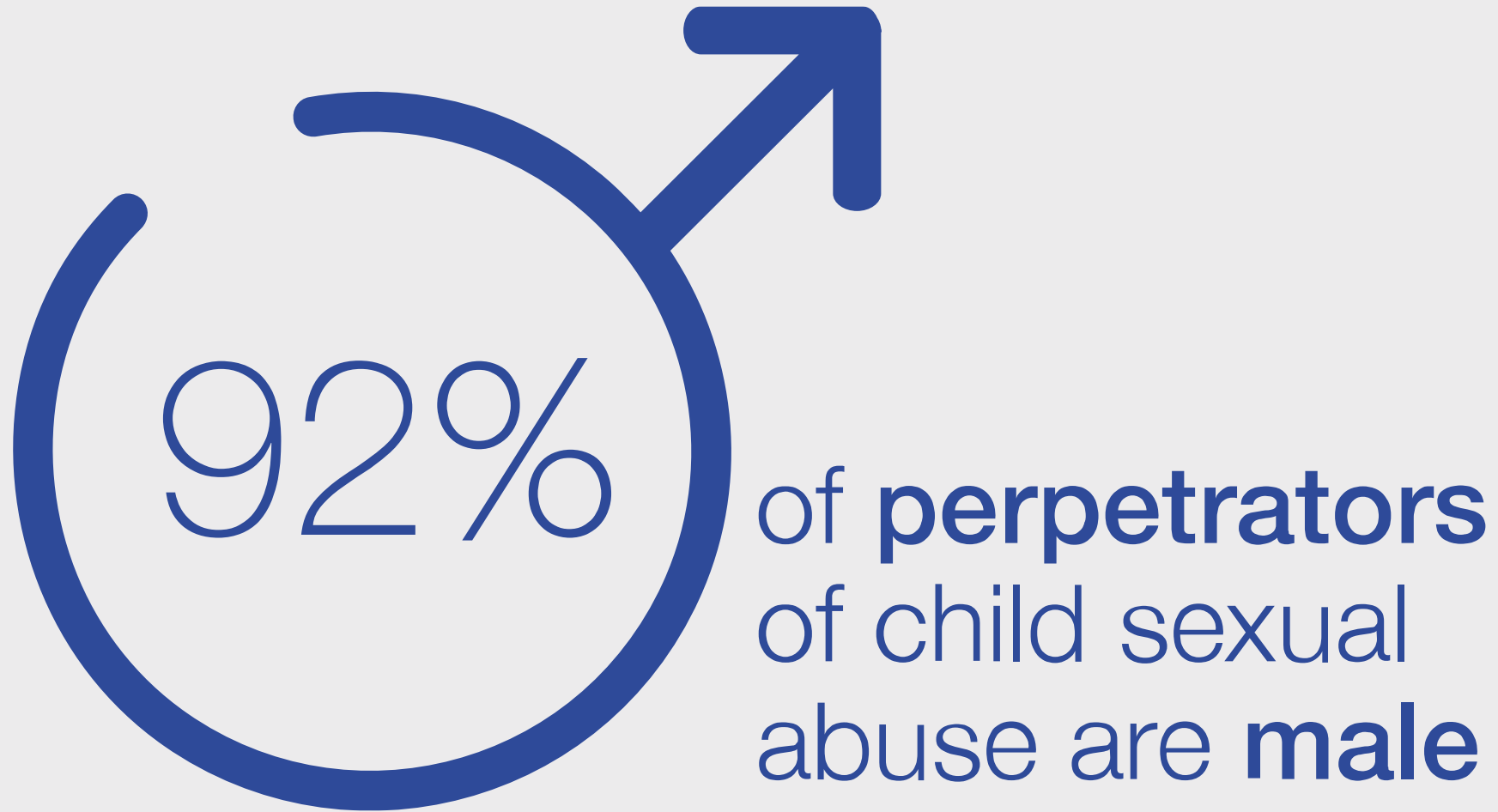


For girls, abuse
by family
members is
more common



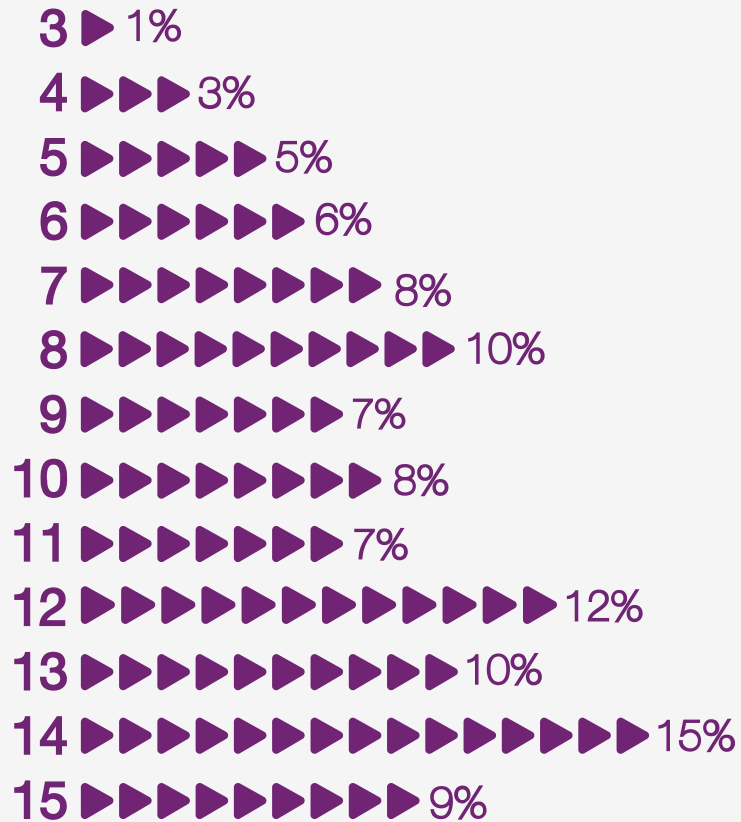
For boys, abuse
by authority
figures is more
common

Sex of those who have sexually harmed



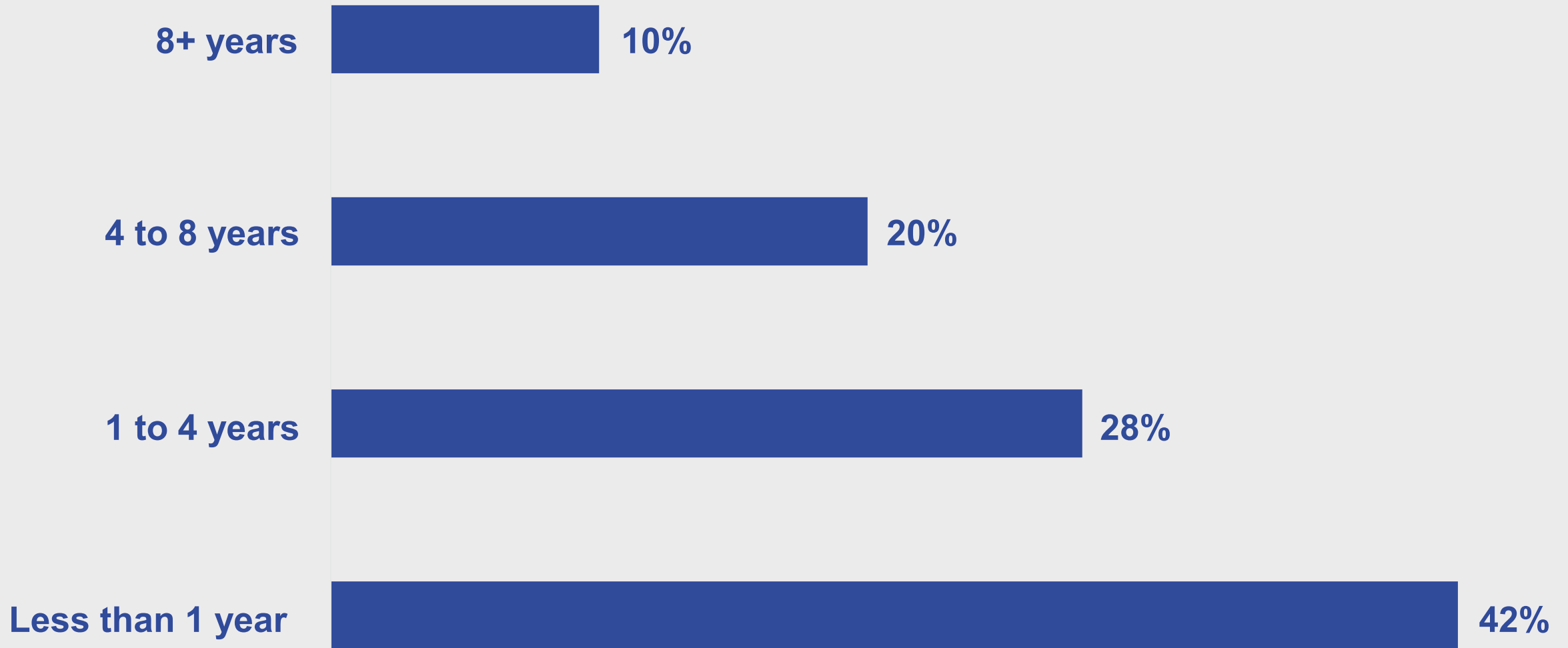
Age of victims

Age when abuse started



- **1 in 3** reported start of abuse before the **age of 9**
- **1 in 3** said it started between ages **9 to 12**
- **1 in 3** said it started between **13 to 15**
- We are **missing 16-17** year olds in this data
- Emerging evidence of abuse of **very young children**

Duration of rape / penetrative abuse



Vulnerabilities in the child's environment

Factors which increase the opportunities for abuse to occur include:

- Children who live in conditions of neglect are **five times more likely** to be sexually abused than those with no experience of neglect.
- Children who spend time in residential care are **four times more likely** to be (or have been) sexually abused than those who live only in a family home.
- Disabled children are **at least twice as likely** as non-disabled children to be targeted by abusers.



Vulnerabilities in the child's environment

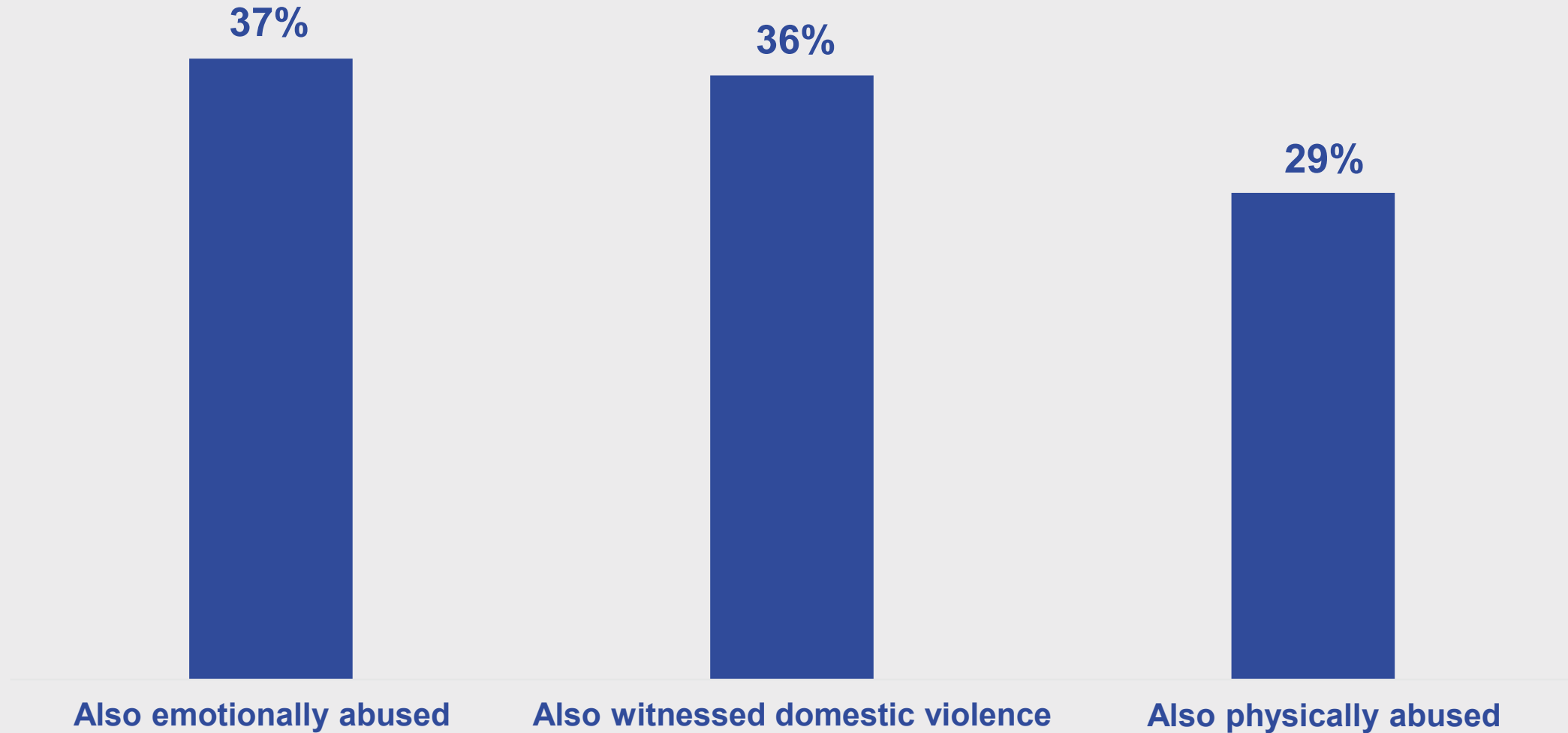


Factors which increase the pressure on families and can undermine their ability to protect children. Including:

- Children who live in a household with someone misusing alcohol or drugs are **three times more likely** to be sexually abused than children not exposed to parental substance misuse.
- **Over a half of children** who are sexually abused also experience other forms of child abuse, most frequently emotional abuse or witnessing domestic abuse.

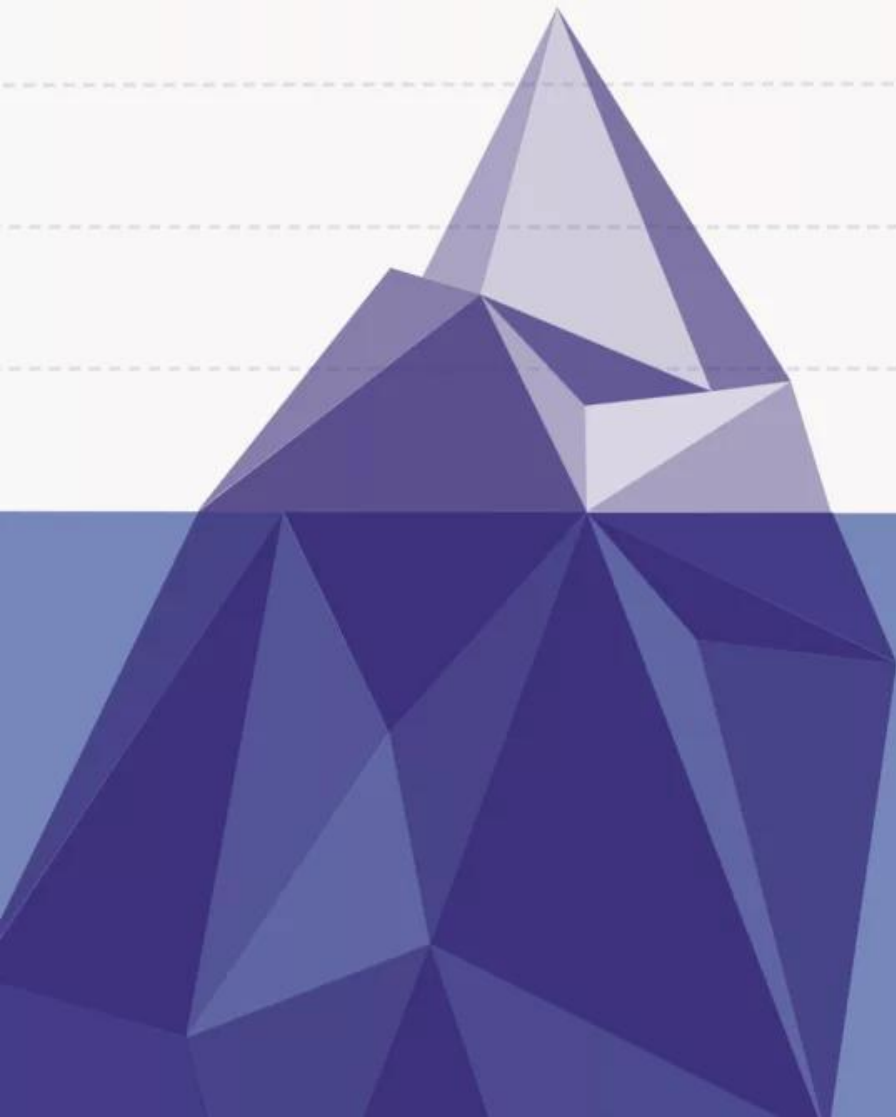
Overlaps with other forms of child abuse:

Including emotional abuse, physical abuse or domestic abuse



Far more children are sexually abused than services identify

Child sexual abuse in 2023/24: Trends in official data
csacentre.org.uk



2,200 children on a child protection plan due to child sexual abuse (England)

10,500 children seen by sexual assault referral centres (England and Wales)

45,000 children assessed at risk of sexual abuse* (England)

101,000 child sexual abuse offences recorded by the police (England and Wales)

500,000

children are estimated to be sexually abused every year**

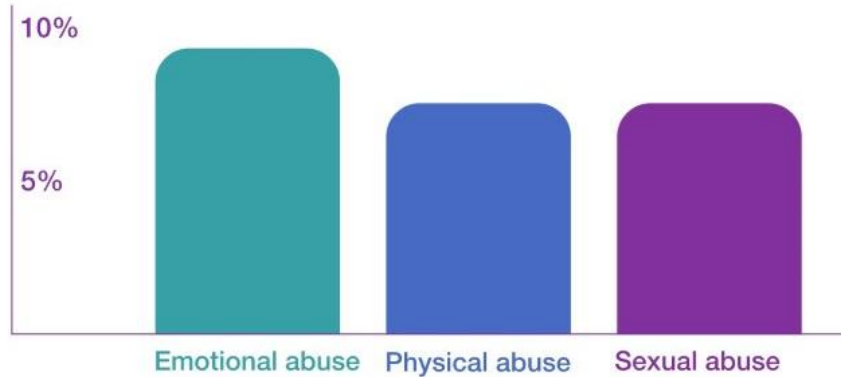
Sources: Home Office, Police recorded crime and outcomes, 2023/24; Department for Education, Characteristics of Children in Need, 2023/24; NHS England 2025. *Includes assessments recording concerns of child sexual abuse and exploitation.** Estimate calculated using single-year prevalence estimated by age group (Radford et al. 2011, Childhood abuse and neglect in the UK today) and the Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates, 2023. Please note: numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred/thousand.

Sexual abuse is just as common as other forms of childhood abuse

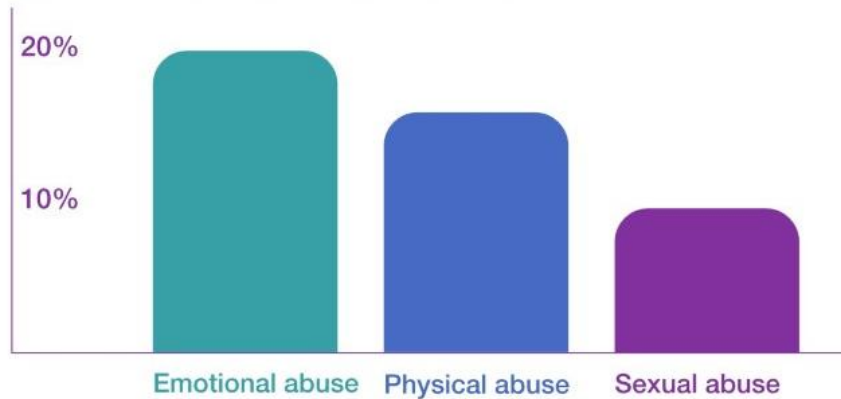
Child sexual abuse in 2023/24: Trends in official data
csacentre.org.uk

But concerns of sexual abuse are far less likely to be identified and named

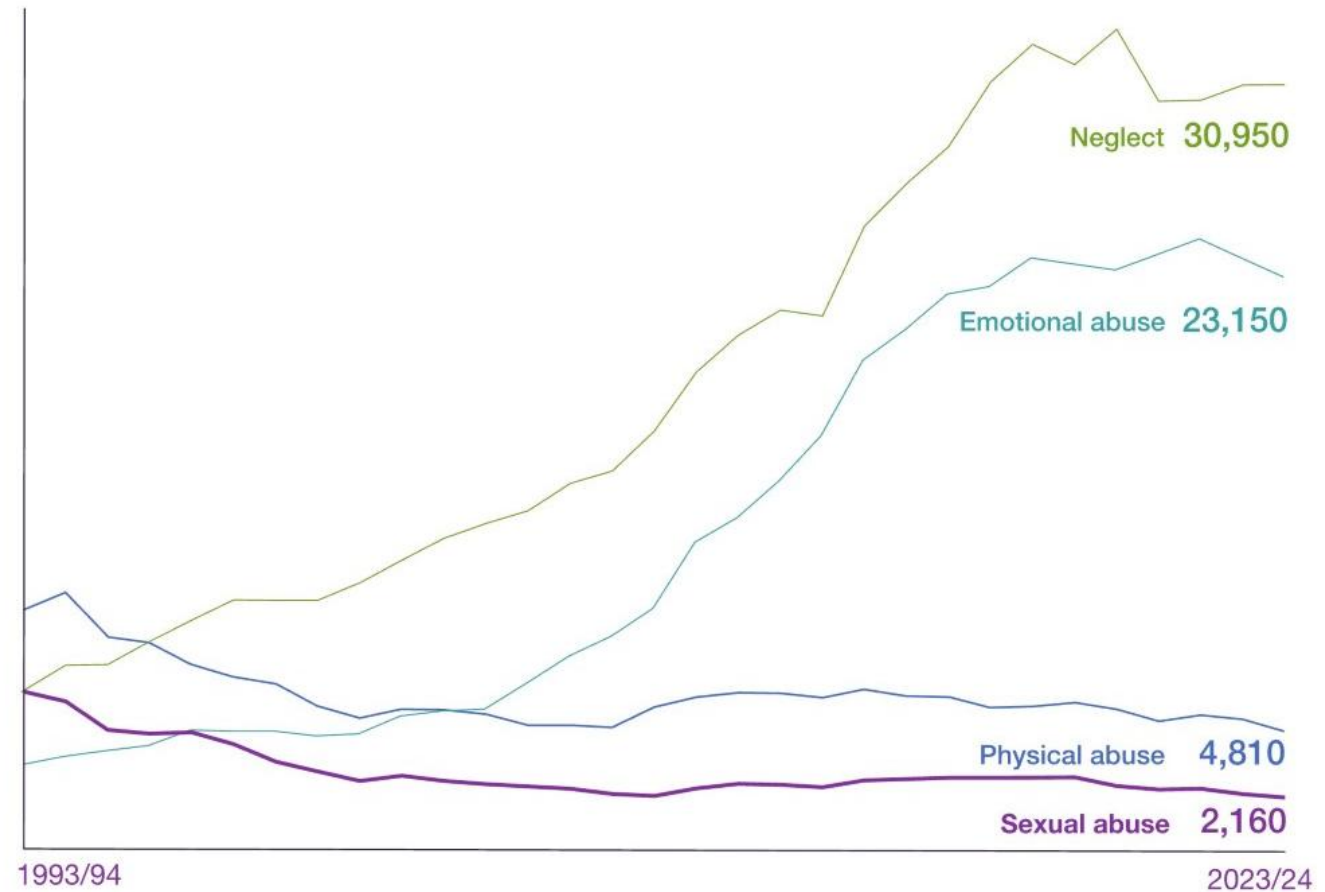
Similar levels of child abuse are identified in surveys



...but lower levels of child sexual abuse are identified in child in need assessments

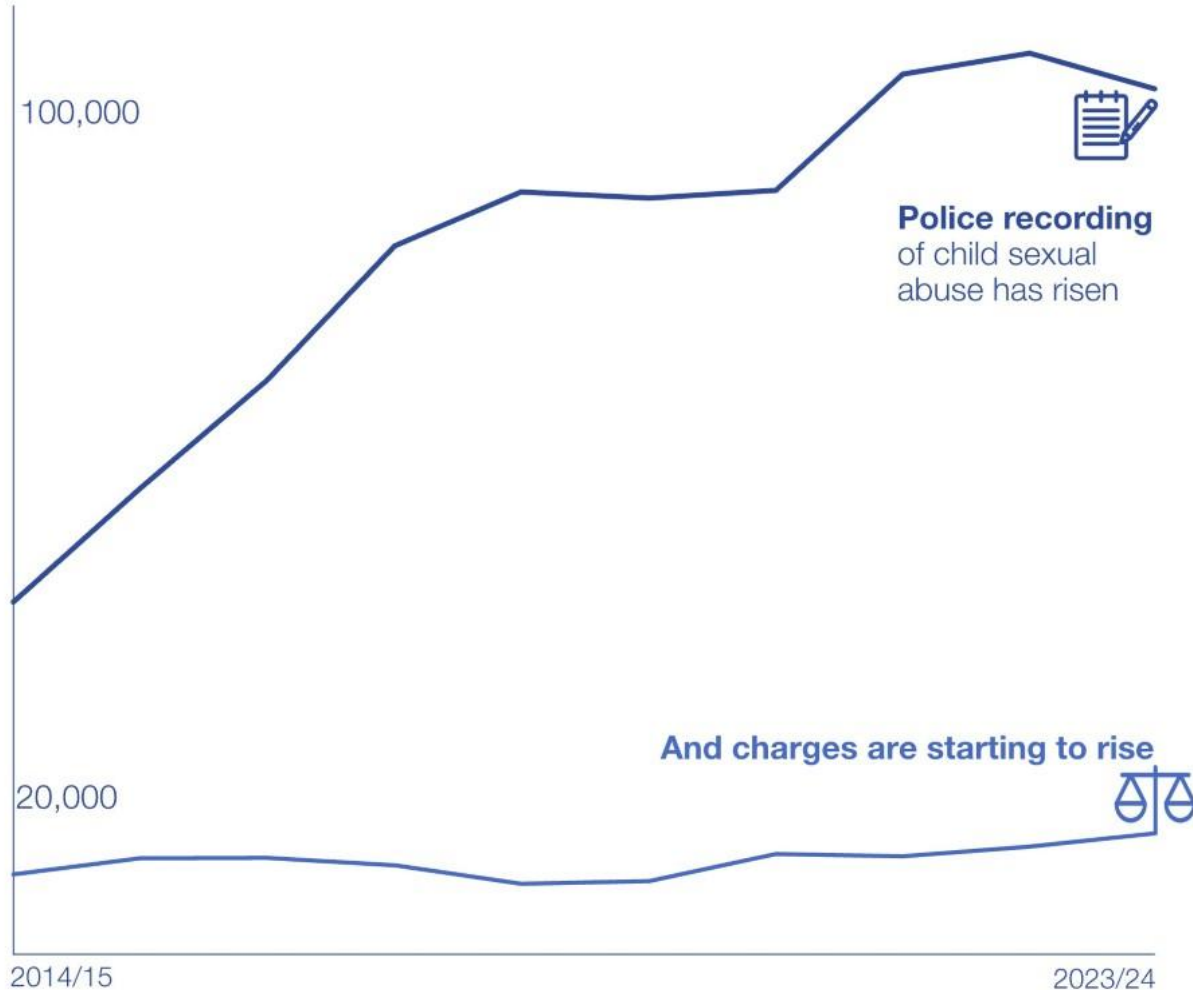


Number of child protection plans by form of abuse



More recording of child sexual abuse but it takes longer to complete at court

Child sexual abuse in 2023/24: Trends in official data
csacentre.org.uk



Average time from recording to charge



Average time from charge to completion at court



The time taken for a case to progress from charge to completion has increased by 29% while time from recording to charge has fallen slightly.

The Data Insights Hub

Local and national data on child sexual abuse in England & Wales

The Data Insights Hub is our **new interactive online dashboard** designed to enable professionals, commissioners and researchers to find, understand and use official data on child sexual abuse.

Using interactive maps and charts, the Data Insights Hub displays official data from local authorities and police forces, alongside up-to-date estimates on the scale of child sexual abuse, **all in one place**.



csacentre.org.uk/data-insights-hub/

“I wanted them all to notice”

Protecting children and responding
to child sexual abuse within the
family environment

November 2024

“I wanted them all to notice” National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment

“The findings of this national review (...) highlight a systemic failure across all agencies to recognise and respond when children are at risk of, or are already, being sexually abused by someone in their family environment.”

“I wanted them all to notice” National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment, page 7

National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment - Findings

Not hearing children's voices and understanding their needs

Understanding parents' and carers' contexts, vulnerabilities and needs

Challenges in **identifying signs, understanding risk and raising concerns**

Issues in **responding to concerns** of intrafamilial child sexual abuse

National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment - Recommendations

- 1: A National strategic plan
- 2: Professional knowledge, skills and confidence
- 3: Enquiries and investigations
- 4: Assessment of people presenting a risk of sexual harm
- 5: Talking to children
- 6: Health
- 7: Criminal investigations and charging advice
- 8: Family Courts
- 9: Cafcass
- 10: Inspectorates

Recommendations for safeguarding partners

Strategic planning

**Professional knowledge,
skills and confidence**

Enquiries and investigations

**Assessment of people
presenting risk of sexual
harm**

Talking to children

Health

Challenges in practice

Our response has always been too reactive

A pendulum swinging between media panics



Centre of expertise
on child sexual abuse

THE PAEDO IS LANDING



50

**MORE MONSTERS
TOOK PART IN
CHILD SEX RING**

- DOZENS ARE STILL WALKING FREE
- EVIL GANG TOOK AWAY MY DIGNITY
- WE'RE SORRY FOR NOT ACTING SOONER, SAY COPS AND COUNCIL
- AND HOW THE FAR RIGHT ALMOST WRECKED THE TRIAL

SPECIAL REPORTS: PAGES 4,5,6 & 7

PERV HUNT .COM

Website names
wanted paedos

28 MONTHS

SICKO JAILED

MAN SENTENCED FOR SEXUAL ABUSE

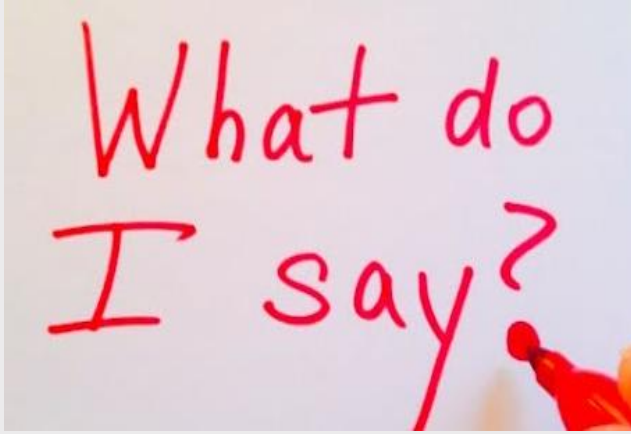
FROM 10 TO 20 YEARS
BY UP TO 20%
BY 2010

Assumptions that follow the stereotypes...

- That we can tell by looking
- That men who are ‘**good with children**’ do not sexually abuse them
- That if children say they **want to see** their abusive parent, they cannot be abusing them



The obstacle of fear

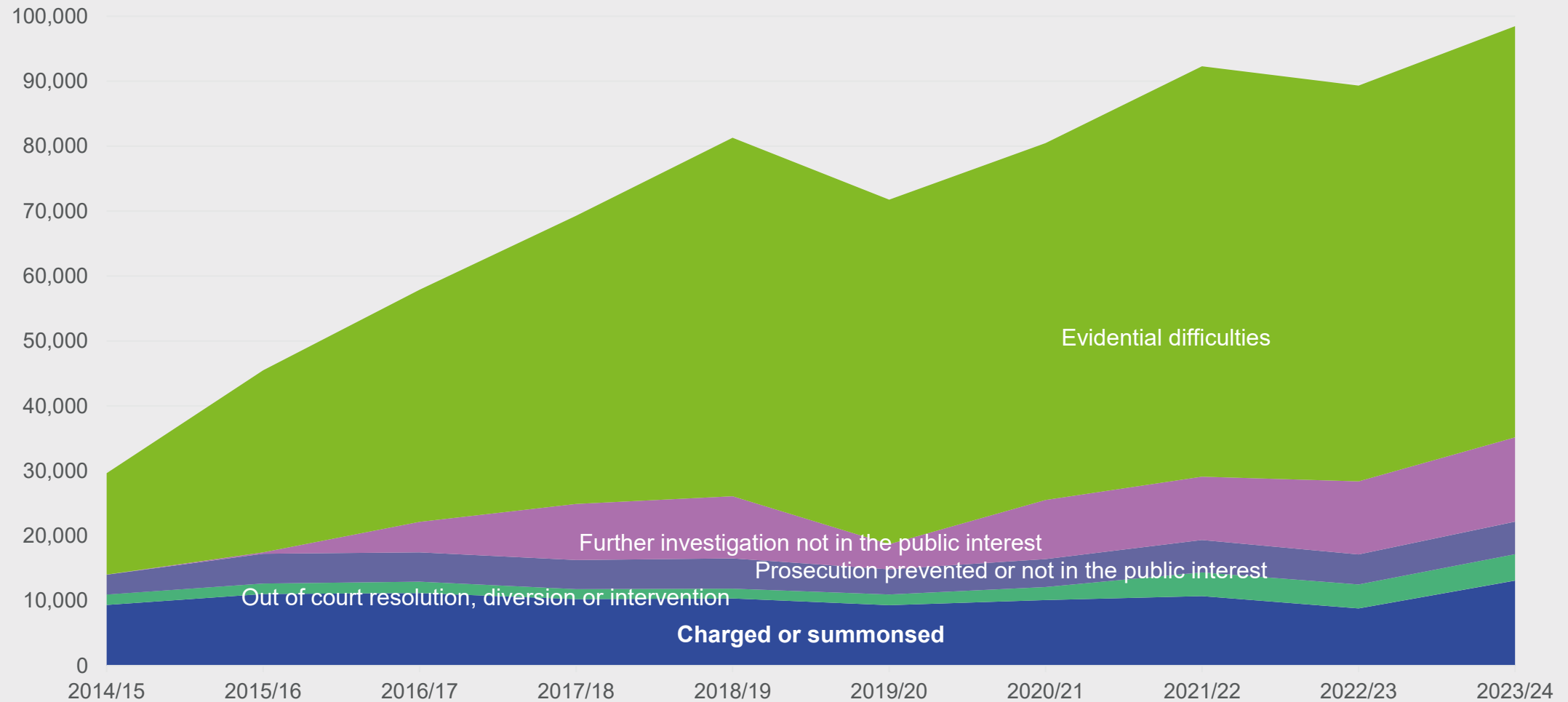




It can feel like a bit of a minefield
...Asking questions

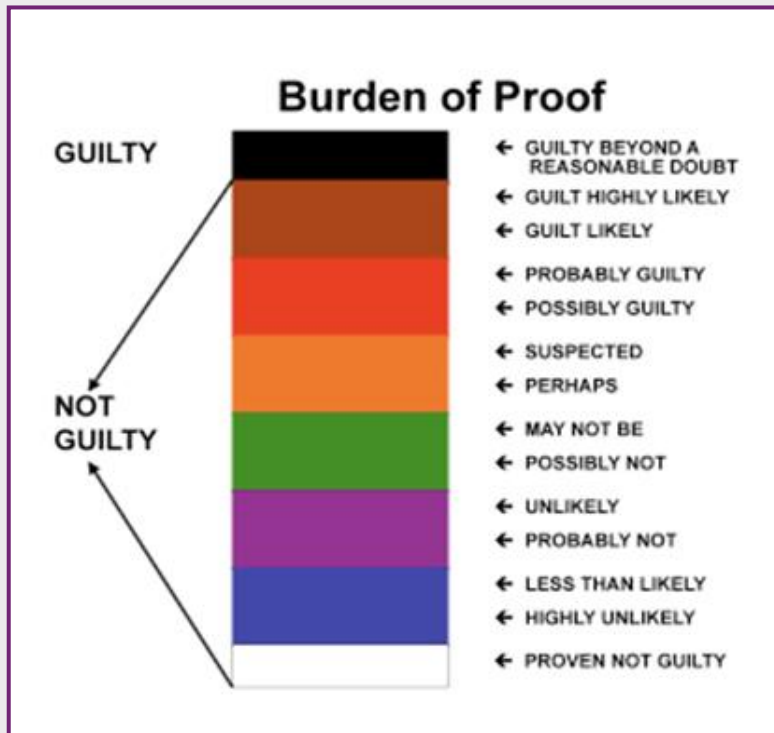
Investigation outcomes of child sexual abuse offences

2014/15 to 2023/24



The Burden of Proof

Beyond Reasonable Doubt



Balance of Probabilities



The implications of a 'no further action' decision

An NFA decision from Police/CPS has undue influence over the remainder of the system's response to children.

- 'The police have taken NFA so there's nothing we can do'
- 'There's no evidence the child has been abused'
- 'The child made must have made this up'
- 'I can't say I believe the child if there is no evidence for it'
- 'There is no evidence this child was previously abused'
- 'We can't refer to specialist help as there's no evidence it happened'
- 'The family won't work with us now, and we don't have the evidence to make them'

Recommendation 3: Enquiries and Investigations

- Safeguarding partners to audit and review local guidance and practice so that a clear distinction is made between thresholds about significant harm to a child and those influencing criminal investigations.
- Safeguarding decisions must be based on **all indicators of sexual abuse** and should not rely solely on verbal statements from children.
- At the conclusion of section 47 enquiries and police investigations, there is a multi-agency discussion to consider risk to the children and how they will be protected and supported.
- The term 'no further action' should not be used in these circumstances as it is too often understood to mean the abuse did not happen. The term 'no further police action at this time' is more appropriate. There should be a clear record of why a criminal investigation has been closed and that this information has been shared with other relevant agencies.

The evidence:

Sexual abuse is rarely 'clear cut'

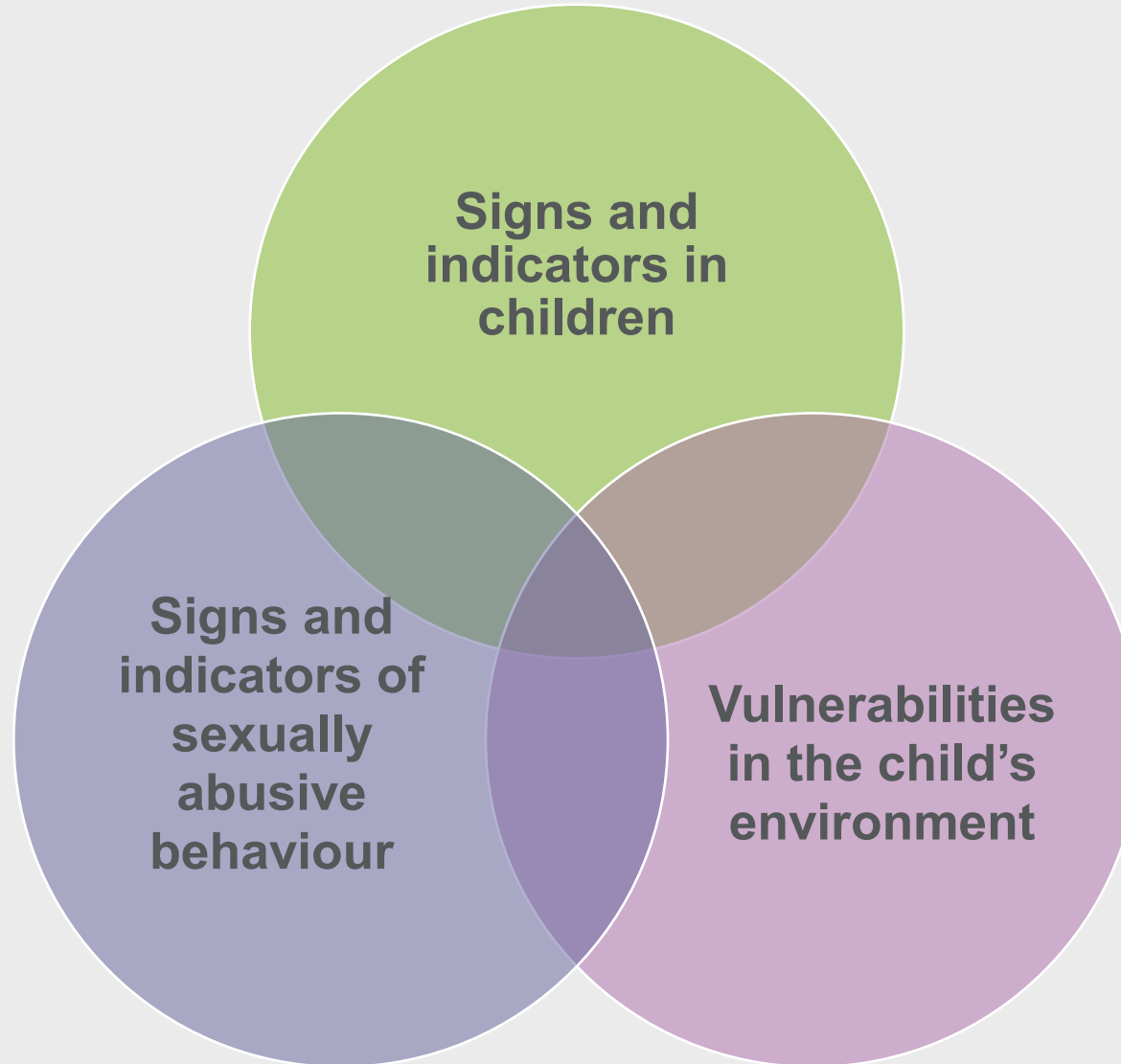
How can we 'absolutely know' abuse has taken place?

- Clear disclosure...repeated at least twice
- Medical evidence of sexual harm
- Admission of guilt from perpetrator
- Witnessed by someone else
- Images/computer records of the abuse exist

Rarely will we reach a position of 'absolute knowing'



Building a picture of concerns



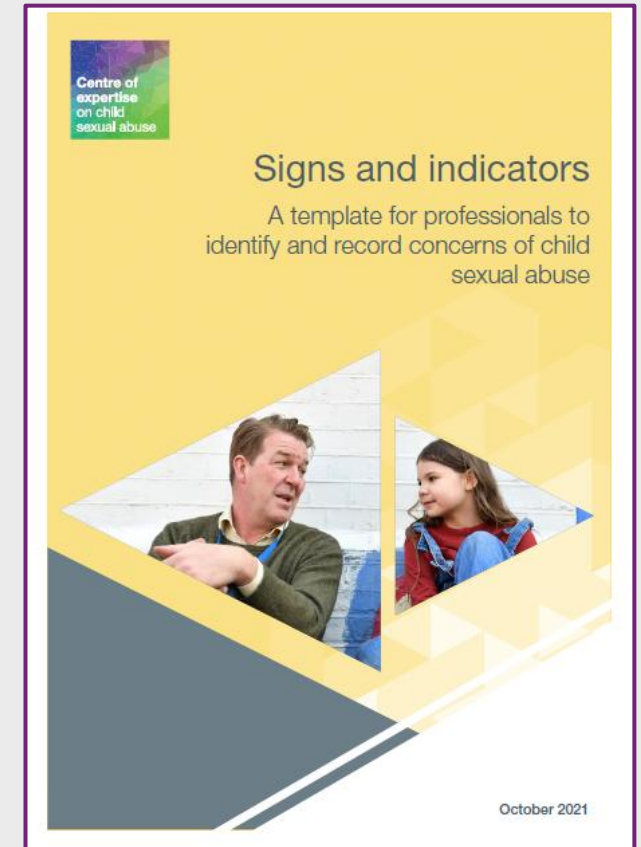
Signs and indicators

A template for professionals to identify and record concerns of child sexual abuse

Designed to provide a common language amongst professionals to discuss, record and share concerns that a child is being, or has been, sexually abused.

Focuses on 4 areas:

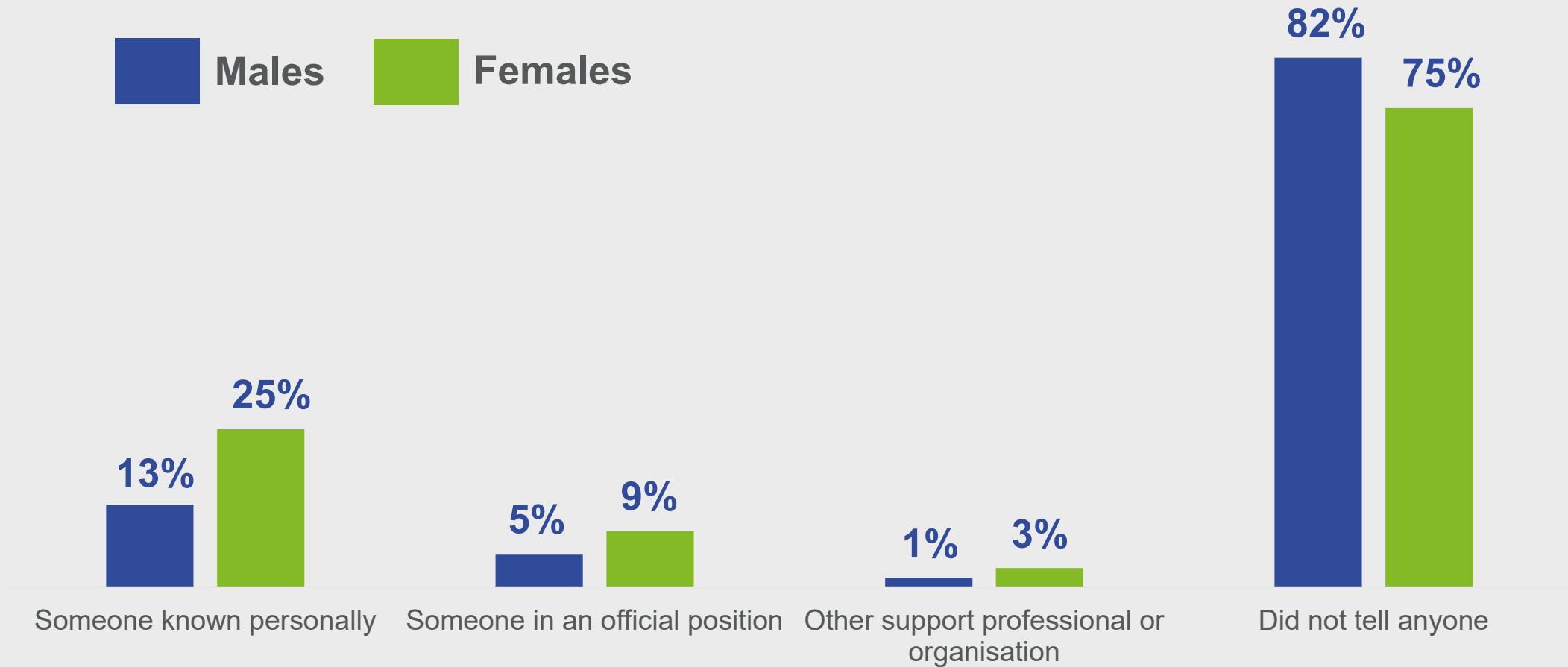
- Behaviours in the child
- Physical signs in the child
- Behaviours in those around the child
- Signs and indicators in the wider environment



“Professionals rely too heavily on children to verbally disclose”

Report into Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment, JTAI 2020

Who was told at the time



Recommendation 5: Talking to children

Government should ensure that practitioners understand that they **can and should talk directly to children**, and families, about concerns of sexual abuse.

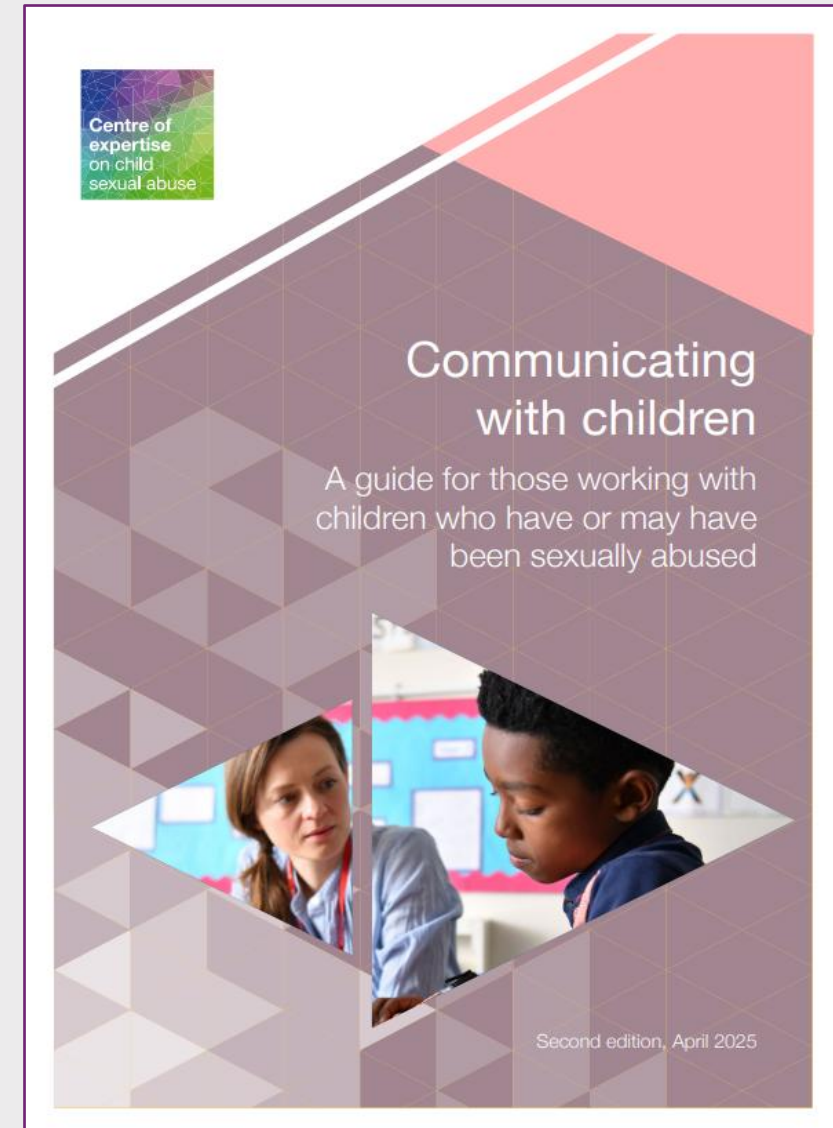
Communicating with children

A guide for those working with children who have or may have been sexually abused

All children can communicate, and it is vital that the **adults around them learn how to listen, understand and support them** when they are concerned about sexual abuse.

Download the guide today to help provide more children with the opportunity to communicate about what has happened to them.

<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/communicating-with-children/>



Understanding and responding well to concerns of child sexual abuse is a multi-agency responsibility

Working together

Centre of expertise
on child sexual abuse

Workforce development



We have developed and begun to deliver a comprehensive, **tiered workforce development programme** focused on improving the recognition and response to child sexual abuse across the children's workforce.

- eLearning
- Webinar programme

Would you like to know more about these topics and more?

- Understanding the impact and signs and indicators of child sexual abuse
- Communicating with children when you have concerns of child sexual abuse
- Supporting parents and carers affected by child sexual abuse
- Safety planning in education (for the education workforce)
- Technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour
- Understanding adults who have sexually harmed
- How sexual abuse happens in families
- Responding effectively to sibling sexual behaviour



WSCP Training Resources
Webpage

Building capacity and ensuring sustainability

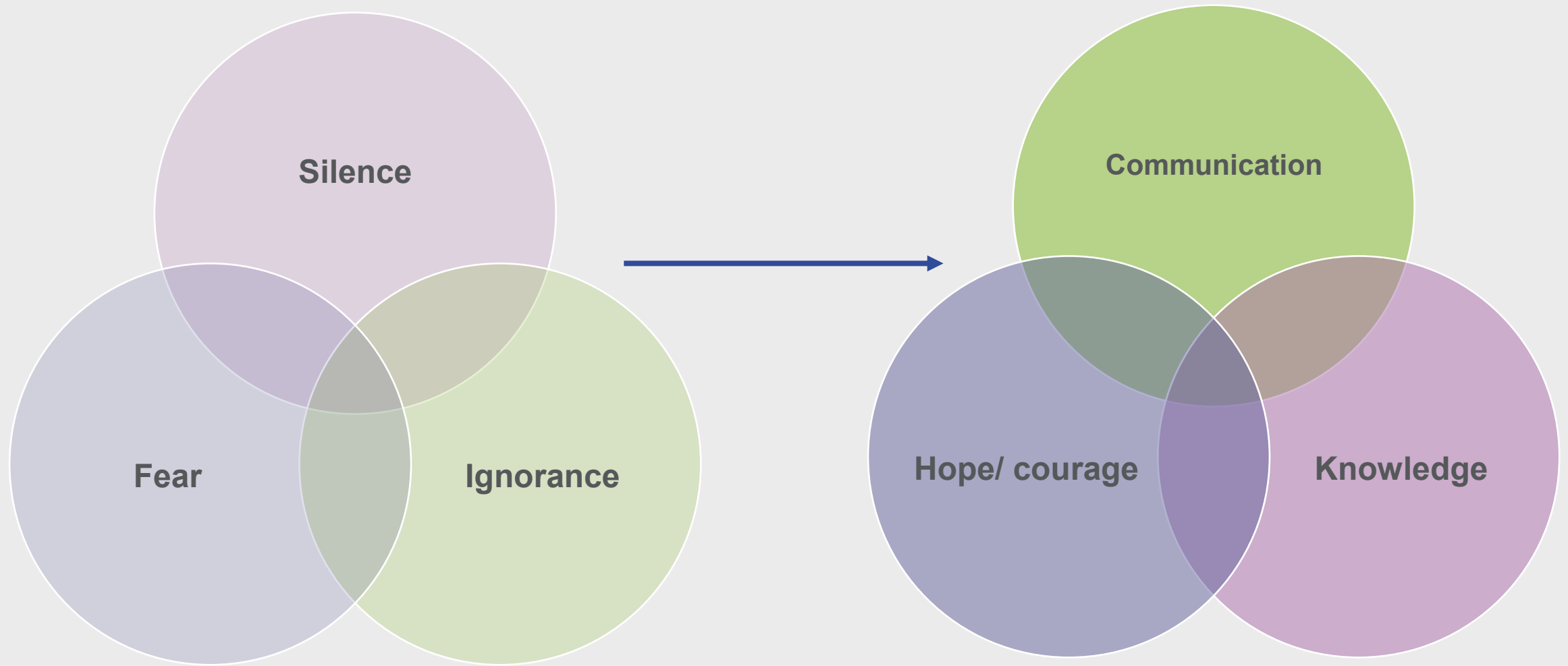


Train the Trainer programme



Practice Leads Programme

When we need hope, communication and knowledge



Together, we have collective strength

“Remember there are always far more people who want to protect children than those who want to abuse them. We should use – and be heartened by – the great potential in collective strength”.

Sarah Nelson, 2016

Find a support service



Being able to access support, as a child, young person or adult, is crucial to mitigating the impacts of child sexual abuse.

To help make this easier, the CSA Centre has created a directory containing **over 350 child sexual abuse support services in England and Wales.**

The **accessible, searchable Support Services Directory** is a simple way for victims and survivors, their families, or professionals, to find services that can help.

Find support services and get help today.

csacentre.org.uk/get-support/

Stop It Now Helpline



Stop it now

If you are worried about your own thoughts or behaviours or are worried about the behaviours of someone around you, you can contact the **Stop It Now Helpline** for **free, confidential advice:**

0808 1000 900

Thank you

For more information, please contact:

Natasha Sabin

Practice Improvement Advisor

Natasha.sabin@csacentre.org.uk



**Centre of expertise
on child sexual abuse**

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csacentre.org.uk

29 April 2026

The impact of child sexual abuse

May Baxter-Thornton

Hands up exercise



Hands up if you can

- **ride a bike**
- **remember when you first rode your bike**
- **remember exact date you first rode your bike**
- **remember where you first rode your bike**
- **remember how it made you feel**

Who am I?

- Project manager
- Independent sexual violence advocate (ISVA)
- Domestic violence support worker
- Advocate
- Residential children's worker
- Consultant to IICSA
- Honorary visiting fellowship at IPPPRI
- Trainer for CSA Centre
- Public speaker
- **Survivor of child sexual abuse**



An invitation into my world

- What happened
- How that made me feel
- How I behaved as a child / adolescent
- What I was thinking at the time
- Behaviour of my father
- My treatment by my family
- My treatment by other people



Different ways I was impacted

My expectations for what I was to become

Body image & Self-esteem

Relationships

Memory disturbances

Hyper vigilance

Dissociation

Stigma

- Children do not have the vocabulary to tell, but then neither do adults
- Children may be happy around an abuser, they may feel safe because you are there.
- Fear of the subject matter can make survivors seem abhorrent and therefore difficult to deal with.
- Fear of what will happen prevents survivors disclosing.
- Not wanting to harm you can also prevent survivors from disclosing.
- Lack of understanding of subject matter.





Stigma

- Lack of understanding of coping strategies can lead to harsh judgement of the victim.
- Victim blaming culture is prevalent.

How can we improve things?

More training to
build confidence
in responding

More open
discussions
about CSA

Banish stigma
and judgement

Don't be afraid
to discuss the
topic

Recognise your
own feelings
and ask for help

Thank you

Any questions

Centre of expertise
on child sexual abuse





Break

Oak Tree Room available as a quiet and private space

Refreshments at the rear of the room

Re-join at 12:00





Learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Nicki Pettitt

Independent Reviewer and Scrutineer





Who am I?

A CSPR lead reviewer

Safeguarding Partnership Scrutineer

Social worker and manager

Multi-agency reviewing for 15 years

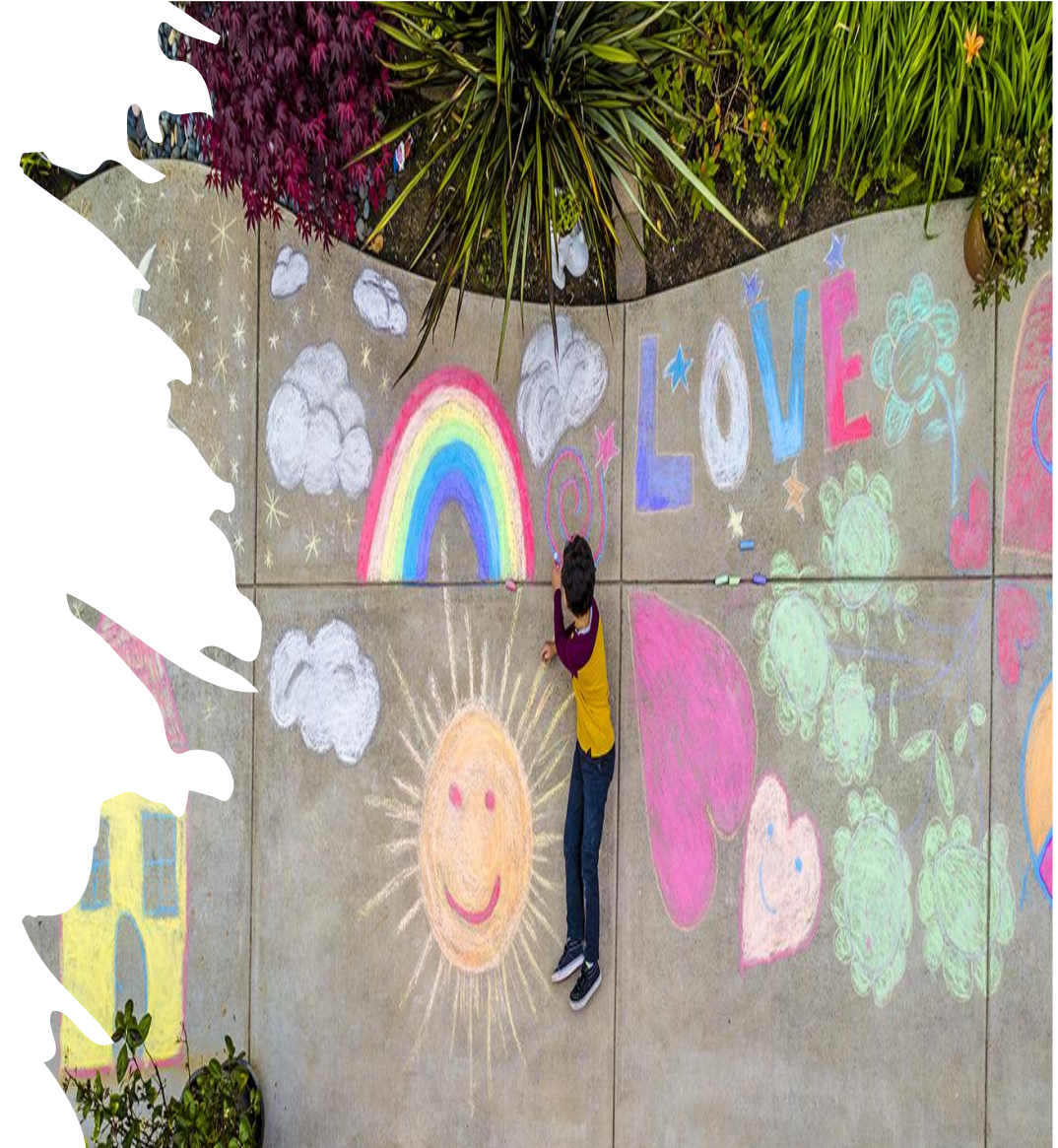
Your independent critical friend



Focus today:

Learning from national review

Learning from local reviews





National Review: Child Sexual Abuse within the Family Environment (SAFE)

Launched November 2023. **Published** 26 November 2024.

Focus on identification, assessment, response to child SAFE.

Key strands:

Early identification of risks, risk assessment and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Responses to allegations or suspicions of intra-familial child sexual abuse.

Cross cutting themes, such as maltreatment (e.g. neglect), other vulnerabilities (e.g. SEND) and race, ethnicity and religion.



The review is based on an analysis of **136 rapid reviews** involving **193 children**

Demographics

- 75% of the children were under the age of 12
- 24% involved children with learning disabilities, autism or ADHD
- 27% of children were from Black or other minoritised communities
- 10 children became pregnant and 7 children died by suicide

Cross-cutting themes

- 47% of reviews involved neglect
- 29% of reviews involved domestic abuse experienced by the child
- Over a third of reviews featured a family member with a known history of sexual offending or who was known to present some risk of sexual harm.



What the review found:

A **systemic failure** across all services to recognise and respond when children are at risk of, or are already, being sexually abused by someone in their family environment.

Practice issues identified include:

Not hearing children's voices or understanding their needs

Not understanding parents' and carers' contexts, vulnerabilities and needs

Challenges in identifying signs, understanding risk and raising concerns

Issues in responding to concerns of
SAFE



Key Learning for Practitioners 1

Systemic Challenges

- Children are often ignored or disbelieved, and risks posed by family members are frequently overlooked or minimised.
- Practitioners lack the support, guidance and direction needed to intervene effectively.

- Practitioners rely too heavily on children to verbally report abuse and lack proactive engagement to identify it.
- Fear of interfering with investigations stops practitioners from talking directly to children about possible abuse.

Challenges in Practice

Professional Development

- Critical need for enhanced training and resources for professionals.
- Practitioners need to be equipped to recognise and respond to signs of child sexual abuse confidently.



Key Learning for Practitioners 2

- Domestic abuse and coercive control significantly impact parents' ability to protect their children.
- Practitioners often fail to recognise and address the influence of domestic abuse on safeguarding.

Impact of Domestic Abuse

Race & Ethnicity

- Practitioners do not sufficiently consider children's race, ethnicity, and culture in their responses.
- Lack of understanding of the specific needs and context of children from Black and other minoritised communities.

- Disabled children are at increased risk of sexual abuse.
- Practitioners often misinterpret signs of abuse as related to the child's disability, highlighting the need for better understanding of disabled children's needs.

Support for Disabled Children



'Marie' and 'Coco'

- Both children (young teenage girls) sexually abused by male foster carers
- Neither disclosed to a professional

THINK ABOUT THAT



'Marie' and 'Coco'

Learning

The **increased vulnerability** of children in care BUT their previous experiences then **mask the cause** of behaviours that should indicate concerns about SAFE.

The need to properly understand a **child's lived experience** and that their **behaviour is communication**.

The importance of **consistent and trusting relationships** with professionals when a child is not living with their birth family.

Identifying, understanding and responding to adult behaviours that might indicate they pose a sexual risk. **Challenging** poor care and **recognising** neglect/coexisting harm.

Professionals must be able to **'think the unthinkable'** about carers who they may know well and who they work closely with.

How we respond to a child when they make an allegation of SAFE is exposed. Short – medium – and longer-term support.

The need for **effective and timely criminal investigations** that support children and young people.

Concerns about the carers were accepted because of a wish to ensure on-going stability for the children. Challenging old school carers. **'Better the devil you know.'**

An abused child is likely to have **complicated feelings about 'disclosing'** - relationship with the abuser, grooming, fear of what a new placement may hold.



What Marie and Coco said

When I was in hospital after an overdose, professionals should have wondered and asked me why I was trying to take my own life

I didn't know my social worker –there was no relationship or trust. I have had so many and they don't seem to know anything about my life

My abuser was always telling us not to trust the professionals, and they gave me no reason to trust them based on my own experience

Kids on an SGO need visits to check they are well cared for – and must be seen without the carers there

Professionals need training to spot the signs of sex abuse and to do something about it

When I met with CAMHS, they asked me about my past but not really asking about what might be happening to me now

Tell someone. You **WILL** be believed and you will never have to go back there again...



Key Learning From Other Local CSPRS

- Rosie – published. 6-year-old sexually abused by step-grandfather (risky adult)
- Another – as yet unpublished. 3-year-old sexually abused by step-father

Mothers have their own vulnerabilities e.g. care experience, cannabis/alcohol use, **domestic abuse** with different partners, exploitation. One SAFE as a child.

Safety plans that state mother should supervise all contact between the children and an adult who may be a risk to a child. In context of controlling and violence **domestic abuse.**

The need to **seek and listen to the voices of friends, neighbours, family members** with concerns, even if the parent states they are malicious.
(Source bias?)

Sexually harmful behaviour between siblings evident in both children's families. E.g. 3-year old's father/uncles. Confidence in this area of safeguarding?

Poor information sharing about risks and safety plans across agencies, including nursery, GP, health visitor, PA, midwives, housing and another LA where one Mother had lived.

Low levels of confidence in discussing concerns with parents where SAFE is suspected, and in asking children if they have been harmed. **Fear could undermine investigation.**

Both children lived with **neglect**, with step-parents, with domestic abusive (**cumulative harm**) without adequate contact with professionals – due to avoidance and lack of consent.

Children not always spoken to. Symptoms not always considered as possible indicator of sexual abuse e.g. oral thrush, soreness, UTIS...

When new babies expected, issues with recognising **impact of concerns about older children** and **lack of robust pre-birth interventions** – partly due to lack of consent and poor knowledge of historic risks.



Message of hope...

Please take care and look after
yourself tonight



**Any
questions?**



Lunch

Exhibitor stands in Oak Tree Room

Lunch provided at the rear of the room

Allergens/dietary requirements in the centre, labelled

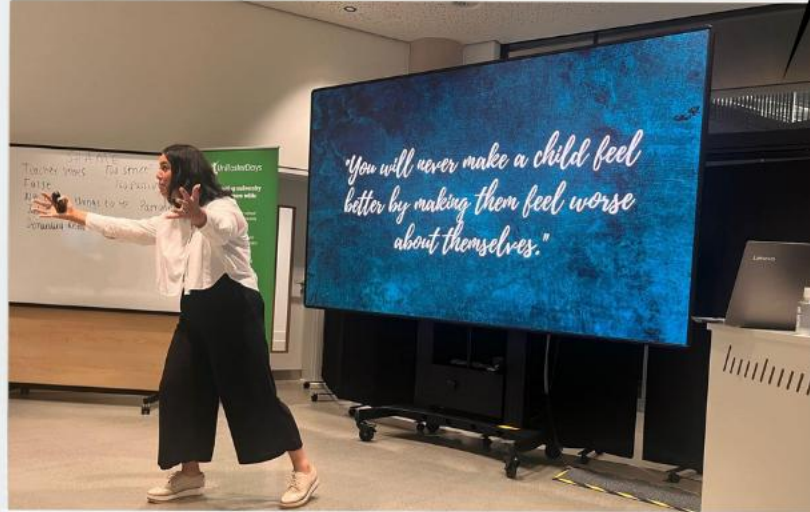
Re-join at 13:45



CONNECTION COUNTS

HANNAH THOMAS





CONNECTION COUNTS

HANNAH THOMAS



CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS



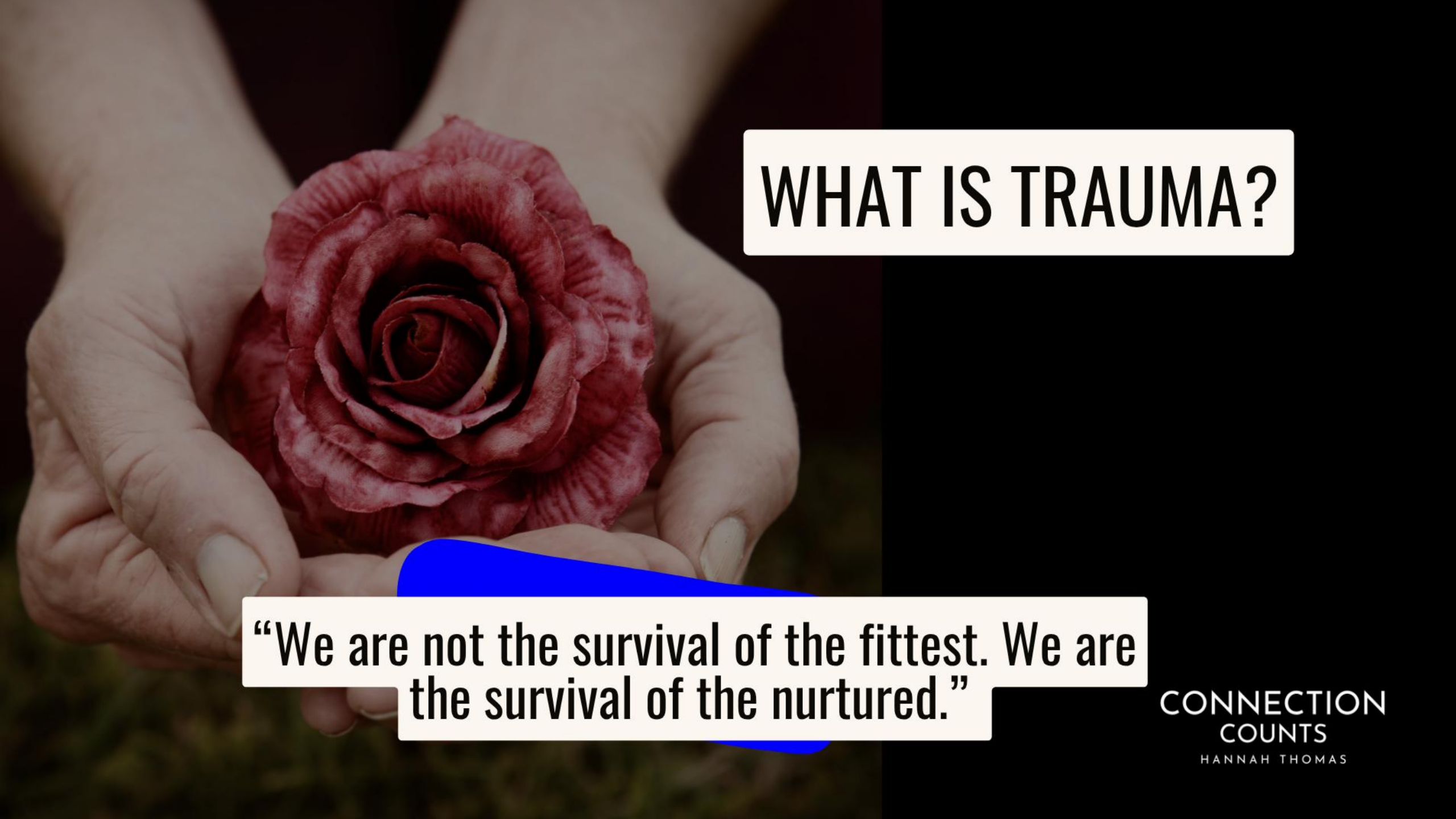
Trauma Aware



Trauma Informed



Trauma Responsive

A close-up photograph of a pair of hands gently cupping a vibrant red rose. The hands are positioned on the left side of the frame, with the fingers slightly curled around the petals. The rose is in full bloom, showing multiple layers of deep red petals. The background is dark and out of focus. A white rectangular box with a black border is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title text. Another white rectangular box with a black border is overlaid at the bottom center, containing a quote. A blue brushstroke-like graphic element is visible behind the quote box.

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

“We are not the survival of the fittest. We are the survival of the nurtured.”

**CONNECTION
COUNTS**
HANNAH THOMAS



THE 4S'S OF ATTACHMENT

Safe, Seen, Soothed & Secure (Siegel & Bryson)

Imagine that these 4 little love tanks are in every child's heart. Each tank represents one of the 4S's. If there is a deficit in any of those tanks, then children will go in search of anything that could fill up those tanks.

CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS

"To feel safe"
"To feel noticed"

"I trust my teachers / I
like my teachers."

What makes the best teacher ?

Year 9: Fairfax School 2019

“

"My teachers like me!
& to smile."

”

"My teachers
remember me"



CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS



BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATION

CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS



WE MUST DEAL WITH THE ROOT NOT THE FRUIT

CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS

WEAVING & INFUSING

TRAUMA-INFUSED & TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

Throughout the whole system: A cultural & paradigm transformation

VALUES & PRINCIPLES

DR KAREN TREISMAN

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Design
Building
Space



SUPERVISION

Performance
Reviews &
Appraisals

TEAM

Meetings, Working
Group, Feedback &
Communication

COLLECTIVE

MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION

Decision making in all
aspects. Lived
experience & multiple
voices.

RECRUITMENT

Job description,
communication,
interview, feedback,
induction.

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Empathetic,
compassionate,
supportive

EVERY INTERACTION IS IMPORTANT

TYPE & CHOICE OF

LANGUAGE

THE ORGANISATIONS VISION, MISSION & VALUES

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, LEGISLATION

WRITING

EVALUATION & MONITORING



STAFF WELLNESS

Wellbeing &
Self-care



TRAINING

Continuing
workforce
development

MATERIALS

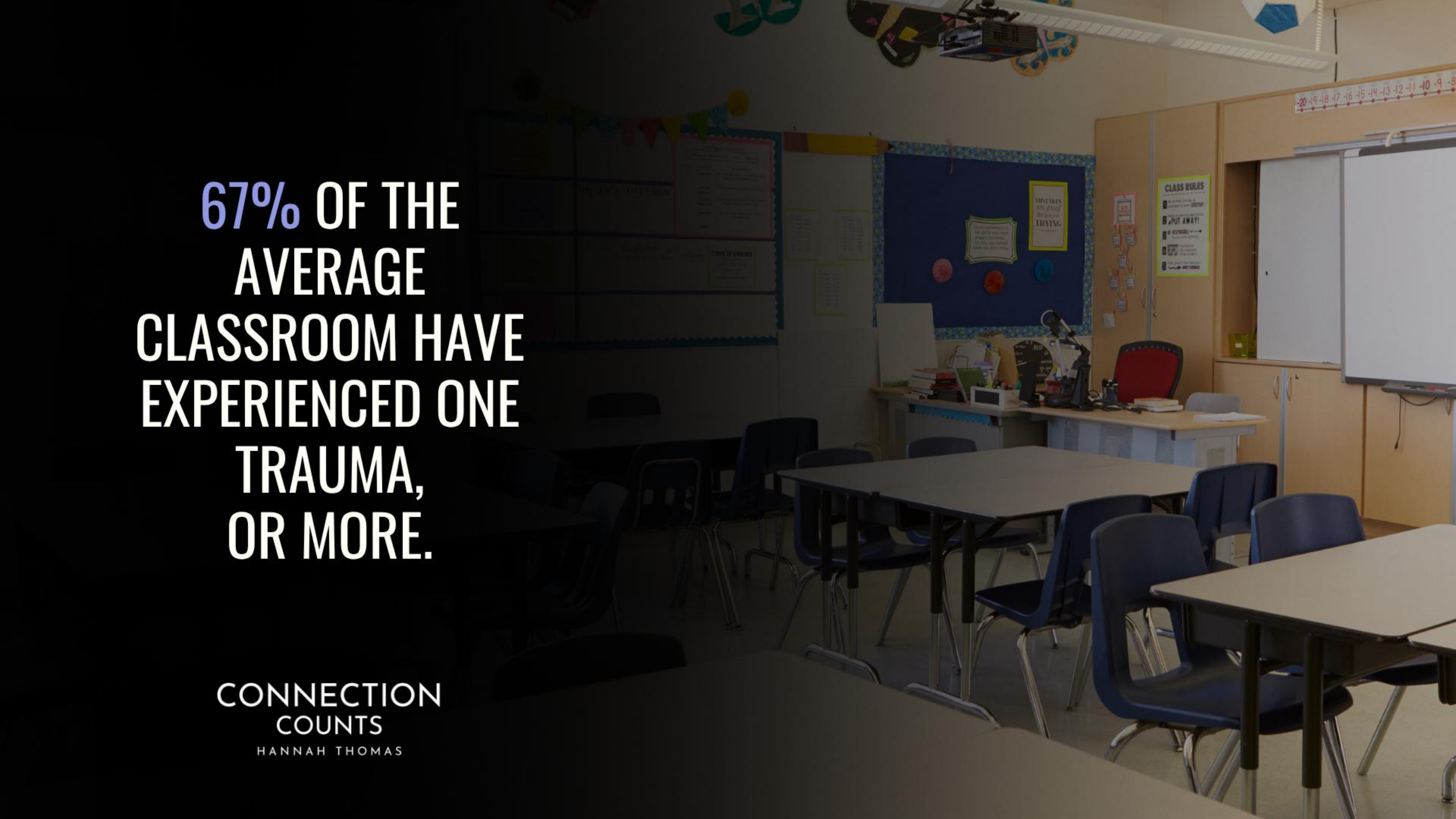
Signs, brochures.

ASSESSMENT & TOOLS



TYPES OF SERVICES & APPROACHES

Offered & available

A photograph of a classroom with several rows of desks and blue chairs. The walls are decorated with various educational posters, including a large one on the left and a smaller one on the right. A whiteboard is visible on the right side of the room. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**67% OF THE
AVERAGE
CLASSROOM HAVE
EXPERIENCED ONE
TRAUMA,
OR MORE.**

**CONNECTION
COUNTS**
HANNAH THOMAS

TOOLS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN ...



THESE ARE KEY FOR EFFECTIVE SUPPORT

SYMPATHY

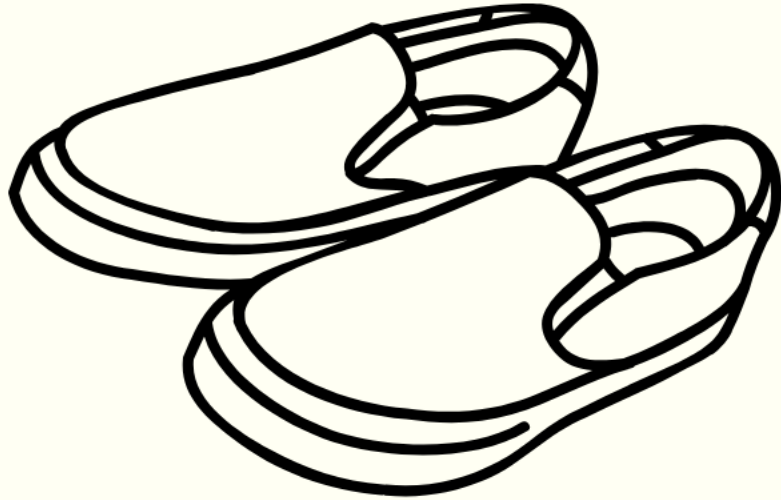
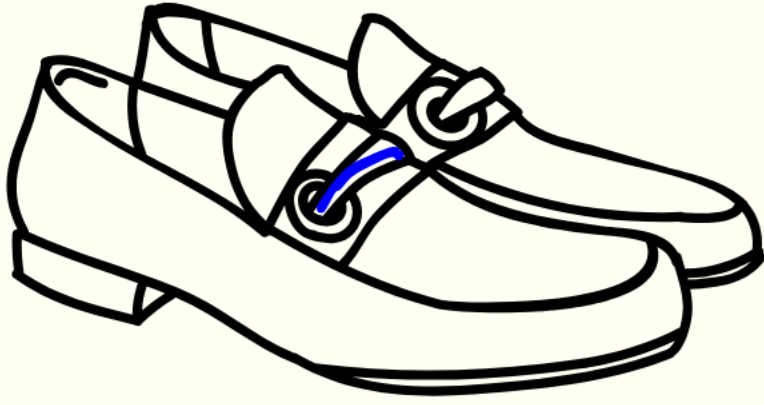
Drives
disconnection

EMPATHY

Drives
connection

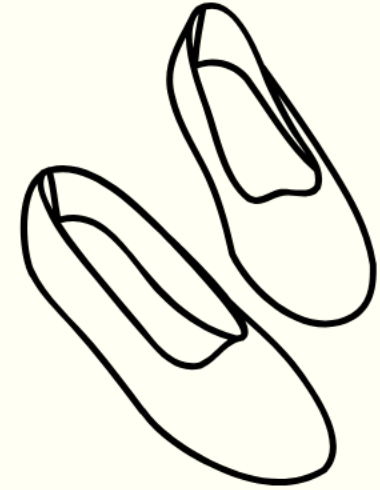
COMPASSION

Empathy in
action



TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF.

SWAP THEM WITH THE PERSON
NEXT TO YOU!



WALKING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES ...



- TOO TIGHT, TOO BIG
- UNCOMFORTABLE
- DOESN'T FIT
- DOESN'T LOOK GOOD
- UGLY
- SMELLS!



**HOW MUCH
MONEY IS IN
YOUR BANK
ACCOUNT?**

**CONNECTION
COUNTS**
HANNAH THOMAS



CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS

CONNECTION COUNTS

HANNAH THOMAS

Hannah Thomas
hannah@connection-counts.com
Private Facebook Group -
Connection Counts



CONNECTION COUNTS PODCAST HAVE A LISTEN!

Have a listen to the Connection Counts podcast where we meet with professionals in the field to discuss a range of topics relating to connection, trauma and supporting children.

CONNECTION
COUNTS
HANNAH THOMAS



Practice Leads Programme

Strengthening confidence and
clarity in responding to child sexual abuse concern

Jo Sabin, Claire Adkins and Practice Leads

WCC Practice and Learning Hub





Changing the Culture: Adopting the Practice Leads Programme



**Safeguarding
Partnership
& DSPs**



**Experienced
Practitioners**



Warwickshire Objectives

Child sexual abuse is identified, named and responded to effectively.

Increased knowledge and confidence in recognising the signs and indicators, and in communicating with children when there are concerns of child sexual abuse.

Knowledge and awareness of available CSA Centre resources.

Application of CSA Centre resources (including the Response Pathway) to support practice.

Effective prevention strategies and a good understanding of who poses a risk and what they need to reduce that risk.



Finding our Practice Leads

Core experience & credibility

Partnership & systems working

Practice & professional qualities

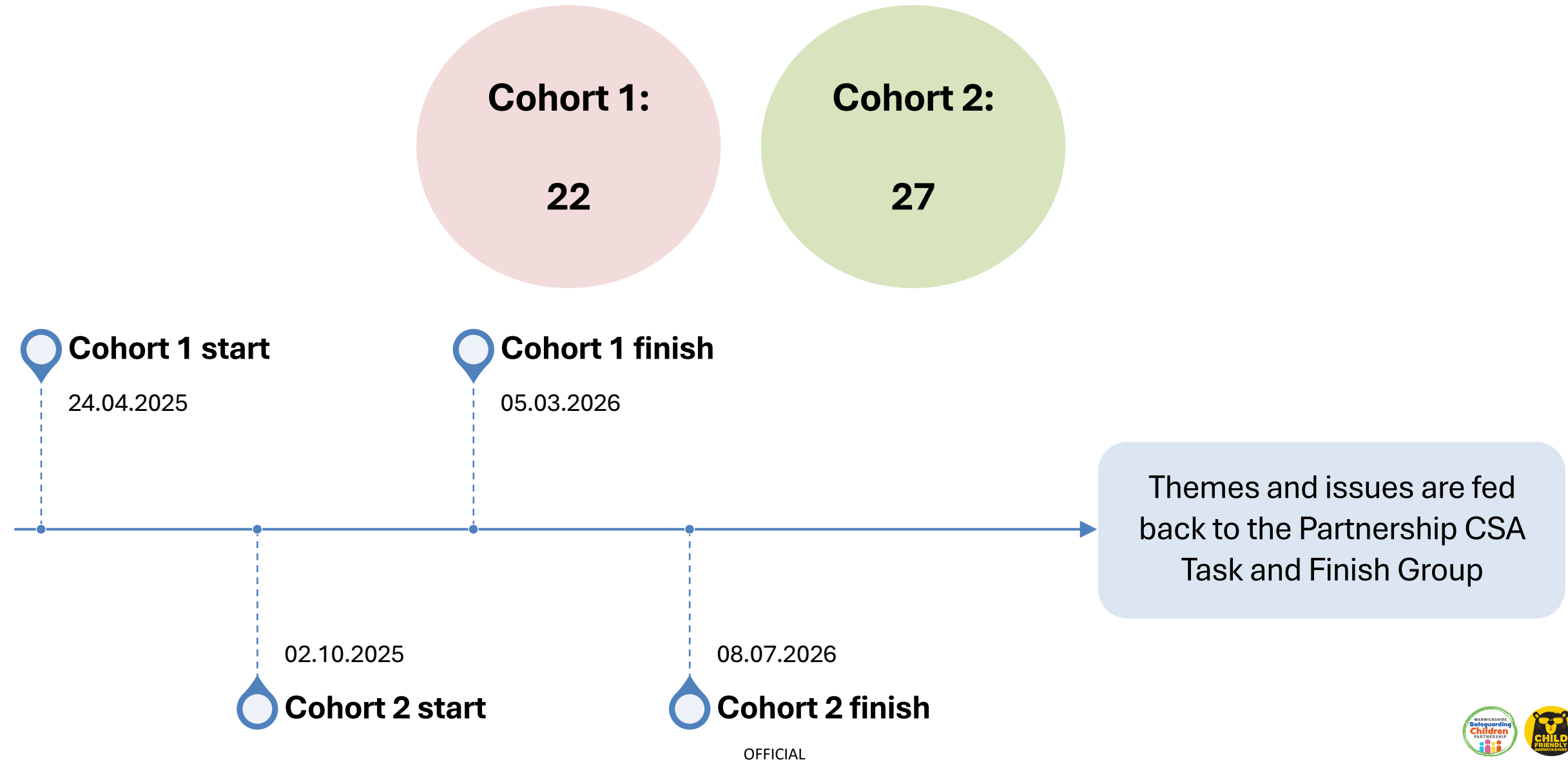
Commitment & capacity

Leadership, learning & support skills

Organisational support



Growing our Practice Leads Network





Who are your Practice Leads?

Health

- Health colleagues in Multi Agency Child Protection Team (MACPT)
- Health & Care Resource Group (HCRG)
- South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust (SWFT)

Education

- Education Safeguarding

Children & Families

- Family Information Service
- Domestic Abuse Team
- MACPT
- Family Help
- System Team
- Family Connect
- Youth Justice
- Leaving Care
- FAST
- Children in Care
- Fostering
- IROs
- Practice and Learning Hub

Police

- Detective Sergeants in Multi Agency Child Protection Team (MACPT)

Voluntary Sector

- Sports partners (Think Active)



Practice Leads Programme

Scale, nature and impact of child sexual abuse

Working with children, disclosures and the social work role

Child sexual abuse in the family context – offenders and offending

Child sexual abuse in the family context – non-abusing partners

Children and young people who have displayed sexually harmful behaviour

Child sexual exploitation

Online sexual abuse

Adult females who sexual abuse

Working with survivors

Child wellbeing and the child protection process in child sexual abuse cases



Quote from Practice Lead

"I've found the Practice Leads Programme very beneficial, particularly in how it has broadened my knowledge around child sexual abuse. One of the most valuable tools has been the guidance on signs and indicators. When I'm completing a consultation and there are signs of domestic abuse, mental health concerns, or neglect – without any disclosures of sexual abuse, which we know children often do not disclose – I regularly refer practitioners to the CSA signs and indicators and the website. I believe this has helped increase awareness and understanding of CSA across other agencies and among social workers."

Katie - Lead Child Protection Practitioner MACPT



Quote from Practice Lead

"The training has increased my confidence in supervising frontline colleagues who are managing these concerns. It has also helped me share key safeguarding information more effectively across the Trust, including with senior leaders, supporting a consistent and evidence-based approach.

During this time, I delivered presentations to raise awareness of available resources, statutory guidance, and best practice. I also identified gaps in staff knowledge and initiated a safeguarding assurance visit in the acute setting, ensuring learning needs were recognised and addressed.

Overall, this training has strengthened both individual practice and the Trust's wider safeguarding capability, supporting a more informed and consistent approach to protecting children."

Róisín - Named Nurse for Safeguarding



Quote from Practice Lead

"A key area of practice development and theme in consultations has been child sexual abuse. The training has been instrumental in changing the team's approach to CSA, and therefore the reflective discussions with colleagues across the service. We have 2 members of our team who are on Cohort 1 of the CSA Practice Leads Training. They are disseminating this to the rest of the Systemic Team and linking in with the colleagues on the training from other services in their locality to support the embedding of best practice principles."

Ruth - Clinical Director (Service Manager) Systemic Practice & Family Therapy
Team



Practice Leads Roles & Responsibilities

To share learning via briefings/training

Offer consultation

Share and embed resources e.g. Signs and Indicators template

To create safe spaces to "think" Child Sexual Abuse

To share their specialist knowledge



Embedding in Practice

Changing the culture

Learning from survivors' experience and feedback

Open discussions and talking more

Not just about disclosure/police thresholds

Intersectionality with neglect, domestic abuse, etc.

Tools – signs and indicators



Table Top Discussions

Introductions to your Practice Leads



Further Information

WSCP Business Team and Website

wscp@warwickshire.gov.uk

<https://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk/child-sexual-abuse/>

Practice and Learning Hub Manager

practiceandlearninghub@warwickshire.gov.uk

Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse

www.csacentre.org.uk



Strengthening the System

Gathering your priorities for a multi-agency child sexual abuse strategy

John Coleman

Chair of WSCP and Delegates Safeguarding Partner for Children & Families, WCC





Table Discussion Questions

What should Warwickshire's Child Sexual Abuse Strategy be trying to achieve, and what must it prioritise to get there?

What would strengthen how we prevent child sexual abuse, identify it earlier, and respond more effectively across Warwickshire?

What needs to be in the strategy to ensure children, families, and professionals are properly supported?



Insight to Impact

Partner commitment to embed the learning across everyday practice

John Coleman

Chair of WSCP and Delegates Safeguarding Partner for Children & Families, WCC





Evaluation & Close

Charlie Naughton

WCSP Delegated Safeguarding Partner for Warwickshire Police





Evaluation & Close



**WSCP Business
Team and Website**

Evaluation Form

wscp@warwickshire.gov.uk

<https://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk/child-sexual-abuse/>

**Centre of Expertise on
Child Sexual Abuse**

www.csacentre.org.uk