

# Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton (HIPS) Child Exploitation Newsletter

Quarterly professionals update from the HIPS Child Exploitation Group - Spring 2020

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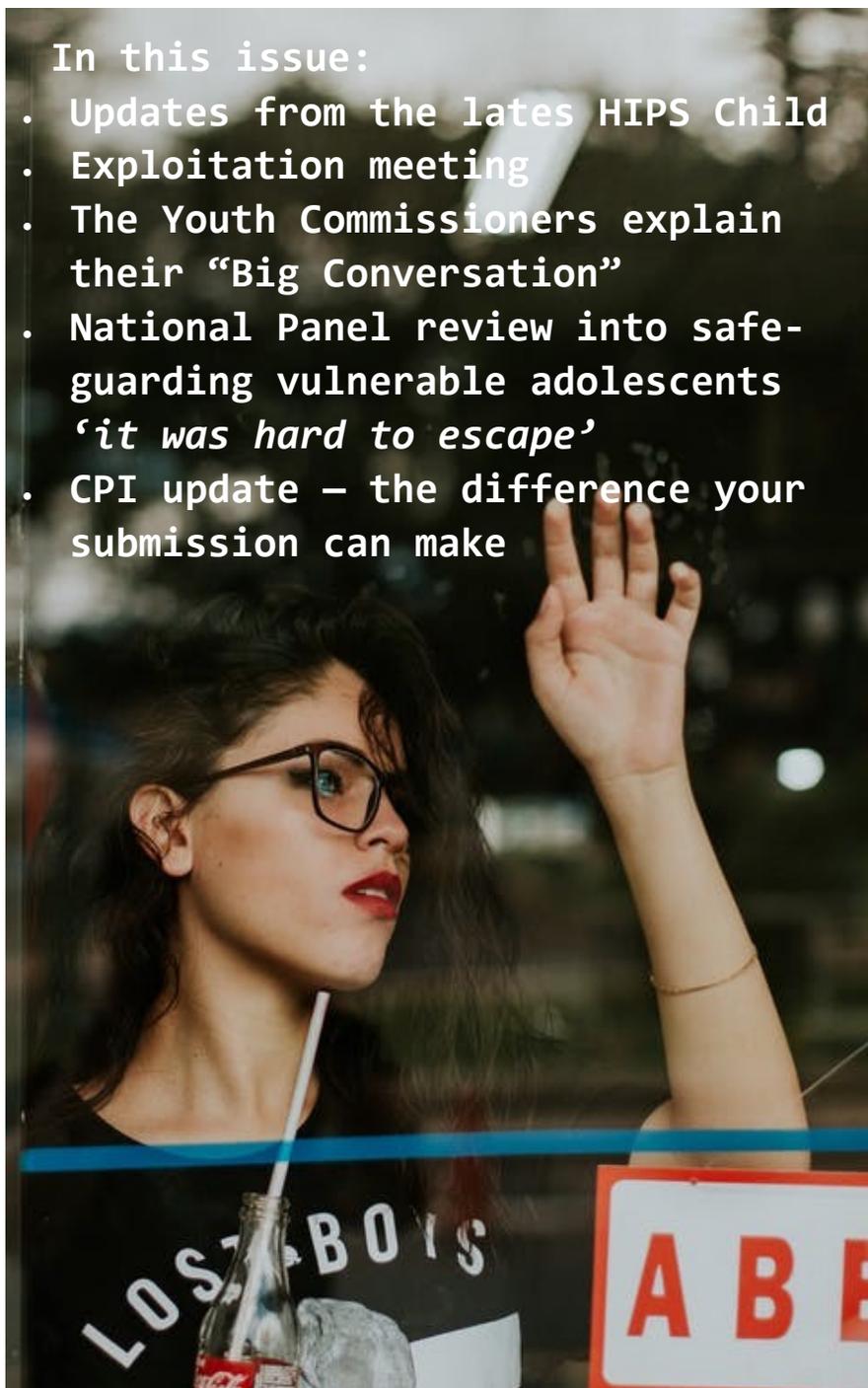
The Safeguarding Children Partnerships of Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton are working together to tackle child exploitation. This is a new newsletter to keep professionals in all four areas up-to-date with issues and progress discussed, and to flag up local and national campaigns.

The HIPS Child Exploitation Group would like to thank all practitioners across all agencies for their work to help keep children safe during this unprecedented time.

### HIPS Procedures website

The HIPS Procedures website is an up to date manual for practitioners across the HIPS areas - check it out for advice across the board at <https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>

Are you a key worker helping to keep children safe during Covid-19? Mind has advice on mental health, wellbeing and practical guidance on going to work at <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coping-as-a-key-worker/>



## Updates from the meeting of 22 April 2020

The HIPS Child Exploitation Group meet on 22 April 2020 via conference call due to Covid-19. The Group discussed the following items:

**SERAF/CERAF** – Barnardo's were commissioned to develop a new version of the Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Form (SERAF) for use across the HIPS partnership and to include the general theme of child exploitation, as opposed to focussing on sexual exploitation. Barnardo's have conducted some consultation with young people decided to step back from the development of this tool. Consequently the HIPS Child Exploitation Group convened a Task & Finish Group, bringing together expertise from the Hampshire Willow team and Southampton MET Hub. The Task & Finish Group has devised a new risk assessment re-named the CERAF (Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework). The CERAF will now be shared with the HIPS Partnerships in June for approval. Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, Youth Offending Teams and Health colleagues (including sexual health) for trial and comments. Once agreed, virtual training will be developed and provided for practitioners across the HIPS areas. Health colleagues across the HIPS areas area reviewing the shortened SERAF/CSERQ4 to consider inclusion of other forms of exploitation. Many thanks to colleagues who have worked to develop the new CERAF and all those who will now help by testing and providing feedback on it. Barnardo's will attend a future meeting to give an update on the longer-term development of a risk assessment tool.

**Child Exploitation Deep Dive** - Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership have conducted a deep dive into child exploitation which has brought about some useful learning. The HIPS Child Exploitation Group were keen to share this and it was agreed that Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership will present their findings at the next meeting; 8 July 2020.

**Covid-19** – all areas have responded to the unprecedented situation and provided updates. The approach taken by all areas has been to try and maintain business as usual by working differently. All areas have seen a reduced number of referrals into MASH, which is a source of concern. Hampshire Constabulary reported a drop in Community Partnership Information (CPI) submissions. In Hampshire, the Willow Team are maintaining their work with young people and seeing them in person where possible. Partner agency meetings are taking place virtually. They have seen a developing gap in intelligence especially around children who go missing. On the Isle of Wight social workers are still carrying out visits to families and children, and schools are making contact with students every week via telephone. They have seen an increase in the number of domestic violence and alcohol misuse referrals. Portsmouth reported that they are conducting weekly telephone calls to every school and have developed a list of children who professionals are most concerned about. The Portsmouth Partnership are working with multi agency partners to determine risk and support to those children, plus 1:1 work with children who are at high risk. In Southampton a similar list is being developed to identify children who are at most risk, and meetings are taking place within the MASH to proactively provide support in these cases. The list will also be shared across the multi-agency network to enable partners to have access to the information. Social workers' visits to children's homes have been postponed, but plans are in place to restore home visits.

Information was mixed regarding children who go missing. In Southampton there had been a high number of children missing in March but this had reduced in April. The Isle of Wight reported seeing a slight increase. Other areas suggested a decline in numbers. From the Police perspective, numbers for March 2020 were fairly similar to March 2019. The Police reported some challenges in identifying options to move children to different placements when needed. Their investigation standards (including risk grading of missing children) remained in line with the Force Policy & Procedures for Missing Persons, however all interactions with the public to locate a missing person were risk assessed in terms of their likelihood of locating that person against risk of infection spread. The operating model has however now returned to pre-Covid and so business as usual was resumed in June. The Police have received feedback from parents that it had been difficult to go out and look for children during lockdown, so they had been more likely to report missing episodes to the Police. Nationally the Police have asked Ofsted for advice on how to keep children safe and secure at home.

**Engaging with Education** – The plot and scripts for this series of short films have been led by the HIPS Child Exploitation Group, the media company and children and young people are complete. The films will **raise awareness and generate discussion around issues concerning exploitation and are aimed at children of 13 years and over**. Filming was scheduled to begin but has been postponed due to Covid-19. The aim is currently to complete filming by September, and if possible to release the films for use in schools in September/October. The team working on this initiative are also keen to engage with parents and had booked some sessions in Hampshire schools, however this has unfortunately also had to be postponed due to Covid.

**Violence Reduction Unit update** – the group received an update from the VRU. Every Local Authority has now completed their strategy for violence reduction, which have been agreed by the Home Office. As a result each LA has a local plan for year two as well as their own strategic plans for the next 12 months. Due to Covid-19 some projects will be carried over into year two. The VRU is currently looking into how Covid-19 has impacted on the families that are at risk and how the VRU will respond to this post-Covid. There is work underway on an analysis and data sharing agreement, plus work underway with multi agency partners to identify the most vulnerable children under 25. Lastly, the group was informed that each LA will have a contact for their own VRU, and in this 'hub and spoke' model, should make contact with them.

**Community Partnership Intelligence (CPI) Analysis** – Hampshire Constabulary reported that CPI submissions had been much higher since the promotion and information sessions ran across the HIPS area. February had seen an increase in CPI submissions, however data for March and April is likely to be effected by Covid-19. Hampshire Constabulary are encouraging multi agency workers to continue to submit CPIs where possible, however it was recognised that this is not easily done in the current circumstances. Please see the back page of this newsletter for information on the results of CPI submissions.

**'It Was Hard to Escape' report** – this report published by the National Panel looks into safeguarding children at risk of exploitation. The group agreed that it would be useful for each HIPS area to discuss the report and how each area is addressing the issues that it raises and report back to a future meeting. It was agreed that this could be done via existing MET operational meetings, or group exercises, and each area will bring back a local report on it to a future meeting (date TBC).

**Any other business** – the group agreed that it would invite attendance from the Modern Slavery Partnership for an update on the work of this new group, the British Transport Police for an update on children who trespass on railway lines which can also be hotspot areas for child exploitation., and the online safety initiative Lurking Trolls, the launch for which has been delayed due to Covid. The group also briefly discussed return interviews which are conducted when a child returns from a missing episode. In Hampshire, Southampton and the Isle of Wight return interviews conducted are being conducted virtually, although it was noted that the quality of interviews can be difficult to manage. It was agreed that an update on this will be brought to a future meeting.

In this edition, Amelia explains the Youth Commission's new project; the Big Conversation.

## An update from the Youth Commissioners

The Big Conversation was started so that young people can have a say in how policing is conducted in their local area, as well as allowing the police and professionals to have an insight into what young people feel is really concerning them. Last year alone we spoke to 2,645 individuals about our work. We hope that the Big Conversation will encourage young people to speak about things that affect them and their friends. We want young people to know that their voice is important and is listened to by many professionals so things can improved.

This year due to the lockdown and all large gatherings being cancelled we have moved our big conversation online so we have been using our social media accounts to reach as many young people as possible so it would be great if any other partnerships would also be able to help us promote this so we can enable young peoples voices to still be valued and heard.

Each year the Youth Commission travel around Hampshire and the Isle of Wight attending freshers' fairs, community events and young people's groups (e.g scouts / Princes Trust) to speak to a wide range of young people about their concerns, views and ideas on our priorities (the areas of work we focus on for the year) as well as any other policing and crime problems that worry them. Each time we speak to a young person we ask them to complete a 'Big Conversation' card, this is a postcard size piece of paper which ask a few questions such as age, location, what concerns do they have about the things affecting young people and how do they think we be best to tackle this concern. At the Youth Commission we will then read all of the responses and group all the similar ones together. From this information we can see which issue has been raised so we can then formulate our response to the issue and present it to the commissioner and professionals at our end of year conference.

So far in our first quarter of this year (January - March 2020) 104 people who completed a Big Conversation card chose **exploitation** as the thing which most concerns them. The majority of these responses came from people aged 14-18 with about 15% of responses saying they have personally experience with exploitation. Many suggested that the best way to help the issue would be to increase education surrounding it and signpost relevant services.... I will update you again on what has been done to address young people's concerns about exploitation. It would be great if you could promote the Big Conversation with any young people you work with. More information is available on our [website](#). Thank you!

Amelia



## CPI update

Practitioners often ask what results are generated from their CPI submissions. It can be frustrating not to receive feedback, but the top priority is to protect sources. We wanted to provide some examples of cases that have had tangible results solely as a result of a CPI submission. Locations and names have been omitted to protect the source.

- A child at medium risk of Child Criminal Exploitation expressed his wish to put a bomb in a Mosque due to his hatred of Muslims. He stated that there was no doubt in his mind that his views were justified. The child wasn't previously known to hold these views. Counter Terrorism Police have been made aware of him so will now be investigating the intelligence. Safeguarding measures have been tasked to local policing as well as further development and action.
- A Foreign National Offender who was an RSO was thought to be attempting to groom young males in Hampshire online. Police acted quickly upon receiving the intelligence and were soon able to arrest the male. He is being held in a secure facility awaiting deportation.
- Two youths were named as responsible for a knife point robbery. They weren't previously considered suspects but the intelligence had led to their arrest.
- Subjects were planning a stabbing that we were not previously aware of. Officers are now continuing to attend the address of the intended victim in order to efficiently safeguard him.
- An unidentified male was expressing extremist views in a public place. The male was identified by Police in the local area. The male was known to Counter Terrorism Police and is now being held as a mental health patient under Section 3.



Please keep submitting CPI information so this work can continue. A CPI form can be found at <https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/>

## it was hard to escape

The first review of the National Panel looks in detail at the issue of safeguarding children from exploitation. It draws on learning from reviews to identify how practitioners can better protect children who find themselves threatened with violence and serious harm by criminal gangs. The review asks two key questions: do adolescents in need of state protection get the help they need when they need it? And how can services work together better to prevent further harm?



The review is co-authored by Clare Chamberlain and Dr Russel Wate; the latter has since been secured as independent reviewer for two new reviews underway in Southampton and Portsmouth.



## Did you know....

There is a new national police Instagram account that enables young people to reach out to the police through private messages about crime, the law, safety, and the issues that matter to them. Since lockdown, the account has seen monthly private messages more than doubled as more young people have used it to get clarification about Covid-19 laws, seek advice, or disclose an experience or crime.

Please help by finding out more at the link below and promoting the Instagram page with any young people age 13+.

The national team are keen to work with Police forces and partners to develop digital content to get messages to young people. For more info see: [the National Youth Engagement Project](#)

**@YourPolice.uk**

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