

Advisory session for Parents and Guardians: Addressing contemporary issues faced by Young People with demonstrations of effective Youth Work support strategies.

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TRIGGER WARNING

"Trigger warnings help people emotionally prepare for potentially triggering content"
(The British Psychological Society, 2023, n.d).



Today's presentation will include discussions on sensitive issues such as:

↓

Child sexual exploitation

↓

Online grooming

OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S PRESENTATION

1 → 2 → 3 → 4

1 CONTEMPORARY ISSUES THAT IMPACT YOUNG PEOPLE

Examination of the contemporary issues faced by Young People and their impacts.

2 TOXIC CHILDHOOD

What is meant by 'Toxic Childhood' , and its impacts.

3 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Examination of Child Sexual Exploitation with regard to the online grooming of Young People.

4 YOUTH WORK'S RESPONSE IN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Contending the impact and prevalence of Child Sexual Exploitation, distribution of information and activities will be provided to support Young People, Parents and Guardians through a range of resources.

1

WHAT IS LIFE LIKE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY?

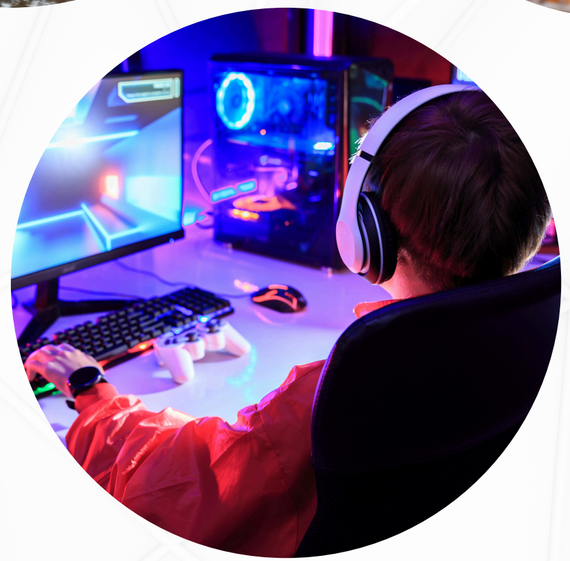


WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE FOR YOU AS A YOUNG PERSON?

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY:







Please reflect on what life was like for you as a Young Person.

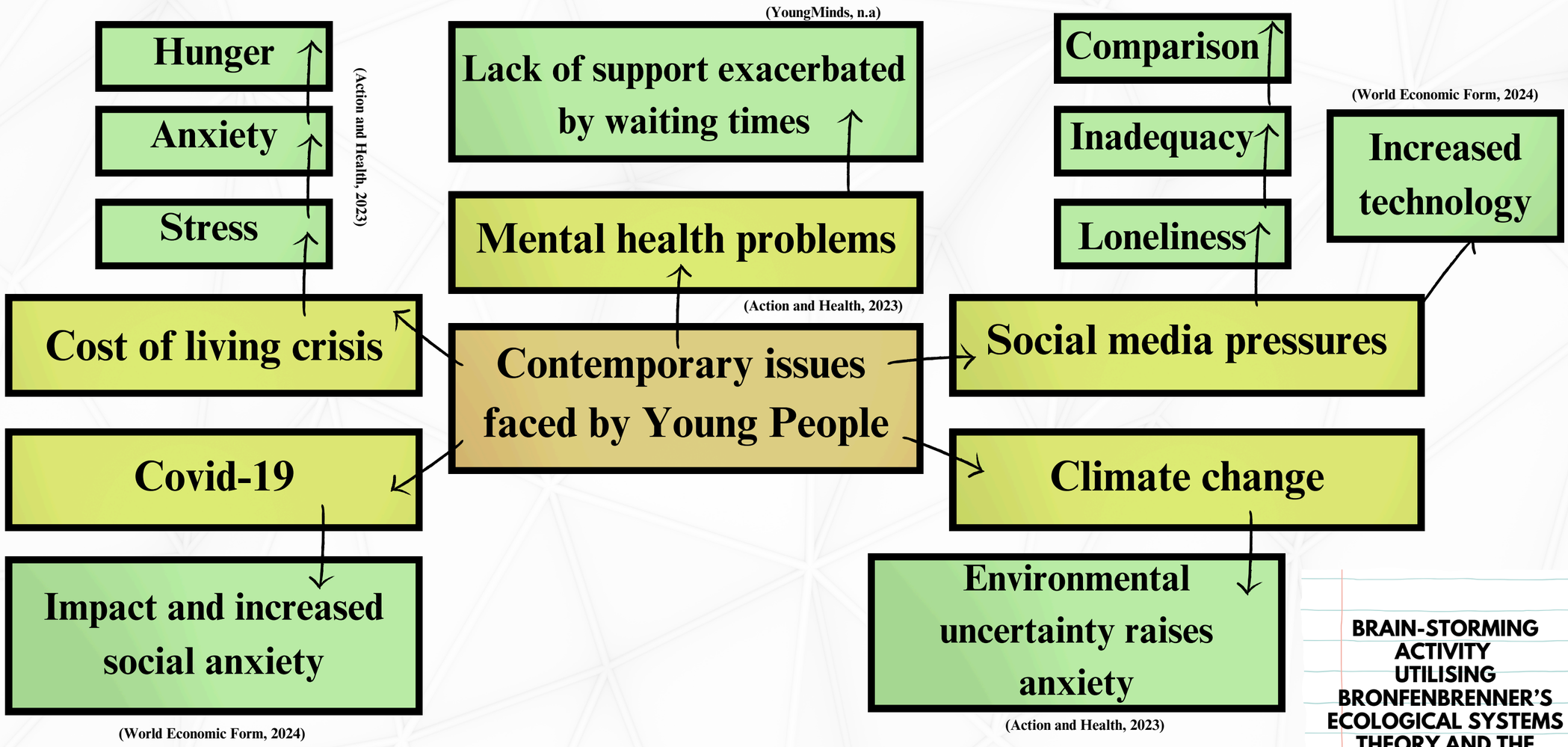
Notes for reflection:

Are there any similarities between contemporary society?

Are there any differences between contemporary society?

REFLECTION ACTIVITY FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

WHAT IS LIFE LIKE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN 2024



BRAIN-STORMING ACTIVITY UTILISING BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL SYSTEMS THEORY ALONGSIDE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS STATISTICS

Year	Money		Work/ Employment		Emotional Health		Qualifications/ Training		Home/ Accommodation	
	☺	☆	☺	☆	☺	☆	☺	☆	☺	☆
2024	56	63	67	67	60	65	74	73	74	71
2023	56	64	67	67	58	64	75	73	73	71
2022	60	65	68	66	57	64	75	72	74	69
2021	60	65	67	66	56	64	77	74	76	72
2020	58	64	68	68	58	64	76	74	75	70
2019	56	65	68	68	58	64	76	73	76	71
2018	56	64	67	67	57	65	76	73	75	71
2017	58	65	69	68	61	67	76	74	75	71
2015	58	65	69	68	64	70	77	74	75	72
2014	58	65	70	67	67	72	76	74	76	73
2013	58	66	69	67	66	72	76	74	76	73
2012	58	67	70	70	67	70	77	76	78	75
2011	57	65	68	67	67	68	76	75	76	73
2010	56	66	70	70	70	71	77	76	76	75
2009	56	67	71	71	67	73	79	79	76	76

☺ Happiness ☆ Confidence

Community/ Local Area		Family Relationships		Relationships With Friends		Physical Health		Total Index Scores		Overall Index Scores
☺	☆	☺	☆	☺	☆	☺	☆	☺	☆	
68	67	76	76	72	72	66	70	68	69	69
66	66	76	76	70	70	64	68	67	68	68
67	66	74	75	71	71	63	68	67	68	68
69	68	77	78	74	73	65	69	69	70	69
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69	71	80	81	77	78	71	74	72	74	73
68	68	78	78	75	75	68	72	70	71	71
69	69	81	82	78	78	71	74	72	74	73
69	70	79	81	77	79	69	74	71	74	73

(Prince's Trust, 2024, p.14-15)

2 WHAT IS MEANT BY ‘TOXIC CHILDHOOD’ AND IT’S IMPACTS



TOXIC CHILDHOOD

TOXIC CHILDHOOD DEFINITION

"Toxic childhood refers to the period of childhood with unfavourable and everlasting experiences [where] the perceiving child subconsciously learns harmful traits which affect [their] life later on"
(Mandriota, 2021, n.a).

EXPERIENCES OF TOXIC CHILDHOOD:

- Emotional needs of a Young Person were not met by caretakers
- If Young People experience frequent high levels of stress or instability in their household
- Young People experienced abuse (e.g physical, verbal, emotional or sexual)
- Young People's caregivers were controlling, neglectful or overprotective
- Young People lacked support, validation or acceptance from authority figures.
- Young People experienced or witnessed traumatic situations.

(Mandriota, 2021, n.a).

IMPACTS FACED BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY FOLLOWING TOXIC EXPERIENCES:

Reflecting on previous identified contemporary issues impacting Young People, it is imperative for practitioners to contend the impact that Toxic experiences have on Young People.

319 million

INCREASE IN ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES:

135,000

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

18-25

ADDICTION TO ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

106%

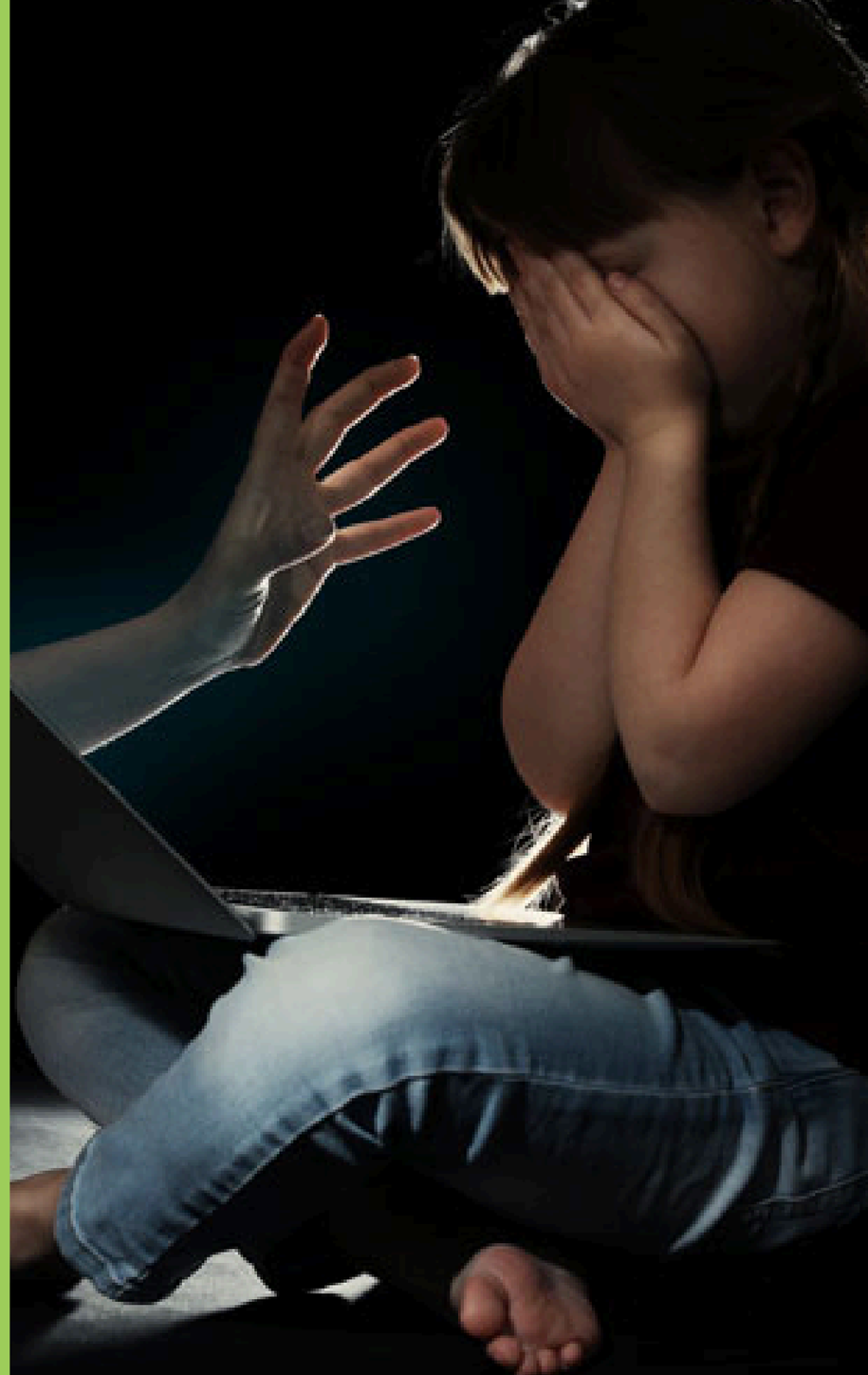
ABUSE

BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITY ALONGSIDE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

3

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND IT'S IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

3



DEFINITION OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse and is a term described when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18 into sexual activity.
(Barnados, n.d).

ONLINE GROOMING

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of abuse initiated and continued through the use of technology, including social media and gaming platforms, to manipulate and coerce children (NSPCC, n.d).

“A CHILD CANNOT CONSENT TO THEIR OWN ABUSE”

(Linda Elias, 2024)

(Welsh Government, 2014, p.2)

FACTSHEET ON CSE

CSE can include:

- Physical contact:
- Unwanted kissing or touching Rubbing outside clothes
- Oral sex
- Rape
- Non-physical contact:
- Forcing a child to send naked pictures or sexual images or other online acts
- Forcing a child to look at sexual images or activities

Coercion is often employed by perpetrators to facilitate Young People to engage in sexual acts through forms of physical or emotional threats and acts to hurt the child or someone they care about. (Welsh government, 2014, p.10).

Control can be employed over Young People through the threat of things being withdrawn if the child does not participate or comply with sexual acitivites (Welsh Government, 2014, p.10-11).

NSPCC (n.d) states “sexual exploitation is a hidden crime”

There are differences between victims who realise they are being exploited but struggle with seeking help and those who fail to recognise their being exploited (Welsh government, 2014, p.10)

It is imperative to contend that although children perceive it as a consenting relationship, anyone under 16 is deemed unable to consent under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. (Welsh Government, 2014, p.11).

Online grooming includes when Young People are persuaded or forced to:

- “have sexual conversations by text or online
- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone (Hamilton-Giachritsis et al, 2017)”

NSPCC (N.d) states that anyone can be a perpetrator or victim of Child Sexual Exploitation regardless of gender, race of social background.

CSE is a very complex form of sexual abuse. It can be increasingly complex for parents and guardians to comprehend and diffucult for the Young Person to acknowledge the presence of exploitation. (NSPCC, n.d).

Most perpetrators of CSE are male. However, it is imperative to note that women can too sexually exploit Young People and often are involved through ‘befriending’ victims (NHS, n.d).

“children and young people are sexually exploited by criminal gangs specifically set up for child sexual exploitation” (NSPCC, n.d)

"Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don" understand that they"e being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what" happening. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. It is vital to acknowledge that a groomed child is not consenting to sexual activity." (RCGP, n.d).



DISTRIBUTION OF A COPY OF THE FACTSHEET TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

DIFFERENT FORMS OF CSE:

1

A LONE ADULT PERPETRATOR

Relationship between a Young Person and a lone perpetrator who exerts control over them utilising physical, emotional or economic abuse. There exists a significant age gap where Young People believe they are in a loving relationship.

2

THE 'BOYFRIEND' MODEL

- "The perpetrator befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and subsequently coerces them to have sex with friends or associates" (Rotherame Safeguarding Children's partnership, n.a).

3

ORGANIZED/NETWORKED SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OR TRAFFICKING

Young People are passed through networks of perpetrators, through towns and cities where they are controlled and coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Additionally, victims can be used to recruit others.

4

PEER ON PEER ABUSE

"Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim"

(Rotherame Safeguarding Children's partnership, n.a)

CSE PROCESS:

As outlined by Together (2021), there is a specific process for online grooming:

1. **TARGETING:**
2. **ENGAGEMENT**
3. **TESTING THE BOUNDARIES**
4. **ISOLATION:**
5. **SEXUALISATION AND CONTROL**

GLOBAL STATISTICS AND TRENDS

Discussion with lead Child Exploitation Officer Linda Elias: "Increasing number of Child Sexual Exploitation cases in the past two years"

Inquiry finds disturbing evidence of organised networks and gangs abusing children in Swansea

Child sex exploitation crimes up in Wales, NSPCC says

Crackdown on Online Child Sexual Exploitation

Under 10s groomed online 'like never before' as hotline discovers record amount of child sexual abuse

Three arrested in Welsh county after investigation into child sexual exploitation

Online grooming can start within 19 seconds as child sexual abuse images double

82% rise in online grooming crimes against children in the last 5 years

HOW CSE IMPACTS YP:

"Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder"

"Extreme tiredness"

"Problems with alcohol and substances misuse and mental health problems."

"Less likely to be in employment or training"

"Fail exams or drop out of education"

"Young People may be fearful of forming new relationships"

"Depression"

"Low-self esteem"

"Nightmares"

"Difficulties sleeping"

"More likely to have social services involvement and poorer outcomes."

"Intrusive thoughts"

"Self-blame"

"Self-Harm"

"Panic Attacks"

"8-10 adolescents victims had mental health problems 4-5 months after the experience"

"More chance of continuing physical/sexual abuse in intimate relationships"

"Struggles understanding healthy relationships and boundaries"

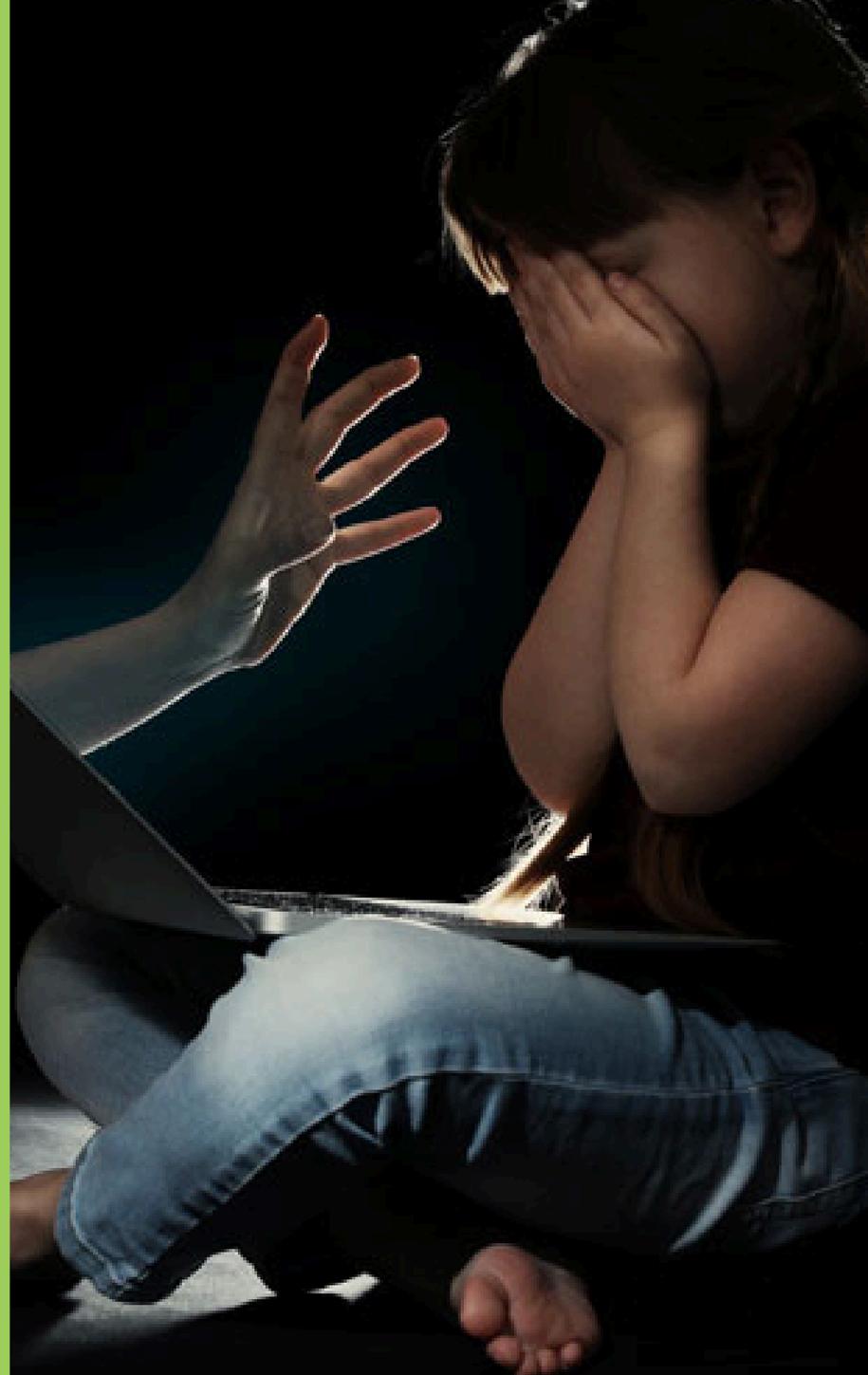
"Flashbacks"

"Become isolated from friends and family"

"Agression"

4

HOW CAN YOTUH WORK RESPOND?



HOW YOUTH WORK CAN RESPOND:

- Many CSE victims disengage from mainstream services and are more likely to respond to voluntary organisations that offer voluntary support on Young People's terms (NHS, n.d, p.2).
- Additionally, outlined by the Welsh Government (2014, p.43) "There is no single model of intervention" given that every child's situations is different. Thereby, contending that Youth Work "Starts at whatever point Young People are in their lives" (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, p.6) it can prove to be significant in providing indivualsised support to Young People.
- However, as practitioners, we must acknowledge how challenging and complex this area of practice is (Welsh Government, n.d, p.47), especially when they lack confidence in their ability to respond. Therefore, we must ensure that practitioners are able to identify concerns about CSE to ensure effective response.



YOUTH WORK SUPPORT STRATEGIES:

1 WARNING SIGNS

Utilising this resource, Youth Work practitioners can ensure they are able to identify any signs of CSE in Young People. Furthermore, providing this resource during advisory sessions promotes collaboration between Parents and Guardians.

2 TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

Youth Work practitioners must ensure they uphold the trusting and non-judgemental viewpoints pertinent in the practice to ensure meaningful connections in which the Young People feel valued (Youth Work in Wales review group, 2022, p.4). This can be ensured through ensuring a trauma-informed practice when responding to CSE.

3 APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

The language that practitioners utilise when responding to CSE is imperative to ensure that they are kept safe or put more at risk

To ensure practitioners and families are able to respond to Young People utilising this appropriate language I created a resource outlining examples that can be referred back to

4 SELF-CARE RESOURCES

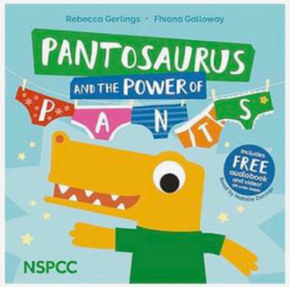
Following the disclosure of CSE, Parents and Guardians may feel a profound impact on their well-being, including a toxic combination of shame, blame and physiological and emotional distress (The Children Society, 2020, p.4).

Thereby, the author has created self care resources for both Victims or CSE and for Parents and Guardians that can be distributed amidst advisory sessions.

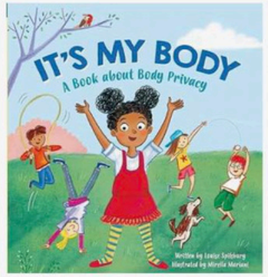
5 PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

Contending that “an early understanding of healthy relationships may help children to recognise relationships as unhealthy” (Welsh Government, 2014, p.21) and be a preventive factor for CSE. The author has created their own storybook utilising the acronym STAR to inform Young People on CSE but what to do in the case they experience online grooming.

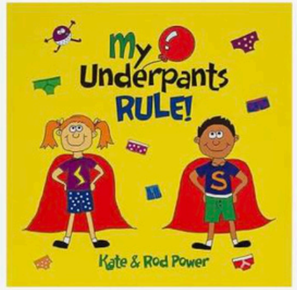
PUBLICATIONS TO USE:



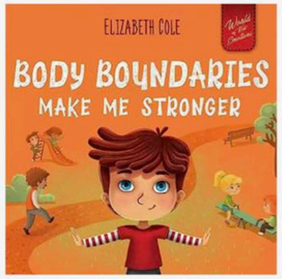
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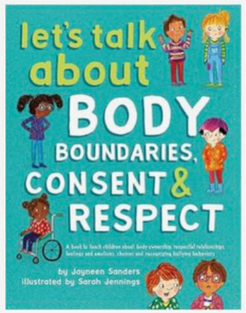
It's My Body: A Book about Body Privacy for Young Children
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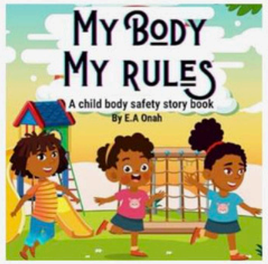
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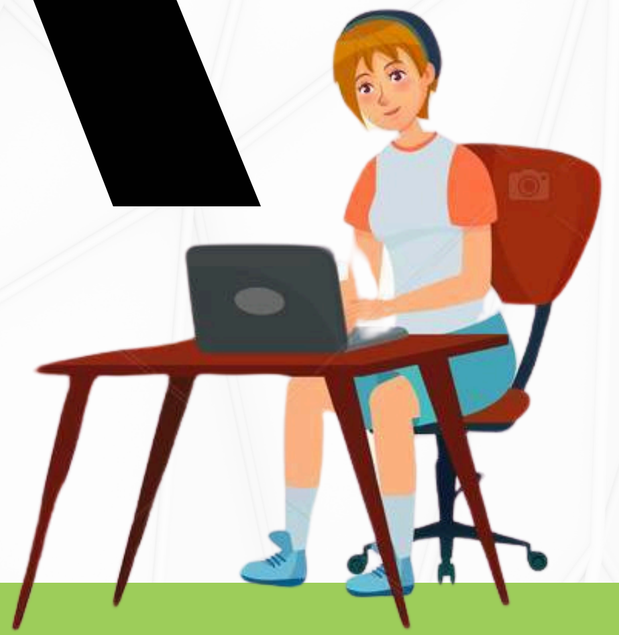
Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect: Teach children about...
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4.6 ★★★★½ (4,950)
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My Body My Rules: A story to teach children private parts, safe/unsafe touches (Body...
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Collects books from: Body safety story books
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THE STORY OF ALEX:

STAR



THE STORY OF ALEX:

S = STAY SAFE

Alex is a tech-savvy teenager. They love chatting with all their friends online after school. One day, a new friend request popped up on Alex's screen. Before accepting it, Alex remembered the first rule of STAR, Stay Safe. Alex remembered is important to keep personal information private and to only interact with known friends.



THE STORY OF ALEX:

T = TALK

A few weeks later, Alex's new online friend started asking personal questions about them that made Alex feel uncomfortable. Then, they remembered the second rule of STAR: Talk.

Next, Alex decided it was important to talk to a trusted adult, their brother, about the stranger's questions and behaviours.

Alex’s brother showed them how to stay safe online and why it was important they followed the STAR rule.



THE STORY OF ALEX:

A = ALERT

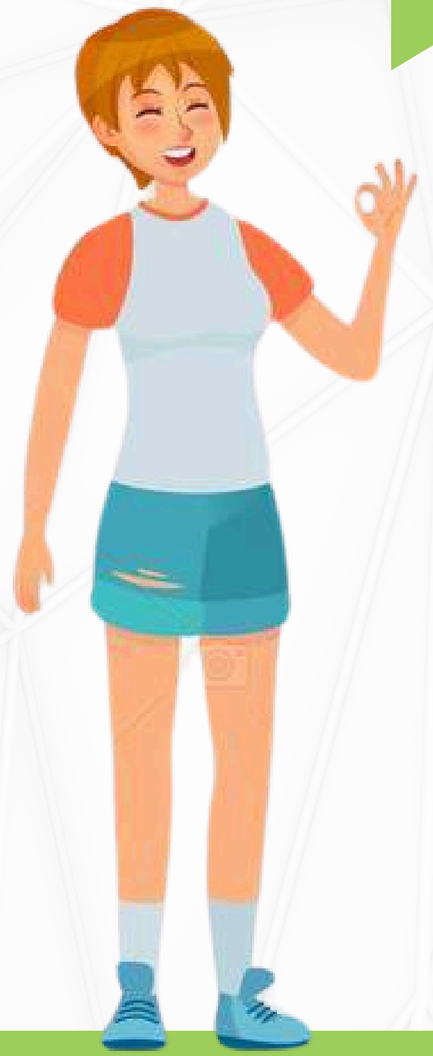


One morning, Alex received a message online that felt weird. It was a request to meet the stranger in person, promising gifts in exchange. Then, they remembered the third rule of STAR: Alert. Alex knew to stay alert and recognise the red flags of potential online grooming.

THE STORY OF ALEX:

R = REPORT

Alex now felt the situation had gone too far and had made them feel really uneasy. Thereby following the fourth rule of STAR: Report, Alex reported the conversation to their parents and showed them all of the messages. From there, they were able to contact the right support and authorities ensuring the potential predator could not harm anyone else. Through using STAR Alex was able to keep themselves safe and remembered this experience was not their fault.



Q + A TIME!

