

Saving Futures: Cross Party Group on Child Sexual Abuse

Minutes of meeting 4th March 2021

Speakers

Jahnine Davies – Listen Up
Fateha – EYST
Sam Clutton – Welsh Government
Jayne Bryant MS

Attendees

Gill Jones – Stop it Now!
Catrin Simpson – SARC
Stuart Williams – NEU Cymru
Jo Robinson – Gwent Police
Helen Stacey – New Pathways
Dr Clare Bennett – Cardiff University
Jan Pickles – PCC
May Baxter Thornton – IICSA
Bethan James – south Wales PNN
Linda Grace – Jigso
Janice Dent – VAWDASV Regional Lead

Damian Rees and Kelly Shannon – Swansea LA
Helen Gordon – VAWDASV Regional Education Coordinator
Myfanwy Kirkwood – North Wales Police
Sarah Keefe – South Wales PCC
Sarah Walton – Stop it Now
Hannah Dicks – Tarian
Dora Szalkay – Senedd Support Staff
Claire Short – Stop It Now!
Berni – Stepping Stones
Philip Walker – The Survivors Trust
Fay – The Survivors Trust
Cecile Gwilym – NSPCC
Elinor Crouch-Puzey – NSPCC

Apologies

Emma Curtis – Children’s Commissioner for Wales Office
Llyr Gruffydd MS – Plaid Cymru

Minutes

Welcomes and introductions from Jayne Bryant MS, including a trigger warning of difficult topics and for attendees to look after themselves first and foremost.

Key points from speakers

Jahnine Davies, Listen Up

- The hypersexual view of Black girls and how this impacts how they are treated within services.
- The concept of ‘adulthoodification’ and how this can lead to erasure of childhood innocence. The concept of ‘adulthoodification’ is applied more to Black girls.

- This is compounded by the devaluation of Black girls and begs the question – ‘who is protecting them?’.
- Jahnine’s research in 2019 was the first of its kind focusing on Black girls. Research with Black women and girls found they often felt ‘no one values us, our experiences are not reflected, the Police do not see us as vulnerable’.
- We need specialist services that understand need but also for universal services to be trained to understand need.

Fateha, EYST

- Barriers which prevent help seeking can include; stigma, shame, use of language to talk about sex and abuse as well as language barriers between parent and child for immigrant parents and the children of immigrants.
- A fear of social service involvement.
- The perpetrator is a family member or respected member of the community.
- EYST is running focus groups with families about how services can better work with minoritised communities, these include;
 - Language awareness and ensuring resources are available in community languages
 - Training for professionals on barriers and nuances of abuse within different cohorts
 - Better information on how abuse can be reported
 - Places of workshop should have compulsory policies on how to deal with CSA
 - Digital skills sessions for parents
 - Visual guides for families

Dr Sam Clutton, Welsh Government

- Due to Covid there has been a 6-month delay in reporting on the Action Plan. This is expected 30th June.
- CSA remains a taboo subject to different degrees across different communities.
- Sam keen to investigate producing visual aids as per Fateha’s suggestion.
- Guides being developed for practitioners for BME, learning disabilities and LGBT+ children.
- There is a scarcity of research on CSA for Black and minoritised children. Welsh Government will be consulting the report from the Centre of Expertise which focuses on this due 21st March.
- Working Together to Safeguard People volume 7 is due for publication 18th March, which will include guidance on supporting Black, minoritised and refugee survivors.
- Sam clear we need to bring the expertise of by and for services and sexual violence services together to better support all children.

Questions and comments from the floor

Catrin Simpson Clinical Lead for Cardiff SARC – keen to ensure the SARC is representative of the Cardiff population and look at what support can be provided to staff around this.

Jan Pickles asked about challenging adultification bias in the new curriculum. Jahnine suggested space is held to talk about bias and for schools to ‘hold a mirror up’ to those biases. Consider what language



is used to describe different cohorts of children, such as 'street wise' what connotations does that hold and how does it impact on how that child's need for support is perceived?

Actions

- Many attendees were keen to have further conversations with the speakers, contact details shared.
- Presentation slides to be shared with attendees

Jayne thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.