

## Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of the Consultation Board literature review, compiled by Research Officer Natasha Fletcher. Topics include **children in custody**, which considers the experiences of 12 to 18 year olds: amidst falling numbers detained the decreasing but still worrying percentage of those who feel unsafe. For those **working with victims and perpetrators of child sexual abuse**, a theoretical editorial covering perpetrator belief theories, harms measurement and interview guidance provides some useful pointers for issues that we might choose to explore through the board in coming months. Literature on the **Barnahus model** is increasingly relevant to the Police and Crime Commissioner as we consider what gap is left by the victim investigation suites and therefore what opportunity we have to improve the evidence gathering experience for child victims of sexual crime.

Within the Office, **life skills for young adult offenders'** research continues to provide valuable insight to the services that we do, could or should provide and we will reflect on the findings as part of our evidence base. In the next calendar year, we plan to evaluate services commissioned by theme with the help of a collaboration with Winchester University and their undergraduate Criminology students. This will become a standing item to provide updates for those at the Consultation board.

You will find in this review, research tackling a new and developing area of understanding that questions the risk of emotional impact on **adolescents engaging in sexting**. In the context of sharing among friends we know schools adopt a range of policies to address this behaviour – evidence of the impact (positive or negative) of this policies is scarce. Even without this risk being realised, we learn that negative emotions are not uncommon and the uncertainty once photos have been shared stays with many of those in this research. As we focus increasingly on mental health, this is an area that requires proactive education in particular (but not exclusively) for young people and parents as well as support for those who experience negative consequences of sexting.

Finally, but of high relevance is a thesis which considers **victim satisfaction** and highlights recommendations including a review of the dialogue used in this context. As we develop understanding of victim perceptions and navigate a research and feedback loop between the Police and Crime Commissioners' Office and the Constabulary, we will be mindful to seek the views of the Consultation Board.

If you find articles to include within the review or for discussion, please mail them to Natasha.

Anja Kimberley,

Consultation Board Chair.

## 1. "Staffing problems impact negatively on children in custody, many feel unsafe and some staff groups are over-represented", says Chief Inspector

Nov 2017

Staffing problems meant far too many boys were locked up in cells nearly all day in young offender institutions, according to an annual report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons on the experiences of detained children aged 12 to 18.

Though the numbers who had felt unsafe in YOIs had fallen from a record high level in 2015–16, surveys in 2016–17 still found almost 40% had felt unsafe. Children in secure training centres (STCs), home to a larger number of under-16s, generally felt safer than those in YOIs but a fifth said they had no-one to turn to if they had a problem.

Overall, the numbers of children in custody has fallen by 70% since 2006–07 and the number of girls continues to fall. 39% of boys said they had felt unsafe, a fall on last year's figure of 46%. There was a significant fall in the proportion of boys who said they could have a shower every day (71% compared with 88% in 2015–16) and the proportion who could use the phone every day had fallen significantly from 80% to 68%.

Press release: <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/media/press-releases/2017/11/staffing-problems-impact-negatively-on-children-in-custody-many-feel-unsafe-and-some-groups-are-over-represented-says-chief-inspector/>

Report: [http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/11/6.3903\\_HMIP\\_Children-in-Custody-2016-17\\_FINAL\\_WEB\\_221117.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/11/6.3903_HMIP_Children-in-Custody-2016-17_FINAL_WEB_221117.pdf)

Accessible: Yes

---

## 2. Working with the Victims and Perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

March 2017

Child Abuse Review- This editorial covers:

Understanding Offenders' Belief Systems- a discussion paper by Jamie Walton and colleagues (2017) looking at the properties of the Sex with Children scale. This assessment tool was developed in the 1990s and is widely used within the prison service in England and Wales to measure pro-offending attitudes in offenders who participate in the national Sex Offender Treatment Programme.

Theories about Theories- Implicit Theories hypothesis (Ward and Keenan, 1999). In essence, this theory was put forward by Tony Ward and colleagues as a way of trying to understand the belief systems of child sex offenders. Ward and colleagues postulated that such offenders may hold one or more 'implicit theories' about themselves, other people and their surrounding environments, and it is these inherent belief systems which allow them to sexually abuse children.

Responding to the Child Victims of Sexual Abuse- child victims of sexual abuse and how we can assess, support and respond to their needs. In Scotland, as in the rest of the UK and elsewhere, best practice in gathering information on alleged sexual abuse is through a joint investigative interview involving

specially trained police officers and social workers. Specific guidance exists for such interviews and they depend on a high level of communication skills.

Supporting Practitioners Working with Child Sexual Exploitation- Elizabeth Ahern and colleagues (2017) explores the experiences of police officers and social workers working with cases of child sexual exploitation. The researchers interviewed 15 practitioners about their experiences.

The Complexities of Researching the Prevalence of Child Maltreatment- work by Mariëlle Prevo and colleagues (2017) from Leiden University. This research team has previously undertaken a meta-analysis of research from across the world on the prevalence of child maltreatment (Stoltenborgh et al., 2015). They had found considerable variation between studies in the reported prevalence of different forms of maltreatment.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/car.2467/full>

Accessible: No

---

### **3. Collaborating against Child Abuse Exploring the Nordic Barnahus Model**

2017

The Barnahus model has been described as one of the main policy ventures related to children as crime victims in the Nordic countries in recent years (Johansson 2012), and the diffusion process in the region has been rapid and extensive. In 2016, all the Nordic countries had implemented the model in some form or other; however, various measures similar to the Barnahus model had been tried out in several Nordic countries in the years before its introduction.

Barnahus is often referred to as an example of child-friendly justice, and the model is currently promoted at the European level by the Council of Europe. Several European countries are now in the process of implementing multi-professional measures regarding investigations of child abuse, inspired by the Nordic Barnahus model.

For example, a Barnahus was opened in Lithuania in June 2016, following an initiative from the government. In November 2015, the government in Cyprus decided to open a Barnahus, and a working group has been established for the implementation process. Initiatives have also been taken in the UK. Recently, we also learned that Barnahus may be tried out by UNICEF in Kazakhstan.

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-319-58388-4.pdf>

Accessible: Yes

---

### **4. The Development and Evaluation of a Life Skills Programme for Young Adult Offenders**

Oct 2017

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0306624X17737682>

The purpose of this research project was to develop, implement, and evaluate a Life Skills programme for young adult male long-term offenders with the aim of improving their life skills that, in turn, could enable them to adjust more effectively in the correctional environment. Experimental research was

used to investigate the effectiveness of the programme. In this study, 96 literate young adult male offenders between the ages of 21 and 25 years, with long sentences, were selected randomly. The participants were assigned randomly into an experimental and a control group. The Solomon four-group design was utilized to control for the effect of pretest sensitization. The measurements of the effectiveness of the programme were conducted before the programme commenced, directly (short term) after, 3 months (medium term) after, and 6 months (long term) after. The findings indicated that the programme had limited success in equipping the offenders with the necessary skills crucial to their survival in a correctional centre. The programme did, however, have significant effects, especially on problem solving and anger management in the short and medium term. These improvements were not long lived.

Accessible: No

---

## 5. Social Media Sex: Exploitation or Everlasting Love?

Nov 2017

[http://vc.bridgew.edu/psychology\\_fac/104/](http://vc.bridgew.edu/psychology_fac/104/)

**Objectives:** This research seeks to examine the different circumstances under which “sexting,” or sending nude or sexual photos, occurs. Sexting with positive and negative outcomes will be compared.

**Methods:** A study of 500 adolescents was conducted in 2016-2017 through an anonymous survey. Subjects were asked about their sexting behaviours and the circumstances surrounding these behaviours, as well as their mental health, dating behaviours, and peer relationships (both online and offline). Data were also gathered on how youth manage their perceived risks regarding sexting behaviours, and key factors (such as frequency of reported sexting) were compared between this study in 2016 and similar studies conducted in 2012-2015.

**Results:** According to recent research findings, most sexters reported no outcomes or consequences after sexting. This includes both positive outcomes (such as achieving a new relationship, becoming more popular, or being admired) and negative outcomes (such as depression, social rejection or humiliation, harassment or bullying, or problems with adults). Yet most subjects reported being warned about dire consequences during high school programs about sexting. Still, whereas most sexting did not appear to be either high-risk or with negative outcomes, it is important to note the exceptions. First, many sexters reported regret or “feeling worse” after having sexted. Second, some sexters did engage in high-risk sexting (sexting with individuals whom they did not know well). These sexters were far more likely to regret sexting with negative outcomes. Sexters who sent photos within already-established relationships were far less likely to report any negative outcomes. Some social norms, such as the specific social media platform used for different types of sexting, did emerge in the data.

**Conclusions:** Sexting appears to be a behaviour that is linked to adolescent sexual behaviours. It may be safer than in-person sex in some ways, although it may carry higher risks in other ways. The possibility that photos will later impact one's life is always possible, although the risk of that happening is also unknown. It is important to understand the factors that lead youth to engage in high-risk types of sexting.

Accessible: No

## **6. Improving Victim Satisfaction In Volume Crime Investigations: The Role Of Police Actions And Victim Characteristics**

Oct 2017

Victim satisfaction plays a critical role in police-victim encounters. Satisfaction could affect victims' willingness to co-operate and report future offences. As police conduct is guided by policies such as the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, the thesis also investigated whether police emotional responses to victims had an effect on performing actions that are expected under the policy and also affect victim satisfaction. Overall, the thesis considered variables not often included in satisfaction research, victim vulnerability, introduced a new way for assessing victim distress, and explored psychological factors that could explain why certain police helping behaviours do not occur. Therefore, the thesis considers police-victim encounters as a system where both police and victim influence each other and added new ideas and evidence to the literature.

Negative victim reactivity and negative emotion toward the victim was found to relate to the likelihood of helping behaviours such as contacting victims. The thesis results have implications for policy and practice in terms of providing evidence for the importance of victim policy compliance and proposes a review of vulnerability terminology in the criminal justice context to align an official definition with victim self-reports.

<http://researchopen.lsbu.ac.uk/1362/>

Accessible: No