



Best practice in reducing and preventing the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

AGIS Project No: JAI/2004/AGIS/143

The context

This project involved NGO practitioners from UK, the Netherlands and Estonia working with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation. The AGIS funded project ran from January 2005 - December 2006.

The primary participants in the project were; 15 child protection professionals from Barnardo's UK, 13 multi-agency NGO & Statutory professionals via Stade, Netherlands and 6 child protection staff from the Tartu Child Support Centre in Estonia. In addition, over 300 stakeholder participants were engaged in the Expert seminar events held in each country over the two years.

The objectives of the project were to identify -


1. priorities and training needs for effective inter-agency co-operation between law enforcement/judicial authorities and NGO's;
2. a best practice model of prevention & victim protection for children & young people abused through prostitution & information on techniques used by abusers & exploiters;
3. the impact of specific legislative frameworks, criminal justice contexts and cultural inhibitors;
4. the impact of trafficking & organised crime and what preventative strategies will reduce future risks for children & young people.

The target groups that benefited from the project were:

NGO professionals e.g. child protection staff in children's charities and youth projects.

Inter-agency stakeholders & professionals e.g. police officers, statutory child protection staff.

Children & young people at risk e.g. those who are at risk of sexual exploitation.



The achievements

The project successfully implemented the following partner activities -

A: Practice/Information sharing visits between countries by partner representatives from NGO's - total 5 visits (1 UK, 1NL, 1 Joint UK & NL to Estonia; 1 Est to UK; 1 Est to NL)

UK & NL partners were able to visit the following Estonian child protection NGO's and criminal justice partners in Tallinn and Tartu -

- Tallinn Child Support Centre
- Tallinn Center for Children at Risk
- Aids Information Support Centre, Tallinn
- Living For Tomorrow, Anti-Trafficking Hotline, Tallinn
- Estonian Police, Tartu
- Kaagvere Residential Special School, Tartumaa
- Tartu Children's Shelter
- Tartu Youth Counselling/Sexual Health Service.

Child protection staff from the Tartu Child Support Centre (Estonia) visited -
In the UK -

- Barnardo's 'Secos' service (Middlesborough) - specialist sexual exploitation service, community/social work support
- Barnardo's Bridgeway (Middlesborough) - sexual abuse counselling service
- Safer Middlesborough Partnership (police, child protection & NGO representatives gave presentations)
- Young Person's Residential Unit (Middlesborough Children's Service)
- Barnardo's 'Space' service (Birmingham) - specialist sexual exploitation service, community/social work support

In the Netherlands -

- Juvenile treatment centre for girls (in Zeist).
- 'Profiel' (an organisation who work with Multi Problem families)
- 'Pretty Woman' (community/social work anti - sexual exploitation NGO)
- Police department (Commercial Vice /prostitution team).

B: Child Protection & Criminal Justice seminars in each member country for inter-agency stakeholders/professionals (Total 238 UK & NL participants)

In the UK - Barnardo's convened 3 expert seminars with at least 30 participants at each to determine best practice approaches and how to produce effective inter-agency working between NGO's and statutory

professionals. These were held in June 2005 in London, December 2005 in York and June 2006 in London. In the UK a total of 127 professionals participated in these seminars from across the child protection and criminal justice sectors.

In the NL - Stade worked with *TransAct* (Information Centre Child Prostitution) and convened 3 expert seminars held in Utrecht in November 2005, April 2006 and September 2006. In the NL a total of 111 child protection and criminal justice professionals participated in these seminars.

C: Interviews with NGO service practitioners & inter-agency stakeholders/professionals

The views of 64 inter agency professionals & stakeholders from Child Protection or Criminal Justice were gathered across the 3 countries as a result of the project. In addition, a further 58 interviews were conducted with NGO Barnardo's child protection professionals in the UK only.

D: Collation of service user feedback (C&YP at risk)


At the visits by the Estonian Tartu Child Support Centre staff to the UK & NL service user feedback was given. These young people have all experienced sexual exploitation and been supported to recovery by the NGO's concerned.

E: Use of monitoring tool to collect data on victim outcomes as a result of NGO service provision in the UK

The 'Outcome Monitoring Tool' devised by Barnardo's in the UK was applied in 10 specialist sexual exploitation services throughout the UK. Practitioners monitored Under 18's who had experienced sexual exploitation through prostitution or were at risk of doing so. The tool successfully monitored the outcomes for 226 children & young people (service users under 18) over a 2 year period to show that Barnardo's UK services do reduce the risk of sexual exploitation, using the social work/community based intervention model in operation.

The method of intervention is called 'The Four A's' model and is substantively described in a separate report; Dutch and Estonian translations are available as free pdfs at - www.barnardos.org.uk/reducingtherisk.

F: Final international expert seminar held in Tartu, Estonia (64 participants)



The final International Seminar was held in October 2006 and was attended by 38 Estonian professionals plus the Tartu Child Support Centre team (6 persons). In addition the partners from Barnardo's UK & Stede NL also attended with 9 and 11 participants respectively.

The four objectives of the project were achieved through these activities (A-E) and are detailed in full in the project report produced by Barnardo's UK -

Blueprints of Experience; working to prevent and reduce child sexual exploitation in the UK, NL and Estonia - at www.barnardos.org.uk.