



Out of sight, out of mind

Child sexual exploitation

Jan Coles

November 2005

Supported by Wales Advisory Group
on Child Sexual Exploitation



Barnardo's

CYMRU

RHO'I'R DYFODOLYN ÔL I'N PLANT
GIVING CHILDREN BACK THEIR FUTURE

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A scoping study into service provision for
sexually exploited children in Wales

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I would like to offer my grateful thanks to the people without whom this report would not have been written.

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Foreword

The harm inflicted on children and young people who are sexually exploited is shocking.

This harm can involve the physical abuse of rape, assault, burns, and broken bones. The emotional abuse may result in self harming behaviour, drug addiction and overdosing. The harm may lead to pregnancies, terminations and sexually transmitted disease.

For young people who have become involved it may take years to recover and repair the damage that has been inflicted upon them.

Across the UK, Barnardo's has a well established record of working in the field of child sexual exploitation – but as yet there is no service provision in Wales.

This report is part of the process aimed at developing – in partnership with others – a response to the unmet needs of this vulnerable group of children.

I am delighted Barnardo's Cymru is actively contributing to the work of the multi agency Wales Advisory Group, chaired by the Children's Commissioner, that is working towards:

- increasing awareness of child sexual exploitation, and campaigning for appropriate services;
- promoting service development; and
- providing information on the prevalence and nature of the problem in Wales.

There is much to be done in taking forward a collaborative multi agency response to meeting the needs of sexually exploited children. I am encouraged by the response of politicians and professionals in recognising there are deficits in existing systems and gaps in service provision.

The time has come for this awareness to translate into a willingness to make real commitments to tackle the issue now.

The report identifies ways forward we can take to begin to make a difference, and I very much hope that the children facing sexual exploitation in Wales today will not remain out of sight and out of mind any longer.



Raymond Ciborowski

Director Barnardo's Cymru

Introduction

Very little is known about the prevalence and nature of child sexual exploitation in Wales and to date there has been no Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) funded study in relation to this issue. This report provides the findings of a scoping study undertaken by Barnardo's Cymru on behalf of the Wales Advisory Group on Child Sexual Exploitation and is the only scoping exercise of this nature. This group was established in January 2004, is chaired by the Children's Commissioner for Wales and has representation from across the statutory and voluntary sectors including WAG and the police.

This report includes the findings of the scoping study which was carried out during the six month period February to July 2005 and is informed by evidence of models of care for the protection of children and young people from sexual exploitation identified in existing research.

Methodology

Practitioners from each of the 22 local authorities in Wales were contacted and a standard set of information was requested. In addition to the social services child protection co-ordinator in each authority a range of practitioners that may come into contact with sexually exploited young people were contacted in each area. In total, 32 practitioners responded to requests for information. Information was received for 21 of the 22 local authorities in Wales.

In total 16 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were carried out with practitioners and managers from 12 local authorities in Wales. The child protection co-ordinator was interviewed in seven local authorities and a further nine interviews were carried out across other agencies. These included: social work practitioners working for local authorities (three); representatives from voluntary sector agencies (four) and representatives from health services working with children (two). In addition to the interviews 16 written responses were received from practitioners from 11 local authorities. Written responses were provided by: child protection co-ordinators (six); health practitioners working with children and young people (nine) and a manager of a local authority after care service (one). All those who contributed to the study were given an assurance of anonymity and neither individuals nor individual local authority areas are identified in the report.

Defining sexual exploitation

As a hidden form of abuse, child sexual exploitation can be difficult to identify and therefore define. In addition researchers and practitioners working in the field vary in their characterisation of the issues, ranging from taking account of an exploitative sexual relationship with an individual where sex may be exchanged for cigarettes, alcohol or mobile phone credit to more formal 'prostitution'. Similarly in identifying causal factors, children and young people can be defined as victims entirely without power or recognised as individuals whose vulnerabilities effectively compromise their ability to provide informed consent:

'Abuse of children and young people through prostitution takes different forms, from young people being involved in sexually exploitative relationships and receiving money, drugs or accommodation in exchange for sex with one or more men, to being exploited in more 'formal' prostitution. In all cases, those exploiting the young people have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, physical strength, or economic or other resources, such as access to drugs. While some element of coercion or intimidation is common, the involvement in exploitative relationships is most significantly characterized by choices born out of the social, emotional and economic vulnerability of the young person' (Hibbert, 2005)

Extent and nature of child sexual exploitation in Wales

Prevalence of exploitation

Practitioners were asked whether they were aware of any children or young people known to their service who they could identify as sexually exploited. Further details were sought about the young people identified in order to ensure that the cases identified related to child sexual exploitation as opposed to other forms of child sexual abuse. It was clear that many respondents needed clarification of the difference between child sexual exploitation and other forms of sexual abuse. As sexual exploitation is a hidden form of abuse and may be indicated rather than known for sure, practitioners were also asked about those young people where there were concerns about possible exploitation.

- Children and young people were identified as being exploited in 20 of the 21 local authorities profiled.
- In total, across the local authorities, 184 separate cases of children and young people were identified as being sexually exploited or where there are concerns that they are being sexually exploited.

Care was taken to exclude those cases that may have been double counted, by cross-referencing reported cases within each local authority that appeared similar and excluding these. Where it was not possible to match cases through lack of data, a cautious approach was taken and those cases were purposefully excluded. Thus those figures included represent conservative figures.

- In five of the local authorities respondents felt unable to give an exact number of children affected, preferring to use descriptors such as 'many', 'a number', 'small numbers'. Therefore, despite the identification of sexual exploitation occurring in these local authorities, no figures have been included in the total.

- Seventeen respondents explicitly stated that no data is kept on this specific issue within their agencies. The lack of formal monitoring meant that in many cases, figures related only to young people that practitioners were personally aware of rather than those known across the agency as a whole. For example, one child protection co-ordinator reported, *'the numbers are increasing; I only pick up a small proportion'*.

It is also likely that the actual number of young people who are sexually exploited is higher, as the numbers of young people identified will relate to the level of awareness and active identification of sexual exploitation, which was low in many cases, an issue that is discussed in more detail below. As a result it is not possible to identify the exact numbers of young people who are sexually exploited.

The number of cases identified (184) therefore represents the minimum number of young people at risk and an under-estimate of the extent of sexual exploitation in Wales.

Nature of exploitation identified

A wide range of exploitation was reported as taking place across Welsh local authorities. This included young people involved in sexually exploitative relationships with older men; children and young people coerced into engaging in sexual activity with acquaintances of an exploitative male; young people being picked up off the street in cars, and children and young people being targeted to perform sexual acts in exchange for money, cigarettes, drugs, gifts, accommodation, meals from café and restaurant workers and rides home in taxis. 'Looked after' children, especially those living in residential homes, were seen to be particularly vulnerable.

- The reporting of the exploitation of boys and young men was limited. Only six respondents were able to split their figures by gender. Those that were able to provide the data reported nine cases of sexual exploitation of young men, all of whom were over the age of 16.
- The reporting of young people between the ages of 16 and 18 was also partial. Eight respondents indicated that their figures included this age group, including only two responses from child protection co-ordinators.

The deficiency in formal monitoring is highlighted through discrepancies in these contributions. For example, in three local authority areas, child protection officers reported no 16 to 18 year olds at risk in their locality, whilst voluntary sector organisations operating in the same geographical area indicated they work with numbers of children whom they had referred to social services due to concerns around sexual exploitation.

One practitioner expressed concerns about the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children and young people from outside of the UK seeking asylum, although there were no figures or further information available.

All respondents who gave data on ethnicity reported this to be predominantly White UK.

Identifying child sexual exploitation

The Department of Health/Welsh Assembly Government (DoH/WAG) Supplementary Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Prostitution (2000) stipulates the clear expectation that services have an essential role in actively identifying sexual exploitation:

'The ACPC should make arrangements to actively enquire into the extent to which children are involved in prostitution' (5.5)

'All professionals must be able to recognise situations where children might be involved in, or at risk of becoming involved in, prostitution' (2.3)

A number of risk factors have been identified through previous research into sexual exploitation. These risk factors are therefore now recognised as being well established indicators of sexual exploitation.

- violent fathers or stepfathers
 - physical or sexual abuse in the family
 - mothers who are victims of domestic violence and/or dependent on alcohol/drugs
 - being disengaged from education by their early teens
 - being alienated from their families or communities
 - being hungry for attention
 - a history of 'going missing'
 - keenness to 'escape' childhood and be regarded as adults
 - drug/alcohol dependence
 - being targeted and sexually exploited by a pimp
- (Scott, 2001)

- homelessness
 - running away
 - experience of life on the street
 - a desire for money, particularly in relation to drug use
 - being 'looked after' in local authority care
- (Cusick, 2002)

- conflict at/with school
 - getting into men's cars
 - extensive use of the phone to multiple callers
 - running away/'going missing'
 - victim of sexual assault/rape
 - victim of physical violence
- (Pearce, 2002)

Practitioners were asked how their agencies identified children and young people as being, or at risk of being, sexually exploited.

- Two local authorities had commissioned scoping exercises in order to provide information about sexual exploitation in their area.
- Thirteen local authority child protection co-ordinators reported that sexual exploitation is identified where concerns have been raised by social workers, residential staff or carers or via referral from other agencies such as health, education and police. Practitioners from after care services described the assessment of need as being the means of identification and the pathway plan as the means of addressing it.
- Eleven practitioners reported the lack of 'hard evidence' as being an obstacle in identifying sexual exploitation. Thus children were not identified as being at risk as information was considered to be anecdotal and therefore not valid. As a result, there is a danger that cases are more frequently identified where risk has already escalated to critical levels.
- Risk factors for sexual exploitation were not specifically addressed as part of the assessment process in 19 of the 21 local authorities where information was provided. Only one respondent described specific information gathering in relation to sexual exploitation during the assessment process.

Six respondents reported that they rely on children and young people telling them of their situation, whilst 13 respondents raised the fact that children rarely disclose this form of abuse, nor recognise their situations as exploitative.

Identification of sexual exploitation relies upon the awareness of individual practitioners working with children and young people. However, there was a general lack of awareness of issues relating to child sexual exploitation across all agencies:

- Twenty eight respondents reported experiencing difficulties in identifying sexually exploited children. This concurs with research that shows that due to the hidden nature of child sexual exploitation, it is extremely difficult to identify and often goes undetected by protective agencies (Pearce, 2002).
- Seven practitioners highlighted the difficulties in raising the issue with children and young people.
- The need for training was identified by 25 respondents with three local authorities reportedly having had or planned specialist training around sexual exploitation. One local authority had planned to access training for their staff but this was cancelled as it was decided there was no particular problem in the area.

Seven practitioners also reported difficulties with children being believed and the often punitive approach taken to addressing sexual exploitation:

'I was in a strategy meeting to discuss a 13 year old child and the service manager chairing the meeting described her as a danger to men' – Practitioner

Protecting children and young people

Use of protocols

The DoH/WAG guidance states that:

'Area Child Protection Committees should develop a local protocol on children abused through prostitution and monitor and review the operation of the protocol' (5.5)

In total:

- Eight of the local authorities were identified as having protocols developed under the guidance.
- Thirteen of the respondents were aware of the existence of protocols for sexually exploited children and young people in their area, however five of these reported that the protocols are not routinely used.
- Twelve child protection co-ordinators stated that child protection procedures are or should be used in response to the identification of a sexually exploited child, whilst five of these reported that they believed child protection procedures are not being used effectively, with cases being dealt with via alternative means.

Inconsistencies in the response to sexual exploitation and use of the protocols across Wales were highlighted. For example in the case of one local authority, child protection procedures are used if a child is not already known to social services and where there is firm evidence that sexual exploitation is taking place. In an authority nearby it was reported that they are hardly used at all.

'It's happening everywhere, I hear people talking about it, but it's not coming to conference' – Child Protection Co-ordinator

This is concurrent with the findings of the Review of Government Guidance (Swann and Balding, 2002), which found a lack of consistency in processes and responses to individual cases and no consensus as to when to initiate a child protection section 47 enquiry following an initial assessment.

Further discrepancies were identified between figures provided by those practitioners working with children in the looked after system and those working in agencies more keenly focused on child protection. An explanation for this may be that looked after children who are sexually exploited may be dealt with through looked after children procedures rather than multi-agency child protection systems as required in the DoH/WAG guidance.

Responding to sexual exploitation

The DoH/WAG guidance stresses the need for a co-ordinated sustained approach to working to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation.

'The Government recognises that creating a successful exit strategy from prostitution for a child is not a simple process. It requires a careful, caring and concerted inter-agency approach that may have to be sustained for a long period of time' (2.4)

Practitioners reported difficulty in gaining support from other agencies to address the needs of affected children.

'Social workers are talking about this being a massive problem with young girls, but nobody knows what to do about it' – Practitioner

- Voluntary sector practitioners and health professionals were particularly frustrated by the response from social services departments and police when raising concerns about a child at risk of or being sexually exploited. 14 reported that their referrals are not taken seriously nor action taken in response.
- In total 19 respondents reported difficulties in gaining an appropriate response from social services departments and/or police when they identified concerns regarding a child.

Overall, the level of awareness around child sexual exploitation was greatest amongst health care practitioners working with children and young people. These practitioners were also more alert to the relevance of risk indicators.

The DoH/WAG guidance states that:

'Children looked after who run away are particularly at risk of sexual exploitation... local authorities should have protocols in place with the police and other agencies on the action to be taken whenever a child goes missing and when he or she returns' (6.14)

- Eleven respondents described the response to missing children as inadequate, with practitioners acknowledging that the current response, where police officers de-brief children on their return, is inappropriate and often counter productive. There was recognition that officers 'on the beat' may not be trained or have the necessary skills for this to be undertaken effectively. As well as being ineffective, this response places extreme pressure on police resources. Colleagues experienced at working with children and young people may be better placed to undertake this task.

- Only five respondents identified children going missing or staying out overnight as indicating risk of sexual exploitation. This is of significant concern as research and practice has identified going missing as a well-established risk factor (Harper and Scott, 2005; Pearce, 2002).

A further area of concern highlighted is the sexual health service provision for sexually exploited children. Practitioners recognised that such children are among the most vulnerable in Wales in terms of poor sexual health. Services are not accessible to effected children and where they are accessed, prove unable to meet their needs. A practitioner cited a case where they were working with a young woman aged 14 who had sought treatment for chlamydia.

'The clinic refused to treat her unless she disclosed the number and identities of her 'sexual partners'... there was no way she was going to do that!' – Practitioner

- In total nine respondents expressed concern about how difficult it is to engage with sexually exploited children and how they felt both they personally and their agencies, are ill equipped to undertake the task, particularly without support from other agencies.

They described how this often leads to frustration and a tendency to do nothing, as 'no one knows what to do'. One practitioner described a series of meetings regarding a child aged 13 where there were clear indications of sexual exploitation. Numerous discussions took place without any action being taken, 'the whole thing died a death in the end... I don't know what happened to her'.

Inter-agency working

The guidance emphasises the need for inter-agency working to respond to the needs of a sexually exploited child.

'In essence, all statutory agencies and professionals are expected to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child' (3.2)

None of the local authorities profiled has a consistent, systematic approach to multi-agency working around child sexual exploitation. Even in areas where working groups exist, there is no established co-ordination of agencies forming a protective network when agreeing a response to concerns regarding a sexually exploited child.

For example, a child protection co-ordinator identified a voluntary sector service operating in an authority's geographical area as an agency undertaking work with sexually exploited young people. However, this agency was unaware of the existence of the protocols and had neither knowledge of nor representation on the multi-agency group that meets in that area to discuss child sexual exploitation. This local authority was one of the more proactive identified through the scoping exercise.

Further evidence that the response to this issue lacks strategy and coordination is provided by the differential figures of prevalence provided by agencies working in the same local authority area as discussed above.

Messages from practitioners

Early recognition and intervention

Four voluntary sector practitioners stated that by the time a child has reached the age of 16 it is too late to be working with them around sexual exploitation. They described the multiplicity of issues experienced by young people leaving care or experiencing homelessness of which sexual exploitation is merely one. They argued that concerns need to be identified and intervention needs to take place much earlier.

'Social services have known her since she was small; this has been happening to her since she was 12' – Practitioner

Specialist resource

The DoH/WAG guidance recognises the benefit of a specialist resource.

'The ACPC should make arrangements to provide a local resource and source of expertise for those who have concerns that a child may be at risk of being drawn into prostitution or is being abused through prostitution' (5.5)

None of the respondents were able to identify a specialist child sexual exploitation service in Wales, although 12 identified services they thought undertook work with sexually exploited children and young people, but which do not. This further demonstrates a lack of understanding of the nature of child sexual exploitation. Harper and Scott (2005) and Pearce (2002) both identify specialist services as being key to ongoing successful work with this client group.

Training, advice and consultancy

A total of 25 respondents raised the need for advice, information and awareness-raising training for their own agencies and practitioners working with children and young people in other agencies. Twenty one respondents identified case consultancy as being of particular use in identifying children at risk and providing an appropriate response.

The need for specific child sexual exploitation services was identified by 14 of the respondents, with seven suggesting the inclusion of out-of-hours provision in any specialist service. The rationale for this is effectively expressed by one practitioner:

'the men [perpetrators] know they [children] have no one after five pm, they're completely on their own' – Practitioner

Missing

Five practitioners raised the need for a service to respond appropriately to children going missing whether overnight or for longer. They viewed this as a means of taking preventative action whilst a child is at risk of being sexually exploited.

Lead role

It has been a key finding for some time that a feature of the development of child sexual exploitation work is that people undertake tasks as an addition to their role, excluding it from mainstream systems and routinely undertaken work. Seven respondents raised this as an issue. Speaking of someone who pressed sexual exploitation onto the agenda in one local authority, a respondent stated:

'there used to be a group that met to discuss this issue... when she left, the momentum ran out, I don't know if the group still meets'. – Practitioner

Discussion

It is five years since the publication of the Department of Health/Welsh Assembly Government Supplementary Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Prostitution (2000). This scoping study suggests that the development of systems to safeguard sexually exploited children and young people in Wales has to date been insufficient. The study has identified inconsistencies in the response to sexual exploitation and use of protocols between agencies within local authorities and between local authorities across Wales. Draft guidance on safeguarding children in Wales was issued by the Welsh Assembly Government in June 2005. This draft guidance refers back to the jointly published Department of Health guidance of 2000, includes a reiteration of the need for protocols and states that:

'The identification of a child involved in sexual exploitation, or at risk of being drawn into prostitution, should always trigger the agreed local procedures to ensure the child's safety and welfare...' (WAG, 2005a:86)

Risk factors for sexual exploitation were not specifically addressed as part of the assessment process in 19 of the 21 local authorities who responded to this study. There was a general lack of awareness of issues relating to child sexual exploitation across all agencies and 28 respondents reported experiencing difficulties in identifying sexually exploited children, despite there being well established indicators for assessing need and identifying risk. Further, only eight local authorities were identified by respondents as having protocols developed under the DoH/WAG guidance (2000). In total 19 respondents reported difficulties in gaining an appropriate response from social services departments and/or police when they identified concerns regarding a child. This would suggest that service provision for sexually exploited children does not take place in a coordinated way with consistent sharing of information.

There is an ever increasing body of literature and research identifying best practice in relation to children and young people involved in sexual exploitation. Outcome monitoring carried out across a number of Barnardo's services in the UK demonstrates that research can be undertaken and information effectively gathered through the provision of services. The research also shows that effective work can be undertaken with this group of children and young people and models are in place that include services for missing children and sexual health provision that could be adopted and applied to services in Wales.

'Children and young people who are or have been abused, neglected or involved in prostitution and those demonstrating sexually inappropriate behaviour' are identified as one group of 'children and young people in special circumstances' in the recently published 'National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales' (WAG, 2005b:57). The National Service Framework makes clear the particular importance of the universal Safeguarding standard (2005b:21) in relation to children in special circumstances because of their increased vulnerability. The findings of this study suggest that much work needs to be done before local authorities and partner agencies in Wales will be in the position to meet the Safeguarding standard in relation to children and young people at risk of or involved in sexual exploitation.

Summary of key findings

- In total 184 separate cases were identified of children and young people being sexually exploited or where there were concerns that they are being sexually exploited. A number of factors identified in the report suggest that this figure represents an underestimate of actual prevalence.
- There is evidence that no formal monitoring processes exist. This deficiency is highlighted by the lack of shared knowledge regarding prevalence between agencies within a single local authority.
- Risk factors for sexual exploitation are not specifically addressed as part of the assessment process in 19 of the 21 local authorities which provided information.
- There is a general lack of awareness of issues relating to child sexual exploitation across all agencies. This is of particular concern as identification of sexual exploitation relies upon the awareness of individual practitioners working with children and young people.
- The need for training was identified by 25 of the 32 respondents.
- Only eight local authorities were identified by respondents as having protocols developed under the DoH/WAG guidance 2000.
- Practitioners reported difficulty in gaining support from other agencies to address the needs of affected children. In total 19 respondents reported difficulties in gaining an appropriate response from social services departments and police when they identified concerns regarding a child.
- None of the local authorities profiled had a consistent, systematic approach to multi-agency working around child sexual exploitation.
- The profile of the child sexual exploitation agenda at the local authority level is often dependent on the goodwill of an interested individual rather than being part of an integrated approach to safeguarding children and young people.
- Inconsistencies in the response to sexual exploitation and use of protocols across Wales were highlighted in the course of the study.

Recommendations

1. The Welsh Assembly Government should undertake a review of local authorities' protocols for children abused through prostitution to ascertain whether they exist, whether they follow government guidance and how they are implemented in practice.
2. Protocols for sexually exploited children should be included in the all Wales child protection procedures and should be incorporated in the review currently underway. The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that local protocols are in line with government guidance, are shared and understood across agencies and are rigorously applied.
3. A commitment from agencies including social services, police, education, health, youth offending teams, youth service and relevant voluntary sector agencies to forming a protective network is required to ensure the safety of children and young people who are or are at risk of being sexually exploited. The identification of a lead individual to collate monitoring information, coordinate response to need and regularly attend meetings is essential; this work should be integral to a specific role in each agency.
4. Children who are or are at risk of being sexually exploited should be included in the monitoring processes of all agencies working with children and young people.
5. Child sexual exploitation should be included in agencies' assessment tools.
6. Practitioners and managers working across all relevant agencies should receive training in identifying sexual exploitation, including the use of risk indicators, and best practice in providing an appropriate response to children and young people. Evidence of good practice in relation to appropriate responses already exists.
7. Practitioners from multi-agencies should be trained in the use of protocols for children abused through prostitution to ensure that they are rigorously and consistently applied.
8. Specialist child sexual exploitation services should be provided that include appropriate intervention for missing children and sexual health services. Models for best practice exist in services across the UK, and should be adopted and applied to services in Wales.

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O'r golwg, o'r ffordd

Ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol

Jan Coles

Tachwedd 2005

Cefnogwyd gan Grŵp Ymgynghorol
Cymru ar Ecsbloetio Plant yn Rhywiol



Barnardo's

CYMRU

RHO'I'R DYFODOLYN ÔL I'N PLANT
GIVING CHILDREN BACK THEIR FUTURE

O'r golwg, o'r ffordd

Ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol

Astudiaeth gwmpasu i'r gwasanaethau a ddarperir ar gyfer plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yng Nghymru

Jan Coles

Tachwedd 2005

Cefnogwyd gan Grŵp Ymgynghorol Cymru ar Ecsbloetio Plant yn Rhywiol

Cydnabyddiaeth

Carwn ddiolch o waelod calon i'r bobl a fu o gymorth. Hebddynt, ni fyddai'r adroddiad hwn wedi cael ei ysgrifennu.

Cyfeillion a chydweithwyr yng Ngwasanaeth Stryd Neville Barnardo's

Sam Clutton

Wendy Flynn

Zoe Harper

Karen Jones

Yvonne Rodgers

Alison Tyrrell

Peter Clarke, Comisiynydd Plant Cymru ac aelodau Grŵp Ymgynghorol Cymru ar Ecsbloetio Plant yn Rhywiol

Cynnwys

Cyflwyniad	1
Graddfa a natur ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yng Nghymru	2
Canfod ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol	4
Amddiffyn plant a phobl ifanc	6
Negeseuon gan ymarferwyr	9
Canfyddiadau allweddol	12
Argymhellion	13
Llyfryddiaeth	14

Rhagarweiniad

Mae'r niwed a wneir i blant a phobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yn ddychrynlyd.

Mae'r niwed hwn yn gallu bod ar ffurf camdriniaeth gorfforol megis trais rhywiol, ymosodiadau corfforol, llosgiadau a chael eu hesgryn wedi eu torri. Gall y gamdriniaeth emosiynol arwain at ymddygiad hunan-niweidiol, bod yn gaeth i gyffuriau a chymryd gorddos. Gall y niwed arwain at feichiogrwydd, erthyliaid ac afiechydon a gaiff eu trosglwyddo'n rhywiol.

I'r bobl ifanc yr effeithiwyd arnynt, gall gymryd blynyddoedd iddynt wella a thrwsio'r niwed a wnaethpwyd iddynt.

Ledled y DU, mae gan Barnardo's record gadarn ei seiliau o weithio ym maes ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol – ond hyd yn hyn, nid oes unrhyw ddarpariaeth gwasanaeth yng Nghymru.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn rhan o broses sydd â'r nod o ddatblygu – mewn partneriaeth ag eraill – ymateb i anghenion y grŵp diymgeledd hwn o blant, anghenion nas diwallwyd cyn belled.

Rwy'n arbennig o falch fod Barnardo's Cymru'n cyfrannu'n weithredol at waith Grŵp Ymgynghorol Cymru, sy'n grŵp aml-asiantaeth dan gadeiryddiaeth Comisiynydd y Plant sy'n gweithio tuag at:

- gynyddu ymwybyddiaeth o ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol, ac ymgyrchu dros wasanaethau priodol;
- hyrwyddo datblygiad gwasanaethau; a
- rhoi gwybodaeth am raddfa a natur y broblem yng Nghymru.

Mae gwaith mawr i'w wneud o ran sicrhau ymateb aml-asiantaeth cydlynus i gwrdd ag anghenion plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol. Mae'n fater calonidd i mi weld gwleidyddion a gweithwyr proffesiynol yn ymateb trwy gydnabod bod diffygion yn y systemau cyfredol a bylchau yn y gwasanaethau a ddarperir.

Daeth hi'n bryd trosi'r ymwybyddiaeth hwn yn barodrwydd i wneud ymrwymadau go iawn i fynd i'r afael â'r broblem ar fyrder.

Mae'r adroddiad yn nodi camau y gallwn eu cymryd i ddechrau gwneud gwahaniaeth, ac rwy'n mawr obeithio na fydd y plant sy'n wynebu cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yng Nghymru yn gorfod parhau o'r golwg ac o'r ffordd.



Raymond Ciborowski

Cyfarwyddwr Barnardo's Cymru

Cyflwyniad

Ychydig a wyddys am ehangder a natur ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yng Nghymru a hyd yn hyn, nid yw Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru wedi ariannu unrhyw astudiaeth yn y maes hwn. Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn nodi canfyddiadau astudiaeth gwmpasu a wnaed gan Barnardo's Cymru ar ran Grŵp Ymgynghorol Cymru ar Ecsbloetio Plant yn Rhywiol, a hwn yw'r unig ymarfer cwmpasu o'i fath. Sefydlwyd y grŵp hwn ym mis Ionawr 2004, dan gadeiryddiaeth Comisiynydd Plant Cymru, ac mae'n cynnwys cynrychiolwyr o'r sectorau statudol a gwirfoddol, gan gynnwys Llywodraeth y Cynulliad a'r heddlu.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn cynnwys canfyddiadau'r astudiaeth gwmpasu a gyflawnwyd dros gyfnod o chwe mis rhwng Chwefror a Gorffennaf 2005, ac mae'n seiliedig ar dystiolaeth o fodlau o ofal ar gyfer amddiffyn plant a phobl ifanc rhag ecsbloetio rhywiol a glustnodwyd mewn ymchwil gyfredol.

Methodoleg

Cysylltwyd ag ymarferwyr ym mhob un o'r 22 awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru, a gofynnwyd am set safonol o wybodaeth ganddynt. Yn ogystal â chydlynnydd amddiffyn plant y gwasanaethau cymdeithasol ym mhob awdurdod, cysylltwyd hefyd ag amrywiol ymarferwyr a allai fod yn dod i gysylltiad â phobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol ym mhob ardal. Ymatebodd cyfanswm o 32 ymarferydd i geisiadau am wybodaeth. Derbyniwyd gwybodaeth o 21 o'r 22 awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru.

At ei gilydd, cynhaliwyd 16 o gyfweiliadau lled-strwythuredig gydag ymarferwyr a rheolwyr o 12 awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru. Cyfwelwyd y cydlynnydd amddiffyn plant mewn saith awdurdod lleol ac fe gynhaliwyd naw cyfweiliad pellach mewn asiantaethau eraill. Roedd y rhain yn cynnwys: ymarferwyr gwaith cymdeithasol a oedd yn gweithio i awdurdodau lleol (tri); cynrychiolwyr o asiantaethau sector gwirfoddol (pedwar) a chynrychiolwyr o wasanaethau iechyd a oedd yn gweithio gyda phlant (dau). Yn ogystal â'r cyfweiliad, derbyniwyd 16 o ymatebion ysgrifenedig gan ymarferwyr o 11 awdurdod lleol. Cafwyd ymatebion ysgrifenedig gan: gydlynwyr amddiffyn plant (chwech); ymarferwyr iechyd yn gweithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc (naw) a rheolwr gwasanaeth ôl-ofal awdurdod lleol (un). Rhoddwyd sicrwydd i bawb a gyfrannodd at yr astudiaeth y byddent yn ddiennw, ac ni enwyd unigolion nac awdurdodau lleol unigol.

Diffinio ecsbloetio rhywiol

Gan fod ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yn ffurf gudd o gamdriniaeth, gall fod yn anodd ei ganfod ac, o'r herwydd, yn anodd ei ddiffinio. Ar ben hynny, mae ymchwilwyr ac ymarferwyr sy'n gweithio yn y maes yn anghytuno ynglŷn â nodweddion ecsbloetio rhywiol, gan amrywio o berthynas sy'n ecsbloetio unigolyn yn rhywiol trwy gynnig sigarennau, alcohol neu gredyd ffôn symudol yn gyfnewid am ryw, i 'buteindra' mwy ffurfiol. Yn yr un modd, wrth bennu ffactorau achosol, mae rhai yn gweld y plant a'r bobl ifanc fel dioddefwyr sy'n gwbl amddifad o unrhyw rym, ac eraill yn eu gweld fel unigolion sydd mor fregus fel nad yw'r gallu ganddynt i roi cydsyniad gwybodus:

“Mae sawl ffurf wahanol i gam-drin plant a phobl ifanc trwy buteindra, yn amrywio o gynnwys pobl ifanc mewn perthynas sy'n eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol a rhoi arian, cyffuriau neu lety iddynt yn gyfnewid am ryw gydag un neu ragor o ddynion, i gael eu hecsbloetio mewn puteindra mwy 'ffurfiol'. Ym mhob achos, mae'r rhai sy'n ecsbloetio'r bobl ifanc yn meddu ar rym drostynt oherwydd eu hoedran, eu rhyw, eu cryfder corfforol neu eu hadnoddau economaidd neu adnoddau eraill, megis llwybr at gyffuriau. Er bod rhyw elfen o orfodaeth neu fygwth yn gyffredin, nodwedd fwyaf arwyddocaol perthynas sy'n ecsbloetio yw'r ffaith mai bregusrwydd cymdeithasol, emosiynol ac economaidd y person ifanc a'u gyrodd i sefyllfa o'r fath.” (Hibbert, 2005)

Graddfa a natur ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yng Nghymru

Ehangder yr ecsbloetio

Gofynnwyd i ymarferwyr a oeddent yn ymwybodol o unrhyw blant neu bobl ifanc yr oedd eu gwasanaeth yn gyfarwydd â hwy y gallent ddweud eu bod yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol. Ceisiwyd mwy o fanylion am y bobl ifanc a nodwyd, er mwyn sicrhau bod yr achosion y tynnwyd sylw atynt yn ymwneud ag ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol, yn hytrach na ffurfiau eraill o gam-drin plant yn rhywiol. Roedd hi'n amlwg bod angen esbonio'r gwahaniaeth rhwng ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol a ffurfiau eraill o gamdriniaeth rywiol i nifer o ymatebwyr. Gan fod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn fath cudd o gamdriniaeth, ac yn rhywbeth y ceir arwyddion ohono, yn hytrach na gwybodaeth sicr, holwyd ymarferwyr ynglŷn â'r bobl ifanc hynny lle ceid pryder o ecsbloetio posibl.

- Pennwyd bod plant a phobl ifanc yn cael eu hecsbloetio yn 20 o'r 21 awdurdod lleol a broffiliwyd.
- At ei gilydd, yn yr holl awdurdodau lleol, pennwyd 184 o achosion gwahanol o blant a phobl ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol, neu lle ceid pryderon eu bod yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol.

Cymerwyd gofal i hepgor yr achosion hynny a allai fod wedi'u cyfrif ddwywaith, trwy groesgyfeirio achosion a adroddwyd ym mhob awdurdod lleol a ymddangosai'n debyg, a'u hepgor. Pan nad oedd modd cyfatebu achosion oherwydd prinder data, cymerwyd agwedd ofalus ac fe hepgorwyd yr achosion hynny'n fwriadol. Mae hyn yn golygu bod y ffigurau yn rhai ceidwadol.

- Mewn pump o'r awdurdodau lleol, roedd ymatebwyr yn teimlo nad oeddent yn gallu rhoi union nifer y plant yr effeithir arnynt, gan ddewis defnyddio disgrifiadau megis 'llawer', 'nifer', 'nifer bychan'. Mae hyn yn golygu, er gwaethaf pennu bod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn digwydd yn yr awdurdodau lleol hyn, na chynhwyswyd unrhyw ffigurau yn y cyfanswm.

- Dywedodd 17 o ymatebwyr yn benodol na chedwir unrhyw ddata ynglŷn â'r mater penodol hwn yn eu hasiantaethau. Mae diffyg monitro ffurfiol yn golygu bod ffigurau, mewn sawl achos, ond yn cyfeirio at bobl ifanc yr oedd ymarferwyr yn gwybod amdanynt yn bersonol, yn hytrach na rhai yr oedd yr asiantaeth yn ei chyfanrwydd yn gyfarwydd â nhw. Er enghraifft, dywedodd un cydlynnydd amddiffyn plant, *'mae'r niferoedd yn cynyddu; dim ond canran fechan a ddaw i'm sylw'*.

Mae hefyd yn debygol bod union nifer y bobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yn uwch, gan fod nifer y bobl ifanc a bennwyd yn adlewyrchu lefel yr ymwybyddiaeth a'r canfyddiadau gweithredol o ecsbloetio rhywiol, a oedd yn isel mewn sawl achos, mater a drafodir yn fanylach isod. Mae hyn yn golygu nad oes modd pennu union nifer y bobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol.

Mae nifer yr achosion a bennwyd (184) felly'n cynrychioli'r isafswm o bobl ifanc sydd mewn perygl, ac yn danamcangyfrif o raddfa ecsbloetio rhywiol yng Nghymru.

Natur yr ecsbloetio a bennwyd

Adroddwyd bod ystod helaeth o ecsbloetio yn digwydd ledled awdurdodau lleol Cymru. Mae hyn yn cynnwys: pobl ifanc sydd mewn perthynas lle maent yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol gan ddynion hŷn; plant a phobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hudo i weithgarwch rhywiol gyda ffrindiau dyn sy'n ecsbloetio; pobl ifanc sy'n cael eu codi oddi ar y stryd mewn ceir a phlant a phobl ifanc sy'n cael eu targedu i berfformio gweithredoedd rhywiol yn gyfnewid am arian, sigarennau, cyffuriau, rhoddion, llety, prydau gan weithwyr mewn caffi neu fwytai neu lifft adre mewn tacsis. Gwelwyd bod plant sy'n derbyn gofal, yn enwedig y rhai sy'n byw mewn cartrefi preswyl, yn agored i niwed.

- Cyfyngedig oedd yr adroddiadau o fechgyn a dynion ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio. Dim ond chwech ymatebydd oedd yn gallu dyrannu eu ffigurau yn ôl rhyw. Roedd y rhai a oedd â'r data hwnnw'n pennu naw achos o ecsbloetio dynion ifanc yn rhywiol, ac roedd pob un ohonynt dros 16 oed.
- Tameidiog hefyd oedd yr adroddiadau am bobl ifanc rhwng 16 a 18 oed. Dywedodd wyth ymatebydd bod eu ffigurau'n cynnwys y grŵp oedran hwn gan gynnwys dim ond dau ymateb gan gydlynwyr amddiffyn plant.

Mae'r anghysonderau yn y cyfraniadau hyn yn tynnu sylw at ddiffygion monitro ffurfiol. Er enghraifft, yn ardal tri awdurdod lleol, adroddodd swyddogion amddiffyn plant nad oedd un person ifanc rhwng 16 ac 18 oed mewn risg yn eu hardal hwy, tra bo mudiadau sector gwirfoddol a oedd yn gweithio yn yr un ardal ddaearyddol yn nodi eu bod yn gweithio gyda nifer o blant a gyfeiriwyd ganddynt at y gwasanaethau cymdeithasol am fod ganddynt bryderon ynghylch ecsbloetio rhywiol.

Mynegodd un ymarferydd bryderon am ecsbloetio'n rhywiol a gwerthu plant a phobl ifanc o'r tu allan i'r DU a oedd yn ceisio lloches, er nad oedd unrhyw ffigurau na gwybodaeth bellach ar gael.

Dywedodd pob ymatebydd a roddodd ddata am ethnigrwydd bod hyn yn nodwedd o bobl wyn y DU yn bennaf.

Canfod ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol

Mae Arweiniad Ategol yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru: Diogelu Plant sy'n cael eu Cam-drin trwy Buteindra (2000) yn nodi'r disgwyliad clir bod gan wasanaethau rôl allweddol i'w chwarae wrth fynd ati'n weithredol i ganfod ecsbloetio rhywiol:

'Dylai'r PAAP drefnu i fynd ati'n weithredol i ganfod i ba raddau y mae plant yn ymwneud â phuteindra' (5.5)

'Rhaid i bob gweithiwr proffesiynol allu adnabod sefyllfaoedd lle gallai plant fod yn ymwneud â phuteindra, neu mewn perygl o hynny' (2.3)

Canfuwyd nifer o ffactorau risg trwy ymchwil flaenorol i ecsbloetio rhywiol. Cydnabyddir y ffactorau risg hyn yn awr fel dangosyddion o ecsbloetio rhywiol sydd wedi hen ennill eu plwy.

- tadau neu lystadau treisgar
 - camdriniaeth gorfforol neu rywiol yn y teulu
 - mamau sy'n dioddef trais yn y cartref a/neu sy'n gaeth i alcohol/cyffuriau
 - wedi ymddieithrio o addysg erbyn eu harddegau cynnar
 - wedi eu hynysu oddi wrth eu teuluoedd neu gymunedau
 - crefu sylw
 - hanes o 'fynd ar goll'
 - yn awyddus i 'ddianc' rhag plentyndod a chael eu hystyried yn oedolion
 - caeth i gyffuriau/alcohol
 - cael eu targedu a'u hecsbloetio'n rhywiol gan pimp
- (Scott, 2001)

- digartrefedd
 - rhedeg i ffwrdd
 - profiad o fywyd ar y stryd
 - awydd taer am arian, yn enwedig mewn perthynas â defnyddio cyffuriau
 - yn 'derbyn gofal' gan awdurdod lleol
- (Cusick, 2002)

- gwrthdaro yn/gyda'r ysgol
 - mynd i geir dynion
 - defnyddio ffôn yn aml i alw nifer o bobl wahanol
 - rhedeg i ffwrdd/'mynd ar goll'
 - dioddef ymosodiad rhywiol/trais
 - dioddefwr/wraig trais corfforol
- (Pearce, 2002)

Gofynnwyd i ymarferwyr sut oedd eu hasiantaethau yn canfod plant a phobl ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol neu a allai fod mewn perygl o hynny.

- Roedd dau awdurdod lleol wedi comisiynu ymarferion cwmpasu er mwyn cael gwybodaeth am ecsbloetio rhywiol yn eu hardal.
- Adroddodd 13 o gydlynwyr amddiffyn plant awdurdod lleol bod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn cael ei ganfod lle codwyd pryderon gan weithwyr cymdeithasol, staff preswyl neu ofalwyr neu trwy atgyfeiriadau gan asiantaethau eraill megis ieuchyd, addysg a heddlu. Dywedodd ymarferwyr o wasanaethau ôl-ofal mai'r asesiad o angen oedd y ffordd orau o ganfod y plant a'r bobl ifanc hyn, ac mai'r cynllun llwybr oedd y ffordd i fynd i'r afael ag ef.
- Dywedodd 11 o ymarferwyr bod prinder 'tystiolaeth gadarn' yn rhwystr o ran canfod ecsbloetio rhywiol. Roedd hyn yn golygu nad oedd plant yn cael eu clustnodi'n rhai a oedd mewn perygl gan y credid mai gwybodaeth ar lafar gwlad ydoedd ac, o'r herwydd, nad oedd yn ddilys. O'r herwydd, mae perygl bod y rhan fwyaf o achosion a ganfyddir yn dod i'r amlwg pan fydd y risg eisoes wedi cyrraedd lefelau critigol.
- Nid oedd ffactorau risg ar gyfer ecsbloetio rhywiol yn cael sylw penodol fel rhan o'r broses asesu yn 19 o'r 21 awdurdod lleol lle darparwyd gwybodaeth. Dim ond un ymatebydd a ddisgrifiodd gam penodol o gasglu gwybodaeth mewn perthynas ag ecsbloetio rhywiol yn ystod y broses asesu.

Dywedodd chwe ymatebydd eu bod yn dibynnu ar blant a phobl ifanc i ddweud wrthynt am eu sefyllfa, gyda 13 ymatebydd yn tynnu sylw at y ffaith mai anaml iawn y mae plant yn datgelu'r math hwn o gam-drin ac nad ydynt yn sylweddoli eu bod yn cael eu hecsbloetio.

Mae canfod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn dibynnu ar ymwybyddiaeth ymarferwyr unigol sy'n gweithio â phlant a phobl ifanc. Fodd bynnag, roedd diffyg ymwybyddiaeth cyffredinol o faterion yn ymwneud ag ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yn yr holl asiantaethau:

- Dywedodd 28 o ymatebwyr eu bod yn ei chael hi'n anodd canfod plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol. Mae hyn yn cyd-fynd ag ymchwil sy'n dangos bod natur gudd ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yn ei gwneud hi'n hynod o anodd canfod achosion, ac mae'r asiantaethau amddiffyn yn aml yn methu yn hyn o beth (Pearce, 2002).
- Tynnodd saith ymarferydd sylw at yr anawsterau o godi'r mater â phlant a phobl ifanc.
- Dywedodd pump ar hugain o ymatebwyr bod angen hyfforddiant, gyda thri awdurdod lleol, mae'n ymddangos, wedi cael hyfforddiant arbenigol ym maes ecsbloetio rhywiol neu'n bwriadu cael hyfforddiant o'r fath. Roedd un awdurdod lleol wedi bwriadu trefnu hyfforddiant ar gyfer eu staff, ond ei fod wedi ei ganslo ar ôl penderfynu nad oedd problem benodol yn yr ardal.

Cyfeiriodd saith ymarferydd hefyd at anawsterau gyda phlant yn cael eu credu a'r agwedd gosbol a gymerid yn aml wrth ddelio ag ecsbloetio rhywiol:

Ymateb i ecsbloetio rhywiol

Mae arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn pwysleisio bod angen agwedd gyson gydlynus tuag at weithio i amddiffyn plant a phobl ifanc rhag cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol.

'Mae'r Llywodraeth yn cydnabod nad proses syml mo greu strategaeth lwyddiannus i gael plentyn i adael puteindra. Mae'n gofyn am agwedd ofalus, ofalgar a chydnerth rhwng asiantaethau, a honno, o bosib, yn un y byddai'n rhaid ei chynnal am gyfnod maith' (2.4)

Cyfeiriodd ymarferwyr at anhawster i gael cefnogaeth gan asiantaethau eraill i fynd i'r afael ag anghenion y plant yr effeithiwyd arnynt.

*'Mae gweithwyr cymdeithasol yn dweud fod hon yn broblem aruthrol ymhlith merched ifanc, ond 'does neb yn gwybod beth i'w wneud amdano'
– Ymarferydd*

- Roedd ymarferwyr yn y sector gwirfoddol a gweithwyr proffesiynol iechyd yn arbennig o rwystredig yn wyneb yr ymateb gan adrannau gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a'r heddlu pan oeddent yn lleisio pryderon am blentyn a oedd mewn perygl o gael ei ecsbloetio'n rhywiol neu a oedd yn cael ei ecsbloetio felly. At ei gilydd, dywedodd 14 nad oedd ei hatgyfeiriadau'n cael eu cymryd o ddifrif ac nad ymatebwyd trwy unrhyw weithred.
- At ei gilydd, dywedodd 19 ymatebydd eu bod wedi cael trafferth cael ymateb priodol gan adrannau gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a/neu'r heddlu pan fynegasant bryderon am blentyn.

At ei gilydd, roedd y lefel ymwybyddiaeth o ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol ar ei orau ymhlith ymarferwyr gofal iechyd sy'n gweithio â phlant a phobl ifanc. Roedd yr ymarferwyr hyn hefyd yn fwy effro i berthnasedd dangosyddion risg.

Mae arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn nodi fel a ganlyn:

'Mae plant sy'n derbyn gofal, sy'n rhedeg i ffwrdd, yn arbennig o agored i'r risg o ecsbloetio rhywiol...dylai awdurdodau lleol fod â phrotocolau ar waith gyda'r heddlu ac asiantaethau eraill ynglŷn â'r camau i'w cymryd pryd bynnag y bydd plentyn yn mynd ar goll a phan fydd ef neu hi yn dychwelyd' (6.14)

- Dywedodd 11 o ymatebwyr bod yr ymateb i blant sydd ar goll yn annigonol, gydag ymarferwyr yn cydnabod bod yr ymateb presennol, pan fydd swyddogion yr heddlu yn holi plant am wybodaeth ar ôl iddynt dychwelyd yn amhriodol ac yn aml yn wrthgynhyrchiol. Cydnabuwyd nad yw swyddogion 'ar ddyletswydd' efallai wedi cael hyfforddiant nac yn meddu ar y sgiliau angenrheidiol er mwyn mynd i'r afael â hyn yn effeithiol. Yn ogystal â bod yn aneffeithiol, mae'r ymateb hwn yn rhoi pwysau aruthrol ar adnoddau'r heddlu. Efallai bod cydweithwyr sydd â phrofiad o weithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc yn fwy addas i ymgymryd â'r dasg hon.

'Roeddwn mewn cyfarfod strategol i drafod merch 13 oed ac fe ddywedodd y rheolwr gwasanaeth a oedd yn cadeirio'r cyfarfod ei bod yn berygl i ddynion' – Ymarferydd

Amddiffyn plant a phobl ifanc

Defnyddio protocolau

Mae arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn nodi fel a ganlyn:

'Dylai Pwyllgorau Ardal Amddiffyn Plant ddatblygu protocol lleol ar blant sy'n cael eu cam-drin trwy buteindra a monitro ac adolygu sut mae'r protocol yn cael ei weithredu' (5.5)

At ei gilydd:

- Nodwyd bod gan wyth o'r awdurdodau lleol brotocolau a ddatblygwyd dan yr arweiniad.
- Roedd 13 o'r ymatebwyr yn ymwybodol o fodolaeth protocolau ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yn eu hardal, ond roedd pump o'r rhain yn nodi nad oedd y protocolau'n cael eu defnyddio fel mater o drefn.
- Dywedodd 12 cydlynnydd amddiffyn plant bod gweithdrefnau amddiffyn plant yn cael eu defnyddio, neu y dylid eu defnyddio, i ymateb i ganfod achos o blentyn yn cael ei ecsbloetio'n rhywiol, ac roedd pump o'r rhain yn dweud eu bod yn credu nad yw gweithdrefnau amddiffyn plant yn cael eu defnyddio'n effeithiol, gydag achosion yn cael eu trin trwy ddefnyddio dulliau eraill.

Tynnwyd sylw at anghysonderau yn yr ymateb i ecsbloetio rhywiol a'r defnydd o brotocolau ledled Cymru. Er enghraifft, mewn un awdurdod lleol, defnyddir gweithdrefnau amddiffyn plant gyda phlentyn y mae gwasanaethau cymdeithasol eisoes yn gyfarwydd ag ef/hi a lle ceir tystiolaeth gadarn bod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn digwydd. Mewn awdurdod cyfagos, adroddwyd mai prin iawn yw'r defnydd ohonynt.

'Mae'n digwydd ym mhobman, rwy'n clywed pobl yn siarad amdano, ond nid yw'n cyrraedd cynhadledd' – Cydlynnydd Amddiffyn Plant

Mae hyn yn cyd-fynd â chanfyddiadau Arweiniad Adolygu Llywodraeth (Swann a Balding, 2002) a ganfu ddiffyg cysonder mewn prosesau ac ymatebion i achosion unigol, a dim consensws ynglŷn â phryd i sbarduno ymchwiliad amddiffyn plant adran 47 yn dilyn asesiad cychwynnol.

Canfuwyd anghysonderau pellach rhwng ffigurau a ddarparwyd gan yr ymarferwyr hynny a oedd yn gweithio gyda phlant yn y system plant sy'n derbyn gofal a'r rhai a oedd yn gweithio mewn asiantaethau a oedd yn canolbwyntio'n fwy penodol ar amddiffyn plant. Esboniad posibl dros hyn yw'r ffaith y gellid delio â phlant sy'n derbyn gofal sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol trwy weithdrefnau plant sy'n derbyn gofal, yn hytrach na systemau amddiffyn plant aml-asiantaeth, fel sy'n ofynnol yn arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad.

- Dim ond pump ymatebydd a ddywedodd bod plant a oedd yn mynd ar goll neu'n aros allan dros nos yn arwydd o risg o ecsbloetio rhywiol. Mae hyn yn destun pryder sylweddol, gan fod ymchwil ac ymarfer wedi nodi 'mynd ar goll' yn ffactor risg sydd wedi ei hen sefydlu (Harper a Scott, 2005; Pearce, 2002).

Maes pryder pellach y tynnwyd sylw ato yw'r ddarpariaeth gwasanaeth iechyd rhywiol ar gyfer plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol. Mae ymarferwyr yn cydnabod bod plant o'r fath gyda'r rhai mwyaf agored i niwed yng Nghymru, o ran iechyd rhywiol gwael. Nid oes gwasanaethau o fewn cyrraedd rhwydd i blant yr effeithir arnynt a hyd yn oed pan fyddant ar gael, nid ydynt yn gallu diwallu eu hanghenion. Cyfeiriodd ymarferydd at achos lle'r oeddent yn gweithio gyda merch ifanc 14 oed a ddaeth i gael triniaeth am chlamydia.

'Gwrthododd y clinig ei thrin os nad oedd hi'n datgelu nifer ac enwau ei 'phartneriaid rhywiol' ... ac nid oedd unrhyw fwriad ganddi o wneud hynny!'
– Ymarferydd

- At ei gilydd, mynegodd naw ymatebydd eu pryder ynglŷn â pha mor anodd yw hi i gysylltu â phlant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol a sut y maent yn teimlo nad oes ganddynt hwy, yn bersonol na'u hasiantaethau, yr adnoddau i ymgymryd â'r gwaith, yn arbennig heb gefnogaeth gan asiantaethau eraill.

Maent yn disgrifio sut y mae hyn yn aml yn arwain at rwystredigaeth a thueddiad i wneud dim byd, gan 'nad oes neb yn gwybod beth i'w wneud'. Disgrifiodd un ymarferydd gyfres o gyfarfodydd a oedd yn ymwneud â phlentyn 13 oed yr oedd arwyddion amlwg o ecsbloetio rhywiol yn bodoli yn ei chylch. Cafwyd trafodaethau niferus, ond ni wnaethpwyd dim, 'rhedodd y cyfan allan o stêm yn y diwedd... wn i ddim beth ddaeth ohoni'.

Gweithio Rhyngasiantaethol

Mae'r arweiniad yn tynnu sylw at yr angen i weithio'n rhyngasiantaethol i ymateb i anghenion plentyn sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol.

'Yn y bôn, disgwylir i bob asiantaeth statudol a gweithiwr proffesiynol weithio gyda'i gilydd i ddiogelu a hyrwyddo lles y plentyn' (3.2)

Nid oes gan un o'r awdurdodau lleol a broffiliwyd agwedd gyson a systematig tuag at weithio'n amlasiantaethol ym maes ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol. Hyd yn oed yn yr ardaloedd hynny lle ceir gweithgorau, nid oes unrhyw gydlynad sefydledig rhwng asiantaethau i greu rhwydwaith amddiffynnol wrth gytuno ar ymateb i bryderon ynglŷn â phlentyn sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol.

Er enghraifft, cyfeiriodd cydlynnydd amddiffyn plant at wasanaeth sector gwirfoddol a oedd yn gweithio yn ardal ddaearyddol yr awdurdod fel asiantaeth a oedd yn gweithio gyda phobl ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol. Fodd bynnag, nid oedd yr asiantaeth hon yn ymwybodol o fodolaeth y protocolau, ac nid oedd hi'n gwybod dim am y grŵp amlasiantaethol sy'n cwrdd yn yr ardal honno i drafod ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol nac unrhyw gynrychiolaeth ar y

grŵp hwnnw. Roedd yr awdurdod lleol yn un o'r rhai mwyaf rhagweithiol a nodwyd trwy'r ymarfer cwmpasu.

Ceir tystiolaeth bellach o'r diffyg strategaeth a chydlynid yn yr ymateb i'r pwnc hwn gan y ffigurau gwahanol ynglŷn ag ehangder y mater a ddarparwyd gan asiantaethau sy'n gweithio o fewn yr un ardal awdurdod lleol, fel y trafodwyd uchod.

Negeseuon gan ymarferwyr

Canfod a chamu i mewn yn gynnar

Dywedodd pedwar o ymarferwyr sector gwirfoddol ei bod hi'n rhy hwyr pan fydd plentyn wedi cyrraedd ei 16 oed i wneud unrhyw waith gyda nhw ym maes ecsbloetio rhywiol. Roeddent yn disgrifio'r elfennau niferus a wynebai pobl ifanc wrth adael gofal neu brofi digartrefedd, a dim ond un ohonynt oedd ecsbloetio rhywiol. Dadleuent fod angen canfod pryderon a chamu i mewn yn llawer cynt.

'Mae gwasanaethau cymdeithasol wedi ei hadnabod ers pan oedd hi'n fach; mae hyn wedi bod yn digwydd iddi ers pan oedd hi'n 12' – Ymarferydd

Adnoddau arbenigol

Mae arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn cydnabod budd adnodd arbenigol.

'Dylai'r PAAP drefnu i ddarparu adnodd lleol a ffynhonnell arbenigedd ar gyfer pobl sydd â phryderon bod plentyn mewn perygl o gael ei dynnu i mewn i buteindra neu ei fod yn cael ei gam-drin trwy buteindra' (5.5)

Nid oedd un o'r ymatebwyr yn gallu enwi gwasanaeth arbenigol ym maes ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yng Nghymru, er y cyfeiriodd 12 at wasanaethau yr oeddent yn credu a oedd yn gweithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol, er nad oeddent. Mae hyn yn brawf pellach o'r diffyg dealltwriaeth ynglŷn â natur ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol. Mae Harper a Scott (2005) a Pearce (2002), y naill a'r llall, yn nodi bod gwasanaethau arbenigol yn allweddol ar gyfer gwaith llwyddiannus parhaus gyda'r grŵp cleient hwn.

Hyfforddiant, cyngor ac ymgynghori

Dywedodd cyfanswm o 25 ymatebydd bod angen cyngor, gwybodaeth a hyfforddiant codi ymwybyddiaeth ar eu hasiantaethau hwy eu hunain ac ar ymarferwyr sy'n gweithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc mewn asiantaethau eraill. Dywedodd 21 ymatebydd bod ymgynghoriaeth achos yn arbennig o ddefnyddiol wrth ganfod plant sydd mewn perygl ac wrth roi ymateb priodol.

Nododd 14 ymatebydd bod angen gwasanaethau penodol ar gyfer delio ag ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol, gyda saith yn awgrymu cynnwys darpariaeth y tu allan i oriau mewn unrhyw wasanaeth arbenigol. Mynegodd un ymarferydd y rhesymeg dros hyn yn dra effeithiol:

*'mae'r dynion [y drwgweithredwyr] yn gwybod nad oes ganddyn nhw
[y plant] neb ar gael ar ôl pump o'r gloch yr hwyr, maen nhw'n gyfan gwbl
ar eu pen eu hun' – Ymarferydd*

Ar goll

Dywedodd pum ymarferydd bod angen gwasanaeth i ymateb yn briodol i blant a oedd yn mynd ar goll, boed hynny dros nos neu am gyfnod hwy. Credent y byddai hyn yn ffordd o gymryd camau ataliol pan fyddai plant mewn perygl o gael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol.

Swyddogaeth flaenllaw

Bu'n ganfyddiad allweddol ers peth amser mai un o nodweddion datblygu gwaith ecsbloetio rhywiol yw bod pobl yn ymgymryd â thasgau ar ben eu swyddogaeth arferol, sy'n golygu bod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn cael ei ynysu o systemau'r brif ffrwd a gwaith a wneir bob dydd. Cyfeiriodd saith ymatebydd at hyn. Wrth siarad am rywun a bwysodd i gynnwys ecsbloetio rhywiol ar yr agenda mewn un awdurdod lleol, dywedodd ymatebydd:

*'roedd grŵp a arferai gyfarfod i drafod y mater hwn... pan adawodd hi, daeth
y cyfan i ben a dydw i ddim yn gwybod a yw'r grŵp yn dal i gyfarfod'.
– Ymarferydd*

Trafodaeth

Aeth pum mlynedd heibio ers cyhoeddi Arweiniad Ategol yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad: Diogelu Plant sy'n cael eu Cam-drin trwy Buteindra (2000). Awgryma'r astudiaeth gwmpasu mai annigonol fu datblygiad systemau i ddiogelu plant a phobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yng Nghymru cyn belled. Mae'r astudiaeth wedi nodi anghysonderau yn yr ymateb i ecsbloetio rhywiol a'r defnydd o brotocolau rhwng asiantaethau o fewn awdurdodau lleol a rhwng awdurdodau lleol ledled Cymru. Cyhoeddwyd arweiniad drafft ar ddiogelu plant yng Nghymru gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru ym mis Mehefin 2005. Mae'r arweiniad drafft hwn yn cyfeirio'n ôl at yr arweiniad a gyhoeddwyd ar y cyd gan yr Adran Iechyd yn 2000, ac mae'n atgyfnerthu'r angen am brotocolau, gan ddatgan:

'Dylai canfod plentyn sy'n rhan o ecsbloetio rhywiol, neu sydd mewn perygl o gael ei dynnu i mewn i buteindra, yn ddieithriad, ysgogi'r gweithdrefnau cytunedig lleol i sicrhau diogelwch a lles y plentyn...' (LICC, 2005a:86)

Nid oedd ffactorau risg ar gyfer ecsbloetio rhywiol yn cael sylw penodol fel rhan o'r broses asesu yn 19 o'r 21 awdurdod lleol a ymatebodd i'r astudiaeth hon. Roedd diffyg ymwybyddiaeth cyffredinol o faterion yn ymwneud ag ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yn yr holl asiantaethau, a dywedodd 28 ymatebydd eu bod yn wynebu anawsterau o ran canfod plant a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol, er bod dangosyddion ar gael ar gyfer asesu anghenion a nodi risg, sydd wedi eu hen sefydlu. Ymhellach, dim ond wyth awdurdod lleol a nodwyd gan ymatebwyr yn rhai a oedd â phrotocolau a ddatblygwyd dan arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth y Cynulliad. At ei gilydd, dywedodd 19 ymatebydd eu bod wedi cael trafferth cael ymateb priodol gan adrannau gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a/neu'r heddlu pan fynegasant bryderon am blentyn. Byddai hyn yn awgrymu nad yw'r ddarpariaeth gwasanaeth ar gyfer plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yn digwydd mewn ffordd gydlynus, gan rannu gwybodaeth yn gyson.

Ceir corff cynyddol o lenyddiaeth ac ymchwil sy'n nodi arfer gorau mewn perthynas â phlant a phobl ifanc sy'n ymwneud ag ecsbloetio rhywiol. Dengys ymchwil monitro canlyniadau a wnaed gan sawl gwasanaeth Barnardo's yn y DU bod modd ymgymryd ag ymchwil a chasglu gwybodaeth yn effeithiol trwy ddarparu gwasanaethau. Dengys yr ymchwil hefyd bod modd gweithio'n effeithiol gyda'r grŵp hwn o blant a phobl ifanc ac fe geir modelau o wasanaethau ar gyfer plant sydd ar goll a darpariaeth iechyd rhywiol y gellid eu mabwysiadu a'u cymhwyso i wasanaethau yng Nghymru.

Pennir *'plant a phobl ifanc sy'n cael, neu sydd wedi, cael eu cam-drin, eu hesgeuluso neu sydd wedi ymwneud â phuteindra a'r rhai sy'n ymddwyn mewn ffordd rywiol amhriodol'* yn un grŵp o 'blant a phobl ifanc mewn amgylchiadau arbennig' yn y 'Fframwaith Gwasanaeth Cenedlaethol ar gyfer Plant, Pobl Ifanc a Gwasanaethau Mamolaeth yng Nghymru' (LICC, 2005b:57) a gyhoeddwyd yn ddiweddar. Mae'r Fframwaith Gwasanaeth Cenedlaethol yn datgan yn glir bwysigrwydd penodol y Safon Diogelu gyffredinol (2005b:21) mewn perthynas â phlant sydd mewn amgylchiadau arbennig oherwydd eu bod yn fwy agored i niwed. Awgryma canfyddiadau'r astudiaeth hon bod gwaith mawr i'w wneud cyn y bydd awdurdodau lleol a phartner asiantaethau yng Nghymru mewn sefyllfa i gwrdd â'r Safon Diogelu mewn perthynas â phlant a phobl ifanc sydd mewn perygl o gael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol neu sy'n ymwneud ag ecsbloetio rhywiol o'r fath.

Crynodeb o'r canfyddiadau allweddol

- At ei gilydd, pennwyd 184 o achosion gwahanol o blant a phobl ifanc a oedd yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol, neu lle ceid pryderon eu bod yn cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol. Awgryma nifer o ffactorau a bennwyd yn yr adroddiad bod y ffigur hwn yn danamcangyfrif o ehangder gwirioneddol y sefyllfa.
- Ceir tystiolaeth o ddiffyg prosesau monitro ffurfiol. Tynnir sylw at y diffyg hwn gan ddiffyg rhannu gwybodaeth ynglŷn ag ehangder y sefyllfa rhwng asiantaethau o fewn un awdurdod lleol.
- Nid yw ffactorau risg ar gyfer ecsbloetio rhywiol yn cael sylw penodol fel rhan o'r broses asesu yn 19 o'r 21 awdurdod lleol a ddarparodd wybodaeth.
- Ceir diffyg ymwybyddiaeth cyffredinol ynglŷn â materion sy'n ymwneud ag ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol yn yr holl asiantaethau. Mae hyn yn bryder penodol, gan fod canfod ecsbloetio rhywiol yn dibynnu ar ymwybyddiaeth ymarferwyr unigol sy'n gweithio â phlant a phobl ifanc.
- Nododd 25 o'r 32 ymatebydd bod angen hyfforddiant.
- Dim ond wyth awdurdod lleol a bennwyd gan ymatebwyr yn rhai a oedd â phrotocolau a ddatblygwyd dan arweiniad yr Adran Iechyd/Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru 2000.
- Cyfeiriodd ymarferwyr at anhawster i gael cefnogaeth gan asiantaethau eraill i fynd i'r afael ag anghenion y plant yr effeithiwyd arnynt. At ei gilydd, dywedodd 19 ymatebydd eu bod wedi cael trafferth cael ymateb gan adrannau gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a'r heddlu pan fynegasant bryderon am blentyn.
- Nid oedd gan un o'r awdurdodau lleol a broffiliwyd agwedd gyson a systematig tuag at weithio amlasiantaethol ym maes ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol.
- Mae proffil yr agenda ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol ar lefel awdurdod lleol yn aml yn dibynnu ar ewyllys da unigolyn sydd â diddordeb yn y pwnc, yn hytrach na bod yn rhan o agwedd integredig tuag at ddiogelu plant a phobl ifanc.
- Tynnwyd sylw at anghysonderau yn yr ymateb i ecsbloetio rhywiol a'r defnydd o brotocolau ledled Cymru yng nghwrs yr astudiaeth.

Argymhellion

1. Dylai Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru ymgymryd ag adolygiad o brotocolau awdurdodau lleol mewn perthynas â phlant sy'n cael eu cam-drin trwy buteindra i ganfod a ydynt yn bodoli, a ydynt yn dilyn arweiniad y llywodraeth, a sut y'u gweithredir yn ymarferol.
2. Dylid cynnwys protocolau ar gyfer plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol yn y gweithdrefnau amddiffyn plant Cymru-gyfan, a dylid eu hymgorffori yn yr adolygiad sydd ar waith ar hyn o bryd. Dylai Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru sicrhau bod protocolau lleol yn dilyn arweiniad y llywodraeth, eu bod yn cael eu rhannu a'u deall rhwng asiantaethau, a'u bod yn cael eu cymhwyso'n gadarn.
3. Mae angen ymrwymiad gan asiantaethau, gan gynnwys gwasanaethau cymdeithasol, yr heddlu, addysg, iechyd, timoedd troseddau ieuenctid, gwasanaeth ieuenctid ac asiantaethau sector gwirfoddol perthnasol i greu rhwydwaith amddiffynnol er mwyn sicrhau diogelwch plant a phobl ifanc sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol neu sydd mewn perygl o ecsbloetio o'r fath. Mae'n hanfodol enwi unigolyn blaenllaw i gasglu gwybodaeth fonitro, cydlynu ymateb i angen a mynychu cyfarfodydd yn rheolaidd; dylai'r gwaith hwn fod yn elfen ganolog o rôl benodol ym mhob asiantaeth.
4. Dylid cynnwys plant sy'n cael eu hecsbloetio'n rhywiol neu sydd mewn perygl o ecsbloetio o'r fath yn y prosesau monitro ym mhob asiantaeth sy'n gweithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc.
5. Dylai canfod achosion o ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol fod yn ganolog i ddulliau asesu asiantaethau.
6. Dylai ymarferwyr a rheolwyr sy'n gweithio ledled yr holl asiantaethau perthnasol dderbyn hyfforddiant ynglŷn â chanfod ecsbloetio rhywiol, gan gynnwys defnyddio dangosyddion risg, ac arferion gorau o ran darparu ymateb priodol i blant a phobl ifanc. Mae tystiolaeth o arfer da mewn perthynas ag ymatebion priodol eisoes yn bodoli.
7. Dylid hyfforddi ymarferwyr o aml-asiantaethau yn y defnydd o brotocolau ar gyfer plant sy'n cael eu cam-drin trwy buteindra er mwyn sicrhau eu bod yn cael eu cymhwyso'n gadarn ac yn gyson.
8. Dylid darparu gwasanaethau ecsbloetio plant yn rhywiol arbenigol sy'n cynnwys ymyriad priodol ar gyfer plant sydd ar goll a gwasanaethau iechyd rhywiol. Mae modelau o arfer gorau yn bodoli mewn gwasanaethau ledled y DU a dylid eu mabwysiadu a'u cymhwyso i wasanaethau yng Nghymru.

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