

The Harmful Sexual Behaviour Team - Briefing

The Context

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) is:

“Sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child, young person or adult.” (Hackett, 2014).

Sexual abuse committed by children and young people is not a rare phenomenon. At least one third of all sexual offences against children and young people in the UK are committed by other children and young people, and the extent of sexual abuse may be much higher (NSPCC, 2016). In Norfolk HSB has been identified as a key priority area following a number of serious case reviews involving sibling on sibling abuse. In addition, emerging statistics in Norfolk has identified that 50% of sexual offences against children and young people are committed by other children and young people (Norfolk Constabulary, 2017). Despite increasing evidence on the scale, nature and complexity of the problem, service provision across the UK remains patchy and relatively uncoordinated. Levels of professional confidence and competence to address the challenge vary across services. There is therefore a need for a more coordinated and consistent approach to the issue, that recognises both the risks and needs of children displaying harmful sexual behaviours.

Project Description

Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT) and the Norfolk Youth Offending Team (YOT) have formed a partnership to develop a Norfolk response to HSB.

We know that young people with harmful sexual behaviour have frequently experienced trauma, disruption and difficulties. The Norfolk HSB Team believes a holistic approach is most suitably taken with such young people, in order that their needs are addressed and focus is retained on both risk and vulnerability. We wish to promote the potential of young people to form positive social and sexual relationships. In addition our vision is to support the development of a skilled and confident workforce who are able to assess and intervene at all levels of the HSB Continuum (Hackett, 2010) as well as feel equipped to work with children and young people displaying HSB.

The Norfolk HSB Team

The HSB Team currently comprises of a Specialist Clinical Psychologist and a HSB Specialist. The team has significant skills and experience in working with sexual violence, trauma, sexually appropriate behaviour, child sexual exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour.

HSB Case Consultations

The Norfolk HSB Team also provides case consultations to any agency/professional where there are worries or concerns around HS. A Harmful Sexual Behaviour Case Consultation can be requested for any child or young person aged under 18 living in Norfolk or Waveney where there are:

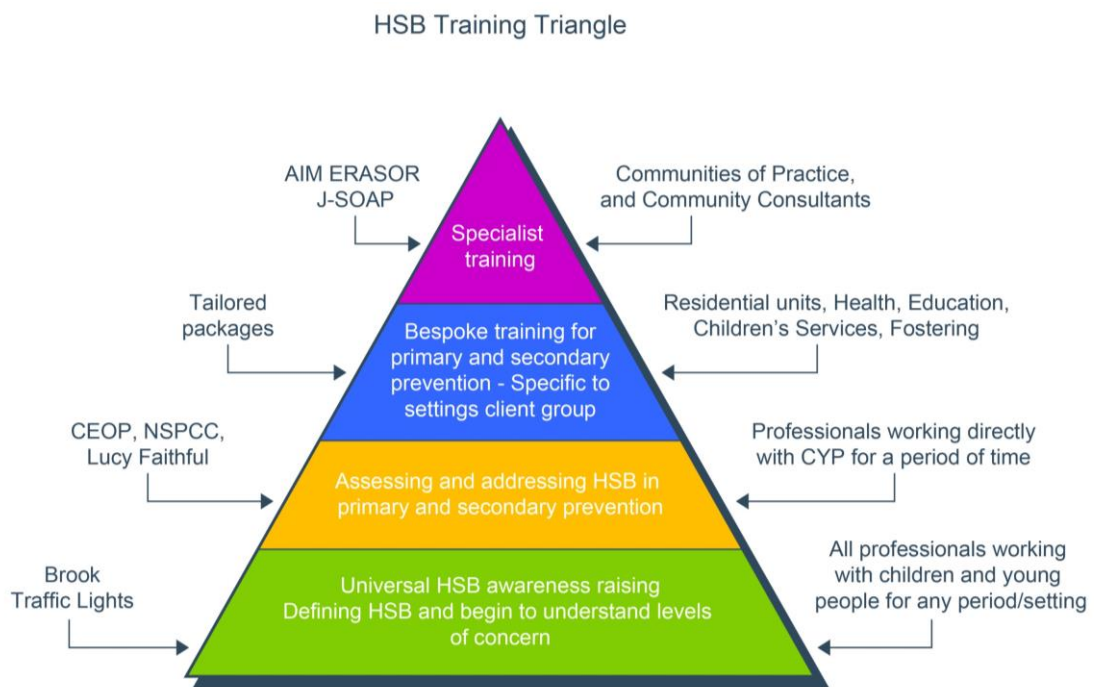
- Worries or concerns amongst professionals around harmful sexual behaviour, including inappropriate or problematic sexual behaviour which has not resulted in police involvement.
- Or**
- Where there has been a Police investigation but there has been a “No Further Action” outcome from the Police but there are ongoing worries and concerns around harmful sexual behaviour

Requests for consultations are considered from any agency that has a child or young person fitting the above criteria. The consultation service offers advice on the following areas;

- identifying and defining areas of concern in regard to HSB
- developing an understanding of the child/young person’s needs
- Safety Planning for the child/young person with HSB
- identifying resources and interventions to use with children with HSB
- identifying appropriate training they can access through the HSB team

HSB Training

The HSB Team also offer training from identifying, assessing and intervening with HSB to more specialist and bespoke training for particular teams.



Contact Details

To discuss the project or to request a HSB Case Consultation please contact:
 Dr Romana Farooq (Specialist Clinical Psychologist) or Francesca Burgess/Richard Hinton (HSB Specialists) on hsbproject@norfolk.gcsx.gov.uk