

Strategy Template & Examples



Working to protect children



Strategy Template and Examples

This document is in three parts.

1. **Example of a child sexual abuse problem (in a city area in Queensland, Australia)**
2. **Example of a strategy to deal with the problem in a city area in Queensland, Australia**
3. **A blank strategy document for you to fill in, with your partners, about your own situation**

Example of a child sexual abuse problem in a city area, Queensland, Australia

(Note – this is a real example. The identity of the city location is withheld out of respect for the community which is dealing with these challenging circumstances.)

The rate of reported sexual offences in their community over the last 12 years was 2.2 times higher than the state average. About one in four of these sexual offences involved a young person (under 18 years) as the alleged offender. Thus, of the 501 sexual offence incidents alleged to have occurred over the last 12 years, probably 120 involved youth offenders. In the last five years, only 22 sexual offences (involving 11 youth offenders) were dealt with in the courts. This suggests a wide gap between reported and finalised cases involving youth sexual offenders.

Given that not all alleged sexual offenders were identified, the estimated number of youth sexual offenders was calculated based on the proportion of identified offenders who were youths (24%) multiplied by the total number of reported offences.

Of those cases that do lead to court outcomes, youth sexual offending in this community appears to involve a much higher than usual incidence of stranger-victim offending, a higher incidence of offending in public locations, and a higher level of severity. It is not clear whether this is the same with unreported cases, or whether there is a higher severity threshold for the reporting of sexual offences. We suspect the latter is at least partially the case.

These figures represent the ‘tip of the iceberg’. While much of the actual sexual victimisation in and around this community almost certainly goes undetected and unreported, our findings suggest that Indigenous women and girls are even less likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to report sexual victimisation, and much less likely to seek hospital care following a sexual assault.

Higher rates of sexually transmitted infections in this community indicate general sexual health problems in the area, particularly for Indigenous residents. While much of this wider problem may not be of direct relevance, sexually transmitted infection figures do show significant (although proportionally small) numbers of cases affecting children and young people.

Our interviews with local professionals and community members paint a bleak picture, particularly for Indigenous girls and young women in this community. Of special concern are reports of group rapes, rapes of intoxicated girls, girls drawn into under-age sex through ordinary peer associations, the insulting of girls who do appear as willing sex partners, and girls and young women trading sex for money on the streets. These problems are compounded by a local context where many places in and around the area are considered by locals to be unsafe (particularly at night), and where there is a high frequency of missing school, low levels of family supervision, a deep reluctance in the community to directly intervene in problem behaviours, a pervasive fear of police among youth, and concerns about the safety of bringing sexual problems to the attention of local community agencies.

The physical environment in the community may itself be part of the problem. Much of the concerning behaviour involves local youth in public places that are hidden from view, difficult to access for police or other guardians, which provide escape routes if anyone were to try to intervene. Findings from our direct site observations agree with the observations of local residents themselves, pointing to problems at specific locations and times.

We decided to call the problem “youth sexual violence and abuse” (YSVA)

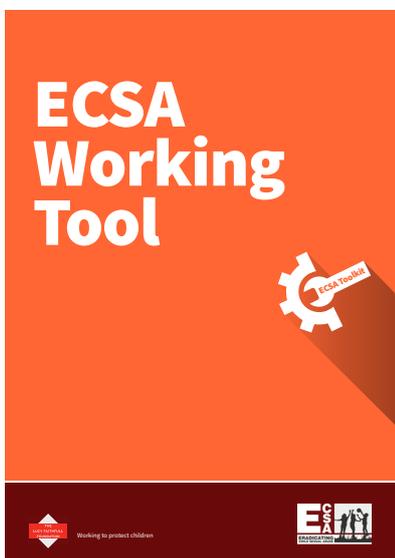
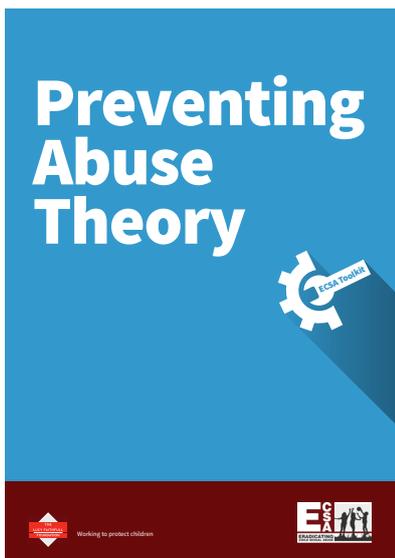
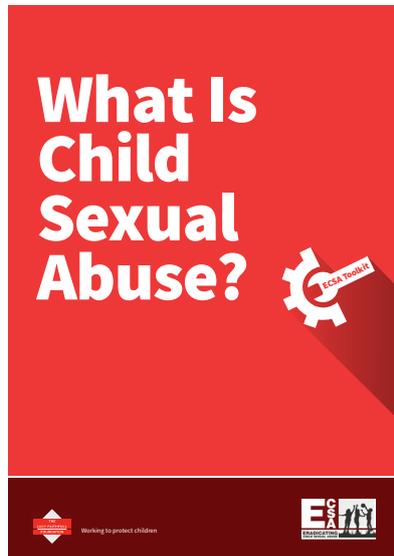
Example of a strategy to deal with the problem in a city area in Queensland

A strategy to prevent youth sexual violence and abuse (YSVA) in Queensland, Australia	
Objective to address the problem	Proposed activities for the objective
<p>1. To reduce YSVA by creating safer public spaces</p>	<p><i>Improve police patrols and make them more targeted.</i> -15 minute ‘pulse patrols’ staged at ‘hot times’ on ‘hot days’. - Improve methods for dealing with youths encountered on such patrols These measures will disrupt potential YSVA behaviour at high-risk places and times.</p> <p><i>Targeted night patrols by community members</i> Community members may be better able to engage more effectively with youth than police. - Informal conversations; share information about available services. - Community patrols of hot spots at hot times</p> <p><i>Modify public spaces to make it harder for youth to do YSVA</i> Reduce youth access to hot spots at hot times – e.g. install sprinklers/ enhance surveillance/extra lighting and CCTV</p>
<p>2. To reduce YSVA by creating safer homes</p>	<p><i>Creating Safer homes</i> Work with communities to develop improved standards in homes by: - Information sharing of problem through community forums - Discussion groups on expectations for parental responsibilities and collective rules for youth - Parent development focusing on parenting skills and child development - Tailoring such activities to suit different community contexts according to whether they come from Cape York or Torres Straits Islands etc.</p>
<p>3. To reduce YSVA by creating safer youth networks and changing youth attitudes</p>	<p><i>Sex ethics and guardianship programme for youth</i> - Provide knowledge and skills to help youths reduce their YSVA and improve ability to stop risky situations. - Therapy to prevent re-victimisation. Will target youth already victimised and at greater risk of re-victimisation – to deliver strategies to help them avoid risky situations.</p>

A blank strategy document for you to complete

A strategy to prevent child sexual abuse	
Objective to address the problem	Proposed activities for the objective
1	
2	
3	

ECSA Toolkit Publications



All of these publications are available to download via the ECSA website:
<http://ecsa.lucyfaithfull.org>



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