

Hope for Children and Families: Working with Sexual Abuse Child & Family Training UK



Type of intervention



Individual work



Family work

Target groups, levels of prevention and sub-groups:



Secondary prevention

Children (6-11 Years), Young People (12-17 Years) | Male, Female | Individual Work, Family Work | English



Tertiary prevention

Children (6-11 Years), Young People (12-17 Years) | Male, Female | Individual Work, Family Work | English



Secondary prevention

Children (6-11 Years), Young People (12-17 Years) | Male, Female | Individual Work, Family Work | English



Secondary prevention

Young Adults (18-20 Years), Adults (21 Years +) | Male, Female | Family Work | English

Target population

The Working with Sexual Abuse Practitioner Guide forms part of Hope for Children and Families and is aimed at work with parents of children who have been sexually abused in the family or by a trusted member of the community and children and young people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviours and their parents.

Delivery organisation

Child and Family Training UK, working with Lucy Faithfull Foundation, SWAAY, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and the Department for Education, developed Hope for Children and Families for delivery to frontline practitioners working in children's services who in their turn will provide interventions to children, young people and families.

Mode and context of delivery

Hope for Children and Families is an evidence based resource pack for delivery to frontline practitioners. It contains modular systemic interventions aimed at different aspects of abusive and neglectful parenting and impairment of children's health and development. It is divided into Practitioner Guides focusing on different types of abuse which can be linked together to meet the needs of different families.

The Working with Sexual Abuse Practitioner Guide is for practitioners to use in their work with parents of children who have been harmed sexually in the family or by a trusted member of the community and in work with children and young people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviours and with their parents. The exercises and materials within this guide can be extended to bring in the guide on Working with Children: Emotional and Traumatic Responses and Working with Disruptive Behaviour: Problems of children and young people. There are also guides which include working with parental stress, providing good quality care and positive parenting. The approach is to construct a profile of the family's strengths and difficulties and to select appropriate modules to reinforce the specific work with sexual abuse.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

The work is intended to be delivered to families by frontline practitioners working in children's services, including children's centres. Basic training in social work practice is required, but not necessarily a social work qualification.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

The Working with sexual abuse guide consists of:

- Briefing modules for practitioners
- Modules including exercises and tasks
- Handouts and worksheets

Description of intervention

Module: Parenting - Promoting safety for children and young people who have been harmed sexually in the family or by a trusted member of the community. The aim of this module is to support and empower parents to promote the child's recovery and psychological wellbeing and also to reduce the negative impact of the abuse on the parent. Clinical experience suggests that information about the behaviour of abusers and the impact on family relationships is effective in assisting parents. The module includes exercises on understanding how abuse happens, understanding the impact of abuse, including grooming, what helps children recover from sexual abuse, protective parenting, access to useful resources and how to develop a family safety plan.

Module 2: Working with parents and carers to support work with children and young people responsible for harmful sexual behaviour. This module aims to educate parents and carers and encourage them to understand and

support their children to develop an abuse free life. It includes handouts and worksheets about age-appropriate sexual behaviours and what should cause concern, how to develop a family safety plan, guidance on communicating with children and young people about sexual matters, helpful messages for worried parents and carers of young children showing sexually problematic behaviour, providing a safe and helping environment for a child who has shown harmful sexual behaviour and how to respond to incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Module 3: Working with younger children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour. This module aims to work with children to help them understand their behaviour and moderate it. It links with the Practitioner Guides Working with parents: Positive parenting and Working with children: Emotional and traumatic responses. It includes exercises about OK and not OK touch, naming and managing feelings, the links between thinking, feeling and doing and working with a family safety plan.

Module: Working with older children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour. This module is intended to help older children learn how to manage and change their behaviour and it encourages positive future goals. It links with the module 'Enhancing children's competence: Education, Talent and the Good Life' in the Practitioner Guide: Working with Disruptive Behaviour. It includes how to work with a family safety plan, how to identify and set positive life goals, the links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour, talking about sex and attitudes towards sexual behaviour and developing sexual knowledge, learning about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours and their impact, the benefits of doing things differently and staying safe now and in the future.

Evaluation

The Hope for Children and Families resource pack has been piloted in five authorities in the UK. These have included agencies concerned with young people who have demonstrated disruptive behaviour problems, as well as those who have been victimised. The material has been tested with services for troubled families, families where there is a high risk of continuing harm and those caring for children and young people who cannot be cared for at home. The material has been found to be accessible, flexible and has given practitioners the tools to be able to provide an evidence based intervention with confidence.

References

Bentovim, A. ed (2013) *Hope for Children and Families: Targeting abusive and neglectful parenting and the associated impairments of children's health and development. Modular Systemic Interventions: Building on Strengths, Modifying Difficulties. A Resource pack for practitioners.* Child and Family Training, York, England.

Contact details

Arnon.Bentovim@childandfamilytraining.org.uk