



Savile case shows how adults fail to protect children

(October, 8 2012) The only UK-wide charity dedicated solely to protecting children from sexual abuse has today said that the Jimmy Savile case highlights how adults too often fail to protect children and young people from sexual harm – and this situation is little better today than it was in the past.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation, which runs the sexual abuse prevention campaign, Stop it Now! UK and Ireland, said the barriers that prevent people reporting their suspicions exist to this day and that many children across the country are at risk of sexual abuse because adults do not know what to do.

Director of Research and Development at the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, Donald Findlater said: “Child sexual abusers all too often go unchallenged. In recent days we have heard from people who say they either witnessed inappropriate behaviour by Savile, or heard rumours of it, but that they failed to act at the time. The reasons why they failed to act, such as being afraid of not being believed, not knowing who to report their concerns to, being scared of possible repercussions or because he was an apparently well loved celebrity, are relevant to all cases of abuse whether it’s abuse by an authority figure in the community or abuse within the family.”

The Foundation is calling for all adults to take responsibility for protecting children on the day the BBC announced that an internal inquiry into the claims of sexual abuse by Savile will take place and made a public apology to the women involved. The Foundation hopes the inquiry will examine why people felt paralysed to act so that lessons can be learnt and children and young people can be better protected in the future.

“Sexual abusers manipulate and exploit the vulnerability of children. It is not fair to expect children to protect themselves,” Donald Findlater added.” Adults must take responsibility for doing that for them. This involves knowing the signs to look out for and accepting the fact that abusers come from all backgrounds and are most likely to be people we know and love. We need to have the confidence to take action if we have suspicions. However, we are realistic and know this can be hard. That’s exactly why the Stop it now! confidential Helpline exists for concerned adults. With all the stories over the last few weeks involving the sexual abuse of children, it’s about time all adults realise that we each have a part to play in making sure children stay safe.”

The Stop it Now! Helpline is a confidential freephone resource for people with concerns about child sexual abuse and has taken over 30,000 calls from 13,100 callers since it began in 2002. Many of these callers have concerns about someone they know – but they don’t know what to do. Operators talk it through, discuss worries and concerns and find a way forward to ensure children and young people are protected.

Anyone with concerns can contact the Helpline on 0808 1000 900 or help@stopitnow.org.uk. Parents and carers wanting information about protecting children can visit www.parentsprotect.co.uk or call the Helpline.

- Ends-

Notes to Editors:

For further information and interview opportunities please contact Deborah Denis on 07540 690315 or ddenis@lucyfaithfull.org.uk.

1. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is celebrating 20 years of protecting children from sexual harm in 2012. Named after its founder, Baroness Lucy Faithfull of Wolvercote, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation is the only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. It works with entire families that have been affected by abuse including: adult male and female sexual abusers; young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours; victims of abuse and other family members. Drawing on expert knowledge about child sexual abuse the charity offers a broad range of services for professionals and members of the public. These include: assessments, intervention and treatment of known offenders, case specific advice and support, training and development courses and workshops, educational programmes for internet offenders and their families, circles of support and accountability, internet safety seminars for schools (teachers, parents and children) and Parents Protect! training for professionals, parents, carers and other adults. www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk. It also runs the Stop it Now! Campaign and Helpline (0808 1000 900) www.stopitnow.org.uk