



Push for better prevention of child sexual abuse in Suffolk

(November 6, 2012) A drive to better protect children in Suffolk and the surrounding areas from sexual abuse gets underway this week as Suffolk Police joins forces with the child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation and the Stop it Now! England campaign for a one-day conference.

The charity works to reduce the risk of children being sexually abused and at the regional event aims to explore some of the key issues surrounding child sexual abuse and highlight how everyone has a role to play in preventing it.

The event, taking place on Thursday, November 8, will focus on ways that local agencies can collaborate and work with the public to protect children from sexual harm. Taking place at Police Headquarters, it will bring together representatives from various organisations that have contact with children or families or deal with child protection issues, including police officers, probation officers, health workers, social workers and those from the education and voluntary sectors.

Entitled 'Preventing Child Sexual Abuse – Making it Everybody's Business', the day will feature workshops conducted by specialist staff from the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and will cover:- how the internet is used as part of sexually abusive behaviour; female sexual abusers; young people who display worrying sexual behaviour and where agencies and individuals roles fit in preventing abuse.

The event marks the start of renewed efforts to ensure that professionals, volunteers and parents and carers across the region are as best placed as they can be to protect children from sexual abuse.

Deputy Chief Constable Paul Marshall will open the event. He said: "Child abuse can have a devastating, long lasting effect on the victims and their families. It is essential the Police and partner agencies work together to ensure that we not only protect children from being abused but also provide them with the help and support they need.

“It is really important for partners to come together at conferences such as the one being organised by Stop it Now!, in order to make sure key issues surrounding child sexual abuse are highlighted and the right measures are put in place to prevent abuse from continuing.”

Director of Stop it Now!, Donald Findlater said: “Child sexual abuse is preventable, not inevitable and the title of this event says it all. Tackling this issue cannot be left to one agency or organisation. We all – professionals and members of the public – need to be involved in protecting children. We need to understand the issues, know where the risks lie and have the confidence to take action when needed. We all have a part to play.”

The Stop it Now! campaign operates a free phone confidential helpline – 0808 1000 900 – which people can call for advice and support in relation to child sexual abuse issues. Suffolk residents can find information about protecting children at www.parentsprotect.co.uk.

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Notes to Editors:

For further information and interview opportunities please contact Deborah Denis on ddenis@stopitnow.org.uk, 01372 847160 or 07540 690315.

1. Stop it Now! England is part of Stop it Now! UK and Ireland. It aims to prevent child sexual abuse by increasing public awareness and empowering people to act responsibly to protect children. Stop it Now! believes that it is the responsibility of all adults to take positive action to prevent the sexual abuse of children. Stop it Now! is an alliance of leading children's charities, working with the government and child protection agencies, to promote public education and prevent child sexual abuse. The Stop it Now! helpline has been operating since 2002 and aims to prevent child abuse by encouraging abusers and potential abusers to seek help and by giving adults the information they need to protect children safely. The helpline is funded by the Ministry of Justice and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation. The England campaign is supported by the Department for Education.

2. Named after its founder, Baroness Lucy Faithfull of Wolvercote, the Foundation is a child protection charity operating UK-wide and specialising in safeguarding children from sexual abuse. The Foundation's policy is to collaborate with individuals and agencies internationally to develop a more child sensitive and offender aware culture in our societies. The Foundation contributes to legislation and to policy and procedure reviews concerned with safeguarding children in faith communities, in schools, in leisure facilities, on the Internet and living away from home. www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk