



**\*\*Embargoed until 00.01 GMT, 3 November 2016\*\***

## **One hundred and fifty-eight men from North-West England seek help to deal with their attraction to sexual images of children**

One hundred and fifty-eight men from the North West of England have contacted a charity helpline in the last 12 months to get help to stop viewing sexual images of children online.

The men called a confidential helpline operated by Stop it Now! ,a sexual abuse prevention campaign run by child protection charity, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation. The helpline offers anonymous, effective support for those worried about their own or someone else’s online sexual behaviour.

The calls from North-West England, made between 1 October 2015 and 30 September 2016, represent a 26% increase in the number of calls received from the same region over the previous 12 month period. The 158 calls received in the 2015-16 period make up 10.4% of the 1,551 calls received from across the UK from adults concerned about their online behaviour during the same period. In addition, 709 people from the North-West visited the Stop it Now! Get Help website at [www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk) over the same period to access online self-help tools and resources to tackle their viewing of sexual images of children online. *(A table with a breakdown of caller totals from Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, Lancashire and Cumbria for 2014-15 and 2015-16 is available in Notes to Editor – below)*

Chief Superintendent Chris Green, from the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit, Titan said: **“Every one of us has a part to play in putting a stop to the sexual exploitation of children online and I would encourage parents, grandparents, teachers, health professionals, social services and any other adults to take time to better educate themselves.**

**“Titan, working alongside forces across the region, is committed to the protection and wider safeguarding issues of young people, and in doing so we will work with partner agencies, such as the Lucy Faithfull Foundation to where possible prevent such abuse and investigate such incidents.”**

The figures come at a time when the police are reporting an escalation, across the UK, in online viewing and sharing of child abuse images. In 2013 the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) estimated that as many as 50,000 individuals in the UK were involved in downloading or sharing sexual images of children (2). But in a BBC TV interview in October 2016, National Police Chiefs Council Lead for Child Protection, Chief Constable Simon Bailey, said that at least 100,000 people in the UK were now regularly viewing online sexual images of children.

Child sexual abuse prevention expert and founder of Stop it Now! , Donald Findlater, said:

**“Imagine what it is like for a husband and father to have to tell his wife and children that he has been arrested for viewing sexual images of children online. And then having to tell his boss. And then his friends.**

**“We have worked with thousands of men *after* they have been arrested - all with bitter regrets about the harm they have done to their families, to the victims in the images they viewed, and to themselves. We need the tens of thousands of men still viewing these images to realise that what they are doing is illegal and to make sure they stop. Here at Stop it Now! we give them all the help we can – by phone and online. And it is confidential.**

**“But we also want to hear from wives, partners, parents who are worried about a loved one’s sexual behaviour online. We must not turn a blind eye to this behaviour. Confidential help and support is available from Stop it Now! “**

In addition to these one hundred and fifty-eight men who rang the Stop it Now! Helpline (1), a further 59 adults from North-West England rang over the same period to express their concerns about the online behaviour of another adult. These calls are typically from wives or parents.

### **Stop it Now’s current UK-wide campaign to tackle the viewing of sexual images of children online**

People from North-West England accessing help to stop looking at indecent images of children are part of an overall figure of over 13,500 people from across the UK who have taken similar action to stop their offending behaviour since October 2015. Many of these people are seeking help thanks to a Stop it Now! public awareness campaign. The campaign has gained significant attention by releasing a series of innovative films, viewed over 3 million times since the campaign launched in October 2015. The films aim to deter those who are already offending by making clear that:

- There are no grey areas – viewing or sharing a sexual image of someone under 18 is illegal.
- This isn’t a victimless crime – the experience is extremely harmful to the children involved.
- The consequences can be devastating to the family, partners and friends of people who access sexual images of children, and may include: , arrest, loss of job, prosecution and becoming a registered sex offender.
- There is confidential help to stop.

The films can be watched on the Stop it Now! Youtube channel [here](#).

The success of the Stop it Now! campaign in encouraging people to get help to stop looking at illegal images has won praise from the police. Norfolk’s Chief Constable of Police, Simon Bailey, said: **“there are many people who offend or who are yet to offend and want help to stop their behaviour; the work of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation is vitally important in supporting these people and giving them access to appropriate services. “**

Images (stills) taken from the films are available on request.

Audio clips taken from the films is available on request.

**-Ends-**

**For further information, and to discuss interview opportunities, please contact:**

**Matt Whitticase** (Media and Communications Manager): t: 01372 847169 / 07540 690 315  
[mwhitticase@lucyfaithfull.org.uk](mailto:mwhitticase@lucyfaithfull.org.uk)

Hannah Mackenzie t: 020 3697 4270, [Hannah.Mackenzie@consolidatedpr.com](mailto:Hannah.Mackenzie@consolidatedpr.com),  
[LucyFaithfullFoundation@consolidatedpr.com](mailto:LucyFaithfullFoundation@consolidatedpr.com)

**Notes to Editor:**

**Data:**

*Table showing county/city breakdown of caller totals from NW England for 2015-16 and 2014-15*

<b>October 1 2015 – 30 September 2016 (12 months)</b>		
	Total adult callers concerned about their own online behaviour	Total adult callers concerned about the online behaviour of another adult
Greater Manchester	36	7
Merseyside	41	20
Lancashire	35	15
Cumbria	13	5
Cheshire	33	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>October 1 2014 – 30 September 2015 (12 months)</b>		
Greater Manchester	25	7
Merseyside	39	17
Lancashire	26	15
Cumbria	5	8
Cheshire	30	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>62</b>

<b>October 13 2015 – October 12 2016 (12 months)</b>	
<b>City</b>	<b>Visitor totals to Stop it Now! online self-help resources</b>
Liverpool	309
Manchester	365
Lancaster	27
Chester	37
Carlisle	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>769</b>

- 1) Stop it Now! is a public EDUCATION campaign run by The Lucy Faithfull Foundation - the only UK-wide charity focused solely on reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. It runs a confidential helpline – **0808 1000 900**. Since 2002 the Helpline has provided advice and support to 31,500 callers and emailers, who together, made 60,000 contacts. 55% of contacts were from people concerned about their own behaviour.

- 2) This estimate was based on file sharing activity alone, and did not include open web searches or activity in the dark net.

The CEOP threat assessment is available in full [here](#). The 50,000 figure comes from the CEOP threat assessment published in 2013, shortly before CEOP became a Command of the National Crime Agency.

It should be noted that this is an estimate based on available information and intelligence analysis at the time. The relevant paragraph reads: "Although it is clearly not possible to establish a precise figure, CEOP estimates that there were around 50,000 individuals in the UK involved in downloading and sharing IIOC during 2012."

The 50,000 figure was a hypothecated total number based on different data sources and was not a list of individuals.

The most recent NCA threat assessment covering child sexual exploitation and abuse can be found here:

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/560-national-strategic-assessment-of-serious-and-organised-crime-2015/file>

- 3) The campaign films are based on key findings from a Lucy Faithfull Foundation survey of men arrested for accessing online child pornography. The survey identified many of the reasons people both access indecent images, and persist in downloading and sharing them. These include a failure to understand that all indecent images of children under 18 are illegal and a lack of awareness of the harm their caused to the children involved, as well as the damage to their own family and friends. Many expressed a desire to stop, but had little awareness of organisations like Stop it Now! that can help.

### **About The Lucy Faithfull Foundation**

Named after its founder, Baroness Lucy Faithfull of Wolvercote, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is the only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to preventing child sexual abuse. It works with entire families affected by or concerned about 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. It also runs the Stop it Now! Campaign and Helpline (0808 1000 900). [www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk](http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk), [www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk) and [www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk)

### **About Stop it Now!**

Stop it Now! UK and Ireland is a national campaign, Freephone confidential Helpline and website run by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation. 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! works 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. Since 2002 the Helpline has provided advice and support to 31,500 callers and emailers, who together, made 60,000 contacts. 55% of contacts were from people concerned about their own behaviour.

[www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk) and [www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk)

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