

Tuesday 12 June, 2018

Safety guidance for adults in Scotland with autism or learning disability first resource of its kind in Scotland:

Easy read booklets focus on online grooming and sexual images of children

Staying safe online has never been more important. For some adults who have autism or a learning disability navigating the internet safely and legally can be complex.

To support them, carers, family members, Fife Adult Support and Protection Committee and child protection charity, Stop It Now! Scotland, have produced a resource pack, the first resource of its kind in Scotland, which provides vital guidance and advice. Just as importantly, the pack also educates in an easy read format. *(Stop it Now! Scotland is a child sexual abuse prevention campaign run by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation).*

Alan Small, Chair of the Fife's Adult Support and Protection Committee, talks about the process and engagement that went into developing the materials:

“Internet safety, accessing inappropriate child imagery and the risk of grooming is a very sensitive subject. It is important that we educate and guide all adults on this topic. In particular ensuring that those who may be more at risk or susceptible to the misuse of the internet because of an additional vulnerability are given guidance and advice how to keep themselves and others safe. This includes providing guidance around the inappropriate and unlawful sharing or use of child images.

The resource is a suite of documents which uses direct and simple language supported by photographs and simple line drawings, so they are very accessible and easy to read. These are the tools we will use to help develop awareness and importantly a full understanding of what is the right and wrong use of the internet: what is inappropriate and unlawful: how to keep safe: and the actions and behaviours that can have serious consequences. All in a simple and easy to understand format. This is the result of many months of hard work and many conversations and we would wish to thank everyone involved, particularly people we worked with how may use the resource and their families.”

To keep people safe and reduce and prevent offending in this way, the project involved working very closely with Stop It Now! Scotland, Police Scotland, Scottish Autism, Autism Rocks and other relevant organisations. Consulting widely over the course of a year ensured the views of a range of people including professionals such as adult and child protection practitioners as well as members of the public with an interest in the subject.

National Manager for Stop it Now! Scotland, Stuart Allardyce, said:

“Our focus has always been to prevent children from being sexually abused, both online and offline. That’s why we work tirelessly to make people aware that accessing sexual images of anyone under 18 online is both illegal and harmful to the children in the images. But until now, there has been no resource specifically for adults in Scotland with learning disabilities. So we were delighted to work with colleagues on the Fife Adult Support and Protection Committee to produce this resource that fills a real gap in child safeguarding. The resource pack will play a vital role in keeping children in Scotland safe from online abuse. And just as importantly, it will help keep vulnerable adults in Scotland safe from getting into trouble online.”

Resources available are:

- [‘I’ve made a new friend online. But I’m worried. What do I do?’](#)
- [‘What am I looking at online?’](#)

Copies of the new resources are available online at:

<https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/easy-read-resources.htm> and at www.fifedirect.org.uk/adultprotectioneasyread on the ‘Internet Safety’ section.

Paper copies for Fife organisations can be requested by emailing: shona.mcewan@fife.gov.uk or call 03451 55 55 55 ext 442134.

Download pre-recorded audio clips of Alan Small and Stuart Allardyce:

<https://we.tl/qmoqeekTWZ>

Ends

For further information on Fife Adult Support and Protection Committee, please contact:

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About Fife Adult Support and Protection Committee:

The Adult Support and Protection Committee (ASPC) is a statutory body established under Section 42 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 (the 2007 Act) within each Council area.

The committee is chaired by an independent convenor who is neither a member nor employee of the Council. [Fife Adult Support & Protection Committee Biennial report 2014-16](#) and [Easy Read Version](#) give details of the Committee's work during those two years.

The ASPC's key functions

- to keep under review the procedures and practices of the public bodies;
- to give information or advice to any public body in relation to the safeguarding of adults at risk within a council area, and
- to make, or assist in the making of, arrangements for improving the skills and knowledge of employees of the public bodies.

In performing these functions, ASPCs must have regard to the promotion and support of co-operation between each of the public bodies. The public bodies involved are the relevant council, the Care Commission, the relevant Health Board, Police Scotland and any other public body as may be specified by Scottish Ministers. The Mental Welfare Commission and Office of the Public Guardian also have the right to attend and must be informed of Adult Support and Protection Committee Meetings.

About Stop it Now! Scotland

Stop it Now! Scotland is part of Stop it Now! UK and Ireland - 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 65,000 contacts. 55% of contacts were from people concerned about their own behaviour. www.stopitnow.org.uk and www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk

