



New awareness campaign launched to help Welsh public play active part in preventing sexual abuse of children

[Stop it Now! Wales](#) is today (Monday, 12 November) launching a new pan-Wales campaign aimed at tackling child sexual abuse by enabling the public to play a more active part in preventing the sexual abuse of children. The launch coincides with Wales National Safeguarding Week 12th – 16th November 2018. *(Stop it Now! Wales is a child sexual abuse prevention project run by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation.)*

Responses to child sexual abuse in the UK have typically been triggered only *after* a child has disclosed that he or she has been sexually abused. This disclosure-led strategy is problematic because one in three children sexually abused by an adult do not tell anyone. And a [2015 report by the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England](#) found that while as many as 450,000 children were sexually abused in the England over a two year period, only one in eight of those abused children were known to the authorities. There is every reason to believe this position is the same in Wales - on March 31, 2016 there were 2,936 children on child protection registers in Wales. Yet only 170 of these were seen as at risk of sexual abuse.

The new Stop it Now! Wales campaign, which is being funded by the Welsh Government, takes a different approach. It will focus instead on tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation by preventing children from being sexually abused in the first place. It will do this by equipping as many adults in Wales as possible with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to ensure children and young people are as safe as they can be.

The campaign will see Stop it Now! share information and advice through training sessions, campaign materials and partnerships with frontline organisations working with children and families. Campaign materials and training sessions will explain: where the risks lie; how protective adults can spot the warning signs that a child is at risk of being sexually abused; and what can be done to act on concerns and prevent abuse from taking place.

The campaign will also seek to lift the culture of secrecy that often surrounds child sexual abuse. It will train parents and other protective adults on how to start difficult conversations and talk sensitively to children about the risk of sexual abuse. This is because most children who have been abused, or who are at risk of being abused, find it difficult to talk about their

abuse and to ask an adult for help. It is therefore vital that parents and other adults know how to talk to children so risk can be proactively identified and concerns acted on.

The **'Child Sexual Abuse - What we all need to know'** campaign will communicate key advice and information to the public through an **awareness raising campaign** involving traditional media, social media, and leaflets. **Simultaneously, training sessions for both parents, carers and frontline workers who work with children and families** will be delivered across each of Wales' six Safeguarding Board regions.

Campaign aims

Specifically, the campaign will educate and train the public to:

- Recognise the signs of child sexual abuse in children including verbal and non-verbal indicators
- Recognise the warning signs an adult who has harmful intentions may display
- Take preventative measures and report concerns before a disclosure is made, acknowledging that most children do not disclose abuse
- Respond effectively and appropriately when a disclosure is made, including reporting to the relevant authorities
- Develop and implement family safety plans

Campaign Promotion

Sixty training sessions will be delivered over the next five months with ten sessions being delivered in each of the six Safeguarding Board regions of Wales.

In addition, leaflets and partner packs communicating key campaign messages and advice will be distributed across each of the six regions. A social media campaign will also communicate these key messages, signposting people to sources of further information and support.

All campaign materials are available in Welsh and English and can be downloaded from a dedicated webpage on the [Stop it Now! Wales website](#).

Demand in Wales for help and advice on preventing sexual abuse of children

The training, support and advice that Stop it Now! Wales is delivering through its campaign will meet widespread demand from parents across Wales for greater information and resources. Stop it Now! Wales' sister website Parents Protect! is an online resource hosting an extensive range of downloadable information and resources with advice for parents on how to protect their children from sexual abuse. **In the last two years more than 13,000 people from Wales have visited the website seeking advice and information.**

Wales' Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“I’m really pleased the Welsh Government is working with Stop It Now! Wales to launch this new campaign, which will help encourage the people of Wales to play their part in stopping child sexual abuse.

“Together, we can and must ensure every child in Wales is safe.”

Welcoming the launch of the campaign, Director of the Stop it Now! Helpline, Donald Findlater said:

“The scale of child sexual abuse is horrifying, with most of it happening in secret and out of sight of others, including the authorities. Police and social workers are working hard to address the problem but if we are really serious about protecting children, we cannot leave it to them alone.

“We all have a responsibility to learn about signs and indicators of abuse, the prevention measures we can all take, and what we can do if we have a concern. Parents and carers have a vital role to play. We have to remember that child sexual abuse is not inevitable, and that with the right knowledge we can all play a part in preventing it. That’s what this campaign is all about – clear and simple advice and support for everyone, so that each of us plays our part in protecting children and young people from the trauma and pain of being sexually abused.”

To find out more and to get involved, visit: <https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/wales-child-sexual-abuse-prevention-what-we-all-need-to-know.htm>

The campaign can be followed online via #Stopitnow and #childsexabuse

Ends

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

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Notes to Editor:

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, www.stopitnow.org.uk and www.parentsprotect.co.uk

About Stop it Now! Wales

Stop it Now! Wales is a child sexual abuse prevention project working across Wales to ensure that parents, carers and frontline staff are as best placed as they can be to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation. It 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 35,000 callers and emailers, who together, made up 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

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