

Child on Child Abuse

STRENGTHENING YOUR MANAGEMENT OF CASES WHILST DEVELOPING A
STRONG CULTURE OF REPORTING.

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Feelings welcome



1

Child-on-Child abuse is a sensitive and emotive subject. If you need to take a break, please do so.

2

Everyone will be treated with sensitivity and respect. If you discuss examples from your settings, please keep them anonymous.

3

Comments, questions and opinions are welcome

Why are these cases so challenging?

In order to strengthen our management of them, we need to recognise the issues

1

Blurred categories

2

Viewing things through an outdated lens

3

‘Victim’ vs. ‘perpetrator’ can oversimplify and make us feel we need to pick sides

To borrow from KCSiE 2024...

“This part of the guidance does not attempt to provide (nor would it be possible to provide) detailed guidance on what to do in any or every case. The guidance provides effective safeguarding practice and principles for schools and colleges to consider in their decision-making process.”

Meet Leon



Leon is on a residential trip and sharing a room with Brandon, Tim, Lee and Ola.



In the middle of the night, Tim sexually assaults Leon.



In shock, Leon does not tell anyone immediately.



**Imagine 6 months later,
Leon discloses to his
form tutor who reports
it to you**



In groups, discuss...

1

Which elements of this case might add to the complexity?

2

What would your top priority be when handling this?

3

Which children/adults might you need to offer additional support to?

Let's run through what Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 tells us

- Regarding management of cases
- Regarding developing a culture of reporting



‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that their child protection policy includes:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse

Step 1

Really good Sex Education that meets each child's needs

Step 2

The ability to ask questions at any point...and have them answered

Step 3

Very clear boundaries and expectations (that are repeated)



Step 1

Good quality, age and stage appropriate sex education

Evidence consistently shows that high-quality sexuality education delivers positive health outcomes, with lifelong impacts.

Young people are:

- more likely to delay the onset of sexual activity
- and when they do have sex, to practice safer sex – when they are better informed about their sexuality, sexual health and their rights.

Sexuality education also helps them prepare for and manage physical and emotional changes as they grow up, including during puberty and adolescence, while teaching them about respect, consent and where to go if they need help.

This in turn reduces risks from violence, exploitation and abuse.

Step 2

The ability to ask questions
at any point...and have
them answered

Reflection point

Ola has heard lads in the playground talking about ‘circumcision’.

He wants to know what it means but:

- Can't speak to his parents
- Doesn't have an SRE lesson for another 4 weeks
- Can't access the Brook website because the filtering and monitoring system block his search terms

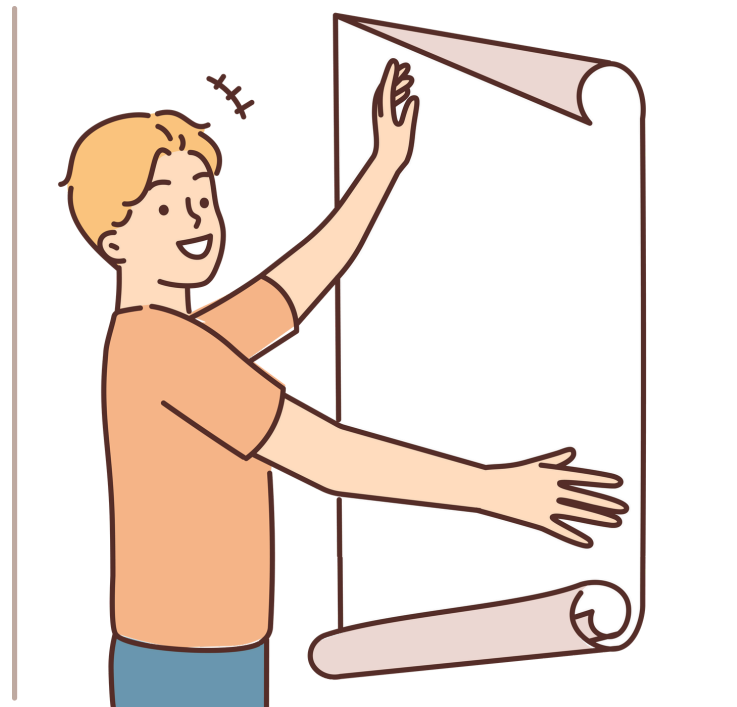


Step 3

Very clear boundaries and expectations that are repeated



‘Red lines’



Bullet pointed posters at child's level for them (and staff) to refer to



The ability to discuss the boundaries so they know WHY things are wrong and they are invested in and take ownership over the behaviour expectations



Child-friendly summary of the behaviour policy

Schools should have...

‘clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported’

Who?

Children who may have witnessed the abuse

Who?

Children (such as Brandon, Lee and Ola) who may find out later that they were present when it happened

Who?

Children for whom this could be personally triggering.

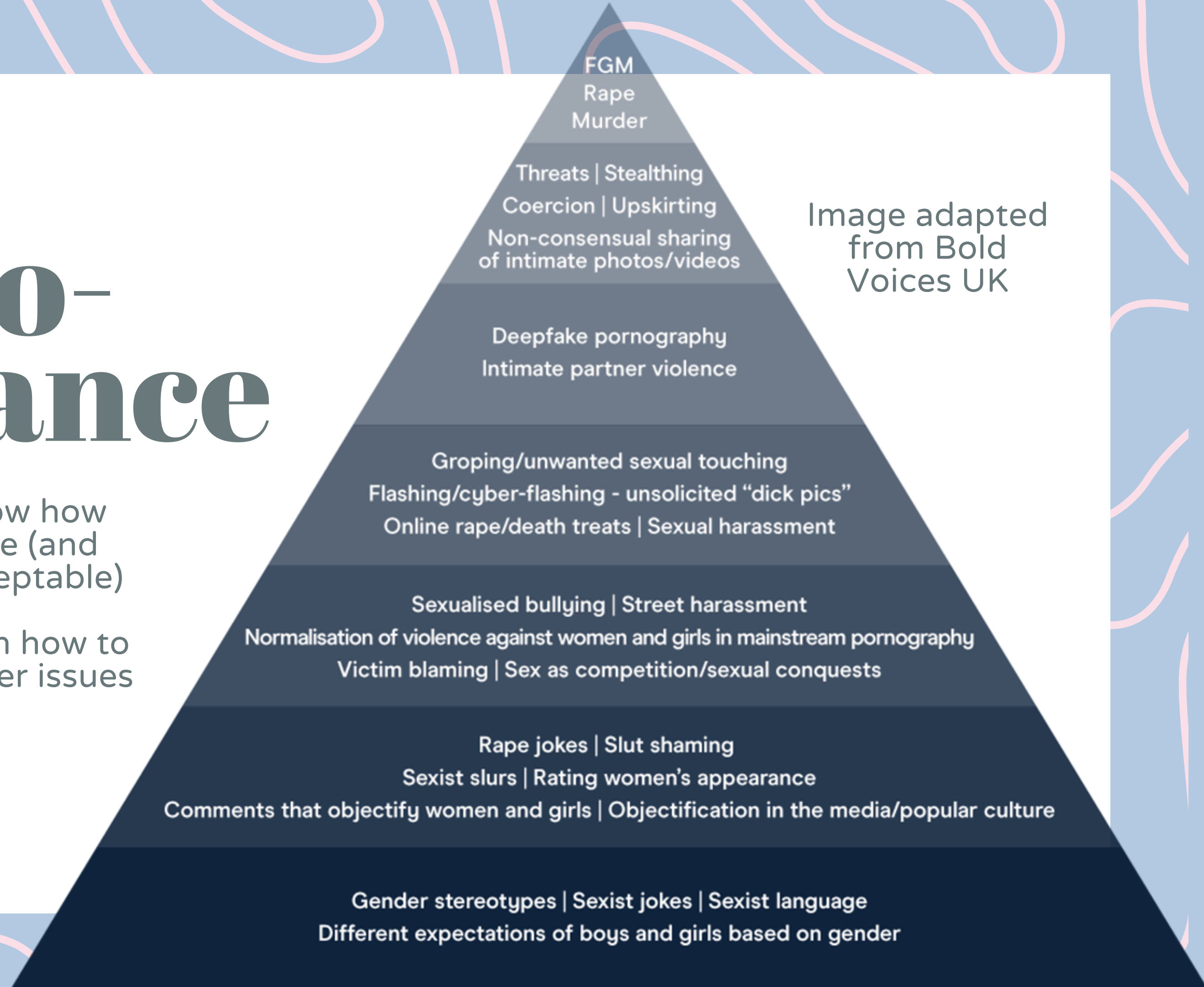
Each child involved having a known ‘trusted adult’ can be really useful.

“Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:

...making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.”

Zero-Tolerance

- Students need to know how we will deal with these (and why they are not acceptable)
- Staff need training on how to respond to these lower issues



How can we ensure all staff are aware of the 'Zero-Tolerance' approach:



'Buddying' with other staff - and crib sheets



Safeguarding learning walks.



Anonymous staff questionnaires to check whether everyone is on the same page.



Safe Touch vs. No Touch policies. Spell out specific expectations.



Regular reminders of policies - once a month, a policy needs to be re-read. Or regular 'bitesize chunks' are sent out.



Within training, short 'what would you do?' scenarios.



Example postcards e.g. 'Acceptable vs unacceptable'

‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that their child protection policy includes:

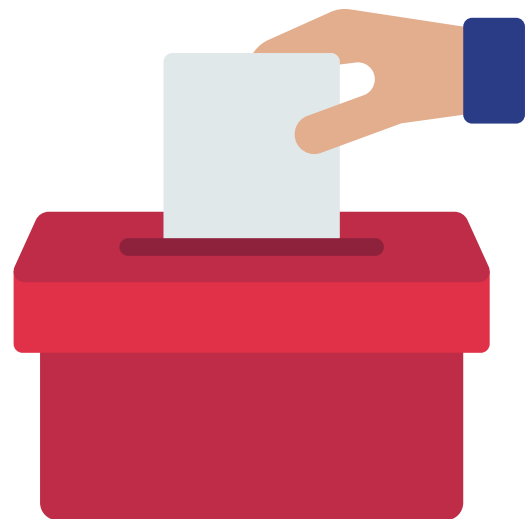
....the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.’



Ideas...



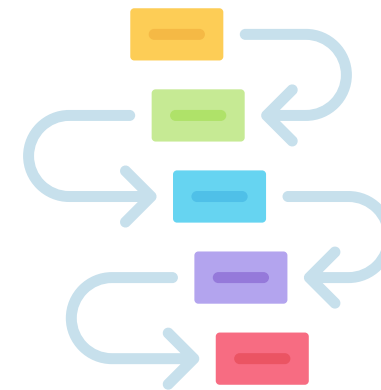
Online (and anonymous)
options for reporting



Question box (real or
fictional) to quell
students' fears



'Ask for an Angel Shot'
or similar



A visible process that
outlines exactly what will
be done and could
happen next



Peer-to-peer reporting
systems



Case Studies included in
assembly: 'This is what
happened, this is how it was
handled, this is how the
child was kept safe'



Posters in toilets about
gendered issues


What's your
setting's
equivalent
of 'behind
the bike
sheds'?



Log locations and
map hotspots

**Liam has told us and we have
ensured his immediate
physical safety...what next?**





Giving victims back their power

- Taking into account their wishes and feelings when we make decisions (where possible).
- Telling them what is happening next - and who we are involving and why.
- Inviting them to meetings or giving them a chance to share their views
- Conducting a risk assessment WITH and not FOR them (NB. not necessarily the entire assessment). What we are worried about, might not be what they are worried about.
- If we are weighing up how to manage the rights of several children - the victim's needs must come first.
- Supporting them to know that while WE need to engage with police, THEY don't have to report.

The process of risk-assessing is in many ways, more important than what is actually written down

You should always share all aspects of a risk assessment with the child themselves.

We should always consider online safety in every safeguarding risk assessment even if the incident wasn't online

Only the DSL needs to conduct safeguarding risk assessments.

We only need to risk assess for specific safeguarding issues such as sexual violence, suicide and self harm

You only need to conduct a risk assessment for the perpetrator of the child-on-child abuse

We must always consider a child's mental health in a risk assessment even if the incident was not linked to mental health

Parents and carers should always be made aware of risk assessments relating to their child.

You should complete a risk assessment following an incident, then review it for 6 months before closing it.

It is important to share risk assessments with other (external) professionals.

What to take into account...



Classroom



Transition times
(corridor culture)



School trips



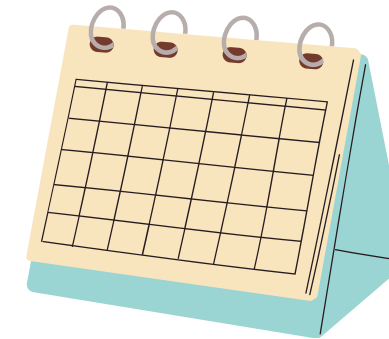
Prom (or similar)



Break and lunchtimes



To and from school
(including school transport)



The anniversary of the
incident



Triggering topics and
projects (Sex Ed, drop down
day etc)



Things to help us assess, make decisions (and write policies)

Finkelhor and
Wolak's typology

Brook traffic light tool

Hackett's continuum

Farrer & Co's
guidance

UKCIS guidance on
sending nudes

NCA alert re
Sextortion

Involving the police

“Local authority children’s social care and the police will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. Referrals to the police will often be a natural progression of making a referral to local authority children’s social care”.

Remember that Sextortion is ALWAYS illegal whether the victim is a child or adult. Incidents involving nudes may also require a police response.

There are several options for contacting the police and you should do so whether you are 100% confident a crime has been committed, or not. Remember to assure the victim that YOU have to engage with police but there is no pressure for them to report.

1 CEOP stands for Child Exploitation and Online Protection. It is a command of the National Crime Agency and specialises in online crimes against children. For Sextortion and online exploitation, they may be the best option. You can make a report online or the child can do it themselves. Make sure you have specific details (usernames etc) of the perpetrator/s.

2 Many police forces in the UK have an online reporting system or online chat function on their website. These can be useful as you can get a quicker response AND transcript. Always call 999 in an emergency however

3 Call police on 101 in a non-emergency (999 otherwise) however it is VITAL to take the advice provided by the NCA rather than some local police forces who can (incorrectly) advise to delete the images.

101

CEOP



ONLINE CHAT FUNCTION



The importance of advocates

- Although our aim is to advocate for the child - we are still a teacher and we may have to do things the child does not like
- Therefore referring the child to an advocate can be really helpful
- They have someone just for them who can support them through the process (particularly court/police interviews) and explain their rights
- Women's Aid is a good place to start for referring to a CHISVA/CHIDVA
- Advocacy Focus.
- Many local authorities also have an advocacy service
- Victim Support is recommended

Any
questions?

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