ZERO TOLERANCE

ywca Scotland

Under Pressure:
Youth worker responses to gendered abuse and exploitation

Produced by Zero Tolerance and YWCA Scotland

Follow up report to Under Pressure: Preventing teen abuse and exploitation

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- Course Participant

1. Introduction

Under Pressure: Youth worker responses to gendered abuse and exploitation examines youth worker responses to training on issues of sexualisation, relationship abuse and sexual exploitation; specifically how the knowledge and practical skills delivered in the training were used in practice. In a broader sense the study is concerned with illuminating the barriers and enablers which determine whether youth work training has the impact intended on participants and the young people they support.

This research project builds on the recommendations of Under Pressure: Preventing teen abuse and exploitation which stated that:

"YWCA Scotland and Zero Tolerance should continue to collect evidence from participants of the project's impact on youth and community work practice; and should use this evidence and emerging evidence from research to assist in the identification of the most effective methods for prevention and early intervention regarding teen abuse and exploitation."

The research was conducted in 2011 following youth worker participation at Under Pressure training events and focuses on the relationship between learning outcomes and participants' capacity to engage and support young people at risk from sexual abuse and exploitation.

2. Background

In 2011, Zero Tolerance and YWCA Scotland collaborated to pilot a one-day training course - Under Pressure - for youth workers on preventing teen abuse and exploitation.

Under Pressure training aimed to:

1. Equip youth workers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop and deliver effective sexualisation awareness, abuse prevention and early intervention initiatives with young people.

2. Enable youth workers to incorporate prevention and early intervention strategies into their work and initiate new activities to address abuse in young people's intimate relationships.

3. Identify the most effective models for increasing the capacity of youth workers to address this issue and make recommendations for further development of violence prevention work in future.

The one-day training course explored the risks facing young people, and tools and techniques to address them. The training was delivered under four themes; 'under pressure to be sexy' which examined the pressures of growing up in a 'pornified' culture; 'under pressure in love', which looked at how abuse manifests in young people's relationships; 'under pressure to cross the line', which examined the risks to young people of being sexually exploited; and 'under pressure to make change', which identified ways of preventing abuse and putting the training into practice. The training was activity-based using practical exercises, games and DVDs and provided resources that participants could take away to use in their work with young people.

Under Pressure aimed to provide support to youth workers by offering a unique opportunity to equip them with the knowledge, confidence, strategies and skills to engage young people in activities to prevent abuse and exploitation and to intervene in situations where they believe a young person is at risk. Through the training evaluation process, youth workers reported the abuse and exploitation recounted to them by young people in their day-to-day practice. Evidence of teen abuse reported by participants at Under Pressure training included:

• Most youth workers (86.2%) had experience of young people making comments that could be seen as hurtful to others because of their gender, sexuality or sexual behaviour.

• More than two thirds of youth workers (69.2%) had experience of young people engaging in behaviour that had given cause for concern that they might be involved in an abusive or controlling relationship.

• Over half of youth workers (58.5%) had experience of young people exchanging images or texts with content which involved harmful gender stereotyping or could be seen as sexually demeaning or abusive.

• More than a third of youth workers (36.9%) had experience of young people saying they felt pressured into engaging in activities of a sexual nature that they felt uncomfortable with; and young people saying that they had been asked to do something they felt uncomfortable about by a person with whom they were in a relationship.

• Only five youth workers (7.7%) had not experienced any of the above.

Research demonstrates that abuse within young people's intimate relationships is increasing and has a long-term impact on their personal safety and sexual, physical and mental health and well-being. With this in mind, and building on the evidence from Under Pressure, Zero Tolerance undertook to explore the way youth workers utilised the training in their everyday practice supporting young people.

More than two thirds of youth workers had experience of young people engaging in behaviour that had given cause for concern that they might be involved in an abusive or controlling relationship.
- Under Pressure findings, 2012

2. Methods

Nine youth workers were interviewed, from six different agencies providing a youth work service. Seven of the participants had attended an Under Pressure training session in the previous 12 months. The interviews were qualitative, semi-structured and based around three 'scenarios' that a youth worker might face in their practice (see Appendix).

The scenarios method was designed to encourage participants to explore their responses to situations that may or may not pose a risk to the well-being of a young person in terms of sexualisation, abuse or exploitation. The participants were encouraged to examine the features of the scenarios that raised or allayed their concerns about the young person described.

This method also allowed participants to make comparisons between the scenarios and their experience of 'real life' occasions where they had encountered similar or related situations. Participants were asked within the interviews to reflect on the impact of training on their practice and in particular to their interpretation of the research scenarios.

4. Summary of Findings

1. The young people the participants work with have a much greater familiarity with information technology than the workers themselves, and are growing up in a sexualised context which was not part of the participants' own youth.

2. Although the Under Pressure training was received positively, participants absorbed information largely unreflectively, through a filter of experience and assumptions that had an impact on how the training translated into practice.

3. The peer-to-peer learning element of the training was seen as particularly valuable, and peer learning was considered integral to participants' learning throughout their youth work careers.

4. There was a disconnect between participants' endorsement of young people's informal peer learning and their assessment that young peoples' peer groups reinforce harmful myths and stereotypes.

5. While readily understanding the wider social structures that lead to sexualisation, abuse and exploitation, participants were sometimes unwilling to discuss these issues with the young people they worked with, preferring to focus on harm reduction and maintaining positive relationships.

"There's so much more (sexual content) for them to see nowadays, much more so than when I was younger."

- Course Participant

5. Findings

Participants' discussions of their day-to-day experiences of youth work support findings from the Under Pressure report that youth workers observe high levels of sexual bullying and relationship abuse among the young people they work with. The examples below are a small sample of the stories participants told:

> *"It was one of the first things that came up, when I started the youth club was that a girl had... and it wasn't even now what you'd class as a sexy picture, but what was classed then as a sexy picture… they made a whole website about it and it was disgusting, it was horrible, and she broke her heart, you know she got herself into such a state about it and it was a horrible position and such a horrible stage in her life to be in."*

> *"There was a girl in one of our groups… she had let her boyfriend take a picture of her with her top off and within seconds on the Monday morning the whole school had it including teachers… it had a massive effect on her and she ended up leaving school. I was shocked then, I didn't realise the extent of young people using phones for this."*

One worker related the situation of a young girl who reported to the worker that her boyfriend "had a secret" on her. The girl also reported that he was very controlling and manipulative. His family monitored the girl's behaviour and whereabouts, and reported them to him.

Another worker related an occasion when a 14 year old girl entered into a relationship with a 17 year old boy. There had been an allegation of sexual abuse against him in relation to another young person. His behaviour towards the girl was controlling and threatening. The worker reported that although the girl was the primary concern throughout, initial responses by adults working with the girl had focused on changing her behaviour, and involved intervention to prevent her engagement with the man. The worker reported that she was able to refocus attention on to the boy's behaviour and in doing so transferred responsibility for his behaviour onto him and those responsible for him.

> *"This removed the blame from her – he's the adult"*

This removed the need for an immediate intervention that may have alienated the girl and subsequently made it possible for the worker to engage and support the girl in the long-term while working to raise her awareness of risk and sexual exploitation.

Throughout the research it was apparent that the participants drew on a wide range of clues or 'red flags' in making sense of the research scenarios. In particular age, and to a lesser extent gender, were frequently suggested as important variables in all scenarios.

> *"She's 17, so because she's over 16 I'm not bound and can't legally do anything, but as a youth worker obviously I would like to."*

> *"Because she's 17 it's quite tricky because there wouldn't be a child protection concern."*

Workers related that their concerns were raised by significant age differences between partners especially if one was under sixteen years of age. The notion of what construed a 'red flag' emerged from a combination of information which included personal experience, peer learning and more formal training. 'Red flags' were often associated with policy rules and guidelines such as those included in child protection training and youth worker guidelines.

The sexualised behaviour of young people (including under 16s) was generally accepted by youth workers who placed reliance on rules and operational frameworks such as Child Protection and 'no mobile phone' rules to manage situations such as those detailed in the scenarios.

Supporting young people in an unfamiliar context

"What they tell us is an eye-opener."

Participants frequently reported that young people were growing up in a culture that differed greatly from that of their own youth, particularly in access to a range of information technology and the availability of pornography. Although one worker described herself as 'growing up with the internet' this was not generally reported by other participants.

Youth workers described young people growing up in a context where there is now a normalisation of pornography and sexual images in popular culture offering derogatory and objectified

representations of women. Youth workers also noted that the appearance and body image of young women was being influenced by access to pornography. Such attitudes were reported as being normalised, particularly by television 'soaps' and reality programmes such as 'The Only Way is Essex'.

"Teenage experience is different – they are bombarded with it."

"There's so much more (sexual content) for them to see nowadays, much more so than when I was younger."

Pornography was reported by all workers to be normalised within a broader range of cultural representations of women available to young people and was often considered to be a 'normal' aspect of a relationship. Some workers reported that they occasionally encountered pornographic images as a consequence of their work with young people and they reported these as "disgusting", "horrible", "distasteful" or "disturbing", and as objectified views of women. Many of these images or videos were ones that had gone viral due to their extreme character, and the participants expressed concern that they may be among the first representations of sexuality or body parts that young people see. The young people themselves, however, were reported as often seeking out these images - one worker said she would be surprised if a young person would be upset by viewing pornography among peers (a context outlined in Scenario 1; see appendix).

Workers reported that young men and women differed in their responses in relation to the discussion of pornography. Participants reported that young men often used the issue to challenge boundaries in terms of their right to view pornography as a normalised male activity. This was in contrast to young women who generally raised the issue in terms of their own lives, and discussions were reported as relating to their experience. It was reported by several workers that young men often encourage young women to view pornography on mobile phones and that sharing pornographic images was common among peer groups. Participants reported that this influences the way they work with young people in terms of pornography and gender.

"It's a difficult conversation to have... usually the audience of these discussions will be 13 to 14 year old young men. Their attention spans are short and they're in groups of their peers. A lot of the time it's about the guys talking about something being done to a woman, and so I talk about that quite a lot, objectification."

"I can't remember an instance when a female has brought up porn to push boundaries [as the boys do]. I talk to them [the girls] about pleasure, and the different ways people get pleasure, but they haven't actually brought that [porn] to the conversation."

Participants also spoke positively about the raised awareness of risk in relation to sexual abuse and exploitation from some media sources, in particular documentaries and reports on issues such as sex trafficking, lap and table dancing, and other aspects of the sex industry.

Mobile technologies were a central theme of the scenarios and so were raised as an issue during all of the interviews. Use of technology was reported by the participants as a material feature of young people's relationships, with Blackberry Messaging, texting, and the internet used as a means of sharing as well as control, especially in relation to images and explicit personal material. Many workers spoke of being unsure of the range and use of new technologies such as mobile technology and smart phones, particularly for image sharing and social networking. Although most spoke of mobile technology as being a normalised part of relationships between young people, many workers reported being unclear about the way that this technology functioned.

"I don't know how you do it but something to do with Facebook…"

"Even girls as young as ten or eleven have got Blackberries… I don't know how it works, I'm not that technically minded."

As discussed in the following section, workers frequently draw upon their experiences of interacting with young people in both their work and home lives to navigate this unfamiliar territory. Although many found this helpful much uncertainty remained, suggesting the need for specific training around information technology, sexualisation and pornography to enable youth workers to support young people effectively.

Barriers to reflective practice

"It's just sort of there… you've always known."

Despite receiving numerous opportunities to access training, participants indicated that the separation between theory and practice presented a barrier to reflective work[1]. Workers reported receiving lots of information about child protection, domestic abuse and related issues, but often suggested that this was used only to back up skills and knowledge gained on-the-job, and was difficult to access due to lack of time. Many of the participants also reported that they had no recollection of where they encountered particular ideas and that formal training usually expanded or developed pre-existing understanding. Despite the apparent availability of information, participants spoke of the theory of abuse, exploitation and gendered violence as being distinct from the real-life experience of youth work. Participants demonstrated a considerable understanding of the risks associated with teen relationship abuse and exploitation but this was usually expressed in terms of taken-for-granted or common-sense knowledge.

"It's just something you do naturally as a youth worker."

Most participants' responses suggested that the research interview was the first time they had given thought to *how* they know what they know, with long pauses, halting sentences and repetitions of "I don't really know" and "I'm not sure." Heavy references were made throughout and by all workers to 'intuition', 'natural understanding', 'instinct', 'inkling' and 'just knowing', together with experience and 'on-the-job' learning along with broader experience gained through extended familial relationships. Although one worker referred directly to being reflective about learning (relating this to her academic training) other workers made little or no reference to reflective practice. One participant acknowledged that learning 'on the job' can have a downside:

"You support people first and then you build up your knowledge as you go… when I think back to some of the situations that we came across I probably didn't deal well with them at all."

Again, while enthusiastic about the benefits of peer learning, one participant described how a discussion group within a training she had attended had made her think about the backgrounds and assumptions of other youth workers. A member of her discussion group had insisted that texting your partner dozens of times a day was normal, and implied that her husband did this. The participant questioned whether the woman was in a healthy relationship herself and therefore in a position to educate young people on the topic. Some workers suggested that instances of violence

1.   "The capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning" ^ Schön, D. (1983)

happening to women they knew, or in their local area, helped them to make the connections between ideas and practice. One worker spoke directly about how the importance of healthy relationships was 'made real' for her through knowledge of a local murder.

"I think you think it's not going to happen to you."

Another spoke of knowing a young person involved in an internet 'grooming' case and how this personal experience had made her training seem more relevant.

"It comes to your door … it's everywhere."
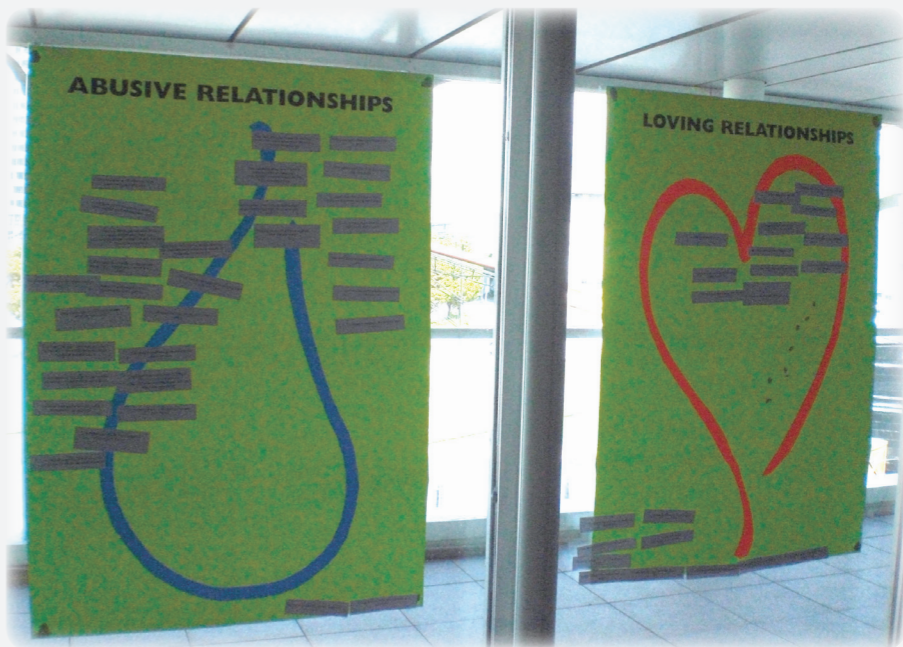
Several participants spoke about the ways in which training had changed their perceptions of the sex industry, including pornography and prostitution, as well as the appropriate delivery of sexual health work; for example one participant was led to reflect on previous work handing out condoms, which she now felt should not have been done without accompanying support and awareness of risk factors for abuse and exploitation.

It should therefore be considered that reflective practice may help youth workers to bridge this separation of theory and practice by enabling them to link the two through concrete examples and cases. This is not a new idea to the youth workers and they report using this technique when working with young people, asking them to reflect and think about their own experience in relation to issues of abuse or control.

Introducing reflective elements and exercises into training sessions could help youth workers locate their day-to-day practice within the context of the wider social issues of teen sexual abuse and exploitation. The consequence of this approach would be to underpin formal training, theory and general information with concrete examples drawn from the worker's own experience as well as offering an opportunity for reflection. In addition, workers would be better equipped to situate the decision and choice making of the young people they support within a broader social context.

Peer groups and informal learning

"We were in a small room with people we knew, it was informal… you were taking it on a wee bit more."

Although participants in some cases reported formal training as the source of their increased awareness of issues such as commercial sexual exploitation, this formed only a small part of their frame of reference. Youth workers reported learning through peer exchange and saw this as a valued means of knowledge acquisition. More formal training was reported as an opportunity to gain resources such as activities to guide their work with young people.

"When you go to a lot of the sessions, like the Zero Tolerance thing, hearing other people's scenarios and hearing other people's side of things and seeing… I mean everybody takes their own thing from different information so to hear it from somebody else "Oh ok I wouldn't have thought of that straightaway", and it's good for other people to point these out so a lot of it is training, and a lot of it is experiences, and a lot of it is just the experience of being a youth worker and other people's experiences."

While this suggests that peer learning enhances the delivery of information and skills and could therefore be a worthwhile addition to training programmes, the lack of reflexivity discussed above means that effective peer learning is often undermined by a lack of consideration of which peer learning is useful, and what sorts of informal learning sources are reliable. Discussion of learning from peers within work and training situations often led on to unreflective endorsement of learning in social situations and from friends and family members.

"A lot of my friends work in the same area I do; when we socialise we tend to talk about work."

"I have 22 nieces and nephews… I definitely think that has an influence."

"I've got younger nephews and things like that."

"I have a son, and I have an expectation of how he should treat partners in his life."

This is in contrast to other forms of information which many participants stated they would treat with caution.

"I am quite cagey about what kind of sites I go onto on the internet and what kind of advice I take from the internet because it could be a lot of nonsense."

Peer relationships were also reported by the workers to be a strong influence on the behaviour of young people in terms of their acceptance of unhealthy relationships. Importantly, peers were able to make comments and pass judgements that youth workers felt were beyond their remit, such as "What are you putting up with that for?" There was also an assertion by youth workers that young people learn best through peer to peer learning ("They're going to listen to their peer group rather than to me anyway."). One participant reported that after doing some work on 'porn culture' a group of young women were keen to do some awareness-raising but were not allowed to do this in their school. They decided instead to talk informally to their peers about the issues. Too much emphasis on peer learning can, however, be seen as problematic when set against the view widely expressed by participants that sexualised, abusive and controlling behaviour is now normalised through popular culture, especially music and television, and shared widely among young people. One participant commented about images of women in magazines:

"Although they'll tell you that's not realistic they're of a younger age where, they know that that's not how people look and they know that it's been airbrushed and we've spoke about things like this, but in the back of their mind they're still thinking 'I want to look like that.'"

Another participant talked about a young woman describing a peer as "wearing a skirt up her backside and getting what she deserved".

Peer learning can, therefore, be seen as a valuable source of learning for both youth workers and young people, but this should be carefully managed to ensure that sources of peer learning are appropriate and adequately reflected upon.

Balancing relationships and education

"They don't want to be lectured."

While it was clearly stated by participants that they would challenge unhealthy relationships and that the normalisation of unhealthy relationships should be undermined, a strong theme that emerged from the interviews was the prioritisation by youth workers of their relationships with the young people they support. This was often reported as taking priority above intervening or giving direction. Many participants reported that they place an emphasis on relationship building over information sharing. Young people were reported as being resistant to direction or intervention on the part of youth workers and taking this as an indication that workers were 'taking charge' or 'being bossy'.

"All I'm there to do is advise and… give different scenarios and different opinions."

"I wouldn't stand there and say 'you will not do that'…only the young person can make that call for themselves."

The participants reported that although they held the welfare of the young people as paramount, they did not adopt a role that would be perceived as authoritative or akin to a parental role. Participants reported adopting various strategies to overcome this issue. One method was to use workers from outside agencies to speak directly and to challenge young people about issues. Another was to speak to groups as a whole rather than address issues directly with individual young people. In many cases the scenarios highlighted the fact that difficult situations were frequently used as opportunities to address broader issues of concern with groups of young people. Participants also spoke of using a range of non-challenging counselling techniques to engage young people in discussion about issues related to sexual abuse, exploitation and healthy relationships.

Despite reporting, as previously covered, that young women are more likely than young men to relate pornography to their own life experience, participants suggested that young people do not associate these personal experiences to broader themes such as the objectification of women. One worker reported that a (non-sexually active) sixteen-year-old girl had said that she had a 'Hollywood wax'. When the worker asked her why she had had this done, she said "Because it's normal". The worker said that getting waxed and having sex was not about 'pornification' or objectification for young people but was, in their view, about "being strong". The worker reported that young women claim to dress and manage their body image according to their own choices.

Another worker reported that young people were often willing to tolerate control and abuse in a relationship and described young girls as sometimes being "desperate for love". The worker said that she always tried not to appear that she was interrogating the young person and that she had to "go really gently" to explore how the young person felt about their relationships. The worker also said that youth workers can provide perhaps the only positive and healthy relationship for a young person.

"The relationship has more influence than information."

The participants strongly advocated the rights of young people to make their own choices and emphasised their role in supporting young people and reducing harm while enabling them to "find out for themselves".

In some instances participants made recourse to policy and guidelines to deal with the situations they faced. These included the frameworks provided by child protection guidelines especially in terms of those under sixteen years of age[2]. In these cases the participants demonstrated more certainty about their responses. The legality of inappropriate images of children under the age of sixteen years was not raised as an issue by workers in the context of peer relationships where both partners were under sixteen years.

2.   Sexual intercourse and oral sex between young people aged 13-15 are offences, even if both partners consent. Guidance from the Scottish Government acknowledges that not every case of sexual activity in under-16s will have child protection concerns, but young people may still be in need of support in relation to their sexual development and relationships. See National Guidance - Under-age Sexual Activity: Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People and Identifying Child Protection Concerns

Though participants were confident around child protection guidelines, there was some confusion around what is acceptable to discuss with young people. One youth worker talked about the challenges of addressing difficult issues such as pornography with young people when schools and parents do not think it suitable:

"As a youth worker it's quite difficult to know what you're allowed to talk about and not."

The participants also reported that young people were often resistant to intervention and frequently chose to avoid engagement with youth workers, parents and others on issues that related directly to themselves or directly challenged their behaviours. Despite this, the participants also reported that they (youth workers) were often the 'first port of call' for young people facing difficult or risky situations.

In relation to young people's relationships with each other, youth workers demonstrated a desire to be supportive without making any concrete intervention.

"We provide a supportive relationship and reduce harm while they find out for themselves."

Many workers reported their twin roles of harm reduction and awareness raising as difficult to manage. Generally workers reported they placed priority on developing and maintaining positive and trusting relationships with young people. An emphasis was placed on the role of youth workers in safeguarding and supporting young people in order that they arrive at their own resolutions to the issues they face.

"A lot of the time I don't think links can be made to the big picture… they can't even get it… they're just dealing every day with [their own issues]."

This proves especially problematic in terms of addressing the fact that young people, although making their own choices, do not do this from a position that is isolated from the broader social context of 'pornification', exploitation and unhealthy relationships that the workers report encountering in their day-to-day practice. Despite the barriers described, workers who did raise the broader social context of abuse with young people reported that it could be very effective.

"At a school group that I did, we did the healthy and unhealthy relationships[3] and one of the girls in particular it was like a light bulb came on and she'd been in quite an emotionally abusive relationship but hadn't realised it… the other girls in the group were like 'see we told you what he was like'. That was nine girls who might go on to not be in that kind of relationship."

> *"As a youth worker it's quite difficult to know what you're allowed to talk about and not."*
>
> - Course Participant

3.   An activity from the Under Pressure training

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Many reports on the issues covered by the Under Pressure training point out the need for more work on prevention and early intervention through schools, which is of course important. A number of recent studies, however (e.g. NSPCC 2011, University of Bedfordshire, 2011) have highlighted that marginalised young people are both particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and less likely than their peers to attend school regularly. Youth work services, many of which cater specifically to young people who do not readily engage with mainstream services, are crucial for educating and supporting those who could be or become involved in abusive relationships or sexual exploitation.

The youth workers who took part in this research showed a wide ranging understanding of the issues of sexualisation, relationship abuse and exploitation in young people's relationships and a strong commitment to supporting the young people they work with to engage in safe, healthy relationships. They were alert to a variety of 'warning signs' for abuse as well as the care needed in distinguishing these from 'normal' adolescent behaviour. Youth workers were keen to develop their knowledge and understanding where possible and cited a wide range of resources they could draw upon to do so.

However, the interviews highlighted several challenges to the delivery of effective information and support on these issues. The following are recommendations to managers, commissioners and funders of youth work services and to organisations and individuals that provide training and support to youth workers (including YWCA Scotland and Zero Tolerance) in order to overcome some of these barriers, ensuring youth workers have every opportunity to make an important and tangible difference to young peoples' lives.

For Managers of Youth Work Services:

• Ensure up to date equality and diversity (including gender equality) training/learning is incorporated in the learning plans of youth workers at all levels as a priority.

• Encourage youth workers to engage in reflective practice through support and supervision meetings, staff meetings, etc. to help strengthen the connection between learning and their experience in practice.

• Provide time and resources for youth workers at all levels to gain specific knowledge, skill and confidence in addressing relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and gender discrimination with young people. This could be through training courses, books, providing on line resources, through newsletters, etc.

• Review and update Child Protection and other policies and practice guides and ensure all youth work staff are clear on action to take if they suspect a young person is involved in or at risk of abuse or sexual exploitation.

• Promote activities and exercises for prevention and early intervention on relationship abuse and sexual exploitation, including exploring wider cultural and social messages on gender, encouraging respectful, equitable relationships and informed decisions (including consent in relationships) and challenging attitudes and behaviours that can be harmful.

For Commissioners and Funders of Youth Work Provision, Learning & Development and Research:

• Invest in training and capacity building opportunities for youth workers at all levels (e.g. entry, practitioner, manager) as a priority so youth workers will have the skills, knowledge and confidence to address risks of abuse or sexual exploitation.

• Require proposals for youth work activities to explain how they address the risks of relationship abuse and sexual exploitation in their practice, including policy implementation, management support and staff learning & development.

• Support further research to encompass a broader range of youth workers to identify examples of good practice to be shared and barriers to implementation of good practice to be overcome.

For Training Providers:

• Ensure training design includes space for reflection on learners' own attitudes, understandings and assumptions about the issues of abuse and sexual exploitation, including specific exercises where possible.

• Explore the difficulties youth workers can face in raising awareness of broader social issues while maintaining effective relationships with young people. Peer discussion may generate potential approaches from practice, capitalising on youth workers' value of peer support and learning.

• Emphasise the ways in which personal agency is affected by wider societal pressures and discrimination (including gender discrimination) with the aim of enabling participants to place their own experiences within this wider social context and avoid placing the responsibility for change with survivors of abuse or sexual exploitation.

> Marginalised young people are both particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and less likely than their peers to attend school regularly.

• Acknowledge the challenges youth workers may face in understanding young people's use of technology, include this within training where appropriate and signpost learners to more specific learning opportunities where appropriate.

For YWCA Scotland and Zero Tolerance:

• Build consideration of youth workers' values and assumptions into all parts of training, enabling participants to build links between the issues of 'pornification', exploitation and abusive relationships and their day to day practice with young people.

• Include content on the interaction between personal agency and wider social pressures with advice on working with young people to develop their critical engagement with society and wider cultural messages on gender.

• Increase level of content related to recognising and tackling potentially sexually abusive behaviours in young people who engage with youth work.

• Clearly signpost specialist training on the management of information and mobile technology to reduce the risks of facilitating sexualisation, abuse, harassment and exploitation.

7. References and Further Information

Sexualisation

Pleasure vs. Profit film and resource pack
With input from young people, police and activists, this short film exposes how porn culture manipulates young people's natural curiosity about sex.
http://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/pleasurevsprofit

Sexy Inc: Our Children under the Influence
30 minute Canadian documentary, free to watch online.
http://www.nfb.ca/film/sexy_inc/

Papadopoulos, L. (2010) *Sexualisation of young people review*
Looks at how sexualised images and messages may be affecting the development of children and young people and influencing cultural norms. It also examines the evidence for a link between sexualisation and violence.
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100418065544/http:/homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexualisation-of-young-people.html

Relationship Abuse

Barter, C., McCarry, M., Berridge, D. and Evans, K., (2009) *Partner Exploitation and Violence in Teenage Intimate Relationships* NSPCC in partnership with the University of Bristol
Executive summary of the research
http://tinyurl.com/6d63uab

Ringrose, J et al (2012) *A qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting'* NSPCC in partnership with Institute of Education, London; King's College, London; London School of Economics and Open University

Safe hub Scotland
Website designed by a group of young people for young people including information and resources.
http://www.safehubscotland.org/your-own-relationship

Scottish Women's Aid information sheet
Information on dating abuse for practitioners working with young people.
http://www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk/help-and-info-for-young-people/dating-abuse

Wood, M., Barter, C. and Berridge, D. (2011) *Standing on my own two feet: Disadvantaged Teenagers, Intimate Partner Violence and Coercive Control*
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/research/findings/standing_own_two_feet_pdf_wdf84557.pdf

Sexual Exploitation

Pleasure vs. Profit film and resource pack

Money and Power film and resource pack
Information on the harmful reality of the sex industry.
http://www.vawpreventionscotland.org.uk/resources/audio-visual-resources/money-and-power-commercial-sexual-exploitation-scotland

Barnardo's *Puppet on a String: The urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation* (2011)
http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf_puppetonastring_report_final.pdf

Jago, S. et al (2011) *What's going on to Safeguard Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation? How local partnerships respond to child sexual exploitation,* University of Bedfordshire

Reflective Practice

Finlay, L. (2008) *Reflecting on Reflective Practice,* Open University
http://www.open.ac.uk/cetl-workspace/cetlcontent/documents/4bf2b48887459.pdf

Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner, How Professionals Think In Action,* Basic Books

Thomson, S. and Thomson, N. (2008) *The Critically Reflective Practitioner*, Palgrave Macmillan

Information Technology and Exploitation

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
http://ceop.police.uk/

Think U Know?
CEOP-run site with information for young people and professionals
http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

8. Appendix - Scenarios

1. You arrive at your youth group one day to find that a few of the young people, a mix of girls and boys of 15 – 17, are there already. Three of the group are laughing and looking at something on one of their phones. The other two are sitting at the other side of the room, and look a bit annoyed. You ask them why, and they say that the other three have been looking at pornography on their phones.

2. One of your youth group, a 17 year old called Robin, has been getting dropped off at the group by an older-looking guy with a car. Robin had been single for a while and a bit depressed about it, as well as having some problems at home, and now seems much more confident and outgoing. You chatted to the guy briefly and he seemed nice. However, you haven't seen Robin at the session for a few weeks, which is quite unusual.

3. One of your youth group, 15 year old Ashley, confided to you a few months ago that they really liked someone in their class at school. They were really excited when they started dating, but recently when you ask them about it they are a bit cagey and secretive. They get texts all the time when they're at the group, which they insist they have to answer. The person they are seeing has also started coming to the group to collect them, and looks a bit annoyed when they stand and chat with their friends. Ashley is spending less and less time doing this, and usually just leaves straight away.