

Nottingham District Child Protection Committee 17th January 1997

Presentation 1:

Alan Davies, Specialist Worker, Thorneywood.

He is a Social Worker employed by the Health Authority and works with children who have sexually abused other children, not just those who have come to the attention of the police as few do. His professional background includes working for the NSPCC and the Probation Service.

He is a member of the East Sector Team and at Thorneywood as part of this project a Core Group has been set up of 5 professionals including Dr. Peter Miller and Dr. Rachel Leheup. If any case involving a child where there are concerns about sexually abusing behaviour is referred to Thorneywood, it is referred to the Core group where it is allocated for assessment/treatment.

They also offer consultation services for other professionals and training, as well as assessments for court. They are also involved in Research, Rachel Leheup will be presenting this at a future meeting, looking at five years of offenders who came into the system countywide, how they are dealt with by Social Services and the Police and outcomes.

They are developing a model of Assessment.

In 1996, there were 25 referrals, mainly from Social Services which was more than they had expected after looking at similar projects elsewhere in the Country.

6 of the 25 were previously known to Thorneywood, the vast majority were male, white/British and two thirds were over 12 years old.

With 10 of the referrals, the Police had had some involvement, 10 of the children had been case conferenced by Social Services but not the same 10. 3 has been charged with Sexual offences, 3 had been cautioned. There had been 38 victims.

They have been involved with a child with learning disabilities and they wouldn't recommend this again as the models for working with children who sexually abuse are not appropriate. Child Psychiatry is not funded to deal with learning Disabilities - this needs to be an area of work for the ACPC Project.

They use models of work to carry out assessments over a number of weeks.

Therapeutic Models

One of their problems is that work is not mandated by the courts and that people drop out.

Need to access children and young people at an early stage of their abusing career.

There are quite a lot of models around but a longer time is needed to engage the young person.

They are looking at group work models.

They do parallel work with families/carers - most of the children still have their families involved.

There is a debate around whether the programme should be mandated or non mandated - current climate is that attendance is not part of a probation programme. Young people are attending because they are distressed about being labelled Schedule 1 Offenders.

They are hoping to follow through on children who are involved in the project.

Judy Holloway-Vine Project Manager ACPC Project: Children who sexually abuse other children.

Background

Judy has been working on this issue since 1988 through work with adolescents who were sex offenders. A Multiagency support group was formed involving Rachel Leheup, Rampton and Probation and a programme of group work was run five times from 1990 - 1992, mainly with children in care - they were inundated with requests. The young people came initially because of wanting to go home and stayed because of the support. The progress was quicker than work done individually.

She was seconded for a year at that time and was involved in consultation work, supervision and individual team work. Funds were granted for a project which were withdraw three weeks before starting.

The courses/groups ran for three months which was felt too short, the young people involved were requesting further course. The course were not mandated by the courts - had asked for them not to be,

ACPC Project

Has been in post for six weeks. Is currently trying to get figures together and looking at Child On Child on Abuse procedures.

Has been looking at the period 1st April to 30th September, looking at Social Services referral forms, Section 47 enquiries and trying to cross reference this with Police data.

She has discovered a case going through the court without Social Services or Police knowledge.

Has found:

57 Alleged incidents of inappropriate or sexually abusing behaviour

74 named young people and 73 victims.

25% under 5 years old , 60% under 10 - 19% female offenders,

20% had been on Child Protection Register,

55% has previous concerns, if not for abuse, then for behavioural problems or as young offenders.

31% open cases a time of incident.

Only 19% Social Services or Police had no prior knowledge.

On the Police computer, there were 30 names - only the primary offence is on record, Social Services had knowledge of only 11.

Sibling abuse often not reported.

Judy has been trying to break down figures of those dealt with by divisional officers and those by CAIU. A high percentage of cases are cautioned, but this only occurs if they admit guilt.

The issue of case conferencing depending on the district involved. Social Workers also find some difficulty in assessing perpetrators.

Part of Judy's role is to identify gaps in procedures.

The project has a reference group made of different sources.

Judy's next area of work is resources.