

New forms of sexual abuse: what Youth Information workers can do

WEBINAR, 31 MAY 2022

With the rising popularity of social media and two years of the pandemic, more and more young people resort to the Internet for building and maintaining friendships and relationships. The modern digitalised life brings both opportunities and threats depending on how well-equipped young people are to identify and cope with them. Unfortunately, online grooming, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, peer-on-peer abuse, gang-related sexual violence, and other forms of sexual abuse targeting children and youth are fast-growing and may happen anytime and anywhere. In this context, youth information services and the youth work sector, in general, are increasingly in need of resources, protocols and programmes able to support young people's resilience.

This webinar, conducted in collaboration with the Council of Europe, is aimed at raising awareness about different forms of sexual violence, harassment, grooming, and abuse affecting young people. It is an opportunity to establish an open dialogue on their impact on young people, the position of youth information and counselling services, and the nature of actions and support that can be provided to young people in need.

AGENDA

11:00 – 11:10	Welcome by Eva Reina, ERYICA Director
11:10 – 11:30	Keynote speech by Maria Rossi, Detective Senior Sergeant at the Finnish Police
11:30 – 11:40	Questions & Answers
11:40 – 11:50	Coffee Break
11:50 – 12:35	Panel discussion: Alexandra Duffy, Training & Prevention Manager at RASASC Mika Pietilä, Senior Advisor at Koordinati Stephanie Hoffman, Head of Social Action at PromoCymru
12:35 – 12:55	Group discussion
12:55 – 13:00	Closing thoughts

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Maria Rossi is a Detective Senior Sergeant who has been working in the Finnish Police for 20 years, mostly in criminal investigations and intelligence. She is specialised in the prevention and investigation of online sexual crimes against children. She has completed the year-long course of Investigative interviews of children and worked as a criminal investigator and a team leader in sexual crimes against children. Rossi has also worked as a national representative of Finland in Law Enforcement CSE-networks of Europol and Interpol.

Currently, she is on leave from her steady post as a team leader of CSE-team in the National Bureau of Finland to study the Masters of Police Services at the Police University College of Finland. Her thesis is concentrating in the investigation of online sexual crimes against children by the Finnish Police.

PANELLISTS:

Alexandra Duffy is the Training and Prevention Manager at the [Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre \(RASASC\)](#)/Rape Crisis South London. Alexandra has worked in the sexual violence sector for 6 years and currently leads RASASC's training to professionals in the education and youth sectors, as well as their sexual violence prevention work with young people in schools and youth settings.

Mika Pietilä is a Senior Advisor at [Koordinaatti](#) in Finland. Since 2019 one of his tasks has been preventing and combating sexual harassment, grooming and sexual violence against children and young people. Mika was one of the authors of a guide on the prevention of sexual violence in youth work in 2020 and a handbook on terms of sexual violence against children and young people in 2022.

Stephanie Hoffman is the head of Social Action at [ProMo-Cymru](#). Since 2015 she has been managing the [Meic service](#), which is the helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. Her value base and expertise come from 35+ years working in the third sector in Wales. This includes leadership roles in organisations working with mental illness, substance misuse, relationship breakdown, family mediation, and homelessness.