

Engaging the experts: The importance of working with young survivors of sexual violence in prevention efforts

Claire Cody

Research Fellow, The International Centre: Researching Child Sexual Exploitation, Violence and Trafficking

Outline

- Why we should involve young people
- Why we should involve those affected by sexual violence
- How we can engage with young people
- Examples
- What we're learning
- A new European project

Why should we engage with young people on prevention?

- Sexual violence disproportionately affects young people
- It's their right to express their views
- Prevention means engaging early

Why should we engage those affected by sexual violence in prevention efforts?

- They're the experts
- Prevention messages have to 'speak' to young people
- Participating in creative activities can have a positive impact
- Engagement and empowerment can help minimise the likelihood of re-victimisation

How can we engage young people in prevention efforts?

- Participatory research
- Youth Advisory Groups
- Creative projects

Gang associated sexual exploitation and violence project

- Research into the issue of gang associated sexual violence and exploitation
- Additional funding - a film project
- 35 young people
- Workshops
- Skills - camera work, sound and technical skills
- Four films - www.beds.ac.uk

Be Healthy Project

- Highlight and address the barriers to health services experienced by young people affected by sexual exploitation
- Partnership between The Association for Young People's Health (AYPH) and The International Centre
- 10 young people
- Series of short animated films and a booklet



A young people's participation project

[Read More](#)



Our film

Watch the animated film made by the Health Advocates about health, wellbeing and the barriers faced by young people affected by sexual exploitation.

[Read More](#)



Our booklet

Read and download our booklet where we talk about our experiences of using services for a variety of health issues. It also contains lots of helpful advice on how young people can look after themselves.

[Read More](#)



Our other resources

Look at some of the other resources we created, including a free downloadable leaflet that professionals can give to young people when they start using a service.

[Read More](#)

Be Healthy Project

- Health advocates received accreditation for their work
- Presented to different groups
- Working with the Department of Health

“I’ve gone from the person who is coming here to ask for help for me, to someone who’s coming to help other young people”

What are we learning ?

- Lots of time to plan
- Time and flexibility
- Money
- Thinking about safety
- Confidentiality
- Expectations
- Exit planning/ sustainability

An exciting new project and opportunity

- Funding from the Oak Foundation for a three year, pan-European initiative – ***‘Our Voices’***
- ***‘Our Voices’*** will promote the involvement of young people in efforts to prevent sexual violence in Europe
- Get in touch claire.cody@beds.ac.uk