

# Sexual Harm Intervention Programme

## Information for professionals

**This handout is intended to inform professionals involved with young people who have shown, or are believed to be at risk of developing harmful sexual behaviour. It outlines the assessment - often referred to as a SHIP assessment, and the intervention service itself.**

### Introduction

The SHIP Team works with young people who have shown, or are believed to be at risk of developing harmful sexual behaviour. The team consists of professionals from Children and Family Services and the Youth Offending Team who have received specialist training in assessment and prevention work in this area. The following services can be provided:

- Undertake initial assessments of young people and their family
- Provide a risk assessment for the courts, child protection conferences, family support meetings, and for the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel.
- Provide a consultancy service for colleagues working with young people who exhibit or are at risk of engaging in harmful sexual behaviour, and their families.
- Undertake time limited interventions with young people who exhibit or are at risk of engaging in harmful sexual behaviour.
- Undertake work with the parents/carers of young people who exhibit or are at risk of engaging in harmful sexual behaviour.
- Researching and liaising with specialist therapeutic placements.

### SHIP Referrals

If you have concerns about a young person exhibiting or being at risk of engaging in harmful sexual behaviour, discuss making a referral to Children and Family Services with your line manager. If it is agreed that a referral is appropriate, complete a SHIP referral form which can be located on the CareDirector System.

The referral will be considered at Children and Family Services transfer meeting and workers allocated as appropriate. The Youth Offending Team would receive notification from the police following an arrest of a young person for harmful sexual behaviour. The Youth Offending Team would complete a SHIP referral and it would be dealt with as above. Two SHIP workers would be identified to make contact with a young person's parents/carers to explain the assessment process and agree a course of action.



## **Behaviours which might trigger a referral**

Broadly speaking referrals will concern the forcing or enticing of a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activity. In deciding whether the behaviour is age appropriate or abusive you may wish to consider the following;

- The context within which the behaviour took place
- Age relationships between those involved
- Power relationship between those involved
- Type of sexual activity
- How sexual contact is initiated (evidence of grooming or intimidation)
- Degree of secrecy involved (including collusion)
- Evidence in progression in regard to the nature or frequency of the sexual activity

## **What is a SHIP Assessment?**

The SHIP workers meet with the young person individually at least five sessions. These sessions are held in a safe environment and workers will take into consideration the young person's cultural, religious and learning needs. The assessment will seek to gain an understanding of the context of the behaviour and how this is understood by the young person. It would seek to identify the strengths of the young person and their family.

The workers will meet separately with the parents/carers and other professionals involved to ensure the assessment is both holistic and accurate.

## **What happens next?**

The SHIP workers use the AIM2 assessment tool to analyse the information and clarify the behaviour that led to the referral. In addition the SHIP assessment involves consideration of the likelihood of the young person exhibiting harmful sexual behaviour in the future, and the risk level associated with this.

The conclusion of the assessment would identify if further intervention was required. The information is presented in a report which is shared with the young person and their parents/carers.

## **Confidentiality**

The SHIP assessment and report created will be treated confidentially and held on the records of Children and Family Services. It may be necessary for this report to be shared with others in order to protect others and this process will be discussed the young person and their parents/carers.

If you require further information regarding the Sexual Harm Intervention Programme, please contact:

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