

# The Children's Society in Calderdale – The Safe Hands Project. Annual Report: 2012 – 2013



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# The Children's Society

The Children's Society is a leading national children's charity committed to making childhood better for all children in the UK.

We provide vital help for tens of thousands of children every year:

- We provide specialist support at a local level for those forgotten children who face the greatest danger and disadvantages in their daily lives; children who are unable to find the support they need anywhere else.
- Our work in children's centres, schools and churches gives children the chance to develop the skills and confidence they need to make the most of their childhood and play a full part in their local communities.
- Our thought-provoking research influences everyone – from people like you and me to politicians and decision makers – about how to create real change.
- Our hard-hitting campaigns attract large public support and make institutions, government bodies and authorities take action to make childhood better for all children.

## Our mission

We make childhood better for all children in the UK.

## Our vision

We see a world where every child enjoys a good childhood.

## Our values

Love, Justice and Forgiveness.

# The Programme

## Project Description:

The Children's Society in Calderdale, Safe Hands Project supports young people affected by Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) across the Calderdale district. Safe Hands is the sister project to the Children's Society Hand in Hand Project in Keighley and Bradford. Safe Hands is commissioned by Calderdale Council to work with young people, families, professionals and communities to address the issue and impact of CSE.

## Project Statement:

The Safe Hands Project strives to provide a safe and accessible service for children, young people and their families involved in or vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

We treat each young person as an individual and we take an advisory, advocacy and facilitation role in supporting them to make positive changes and choices in their lives.

We work in partnership with appropriate services to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people we support, with Safeguarding being our guiding principle.

By offering a long term, consistent service with clear boundaries we endeavour to give the children and young people we work with the support they require and a voice that is heard.

## Project Aim:

To reduce the harm and incidence of CSE in Calderdale and provide support and safety for those affected by CSE

## Project Objectives:

1. Raise awareness of CSE by developing and implementing preventative strategies with CYP, professionals and parents/carers
2. Provide appropriate support for young people and their families affected by CSE with the main aim being to successfully exit from abuse
3. Be the Calderdale 'expert' on the issue of CSE and co-ordinate multi agency work to prevent, protect, prosecute and exit

## Participation:

Staff, students and volunteers work to the best practice principles highlighted in The Children's Societies Participation Strategy – **Be Part of it**.

Participation underpins all the services offered by **Safe Hands** to the children and young people we work with and support. This ensures that our services are truly child focussed and child driven.

## Meet The Team:

**Fran Johnson** – Assistant Director (left)

**Emma Holmes** – Programme Manager

**Joanne Hazelgrave** – Administration and Finance Manager

**Nikkola Woods** – Administration Assistant

**Zoe Watson** – Child Sexual Exploitation Project Worker

**Stephanie Gulliford** – Child Sexual Exploitation Project Worker

**Ruth Stainsbury** – Social work Student

### **Joanne Hazelgrave:**

I'm Joanne Hazelgrave, Administration Manager for The Children's Society in Keighley, Bradford and Calderdale.

I have worked for The Children's Society for five years, coming into post when The Children's Society became the lead agency for Hand in Hand.

Due to expanding our services into Calderdale I have supported The Programme Manager with setting up the Safe Hands Project. This has been exciting, rewarding and at times challenging.

Nikkola Woods our Administration Assistant for Safe Hands is based at Silver Street. Nikkola is a great asset to the team and our Safe Hands premises are now up and running offering a welcoming and professional Service.

My role is really varied, primarily finance, from building and monitoring the budget to balancing petty cash.

Health and Safety is also an important part of my role ensuring that audit forms are completed on time and that the premises in Halifax and Keighley are fit for purpose.

It is also important that all our policies and procedures are all up to date ensuring that staff have information to hand.

As well as recruiting the team for our Safe Hands Project, we have had staff changes at Hand in Hand. I have liaised with our HR team to ensure all the necessary recruitment procedures are followed; I also support all new staff and students with their induction into The Children's Society.

Promoting our work at Hand in Hand and Safe Hands can include attending really interesting and different events and I always welcome the opportunity to go out into the community and promote our services.

The teams at Hand in Hand and Safe Hands work tirelessly to ensure our young people are supported. Looking back over the five years I am so proud of the work we have done and continue to do.

## **Nikkola Woods:**

My name is Nikkola Woods and my role is Administration Assistant for the Children's Society in Calderdale at the Safe Hands Project.

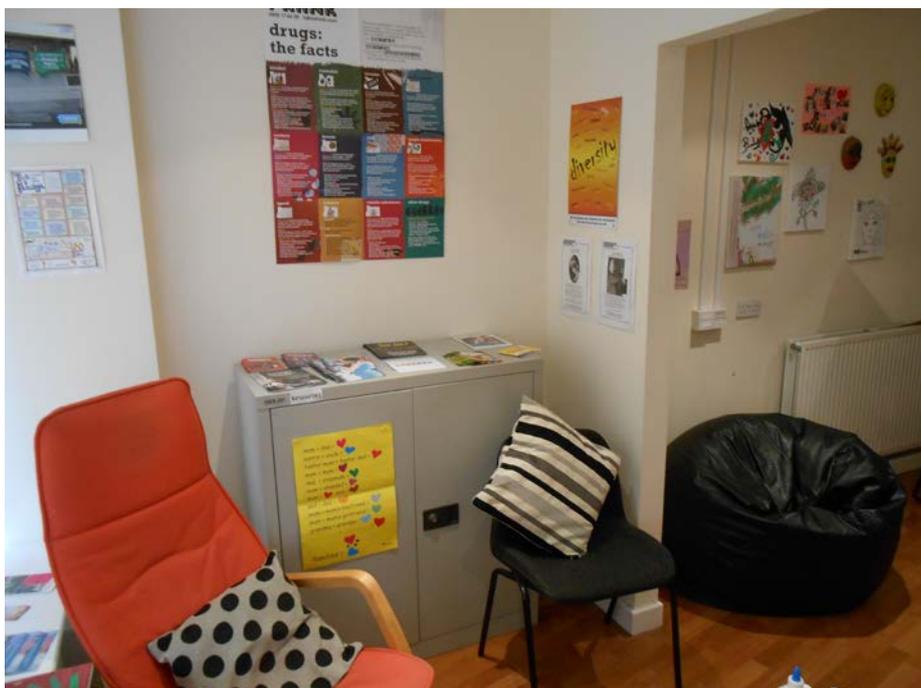
I initially started work with the Hand in Hand Project in Keighley in October 2012 and moved to our new project - Safe Hands in Halifax in January 2013. Initially I played an important role in setting up the new premises, ensuring the premises are attractive and welcoming to our visitors, as well as ensuring Health & Safety policies are in place and being adhered to. I have made all the policies available to the project staff. I am responsible for all the administration tasks at the project as well as supporting our project workers, ensuring they have all the necessary equipment to be able to work with our young people, such as art and craft materials and baking ingredients etc.

My day to day tasks are extremely varied depending upon what is going on at the project at that time. I co-ordinate our open days and events, set up premises for events and meetings, ensure refreshments are available, update displays, order marketing materials, use marketing tools to produce leaflets and posters for our project, order stationary etc as well as booking travel, sourcing furniture and resources. I have also arranged for our project to have an internet presence and I am working with the marketing team in arranging an Intranet page.

As our project deals solely with CSE and grooming I also check local and national news, building our own collection of 'News' which is available to all staff and for information for the young people.

I work closely with our project staff looking at ways in which I can help them.

My role is extremely varied and no two days are ever the same, but this is why I love my job so much. Everything is a team effort and working at Safe Hands is a team I am privileged to be part of!



## **Stephanie Gulliford:**

My name is Stephanie Gulliford and I am a CSE project worker for the Safe Hands Project. I work with young people involved in or who are at risk of child sexual exploitation. I work on a one to one basis with young people as well as delivering preventative group work and awareness raising sessions in schools.

As a project worker, I provide regular, consistent support on a one to one basis, working hard to develop positive relationships with individual young people. We complete work plans around staying safe, respond to crisis and support young people to engage with various agencies such as education and health services.

At Safe Hands our base is a safe space for young people to have some time to themselves where we create opportunities for positive activities and provide some therapeutic care and respite.

Intervention depend on the young persons' needs, so I develop a tailor made work plan to help educate and empower young people.

Some of the key subjects included in our work plan are exploring healthy and unhealthy relationships, keeping safe strategies, online safety and increasing understanding of the grooming process.

These key subjects are also explored in our preventative work. We have delivered 4 week preventative work plans to targeted groups at Calder High School to Year 8 girls, Park Lane School year 9 girls and residents of The Foyer at Ryburn House and Northern Care Boys home.

We have also delivered one hour awareness raising sessions to all year 9 students at Sowerby Bridge High School, the local LGBT group and substance misuse service for young people.

*'Steph – FANTASTIC job – well done, you have done some great work here – thank you for your support.*

*Your reports are also really helpful in assisting other professionals to understand the issues around YP XX and CSE in general.* **Keith Hores, Deputy Head, Sowerby Bridge High School.**

*'From our point of view the sessions that you did for our entire year were invaluable. The pitch was perfect and each group was left in no doubt as to the seriousness of the topic. Many staff commented that they hoped their own children would be having similar sessions in their own schools. In short they were very well received by pupils and staff alike'* **Phil Brook, Safeguarding Officer, Sowerby Bridge High School**

*'Steph's been very good at her job'* **Boy 16.** *'No matter how scared and worried you are they'll always be someone to listen to'* **Girl 14.**

As a practitioner I work closely with partner agencies such as Police and Social Care, sharing information and working together to help keep young people safe. I also attend various multi – agency meetings advocating for individual young people as well as the Police Operation meetings and CYP events in Calderdale, sharing information and raising awareness of CSE.

## Zoe Watson:

Hi my name is Zoe and when the Children's Society was commissioned to set up a brand new Child Sexual Exploitation Service to support young people and parents in the Calderdale area, I was recruited as a CSE Project Worker. I had previously been a front line social worker in Children's Social Care for 5 years but was really ready for a new challenge in a specialist area, and what a challenge!

Being part of the small team setting up Safe Hands has been a demanding but exiting experience. In the matter of a few months we have got a base, officially launched the project, begun to develop working relationships with our partner agencies like Children's Social Care and the Police as well as specific relationships with teachers and year heads in schools, and most importantly begun supporting and working with a range of young people at different levels and in different settings. It's all been a bit of a whirlwind and we are very much still developing the service and getting to know the local issues that affect Calderdale's young people and their families.

In the Children's Society we have started to use a new assessment tool called the Outcomes Wheel with all young people so that we can find out what they think are the strengths and difficulties in their lives. This is a real move forward in making sure we get to know what's really going on with young people, and how they see their world. For us as workers, it allows us to assess and plan at an early stage what kind of activities and information we need give to each individual young person. It then also allows us to review and reflect with young people where we've been and where we are going. It's all still pretty new but I'm really confident that building the Outcomes Wheel into our practice means we can deliver a great bespoke service and help improve outcomes for young people.

Along with my colleagues I support young people at varying levels of need on a one to one basis but a big feature of my work over the last few months has been providing information and support to parents who are affected by Child Sexual Exploitation. It's a parent or carer's worst nightmare finding out that their child has been sexually abused and it can also be hard for a parent to understand how their child came to be in that position in the first place and possibly the hardest is why it continues despite their best efforts. Over the coming months we are going to be rolling out support sessions for parents and carers in Calderdale to raise awareness about the indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation and what to look out for, how adults are able to groom young people for abuse and what to do if you need help.

A young person told me '**glad I have you to talk to and "thanks for standing up for me with my mum"** I had just spent over an hour mediating as mum was very angry and confused at the young person and feeling she couldn't cope and threatening to put her in care.

*Zoe clearly has an informed knowledge base, which has been invaluable when working together and her approach has always been balanced; clearly recognising the competing demands of family dynamics, the young person's development and the need to safeguarding. This has meant that the Safe Hands approach has always ensured that the young person's needs and experience of their situation is focussed on rather than professionals own anxieties, which is always a challenge given the emotive nature of CSE.'* **Social Worker**

## **Emma Holmes:**

I have the great pleasure to be the Programme Manager for the Safe Hands Project as well as for the Hand in Hand project based in Keighley. As you will see as you read through this report the Safe Hands staff team have been extremely busy in the 6 months the project has been operational.....you might say we hit the ground running!

Our contract started in September 2012 when we were commissioned by Calderdale council to deliver the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation contract. The staff team were recruited and inducted in mid October 2012. We successfully launched our project base on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2012 with more than 45 professionals joining us over the day. We were also supported by a young person who talked very articulately to attendees about what its like being a young person in Calderdale and the importance of having a service like Safe Hands to support her.

We have started to embed the work of Safe Hands Project in the both the operational and strategic response to Child Sexual Exploitation across the district. The project workers are key members of the CSE Operational Group that meets every 6weeks and I attended the quarterly CSE and Missing Strategic Group. In addition and in partnership with the Police and Children's Social Care we implemented a weekly meeting to discuss new referrals to the project and new information and intelligence. This has assisted in the development of the productive partnership we have with the Police and Children's Social Care.

I am supporting the training programme for the district regarding CSE and am delivering training for Calderdale Safeguarding Children's Board. We are also offering bi-monthly open afternoons at the project providing practitioners from across the district the opportunity to find out about the issue of child sexual exploitation and the work of the Safe Hands Project.

It is an exciting time for the Safe Hands Project with lots of developments pending including the recruitment of a Preventative and Group Work Practitioner to work with and support the Schools across the district as well as the support we will be offering to children missing from home across the district through return interviews.

It has been an exciting 6 months building relationships, embedding responses and working within a new authority and I am looking forward to the future and the positive outcome we will achieve as a partnership for children and young people across the district.

## Outcomes

**30** young people have been supported through intensive individual support since the start of the contract in September 2012.

**2** families have received intensive individual support since the start of the contract.

**45** professionals attended the launch of the project premises.

**57** young people have benefitted from our comprehensive preventative programmes of targeted group work and awareness raising sessions.

**21** professionals from a variety of services and organizations have attended the bi – monthly open afternoons at the project.

**100** professionals and members of the community have received training and information regarding Hand in Hand and the impact of Child Sexual Exploitation on children and young people

**1** social work student has successfully completed her placement with us.



## **How we contribute to national outcomes**

- Member of the NWG Network for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People
- Member of the Boys and Young Men's forum of the NWG Network
- Contributing to the Children Society internal consultations feeding into All Party Parliamentary Groups for missing and sexually exploited children and young people
- Contributing information to the Children's Commissioner consultation into CSE in Gangs and Groups
- Participating in national consultations to implement better outcomes for children and young people who are sexually exploited and/or go missing/runaway

## **How we contribute to local outcomes**

- By supporting the outcomes identified in Calderdale's Children and Young People's Plan
- By supporting local area agreement targets for children and young people
- Supporting the actions and developments across the city to tackle CSE through membership to the CSE Operational Group.
- Supporting the actions and developments across the city to tackle Missing through membership to the Missing Operational Group.
- Support the actions of Calderdale's Children and Young Peoples Partnership
- Membership to the CSE and Missing Strategic Group
- Provide direct support to victims of child sexual exploitation
- Ensuring young people are supported to have a voice and feed into local initiatives

## Partnership Working:

We work with a number of formal and informal partners at the project, those who provide funding for the project and those who are our practice and working partners. We wouldn't be able to support the young people who work with us as effectively without the help and support of these partners

### Funding Partners

Calderdale Council

### Working Partnerships

Children's Social Care

West Yorkshire Police

Youth Service

Calderdale Safeguarding Children's Board

### Practice Partners

Branching Out

Women Centre

Barnardos Cornerstone

and many many more.....

## Comments from Partners:

*"Calderdale Council commissioned a service to support children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and to deliver a programme of work aimed to prevent and raise awareness of CSE. This work supports the outcomes of the Calderdale Children and Young People's Partnership to ensure that children and young people in Calderdale:*

- *Start healthy and stay healthy*
- *Are safe at home, in school and in the community*
- *Enjoy learning and achieving their best*
- *Make friends and take part in activities*
- *Stay in education and get a job*

*The Children's Society submitted a successful tender and since September 2012, their 'Safe Hands' project has been working closely with Calderdale Council both operationally and strategically on the prevention of CSE and providing direct support to children and young people and their families.*

*In addition, 'Safe Hands' has quickly established itself as a key player in this area of work and is working closely with schools to run awareness raising sessions for young people."* **Karen K Smith, Service Manager, Strategic Commissioning**

*'I have been working with Safe Hands as part of a multi-agency support for a young person; Zoe has continually been supportive and child centred and delivered her work in a realistic and pragmatic manner. She has been able to convey her knowledge about the enduring nature of CSE for many young people, what exiting may look like for a young person and be able to use an informed knowledge base to support other professionals in understanding what CSE concerns may look like for a young person.*

**Marie Hopkinson Social Worker**

*'Can I just take this opportunity to say how hugely impressed I have been with Steph. She has great enthusiasm for her role, takes responsibility of issues and is very competent and confident in her role. I am particularly impressed with all the work she has put in with XX who is immensely high risk. I just wanted to flag this with you'. DC Leanne Walker, Calderdale Safeguarding Unit*

*The ready availability of the Safe Hands staff has allowed effective Safeguarding and risk management to be put in place without recourse to trained Social Work staff or untrained Police Officers/ Police Community Support Officers.*

*In assessing the effectiveness of Safe Hands, it seems clear that the role they undertake is proving invaluable to Safeguarding victims of CSE, improving risk management and promoting a more effective criminal investigation. Detective Chief Inspector Terence Long, Calderdale Division*

## **How we evaluate our work independently**

CHYMS – Children and Young People's Monitoring System is the Children's Societies data base for recording and monitoring outcomes and benefits for the children and young people we work with. It is also used to produce statistical information for the Children's Society and the project. Our research team will also use it to look at achievements across the organization and to inform research they may want to develop or implement.

We worked with our CHYMS team to develop a data monitoring set linked to the Key Performance Indicators for the Safe Hands contract.

All group work, school work and training delivered by the project staff team is evaluated by the participants and attendees. Any new sessions that we deliver or implement into a package are piloted and evaluated to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of the target group. When we are piloting a new session we will also ask for teaching staff as well as the young people to comment on the content.

The Children's Society has also developed a Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Trafficking Outcomes Wheel as a way for young people to be able to measure the distance they have travel themselves. This is an interactive activity that is led by the young person and facilitated by the worker.

## **Comments from the children we work with**

*'it's a really helpful project that is always there is you need it. Always there to help, cheer you up and put a smile on your face. They get the message over to you and help you with different situations. We have fun too. I love working with them. Young Person Aged 15.*

When asked about something she learnt from her one to one sessions a young person told us:

*'I learnt how to stay safe and not be vulnerable. What to do in certain situations – if someone offers me or a friend something (drugs/drink) how to say no and who to tell'*  
**Young Person Aged 15**

## What we hope to achieve in the next year

- Young people successfully exit from abuse and sexual exploitation and continue on their journey of recovery.
- We continue to embed the work of the Children's Society and the Safe Hands project into the operational and strategic responses to CSE across the District.
- Successful attachment of practitioners from key services such as Health and the Youth Service to the Safe Hands Project to increase the services, responses and reach offered to young people.
- Develop a comprehensive response for young people who go missing from home.
- Develop our support to parents and families in partnership with local and National parent support services.
- That young people continue to have a voice and guide the work we deliver through true and meaningful participation.



## Contact details

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## Donations

If you would like to make a donation to our work you have read about in this report, please call our Supporter Action Line on 0845 300 1128

[www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)

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