

**Anonymous practitioner working with children at risk of sexual exploitation provided these comments to the Inquiry:**

“The response from professionals towards young people at risk of CSE varies dramatically. On the whole dedication to help can be witnessed and the willingness to protect and safeguard can be observed.

However there have been several occasions in which the young people report they feel victimised, problematised and ultimately not listened to.

One girl commented that she has been called “*Slag*” and “*White Trash*” by a beat-officer, another said she was one told after disclosing a sexual transgression “...*what do you expect dressed like that, you’re looking for it...*” One police officer commented on “*slags who knew what they were getting themselves into*”. Regarding one girl, a social worker commented, “...*well if she won’t stay in then that’s what will happen to her...*”

Isolated examples perhaps, but it is indicative of a rudimentary lack of understanding on the complex nature of CSE, why young people go missing, and the psychological manipulation experienced by the young people at the hands of deviant adults.

These young people do not choose to be sexually exploited, it is not a lifestyle choice they consciously opt into and clearly some professionals show little empathy to victims of a heinous crime”.