



## **Response to Welsh Women's Aid/Welsh Government Consultation**

**Good Practice on delivering Whole Education Approaches  
to preventing violence against women, domestic abuse  
and sexual Violence**

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**MAE POB PLENTYNDOD WERTH BRWYDRO DROS  
EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

## About the NSPCC

We're leading the fight against child abuse in the UK and Channel Islands. We help children who've been abused to rebuild their lives, we protect children at risk, and we find the best ways of preventing child abuse from ever happening.

Abuse ruins childhood, but it can be prevented. That's why we're here. That's what drives all our work, and that's why – as long as there's abuse – we will fight for every childhood.

We help children rebuild their lives, and we find ways to prevent abuse from ruining any more. So when a child needs **a helping hand**, we'll be there. **When parents are finding it tough, we'll help.** When laws need to change, or governments **need to do more, we won't give up until things improve.** Abuse changes childhood. But so can we.

## **Key Points**

- NSPCC Cymru/Wales warmly welcomes the development of this Good Practice Guide on a Whole Education Approach to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. **We would like this to be the basis for a wider approach to building the capacity of schools to embed effective preventative 'keeping safe' education in all aspects of school life.**
- **NSPCC Cymru/Wales sees compulsory healthy relationship lessons for all children and young people as a vital part of helping them to stay safe and to equip them to feel able to speak out about their experiences. We would like to see mandatory healthy relationships education as part of a statutory entitlement to PSE/Personal Development education for all primary and secondary school pupils in Wales.**
- **We would like to see lessons on healthy relationship education built around up-to-date content. This needs to be regularly refreshed in partnership with young people to ensure it is relevant to the realities of their lives and experiences. We would see this as a vital part of whole-school and public health approaches to prevent child abuse and neglect.**
- **We draw attention to NSPCC best practice to support the development of the Whole-School Approach Guide including:**
  - **NSPCC Northern Ireland delivery of a 'Keeping Safe' whole-school and public health approach to preventative education, funded by the Northern Ireland Executive.**
  - **The NSPCC Schools Service (formerly Childline Schools Service) which has the potential to support whole-school preventative approaches.**
  - **NSPCC resources to support pupils who experience interpersonal violence and abuse in their own intimate relationships and a guide on online abuse and bullying prevention to support professionals working with young people.**
  - **The work of the Welsh Neglect Project on the role of schools and educational professionals in providing early support to children experiencing low-level neglect.**

NSPCC Cymru/Wales welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation to support Welsh Women's Aid's development of a Welsh Government Good Practice Guide on a Whole Education Approach to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, to support the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. We welcome that to inform this guide Welsh Women's Aid is gathering examples of emerging or good practice on each element of what's needed to deliver a whole education approach, either from within Wales or from further afield.

Our response focuses on highlighting NSPCC research, programmes and services which we believe can offer significant learning to support the development of the type of preventative whole-school approaches that this Good Practice guide aims

to foster in schools across Wales. In particular, we would highlight an ongoing NSPCC project being carried out by NSPCC Northern Ireland and funded by the **Northern Ireland Executive 'Developing Preventative 'Keeping Safe' Education in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland using a randomised controlled design 2013-18'** which aims to embed and evaluate effective 'keeping safe' whole school approaches in primary schools across Northern Ireland.

Ensuring we maximise this learning is crucial as we remain concerned at the number of children across Wales who continue to experience physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. Many are also impacted by bullying (including cyber bullying) and domestic abuse. These experiences have all been shown to **have a detrimental impact on children's health and wellbeing as well as** their educational outcomes. Evidence by recent US research demonstrates clear links between social and emotional learning and improved academic attainment.<sup>i</sup> However, we know that many children do not seek help and support because they do not recognise their experience as being inappropriate or abusive. NSPCC research shows that many children lack the skills, confidence and knowledge to seek help if they are abused.<sup>ii</sup> Preventative education teaches children to recognise and challenge abusive behaviour and in turn helps to reduce child abuse and neglect.

However, we believe that educating children is just one element of what is required to effectively prevent abuse. We know from research evidence that preventative education is most effective when developed as part of whole-school approaches, linked to a wider public health approach. All sectors, agencies and members of the community must work together to prevent abuse.

A recent National Children's Bureau report emphasises that "*vulnerability is difficult to recognise, often seen only when looking across the whole of a child's life, and so is most likely to be recognised by those who are in daily contact with a child.*"<sup>iii</sup> A range of reports have identified the potential role of schools as a universal service in the early identification of vulnerability, but we believe they still need more support to embed this preventative role and to start to see **themselves as part of a "child-centred systemic response"** as argued in the Munro Review of Child Protection services.

We therefore welcome the development of this Good Practice Guide on a Whole Education Approach to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as an important step forward in Wales. We also believe that Whole Education Approaches must be **underpinned by children and young people's own** experience and NSPCC Cymru/Wales would strongly support an accompanying young person-led version of the Guidance. We believe that the practices that will be endorsed and highlighted by these new Guides, have the potential to form a vital strand and the basis for the development of a wider approach to building **the capacity of schools to embed effective preventative 'keeping safe' education** in all aspects of school life.

## **2. The Need for Whole-school Preventative Approaches: NSPCC evidence about Young People's Experiences**

NSPCC Cymru/Wales believes that for whole-school approaches to work effectively, they need to be relevant to the realities of children and young

people's lives, rooted in their own views and experiences. NSPCC Cymru/Wales is already in discussion with partners to support a process of consultation with and the development of, a children and young people-led version of the Whole School Approach Guide.

A recent study, 'Boys and Girls Speak Out' carried out on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales Cross Party Group on Children's Sexuality- Sexualisation and Equalities and funded by the NSPCC, Cardiff University and the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales explored how younger children perceive gender, sexual identity and relationships.<sup>iv</sup> The research involved 125 children aged between 10-12 years from five secondary schools and three primary schools in Wales. A key finding from the research highlighted the importance of 'starting from where children are at' in terms of their own experiences and their own relationships to guide the development of preventative approaches.

This is endorsed by the findings of a 2013 survey, to inform the NSPCC's work on healthy relationships education across the UK and conducted via the ChildLine website which was designed to gain insight from children and young people into their experiences of PSE and SRE education in school and what they felt was important to include in SRE lessons.<sup>1</sup> In order to gather the most current views from young people, we also conducted online discussions on the ChildLine Facebook page and website in early June 2014. Our survey findings suggest that according to many of the young people we have spoken to, current educational provision is failing to meet their needs. This is supported by NSPCC research carried out in Northern Ireland showing significant gaps in children's knowledge and understanding and low confidence and uncertainty amongst teachers and parents about how to teach and communicate keeping safe messages.<sup>v</sup>

In 2013-14, ChildLine dealt with nearly 65 counselling sessions a day from children and young people who were mainly concerned about puberty, sex or sexual health, relationships or pregnancy. Many of the callers to ChildLine stated that they have not been given access to this information through school. Children and young people are telling us that PSE and SRE teaching is not covering the topics they want it to and is failing to give them the knowledge and understanding they require to protect themselves from abuse and exploitation. This is not just about information; it can also support behaviour change. High quality lessons taught from a rights and equality perspective in an age-appropriate way, build self-esteem and awareness, giving children and young people the tools to make informed decisions and encouraging them not to engage in potentially harmful behaviour as well as enabling them to recognise what is abusive behaviour and how to get help.

The key findings of our survey showed that:

- 78 per cent of young people who responded felt that every child should have sex and relationship education lessons in school
- Whilst the majority of young people (94 per cent) remembered having SRE in school, the survey highlighted that SRE provision was inconsistent,

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<sup>1</sup> The Survey was carried out in 2013 by NSPCC in conjunction with the Telegraph. 678 young people responded to the survey. The survey did not exclude any geographical region, while it is difficult to guarantee responses are UK wide, they are representative of children who use the ChildLine website.

and often failed to go into enough detail or indeed missed out important topics altogether

- **1 in 3 young people said SRE lessons 'hardly went into any detail'.** For older pupils (16+), the proportion who felt SRE did not go into enough detail rose to 38 per cent. 44 per cent of all respondents said that some aspects of teaching were good, but other parts were poor.
- Nearly half of all young people said that only some teachers were comfortable talking to them about sex and sexual health, whilst a further quarter said they did not feel their teachers were comfortable talking to them about these issues.

**What is the quality of the teaching of SRE like from your experience?**

*'SRE in my school is not compulsory, so they just showed us a boring video! It was appalling and taught us nothing!'*

*'I think puberty, abortion, age of consent, contraception, online grooming and how porn affects body image, are the things that should be taught. Some of those were taught to me, but not all and I had to find out for myself.'*

*'Me and my mates have had to figure everything out for ourselves.'*

- Comments from young people to ChildLine discussion board (2014)

As part of the 2013 ChildLine survey, we specifically asked young people about the issues they wanted to see covered by PSE/SRE. The table below represents the importance of issues to different age groups. The percentages relate to the proportion of young people who rated each issue as either 'Very Important' or 'Fairly Important' for PSE/SRE.

Issue	11-15	16 and Above
<b>Sexting</b>	52%	64%
<b>Online Dating</b>	49%	61%
<b>Websites that show sexual content</b>	55%	70%
<b>Pregnancy</b>	91%	97%
<b>Bodily Changes and Puberty</b>	92%	91%
<b>Pornography</b>	48%	66%
<b>Sexual Health and Infectious diseases</b>	88%	94%
<b>Relationships and Decisions</b>	83%	86%

**What was missing or unhelpful about sex education? What should be taught in SRE?**

*'They don't tell us much about forced / unwanted sex and bad experiences'.*

*'Not enough emphasis on things such as the age of consent, peer pressure and making your own mind up without being influenced by others'.*

*'How to manage different situations in relationships (cheating, being put under pressure to have sex etc.)... I also think we should be taught what sexual abuse is and how to cope with it'.*

*'Sex education only really covered heterosexuality so anyone who is confused about their sexuality is left even more so'.*

Quotes from young people who responded to ChildLine survey (2013) and ChildLine discussion posts (2014)

The importance of making content more relevant to the realities of young people's lives is evidence by research by the NSPCC and University of Bristol

which found concerning levels of physical, emotional and sexual partner violence amongst teenage girls and boys.<sup>vi</sup>

- 88 percent of young people had some kind of relationship
- A quarter of girls and 18% of boys reporting some form of physical partner violence;
- Nearly three-quarters of girls and half of boys reported some form of emotional partner violence
- Just over a third of girls and 16% of boys reported some form of sexual partner violence.

The 'Boys and Girls Speak Out' research supported this picture, finding that most children and young people reported struggling to live with gender stereotypes and "everyday sexism" as well as experiencing verbal sexual and gender-based harassment.<sup>vii</sup>

**Sexual abuse is a core area where we believe children need better preventative education.** A Cochrane Systematic Review published in April 2015, widely recognised as representing a gold-standard in evidence-based research, presented the findings of research conducted across seven countries finding that children who have been on abuse prevention programmes are more likely to tell an adult if they have been abused.<sup>viii</sup> Moreover, children who had taken part were more than three times more likely to disclose sexual abuse than those who had not.<sup>ix</sup> This builds on the findings of an earlier Cochrane Review (2009) on School-based programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse.<sup>x</sup> This supports NSPCC's calls for preventative education and keeping safe messages to start early and that primary-aged children especially, should be receiving this type of education. To support these sorts of conversations, NSPCC launched the Underwear rule (PANTS campaign) in 2013<sup>2</sup> which gives parents advice on how to talk to children in an age-appropriate way about staying safe from sexual abuse. We believe these could be core resources to schools to support the sorts of preventative approaches we are recommending. The campaign included a guide for children and a guide for parents based around 5 'rules' (see fig 1 and 2 below)<sup>3</sup>. We are currently in the process of developing lesson plans aimed at Key Stage 1 to be rolled out as part of our forthcoming joint schools service. The lesson plans will be available within the next couple of months.

## Talk PANTS and you've got it covered

PANTS is a really easy way for you to explain the Underwear Rule to your child:

- **P**rivates are private
- **A**lways remember your body belongs to you
- **N**o means no
- **T**alk about secrets that upset you
- **S**peak up, someone can help



**Fig 1. NSPCC - The Underwear Rule (2013)**

<sup>2</sup> More information about the Underwear Rule and the parent/child guides are available at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/>

## Privates are private



Be clear with your child that the parts of their body covered by underwear are private.

Explain to your child that no one should ask to see or touch their private parts or ask them to look at or touch anyone else's.

Sometimes doctors, nurses or family members might have to. Explain that this is OK, but that those people should always explain why, and ask your child if it's OK first.

## Always remember your body belongs to you

Let your child know their body belongs to them, and no one else.

No one has the right to make them do anything that makes them feel uncomfortable. And if anyone tries, tell your child they have the right to say no.

Remind your child that they can always talk to you about anything which worries or upsets them.



## No means no



Make sure your child understands that they have the right to say "no" to unwanted touch – even to a family member or someone they know or love.

This shows that they're in control of their body and their feelings should be respected.

If a child feels confident to say no to their own family, they are more likely to say no to others.

## Talk about secrets that upset you

Explain the differences between 'good' and 'bad' secrets.

Phrases like "it's our little secret" are an abuser's way of making a child feel worried, or scared to tell someone what is happening to them.

Good secrets can be things like surprise parties or presents for other people.

Bad secrets make you feel sad, worried or frightened.

Your child needs to feel able to speak up about secrets that worry them and confident that saying something won't get them into trouble.

Telling a secret will never hurt or worry anybody in your family or someone you know and love.



## Speak up, someone can help



Tell your child that if they ever feel sad, anxious or frightened they should talk to an adult they trust.

This doesn't have to be a family member. It can also be a teacher or a friend's parent – or even ChildLine.

Remind them that whatever the problem, it's not their fault and they will never get into trouble for speaking up.

**We believe healthy relationships/personal development education is also crucial to help tackle and prevent Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as highlighted by a range of recent reports.<sup>xi</sup>** The online context of CSE is also important to consider, with existing guidance and provision not adequately reflecting the developments in technology and their knock on effects for safeguarding and we would like to see more attention to issues such as "sexting" and pornography. NSPCC has seen a concerning rise in issues related to pornography, sexting and online bullying in recent years. In 2012-13, ChildLine recorded a 78 per cent rise in counselling sessions about cyber-bullying and a 28 per cent rise in counselling sessions where sexting was mentioned.<sup>xii</sup> In response the NSPCC launched its **Share Aware campaign** and **NetAware tool** in January 2015. Share Aware provides straightforward, simple advice to help parents untangle the web, understand what their children may be doing online, and feel confident in talking to them about how to stay safe.<sup>4</sup> Our videos 'Alex's Willy' (available bilingually) and 'Lucy and the Boy' have been used widely to support learning on these issues and the NetAware tool and Share Aware Guide are already featured on the Welsh **Government's HWB E-Safety Portal**. Lesson plans around Share Aware aimed at the KS2 age group are also being developed and will be available in the next few months. We believe these resources could also support schools in delivering 'keep safe' messages.



I Saw Your Willy



Lucy and the Boy

**Fig. 3 Share Aware videos**

<sup>4</sup>Details of Share Aware and the NetAware tool are available at:  
<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/>



Fig. 4 Share Aware Parent's Guide

**Pornography is an issue that 74 percent of young people thought should be addressed in SRE lessons.** Recent pan-European research supported by the NSPCC found that 39% of boys in England aged 14-17 regularly watched pornography.<sup>xiii</sup> The NSPCC also released the findings of a survey in March 2013 which showed how online pornography is affecting the lives of young people.<sup>5</sup> The NSPCC conducted a survey in March 2015 which found that **one in five** 12-13 year-olds think that watching porn is normal behaviour. Nearly **one in ten** 12-13 year olds are worried they might be addicted to porn. Around **one in five** of those surveyed said they'd seen pornographic images that had shocked or upset them and **12 per cent** admitted to making or been part of a sexually explicit video.

Echoing the points around the teaching of messages on sexual abuse, another core concern for the NSPCC is that, currently **primary schools** are not required to provide SRE although some aspects can be covered at the discretion of the school. We are therefore concerned that the younger age group could be missing out on core healthy relationship/keeping safe messages. We believe that taking a more 'keeping safe' approach could offer a way to move forward and extend compulsory provision to primary schools. We believe it is crucial to address this because of findings of the recent Cochrane Review cited earlier as well as a growing body of research into pre-teen relationship cultures is demonstrating that patterns of sexual coercion and harassment are not confined to older teens but are also emerging in the everyday lives of pre-teen children.<sup>xiv</sup> This was also

<sup>5</sup> The online survey was conducted by One Poll, with participants selected from its UK panel. It involved 2,000 young people aged 12-17, of which 700 were aged 12-13. Young people were asked 11 questions about how often they watched porn and how it made them feel.

a core finding of the 'Boys and Girls Speak Out'<sup>xv</sup> research project which underlined the prevalence of young boyfriend/girlfriend cultures in primary school and the need for appropriate education, measures and interventions to start early. **NSPCC Cymru/Wales would like to see this gap addressed.** **NSPCC Cymru/Wales would therefore call for the statutory provision of preventative education through healthy relationships and personal development education to apply to primary schools across Wales.**

**NSPCC Cymru/Wales sees compulsory healthy relationship lessons for all children and young people as a vital part of helping them to stay safe and to equip them to feel able to speak out about their experiences. We would like to see mandatory healthy relationships education as part of a statutory entitlement to PSE/Personal Development education for all primary and secondary school pupils in Wales.**

**We would also like to see lessons on healthy relationship education built around up-to-date content. This needs to be regularly refreshed in partnership with young people to ensure it is relevant to the realities of children and young people's lives and experiences. We would see this as a vital part of whole-school and public health approaches to prevent child abuse and neglect.**

**We would like to see these changes delivered in Wales, particularly as the Welsh Government considers how it will take forward the the 'Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment procedures in Wales' recommendations.**

### **3. NSPCC Good Practice on Delivering Core Elements of a Whole School Preventative Education Approach.**

The NSPCC believes that schools could do more to embed preventative 'keeping safe' education in all aspects of school life. As part of a wider public-health approach we believe this is an important part of better protecting children from abuse and neglect and ensuring they receive early support if they are exposed to any of these issues. This section highlights best practice from across the NSPCC which we believe can offer learning to support the development of the type of preventative whole-school approaches that this Good Practice guide aims to foster in schools across Wales.

NSPCC Cymru/Wales welcomes the 'key strands for the implementation of a comprehensive whole education prevention approach around violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence' as set out by the consultation:

- Children and Young People learn about Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
- Staff learn about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Parents and Care-Givers learn about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to measure the impact of this work

- Safeguarding measures to support people that experience forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, including ensuring policies and procedures are in place
- Participating to actively prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Taking action to stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Localising to work in relevant expert partnerships
- Institutionalising to embed a comprehensive prevention programme

We would also like to see whole-school approaches to be strongly rooted in the UNCRC as well as specifically to draw on the aims of education as set out in Article 29 of the UNCRC. It will be important to ensure that approaches are clear that the UNCRC articles not only set out a child's right **to** education but also that a child's rights should be secured **in** and **through** education.<sup>xvi</sup>

In recent years, a number of preventative education programmes have been developed in Canada, America, Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland and a range of research evidence collates the characteristics of their approaches and points to their effectiveness.<sup>xvii</sup> The forthcoming Preventing Domestic Abuse for Children (PEACH) scoping study will also support greater understanding of preventative interventions in domestic abuse for children and young people. The PEACH study brings together international evidence including evidence from Wales on preventive interventions in domestic abuse for children and young people under-18 in the general population. These preventive interventions include programmes delivered in school, media and community campaigns and initiatives specifically targeting children and young people. Early findings and conclusions include<sup>6</sup>:

- A lack of committed funding for interventions has contributed to short-termism.
- Making PSHE and teaching on healthy relationships compulsory in the English curriculum would address patchy landscape.
- Teachers require training and support to deliver these programmes – required at the qualifying and post-qualifying levels.
- Interventions for younger, primary school age children require robust evaluation
- Children's and young people's perceptions and experiences should be incorporated into evaluations

### **Developing Preventative 'Keeping Safe' Education in Primary schools in Northern Ireland – Learning for Wales**

These initial findings of the PEACH study about the existing landscape in preventative interventions in domestic abuse for children, chime with a number of areas that the NSPCC would like to see addressed as whole-education preventative approaches are delivered in schools across Wales. A specific example that offers considerable learning for the embedding of whole school preventative education approaches in Wales is a project currently being developed and rolled out by NSPCC Northern Ireland delivering Preventative

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<sup>6</sup>Interim findings were presented by Professor Nicky Stanley at the recent British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (BAPSCAN) Conference in April 2015.

**'Keeping Safe' Education in Primary Schools.** Following two large-scale research projects carried out on behalf of the Department of Education of the Northern Ireland Executive, the NSPCC was commissioned by the NI Executive to take forward the six year £640k – £795k '**Keeping Safe**' project. The project will be piloted in 80-100 schools across Northern Ireland over the next few years. Using a randomised controlled trial design to ensure robust evaluation, the project will focus on building *primary* schools' capacity to engage and embed effective preventative 'keeping safe' education in all aspects of school life. **This will be achieved through a whole school approach.**

The research base underpinning the project identified 9 key 'sub-themes' for what needs to happen to facilitate and support the development of preventative education for children in primary schools across Northern Ireland based on stakeholder and core organisational views about what the key ingredients are. These echo many of the elements of a 'whole school approach' identified by the WWA/WG consultation:

1. Get the Foundation Right
2. Gain the Support of the School Principal
3. Maximise parental support and involvement
4. Develop good resources and models of delivery
5. Develop a training strategy
6. **Provide teachers with "proper training"**
7. Ensure ongoing inspection
8. Adopt a multi-agency approach
9. Use public education to prepare the way.

The 'Keeping Safe' project is based on evidence that preventative education (including education on VAW, DA, SV and healthy relationships) teaches children to recognise and challenge abusive behaviour.<sup>xviii</sup> It also equips them with the skills to access appropriate help. However, crucial to the project is the recognition that educating children is just one element of what is required to effectively prevent abuse – it needs to be part of a whole-school approach underpinned by a wider public health approach with all sectors, agencies and members of the community working together to prevent abuse.

The 'Keeping Safe' Project is underpinned by international research as well as two research projects completed in 2011 by NSPCC on behalf of the Department of Education in Northern Ireland.<sup>xix</sup> The 2011 research built an evidence base for the need to teach 'Keeping Safe' messages in primary schools in Northern Ireland based on working directly with children to establish what they currently know and understand. The research also collected the views of principals, teachers and other school staff in relation to teaching "keeping safe" messages. The research findings established a clear need for preventative education showing that there were significant gaps in children's knowledge and understanding in relation to sensitive issues such as sexual abuse, appropriate and inappropriate touch and domestic abuse. Younger children, children with special education needs (SEN) and those with fewer sources of information about staying safe were found to have the greatest gaps in understanding. The research showed that children felt they would be unsure about being able to tell a trusted adult about their experiences of abuse.<sup>xx</sup> The findings also showed that teachers are willing to teach sensitive messages but many lacked the confidence to do so. Teachers identified a need for training and ongoing support in this

area. This research echoes many of the findings of the Cochrane Reviews cited earlier in this response.<sup>xxi</sup>

Parents were keen for their children to be taught keeping safe messages however they were uncertain about how to communicate with their children about sensitive issues and requested training and support. The findings of the research also highlighted a willingness across all statutory and voluntary sectors to work together effectively to develop effective preventative education.

The delivery of the 'Keeping Safe Project', now in its second year, will be built around comprehensive programmes involving: school staff; parents and community with keeping safe messages integrated across the curriculum and built around three key themes *healthy relationships, my body and keeping safe*. The project has four key goals which include:

- **Develop and deliver training and support for whole school communities making best use of technology.** The project will build the capacity of school leadership, the school safeguarding team, teachers and other school staff to promote and deliver effective preventative education.
- **Develop teaching and learning resources for school staff.** These resources will assist staff to teach sensitive keeping safe messages to children through the formal curriculum and informal curriculum
- **Develop resources for parents.** Resources will develop parents' confidence, knowledge and skills to communicate with their children about sensitive issues in a way that reinforces the learning at school. These will be available in a variety of formats to meet parents' needs. **Provide robust evidence of effectiveness.** A Randomised Control Trial design will investigate the **impact** of the project in developing children's knowledge and skills to keep safe in situations of abuse. The trial will also **assess changes in teachers' and parents' confidence and skills** in communicating sensitive messages. A **process** evaluation will track the project implementation at a school level and tease out implications for departmental policy on preventative education.



**Fig. 5. Whole School Approach/Public Health Model designed to support NSPCC 'Keeping Safe' RCT study currently being delivered in Northern Ireland and funded by the Northern Ireland Executive Department of Education.**

NSPCC Cymru/Wales would emphasise that the 'Keeping Safe' Project in Northern Ireland spans 6 years to lay the foundations, develop the core elements and build the capacity of primary schools to embed and implement whole-school preventative approaches in all aspects of school life. The funding for this approach is also committed for the 6 year period. We would suggest that this sort of focused ongoing support and intensive work with schools would support consistent implementation of whole-school preventative approaches in schools across Wales. This will require new approaches and accessible guidance/frameworks to be matched with resource and sustained support to help schools to put the various elements into practice and to effectively draw on best practice. **Learning from the 'Keeping Safe' project in Northern Ireland** also points to the importance of adequate training for educational professionals and the potential for multidisciplinary training to provide opportunities for networking, thus enhancing inter-agency cooperation. In addition conducting evaluations to monitor and support the effective delivery of whole school approaches would be welcome.

**A core projected output of the NI 'Keeping Safe' project will be for it to** be able to be tailored to the context of other nations. Drawing on learning from delivery in Northern Ireland will allow the NSPCC to work with governments in other administrations across the UK to test/run parallel or variations of the project in other nations (with significant potential to focus on post-primary age-groups or early years settings). We would be pleased to discuss this further with Welsh Government.

### **NSPCC Schools Service**

NSPCC has been rolling out the NSPCC Schools Service<sup>7</sup> (formerly ChildLine Schools Service) in recent years to primary schools across Wales (and the rest of the UK) to help children understand how to recognise and protect themselves from abuse, and where to go for help if needed.<sup>8</sup> The service uses specially trained volunteers to talk to primary school children about abuse. We use an assembly or workshop to help under 11s understand abuse and recognise it if it occurs.

We would like to see this service delivered in every school in Wales (and the service extended to secondary level education). Furthermore, we believe the service could be potentially supportive of and complementary to whole-school approaches to preventative education. We would welcome further conversations with Welsh Government about taking this forward.

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<sup>7</sup>More information about the NSPCC Schools Service Available at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/our-services/services-for-children-and-families/childline-school-service/>

<sup>8</sup> Since ChildLine Schools Service started we have completed 971 schools and reached 54340 children in Wales.

## **NSPCC resources to support pupils who experience interpersonal violence and abuse in their own intimate relationships.**

These resources, developed in partnership with the Association for Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) which specifically aim to support educational professionals, lecturers and support staff in Wales. This is particularly important given recent research supported by the NSPCC which finds that a quarter of the young people surveyed had not talked to anyone about the interpersonal violence and abuse (IPVA) they had experienced in their intimate relationships. Most young people talked to peers rather than adults about their experiences of IPVA.<sup>xxii</sup> We believe these resources the potential to support the range of policies and procedures that could underpin a 'whole school approach.' The resources include a checklist for what should be in a model secondary school policy on abuse in young people's relationships and safety planning to ensure the safety of the young person in the school setting. It also includes a quick guide for teachers providing information about abuse in young people's relationships.<sup>9</sup> NSPCC would like to see these checklists and guidance form one element of a wider preventative education 'whole-school approach'.

## **Online Abuse and Bullying Prevention Guide for professional working with young people**

This guide<sup>xxiii</sup> published in April 2015 has been developed for professionals who work with young people to help them understand what constitutes abusive behaviour online, the consequences of that behaviour and where they can get help. The guide applies to professionals working in England and Wales and we believe it could form part of school's toolkits in delivering preventive education through whole-school approaches. The discussion guide has been developed in consultation with the NSPCC Young People's Panel, the Behavioural Insights Team, the Home Office, Sussex Police, o2 and the National Union of Students. It has been tested with young people from NSPCC and Merton Volunteer Police Cadets.

## **The Welsh Neglect Project**

NSPCC Cymru/Wales and Action for Children are currently delivering the **Welsh Neglect Project** funded by Welsh Government, which aims to improve multi-agency responses to child neglect in Wales. Child neglect is the main cause for child protection registrations in Wales, with 39% of children being subject to a child protection plan due to neglect alone in 2014, as well as many more who don't come to the attention of statutory Social Services and the Police. NSPCC Cymru/Wales believes that spotting the signs of neglect and ensuring children receive early support is a key area where educational professionals could play a greater role. This is a key part of our position around regarding the potential role schools could play in supporting a public health approach to prevention of child abuse and neglect.

We know that neglect can have a lasting detrimental impact on a child's development and we have recently published a series Core Info Leaflets<sup>xxiv</sup> in

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<sup>9</sup> Resources are available at: <https://www.atl.org.uk/help-and-advice/school-and-college/relationship-abuse-young-people.asp>

partnership with Cardiff University, providing comprehensive systematic reviews of scientific evidence relating to the recognition of emotional neglect or emotional abuse or emotional abuse in children of different age-groups. This work emphasises that getting help for the child and family as early as possible gives the best chance of a good outcome. We recommend a formal developmental assessment if emotional neglect or abuse is suspected.

A core strand of the Welsh Neglect Project was a research project recently submitted to Welsh Government which looks at how the role of the education **professionals is more than just "recognise/refer" but also to support children and** signpost children and parents to other forms of support than social services. The quotes below emphasise the importance that educational professionals place on **taking a holistic and preventative approach to supporting children's wellbeing:**

*The battle that we have had in school is that we are not teaching to a room of empty vessels, they've got kids who have come in with baggage and have all these things that are going on for them, and they are expected to sit and learn. **Secondary School Well-being Officer***

*All those things contribute to children having barriers to learning, which for us whilst obviously we care about the individual child, our function is to deliver a good quality education so minimising those barriers is really important in a very practical sort of way. **Secondary School Teacher***

A forthcoming area of focus for the Welsh Neglect project will be developing best practice advice to teachers/schools so that they can better support and provide early help to children experiencing neglect. We believe this has the potential to be integrated into whole-school preventative education approaches.

## 5. Summary

NSPCC Cymru/Wales warmly welcomes the development of this Good Practice Guide on a Whole Education Approach to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. We believe this is an important part of supporting and building schools' capacity to embed effective preventative '**keeping safe**' education in all aspects of school life. We would also be pleased to support the development of children and young people-led versions of this Guide.

Our response has made clear that we see compulsory healthy relationship lessons for all children and young people in Wales as a vital part of helping them to stay safe and to equip them to feel able to speak out about their experiences. We see this as a vital strand of effective whole school approaches. We would like to see mandatory healthy relationships education as part of a statutory entitlement to PSE/Personal Development education for all primary and secondary school pupils in Wales. We would also like to see the content of lessons to be more up-to-date reflecting the realities of children and young **people's lives and experiences** and to see content regularly updated and refreshed to capture new and arising issues.

Our response has highlighted a range of NSPCC best practice which we hope will support the development of the forthcoming Whole-School Approach Guide as well as to support any future work to build the capacity of schools to embed '**keeping safe**' messages as part of a stronger approach to preventative education across all aspects of school life.

- <sup>i</sup> Durlak, J., Weissberg, R., Dymnicki, A., Taylor, R., Schellinger, K. (2011). *The Impact of Enhancing Student's Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions*. *Child Development* 82:1, 405-432; Payton, J. Weissberg, R.P., Durlak, J.A., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., Schellinger, K.B., & Pachan, M. (2008). *The Positive Impact of Social and Emotional Learning for Kindergarten to Eighth Grade Students: Findings from Three Scientific Reviews*. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional learning.
- <sup>ii</sup> Radford, L., Corral, S., Bradley, C., Fisher, H., Bassett, C., Howat, N. and Collishaw, S. (2011). *Child Abuse and Neglect in the UK Today*. London: NSPCC.
- <sup>iii</sup> Edwards, A. (2015). *Chapter 3: Interprofessional Working in and Around Schools* in McLaughlin, C. (ed.) (2015) *The Connected School: A Design for Wellbeing- Supporting Children and Young People in Schools to Flourish, Thrive and Achieve*, London: Pearson.
- <sup>iv</sup> Renold, E (2012) *Boys and Girls Speak Out, a qualitative study of children's gender and sexual cultures*. Cardiff: Cardiff University, NSPCC & Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/boys-and-girls-speak-out\\_wda100425.htm](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/boys-and-girls-speak-out_wda100425.htm);
- <sup>v</sup> Stephenson, P., Tracey, A., McElearney, E. (2011). *Keeping Safe: The views of cross-sector stakeholders in relation to teaching "keeping safe" messages in primary schools in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: NSPCC. Available at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/keeping-safe-preventative-education-northern-ireland-stakeholders.pdf> McElearney, A., Scott, J., Adamson, G., Turtle, K., MacBride, O., Stephenson, P. (2011). *Keeping Safe: Establishing the need to teach "keeping safe" messages in primary schools in Northern Ireland: What do Children Currently Know and Understand*. Belfast: NSPCC. Available at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/keeping-safe-preventative-education-northern-ireland-report.pdf>
- <sup>vi</sup> Barter, C. McCarry, M., Berridge, D. and Evans K. (2009). *Partner Exploitation and violence in Teenage Intimate Relationships*, London, NSPCC and University of Bristol. Available at: [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/partner\\_exploitation\\_and\\_violence\\_summary\\_wdf68093.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/partner_exploitation_and_violence_summary_wdf68093.pdf). The report looked at 1,353 young people, between 13 and 17 years old from England, Scotland and Wales exploring their experiences of relationships and partner violence.
- <sup>vii</sup> Renold, E (2012) *Boys and Girls Speak Out, a qualitative study of children's gender and sexual cultures*. Cardiff: Cardiff University, NSPCC & Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/boys-and-girls-speak-out\\_wda100425.htm](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/boys-and-girls-speak-out_wda100425.htm);
- <sup>viii</sup> Walsh, K., Zwi, K., Woolfenden, S., Shlonsky, A. (2015). *School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse (Review)*. The Cochrane Collaboration, The Cochrane Library 2015, Issue 4.
- <sup>ix</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>x</sup> Zwi K, Woolfenden S, Wheeler DM, O'Brien T, Tait P, Williams KJ. School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2007, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD004380. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004380.pub and
- <sup>xi</sup> Children's Commissioner for England (2013). "If only Someone had Listened". *Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation and Gangs*. p.11; Hallet, S. (2015). *Child Sexual Exploitation: Problems and Solutions from the Perspectives of Young People and Professionals*. Cascade Research Briefing, Number 3, March 2015. Cardiff: Cardiff University.
- <sup>xii</sup> Childline, (2014), *Can I tell you something?: What's affecting children in 2013*, London: ChildLine.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships (STIR) (2015). Connecting online and offline contexts and risks Briefing Paper 4: Young People's Views on Intervention and Prevention for Interpersonal Violence and Abuse in Young People's Relationships. <http://stiritup.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/STIR-Briefing-Paper-4.pdf>
- <sup>xiv</sup> Barter, C. McCarry, M., Berridge, D. and Evans K. (2009). *Partner Exploitation and violence in Teenage Intimate Relationships*, London, NSPCC and University of Bristol. Available at: [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/partner\\_exploitation\\_and\\_violence\\_summary\\_wdf68093.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/partner_exploitation_and_violence_summary_wdf68093.pdf).
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- 111-117; Ellis, J. (2004). *Preventing violence against women and girls: a study of educational programmes for children and young people*. London: Womankind Worldwide; Kenny, M. Capri, V., Thakkar-Kolar, RR., Ryan, EE and Runyon, MK. (2008). Child sexual abuse: from prevention to self-protection. *Child Abuse Review*, 17(1), Jan-Feb, 36-54; MacIntyre, D. and Carr, A (1999). Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Stay Safe primary prevention programme for child sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 23 (12), 1,307-1,325. In addition to a range of evidence cited in Stephenson, P., Tracey, A., McElearney, E. (2011). *Keeping Safe: The views of cross-sector stakeholders in relation to teaching "keeping safe" messages in primary schools in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: NSPCC, p.6. Available at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/keeping-safe-preventative-education-northern-ireland-stakeholders.pdf>
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