

Missing, Child Exploitation and Vulnerability Research & Development Round-up

May 2023



Focus on Vaping

Child vaping

[New report](#) from ASH suggests that the current levels of children and young people vaping regularly are consistent with last year, but the numbers of CYP experimenting with vaping is up by 50%.

Latest [Government data](#) on nicotine vaping in England in 2022.

House of Lords Library [briefing](#) on the growing trend of vaping among teens.

BBC News [article](#) about the high level of harmful chemicals found in illegal vapes used by children.

Guardian [article](#) quotes a leading respiratory doctor who fears the younger generation could end up with long-term addictions and lung damage from vaping.

ASH [resources](#) for schools on Youth Vaping

Vaping [resources](#) from American website Youth Now

Child Exploitation

Special [open access volume](#) of the Child Abuse Review contains articles from Professor Carlene Firmin amongst others, and explores the role of peers in both harming and helping young people.

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and Exploitation (CSE)

[Twitter thread](#) from the CSA Centre summarises what data tells us about the sexual abuse of children, what we don't yet know and how we can make better evidence-informed responses.

Free NWG awareness and myth-busting [training on CSE and LGBTQ+](#) on June 30th. Booking required. Tickets may sell out.

[NSPCC Freedom of Information request data](#) shows that 77% of local authorities offer no specialist support for children who have experienced sexual abuse; and only 34% of local authorities had records of both the numbers of children who had experienced domestic abuse and those who had experienced sexual abuse.

Children's Social Care

Channel 4 [article](#) about Kids, a three-part Channel 4 documentary 'that takes a close-up look at teenagers and their families in the care system in Coventry – and those working to help and support them.' Featured young people include Xorin, who was criminally exploited by a County Lines gang.

Become charity's new '[Gone too far](#)' campaign and policy briefing calls on Government to ensure children in care are kept close to the people and places that matter to them.

Nuffield Family Justice Observatory short [briefing paper](#) and full [report](#) show deep inequalities in children's social care. Research indicates that children from Black and some Mixed or multiple ethnic groups are most likely to be in care, while children from Asian ethnic groups are the least likely.

Free copy of the British Journal of Social Work [special issue](#) 'Voice and Influence of People with Lived Experience.' includes articles on: co-design, conversion therapy, life story work, mental health.

Cost of Living

UK Youth [article](#) on ways the cost of living crisis is impacting the Youth Sector in the UK against a backdrop where children as young as 10 are acutely aware of the rising cost of living with 47% of 10–25-year-olds seeing financial pressures as one of the top five challenges they're facing.

County Lines

The Clewer Initiative has produced [lesson plans for schools](#) and youth leaders to raise awareness of the nature of county lines. The sessions include information, activities and case studies that show the scale of this crime as well as the impact it has on children, families and communities.

Mental Health

Guardian [article](#) claims that one third of all child mental health referrals are turned down as the NHS struggles to manage ever-growing caseloads.

The Association of Child & Adolescent Mental Health has produced a free [topic guide to ACEs](#) (Adverse Childhood Experiences) including resources and web links.

Findings from this [Report](#) from the Head Start programme about the impact of gender identity on the mental health of children aged 10-16 include: cisgender young people are most likely to have higher subjective wellbeing and lower mental health difficulties than those identifying as non-binary or transgender.

[Anxiety triggers worksheet](#) from Kate Seasman, available for free download on Pooky Knightsmith's website.

For Mental Health Awareness Week 2023, C&YP Now has produced a [guide to mental health support](#) for teenagers and children including links and helpline numbers.

New [briefing](#) from NSPCC about learning from serious case reviews involving children's mental health. These range from diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health conditions, to wider concerns related to mental and emotional wellbeing.

Missing

London Assembly Police & Crime Committee [report](#) into Missing Children in London finds that low trust and confidence in the Metropolitan Police Service may make parents and carers reluctant to report children missing. It also states that not all children who return home after a missing episode receive an effective response from services and information gathered from the return home process is not effectively used to inform safeguarding plans.

Online Safety & Online Harms

The NSPCC has published a [news item](#) on public opinion around the Online Safety Bill in the UK. Findings from a YouGov survey of 1,723 adults show 86% think it's necessary for social media regulator Ofcom to listen to the opinions and experiences of children.

Wayne Denner [blog](#) for parents explaining Snapchat My AI chatbot.

Internet Watch Foundation [Annual Report](#) gives the latest data on child abuse imagery, including the continued rise of 'self-generated' imagery. A record-breaking number of reports in 2022 (51,369) showed Category A child sexual abuse material.

Safer Schools [Home learning hub](#) has been updated with more free resources to help parents and carers keep children safe online. Topics include the Metaverse, AI and online gaming.

Parentzone's [report](#) on Online Safety Tools questions whether the Online Safety Bill's reliance on user-empowerment tools is too complacent, raising concerns about the time and effort required to set them up and making a series of recommendations for improvements.

The 5Rights Foundation's [Disrupted Childhood report](#) considers the impact of persuasive design on children's social, mental and physical development, and how the digital world can be redesigned to ensure children's rights are recognised, respected and upheld.

Safeguarding

CSA Centre's latest [publication](#) 'Managing risk and trauma after online sexual offending: A whole-family safeguarding guide' is designed to help professionals to confidently safeguard and support families at a time of great emotional distress.

Substance Misuse

[Making a Change booklets](#) supporting people to reduce their alcohol consumption- also available in large print, Polish and Russian formats.

VAWG

[Government press release](#) states that the new Victims & Prisoners Bill will stop unnecessary and invasive access to personal materials of rape victims, such as therapy notes.

Youth Justice

CYPNow [article](#) draws attention to the fact that many children are placed in custody far from their home meaning parents are unable to visit regularly and family relationships suffer.

A report by Peer Power for the Youth Justice Board looks at [co-creation and participation in the youth justice system](#) and provides a range of resources for practitioners.

The Government commissioned some [independent research](#) exploring why reoffending rates among children are higher in some ethnic minority groups. The YJB states: 'these insights show the system has some way to go to achieve equity of treatment for all children in the youth justice system.'

Youth Violence

New [report](#) from Liberty calling for a new approach to serious youth violence, including better funded youth services and a rolling back of police powers.

OTHER

Centre for Social Justice [report](#) explores the issue of severe absence from school, with latest data showing 140,000 children spend more time absent from school than present. It finds that persistent and severe absence are often symptoms of complex issues and schools are often unable to provide the support that children need to access education.

Latest Government statistics for pupil absence in England can be found [here](#).

Guardian [article](#) covering the new Children's Commissioner [report](#) exploring the impact of pornography on children, its association with harmful sexual behaviour and its role in shaping and fuelling violence against women and girls.

Runnymede Trust [report](#) for 30th anniversary of Stephen Lawrence 's death "Dear Stephen: Race and belonging 30 years on" shows that less than one-fifth of people now think that it is very important for being truly British that someone was born in Britain, down from almost half in 1995; and 45% said that equal opportunities for Black and Asian people had not gone far enough.

[Video](#) "Why I am rude" is based on a poem showing the potential feelings and circumstances behind young people's bad behaviour.

Findings from [VKPP report](#) on learning for the Police from MAPPA (Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements) Serious Case Reviews include: there were missed opportunities for victim engagement and safeguarding, particularly where children were involved.