

Mate Crime

Friend or Fake?

Community Care Live, London

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Safety Net

What is a friend?

This session

- Beginnings
- Safety Net Project
- What is 'mate crime'?
- What makes people 'vulnerable' to mate crime?
- What makes it different to 'hate crime' and 'abuse'?
- Reporting issues
- Project findings
- What to do about it
- Helping Each Other - peer education/sexual exploitation

Background



‘Steven wanted friends. He did not see that the friendship he had so prized was starkly exploitative, devoid of reciprocity and instrumental in obstructing his relationships with those who would have safeguarded him.’



- Steven Hoskin Serious Care Review

Background 2

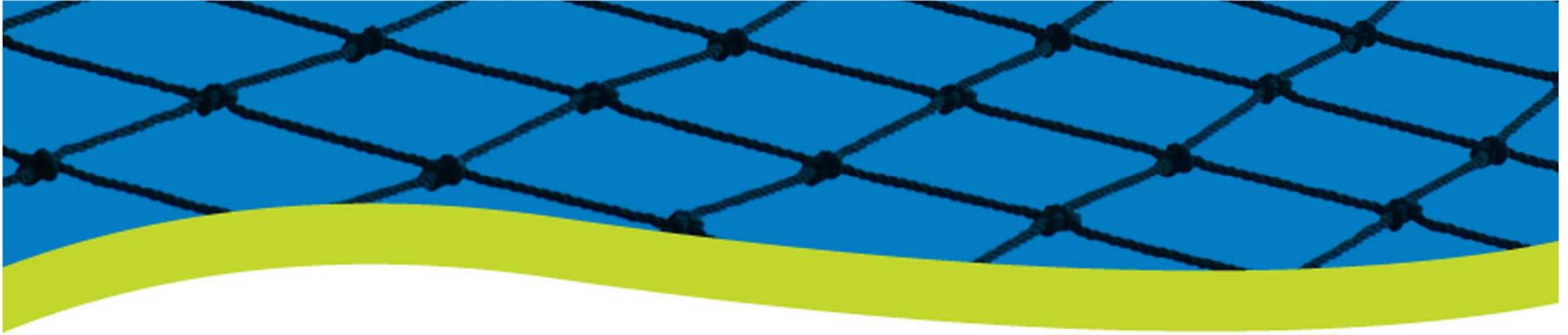


- Pattern of murders.
- Local anecdotes.
- We called this 'Mate Crime'
- *'The term 'disability hate crime' fails to recognise the duration of Steven's contact with his persecutors; the counterfeit friendship'*

What is 'mate crime' ?



- Many people with situational vulnerabilities have 'friends' who go on to abuse the trust placed in them.
- This has led to people losing their independence, financial, physical and sexual abuse . . . even murder.
- Involves 'grooming' .
- Includes people being used to commit crimes.
- Includes cyber crime



What makes some
people so vulnerable?

What makes some people particularly vulnerable?



- We are all 'vulnerable'
- We all need friends
- Easily manipulated - learned compliance.
- Poverty & Social Exclusion
- Community presence
- Historical attitudes
- What is 'normal'?

'Historical' attitudes?

The victim comes from North Devon but was on a day out to the seaside with her mother, who travelled separately to give her the chance to manage on her own.

Fitzhugh pulled the girl off the platform by her wrists and kissed her on the lips before groping her breasts and trying to take her behind a bus station.

She was terrified and managed to escape and run off. She met her mother and the police were called.

Fitzhugh was identified from CCTV from the train but denied the offence, claiming the girl was too ugly to interest him and telling police "you know what mental people are like, they twist things around and make up stories and lies about other people".

What makes it different? (1)



- Duration of contact
- May appear consensual
- It takes place in private
- It doesn't seem to involve hate
- Perpetrators are known and trusted
- Not recognised by victim

What makes it different? (2)

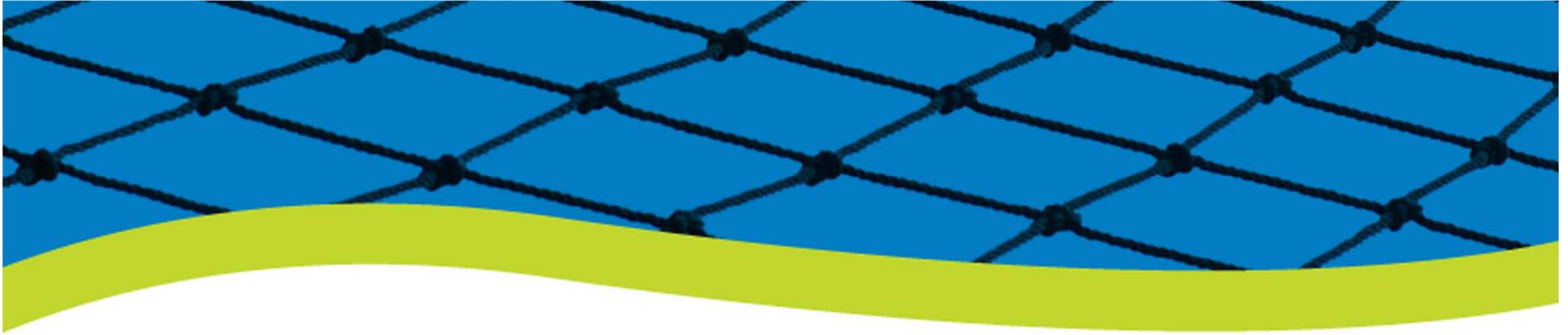


- There are ‘pay offs’ for the victim
 - May not be illegal
 - Largely affects people not in the system
- . . . it is an invisible crime, with invisible perpetrators and victims, taking place in invisible situations.

New evidence: Wirral Report

- 85% of those aged 16+ often feel lonely and left out.
- ALL 16-25 year olds reported having difficulty distinguishing genuine friends from those who may bully or abuse the friendship in some way.
- 80% of those aged 16+ felt they had been bullied or taken advantage of by someone they had thought was a friend.
- Of those experiencing mate crime: 54% of 12-16 year-olds had had money or possessions stolen.
- In the 25+ age group, 74% reported that they had been manipulated or forced to do the wrong thing.
- Over a third of adults with autism had been subject to bullying or manipulation of a sexual nature - including being coerced into 'sexting'.

Wirral Autistic Society, 2015



How can we spot it?

How to spot mate crime 1



- Changes
- Unexplained injuries
- Not looking after yourself
- Bills not paid
- 'Friends' who don't behave like friends

How to spot mate crime 2



- Money problems
- Mental ill health
- Losing usual friends and family
- Missing usual activities
- Mail order
- Party mess



Why is it not reported?

Reporting Mate Crime

Core issues

- Credibility
- Lack of action
- Retribution

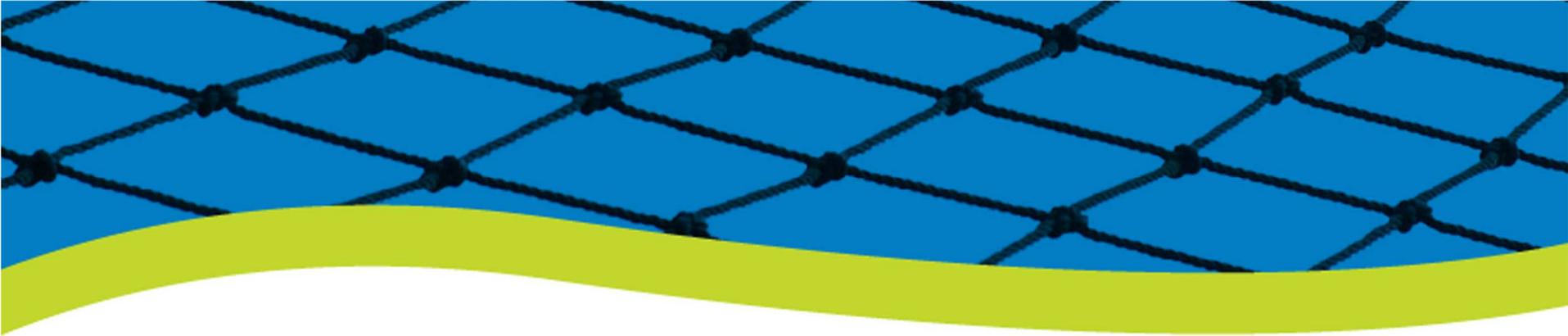


Reporting Mate Crime

Additional issues:

- Capacity
- Complicity
- Need for acceptance and validation
- Shame





“I don’t want them to get criminal records. I want them to make something positive of their lives. Perhaps in time we could become *friends.*”

Findings

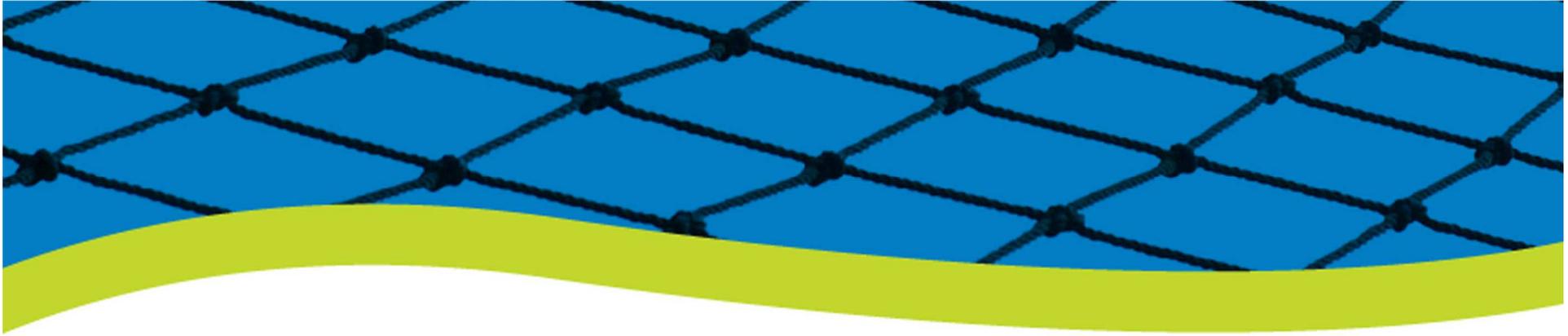


- Huge under-reporting
- MCA issues/Informed decisions
- Not recognised by victims
- Similarities to Domestic Abuse
- Some apparent links in extreme cases (next slide)
- 'Safeguarding' is often failing

Apparent links



- Multiple perpetrators
- High number of females
- Spurious excuse?
- Prolonged period of torture
- Brutal murder
- Troubled history



What can we do about it?

What we are telling people to do

- Work on self esteem, relationships.
- Be a part of your community. Enable and support social opportunities.
- Risk Assessment (Risk Enabling Forums)
- Act on beliefs, not evidence
- “Be a detective.”
- Tenancy Support Packages/Cocoon Watch
- Use complaints procedures

What we are telling people to do 2

- Share information
- Go to Police Surgeries, lobby for PACT priorities
- Lobby PCCs
- REPORT IT . . . and report it often
- Report it as a Hate Crime
- Alert Safeguarding

ARC can offer

Training for:

- People with learning disabilities
- Staff
- Family carers

And now . . . Train the Trainer



Safeguarding

- Assess people for vulnerability
- Interview people separately
- Encourage sole tenancies
- Agree policy/procedures
- More training/awareness
- Signpost and refer (inc adult MASH)

Safeguarding

- Ask the right questions
- Avoid preconceptions
- LISTEN to people
- Build a bigger picture
- Support to report
- Record accurately and consistently

Capacity . . .

- ***If the person lacks capacity it's easy!***
- ***Does the person have capacity for that decision at that time?***
- ***Is it free from coercion?***

Safeguarding since the Care Act

Key Concepts:

- Outcomes focused
- Empowered individuals
- Emphasis on prevention

Safeguarding since the Care Act

- “people tend not to be asked the outcomes they want. Often they want more than one outcome, which are sometimes not easy to reconcile. People generally want to feel safe but also to maintain relationships. For some people the only human contact they have is with the person/people who is/are harming/abusing them” (LGA, 2013)

Can you choose 'abuse'?

- Yes!
- “unwise decision”
- . . . unless . . .

- 
- Other people are at risk (e.g. shared living)
 - Children are involved
 - The alleged perpetrator is a member of staff
 - The alleged perpetrator has care needs themselves and may be ‘at risk’
 - Or . . . a **serious crime** is involved, or . . .
 - if there is **coercion (theoretically)**.

If these do not apply . . .

- Don't abandon people!
- You should still make them aware of risks, impact and strategies.
- Agree a plan with them.
- Review, record and report.
- Help build their confidence and self esteem.

A new campaign

- 'Vulnerable Adults' Bill
- Inherent Jurisdiction
- Adult Support & Protection (Scotland)
- Interested? Please email me . . .
rod.landman@arcuk.org.uk

Two related projects

- 'Helping Each Other'
(Peer
Education/Sexual
Exploitation)
- SaferNet (Social
Media Hate & Mate
Crime) –
safernet.org.uk



Helping Each Other



- Peer education
- Positive approach
- Resources
- Evaluation (next slides)

Evaluation

Peer Education

- 25 workshops; engaged with over 500 people.

At the start:

- 6% knew what sexual exploitation was
- 5% knew how to tell it was happening
- 18% would know what to do if it was happening

By the end:

- 68% knew what sexual exploitation was
- 70% knew how to tell it was happening
- 85% would know what to do if it was happening

Evaluation

Staff Training

- 11 workshops; 150 learners.

At the start:

- 64% knew what sexual exploitation was
- 19% knew how to tell it was happening
- 77% would know what to do if it was happening

By the end:

- 100% knew what sexual exploitation was
- 95% knew how to tell it was happening
- 96% would know what to do if it was happening

Impact Evaluation (Staff)

- Av. 4.0/5 scale: increased knowledge.
- 4.3: increased confidence.
- 3.9: practice will change.
- 3.7: support someone to have a better life.

Ring of Safety evaluation

Do service users have:

- Better understanding of their rights: Yes 71% A bit 29%
- More confidence: Yes 57% A bit 43%
- Better sex education: Yes 43% A bit 57%
- Better understanding of privacy: Yes 71% A bit 29%.
- Ability to say 'no': Yes 43% A bit 57%
- 57% had used the workbook

Key Messages

- **Inform and educate ourselves and others about mate crime.**
- **Act preventatively to: a) enable positive relationships; b) use the preventive measures demanded in the Care Act safeguarding provisions.**
- **Support people's rights to make unwise decisions, but being very sure about capacity and consent.**
- **Do not abandon people just because they have made an unwise decision.**
- **Share information and working across agencies.**
- **Campaign for legal changes to assist in the better prosecution of mate crime.**

Thanks for coming!

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