Children and Young People demonstrating Technology-Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviours

Rhiannon Lewis
Aims

- To establish what TA-HSB is and what it involves
  - This will be in consideration of current literature and real-life case examples

- To understand why children and young people may engage in TA-HSB, according to theory and research, and their vulnerability within this.

- To explore how we might conduct a risk assessment and programme of intervention with TA-HSB’s.

- To discuss recidivism, and approaches to risk management and safeguarding
Influence of Technology

- Overcoming interpersonal boundaries\(^1/2\)
- Developing social relationships\(^1/2\)
- Enabling access to ‘embarrassing’ content\(^1\)
- Changing mood states\(^3/4/5/6/7/8\)
- “Triple A Engine”\(^9\)
- Addictive, compulsive, diminishing social skills and perpetuating loneliness\(^10/4/11\)
- Encouraging fantasy, minimising barriers and inhibitions\(^12/13\)
- With naivety of others and decreased desistance\(^11\)
58% of 12-15 year olds believe they can easily delete something they previously posted

41% of parents finding it hard to control their teenagers online time

62% of 5-15 year olds have a mobile
With this statistic increasing by age...
- 23% of 3-4 year olds
- 28% of 5-7 year olds
- 57% of 8-11 year olds
- 91% of 12-15 year olds

Almost half of 8-15 year olds prefer to watch YouTube to TV

Nearly half of teens believe they should be able to say or do what they want online

Likes = Social Currency
Many children will remove a post depending on these

Within the last year more children have learnt to delete history, browse ‘incognito’, and to disable controls

Over ¼ of 8-15 year olds believe if it is on Google it can be trusted

In the UK, 99% of households with children have an internet connection

1 in 10 children are adding people they only know from online
This is an increase from the previous year

Children are no longer “passive consumers” but “social actors” of an unregulated environment; native versus immigrant
What is TA-HSB

- What is Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)?
  - Against will, without informed consent, compliance via aggression/manipulation/fear/bribery etc., inequality in relation to age/power/status/size/authority

- Sexualised behaviours are on a spectrum
  - Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool

- A definition:
  "TA-HSB refers to one or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts – using the internet and/or any image-creating/sharing or communication device – which is considered inappropriate and/or harmful given their age or stage of development."
What are TA-HSB’s?

Behaviours this may include; 

- Taking, making, possessing and/or distributing indecent images of children (IIOC).
- Making, possessing and/or distributing extreme (illegal) pornography.
- Soliciting, or sexually harassing behaviours.
- Self-victimising behaviours that in reality increase the vulnerability of the child or young person to self-criminalise.
IIOC

- As of August 2017, Interpol’s ICSE database contained over 1 million unique images and videos that are indecent of children or lead to identity of a child victim.  
- Estimated that up to 15% of IIOC consumers are young people.  
- U18 possession of IIOC increased from 2% (2000) to 5% (2006).

Extreme Pornography

- Potential impact of pornography; disinhibition to sexual aggression, skewed sexual attitudes and incitement into early sexual priming.  
- Estimated that 4-17% of children have viewed illegal pornography.  
- Attitudes of “acceptance” and/or “indifference”.

Soliciting/Sexually Harassing

- 1 in 5 females and 1 in 4 males in a sample of 12-18 year olds, had engaged in cyber-sexual activities. Consent or compliance?  
- Nearly half of sexual solicitations and aggressive sexual solicitations in a large sample of young internet users, were incited by other young people.

Self-Victimising/Criminalising

- One fifth of IIOC is self-produced by the child or young person.  
- Association with other problem behaviours including, bulling, IIOC distribution, skewed attitudes, HSB.  
- Indecent exposure? Harassing or victimising? Only 1 study with young people; small sample and offline.
What does this look like in the context of our cases?

Sensitive information to follow...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Referral</th>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zayn, 15</strong></td>
<td>Referral; general PSB to</td>
<td>violent, beastiality &amp; incest porn. History; CSA, PA, EA, DV, &amp; neglect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anyone &amp; uploading naked</td>
<td>self-images online. Prior to this viewed violent, beastiality &amp; incest porn. History; CSA, PA, EA, DV, &amp; neglect.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self-images online. Prior</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>to this viewed violent,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>beastiality &amp; incest</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>porn. History; CSA, PA,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EA, DV, &amp; neglect.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Niall, 14</strong></td>
<td>Referral; contact HSB</td>
<td>emotional neglect &amp; DV</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>towards 4 year old half</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sister. Prior to this</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>viewed IIOC &amp; beastiality</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on dark web. History;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>emotional neglect &amp; DV</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Harry, 16</strong></td>
<td>Referral; HSB in presence</td>
<td>emotional neglect &amp; DV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of 12 year old step sister.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>On bail for sending</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>250-300 people photos of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>penis, victims 11 years+</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History; DV &amp; parental MH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liam, 18</strong></td>
<td>Referral; download of 19</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>IIOC, 6 cat A Groomed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poor legal support.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No history.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Perrie, 9</strong></td>
<td>Referral; HSB towards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self, &amp; 7 year old sister.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Internet searches; pencil</td>
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<td>in vagina, fuck sleeping</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sister, naked baby sex.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>History of PA, EA, DV,</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>neglect &amp; CSA?</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Jesy, 13</strong></td>
<td>Referral; HSB when actually</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>CSE. Told “rapist” of 12</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>year old boyfriend.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exchanging videos of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>masturbating &amp; self</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>harming. History of PA,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EA, DV, neglect &amp; CSA?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leigh-Anne, 17</strong></td>
<td>Referral; CSE and HSB to others.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uploaded naked images/videos of self &amp; friends some include rape &amp; sexual assaults.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jade, 11</strong></td>
<td>Referral; general PBS to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>anyone &amp; risk of CSE.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uploading indecent videos of self at request of internet users – unknown.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>History of PA &amp; DV.</td>
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Why?
Assessment

“good assessments can help ensure that young people are treated equitably, that the nature and meaning of their sexual behaviours are understood, that their specific needs are highlighted and that risks are quantified and strategies to manage such risks are identified” (pp.51) 44

- Information gathering
- Interviews with supports around the child/YP
- Direct child-centred sessions with the child/YP
- Where appropriate; psychometrics
- Risk and protective factor assessments
- Assessment report with intervention formulation
Purpose of Assessment

- What caused behaviour to start and continue
- Not a level of risk but a context, alongside vulnerability
- To discuss professional response and potential impact, with consideration to supervision and safeguarding
- Where the behaviour fits within their stage of sexual development and the implications of this
- To ascertain whether child/YP is safe to engage in intervention
- Where possible, prevent victimisation or criminalisation
Assessment Tools

- ERASOR\textsuperscript{45}; HSB tool, SPJ of context as opposed to score
- J-SOAP-II\textsuperscript{46}; adolescent reoffending risk level
- AIM2\textsuperscript{47}; checklist for supervision and intervention
- TA-HSB/iAIM\textsuperscript{48};
- SSPI\textsuperscript{49/50}; screening tool for sexual interest in children
- CPORT\textsuperscript{51}; only predictive of IIOC with contact
- \textbf{SAPROF-YV}\textsuperscript{52}; protective factors tool

- Formulation; dependent on intervention approach

\textit{TOPA, 5 P’s, TA-HSB (NSPCC)}
TA-HSB Intervention

- Dependent on the treatment needs identified from “why”, however likely to include 11/53/54/55/56/57:
  - Sexual development
  - Safe internet use
  - Anonymity myth
  - Consequential awareness
  - Motivation to change
  - Emotional management
  - Trigger identification
  - Power and control
  - Consent and compliance
  - Challenge unhelpful beliefs and skewed attitudes
  - Develop protective factors
  - Self-compassion
  - Social/r’ship skills
  - Trauma processing
  - Cyber-victim empathy
  - Relapse prevention
  - Parent/carer sessions
Case examples...
Zayn, 15

Niall, 14
** Currently Undertaking Assessment **

Harry, 16

Liam, 18

Perrie, 9

Jesy, 13

Leigh-Anne, 17
** Currently Not Safe for Structured Intervention **

Jade, 11
Recidivism

- Persons who offend online only generally have low reconviction rates for sexual offending.
  - Of those that commit further sexual offence, it is usually an internet offence.\(^{29/58/59/60}\)
- With the right intervention, most young people that have engaged in HSB do not go on to reoffend
  - Those that do re-offend, it is usually a non-sexual offence\(^{61}\)
- Likelihood of crossover from TA-HSB to contact offences is low.\(^{38}\)
- However...
Recidivism

- Children and young people are continuously learning from their environment.
- If sexualised behaviours and underlying treatment needs go unmanaged and without intervention, there exists a risk of recidivism.
- In children and young people this may be general offending, TA-HSB or sexual contact offences.
- Low risk? Focus on the fundamental needs they may be missing as a whole child.
The Impact of TA-HSB...

What do you think?...
Risk Management

- Context as opposed to level; who, what, where, when, why, how
- Two aspects;

relapse prevention  strengths/protective factors
Safeguarding

- **Identifying TA-HSB**
  - How would you identify HSB occurring? How would this look the same/different online?

- **Being aware**
  - Digital footprint; apps, trends, traps, and TA-HSB’s

- **Educating**
  - For future independence. Conversations = protective factor

- **Supervision**
  - Don’t solely rely on technology to safeguard a child or young person from TA-HSB

- **Support to meet unmet needs motivating TA-HSB**
Final Thoughts
References


References


34. Sheldon, K., & Howitt, D. (2007). *Sex Offenders and the Internet*. Chichester, UK: West Sussex


References


References


