

Centre of
expertise
on child
sexual abuse



Prioritising child sexual abuse

10th September 2026 – Swansea City Stadium

Welcome to an engaging day of presentations in partnership with the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre).

Organised in collaboration with:



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Bwrdd Diogelu Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff & Vale Safeguarding Board



Cwm Taf Morgannwg
Bwrdd Diogelu
Safeguarding Board



Diogelu Gwent
Gwent Safeguarding

This roadshow event will help you and your colleagues identify and respond to child sexual abuse, and work confidently with children and families.

Throughout the day we will signpost you to useful advice and guidance to help you give victims, survivors and families affected by child sexual abuse the support they need. Explore the full schedule below.

9:30 AM	Welcome Chris Frey-Davies
9:35 AM	Introduction Artie Meakin and Taryn Stephens
9:50 AM Keynote 1	Impacts of child sexual abuse May Baxter-Thornton This keynote considers the lifelong impact of child sexual abuse on the child, adolescent, and adult. May uses her own experience of child sexual abuse within the family environment to discuss the stigma and judgements inflicted upon those who disclose abuse.
10:45 AM	Break and networking
11:15 AM Keynote 2	Child sexual abuse in Wales: Key challenges and opportunities in practice Nici Evans and Sharron Wareham To tackle child sexual abuse, we need to properly understand its causes, scope, scale, and impact. There has been increasing awareness of child sexual abuse and its impact on victims and survivors in recent years. Despite this, there are still many gaps in our knowledge and understanding which limit how we can best protect and support those affected. In response to this, the Welsh Government published the national 10-year strategy for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse and delivery plan in March 2026. This is an ambitious plan and presents the Welsh Government's vision for a comprehensive, whole system approach to tackle child sexual abuse in all its forms. This will require sustained commitment from Welsh Government to lead and resource this work over the long term, and continued, meaningful commitment by us all in both the statutory and voluntary sectors to implement in policy and practice. However, as with any strategy, its power lies in its delivery and this session provides the context and picture in which we can, by working together, tackle child sexual abuse in Wales. We will provide an overview of what we know about the scale of child sexual abuse, both locally and nationally; the contexts in which sexual abuse takes place; the characteristics of those affected; and who perpetrates sexual abuse. We will consider the key challenges we face in Wales as we set out to deliver the strategy and the challenges that professionals face in the identification and response to child sexual abuse, setting the scene for the afternoon's workshops

12:15 PM
Keynote 3

The Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway

Dr Natasha Sabin

This session will provide an overview of the CSA Centre's Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway - our dynamic, online resource for all professionals working with children to help them understand the steps they can take to protect and support children and their families. The Response Pathway sets out how to respond to concerns of child sexual abuse at key points in the safeguarding and criminal justice processes, focusing the response on meeting the needs of children and their families throughout. It is designed to empower professionals to understand the role they and their professional colleagues can play, to best protect and support children. We will focus on why the Response Pathway is needed, how it was designed, piloting its implementation and how you can use it in practice. This session will also include considerations of the local pathway.

The Welsh Government is committed to the rolling out of a national child sexual abuse pathway to ensure children receive a consistent and appropriate response when there are concern of child sexual abuse, and the implementation of a national child sexual abuse training framework. These are significant and concrete steps and this session will talk about the Response Pathway.

1:00 PM

Lunch

2:00 PM
Workshops

A) Communicating with children

Dr Natasha Sabin

We know that professionals and children face many barriers in talking about sexual abuse. It is vital that anyone who works with children knows how to recognise when something may be wrong and understands how to give children the confidence to communicate what is happening to them. This workshop gives professionals the knowledge and confidence to act, using the CSA Centre's Communicating with children guide. We will explain what may be going on for children when they are being sexually abused, what prevents them from talking about their abuse, and vitally what professionals can do to help children speak about what is happening. This workshop is suitable for all professionals who work with children.

B) The signs and indicators of child sexual abuse

Paul Burnside

'Professionals rely too heavily on children to verbally disclose' - Report into child sexual abuse in the family environment JTAI 2020.

This workshop will introduce delegates to the CSA Centre's Signs and indicators template to enable professionals to feel confident in building a picture of the signs and indicators in a child's behaviour and presentation, alongside those in the person of concern, and the vulnerabilities in the child's family and wider environment. This workshop includes a collaborative opportunity to put the Signs and indicators template into practice and to consider how this tool can be used effectively within your organisation. This workshop is for all professionals working directly with children and families, including those who work only with parents.

C) Safety planning in education

Lorraine Myles

Professionals in education are managing increasing numbers of incidents where there are concerns about harmful sexual behaviour – sexual discussions or acts, involving children and young people, that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. Often, this is with limited or conflicting advice about how to assess risk for both the child who has been harmed, and the child who has caused harm, and how to develop an effective safety plan.

This workshop will introduce the CSA Centre's Safety planning in education - A guide for professionals supporting children following incidents of harmful sexual behaviour. It has been developed to support professionals in their thinking and decision making where there has been an incident of harmful sexual behaviour in their education setting and gives examples of how professionals can best respond to children's needs and safety when incidents occur. This workshop is suitable for professionals from education, agencies supporting education, sports and leisure, and other related settings.

D) Working with adults affected by childhood sexual abuse

Nici Evans

Victim and survivors of child sexual abuse can be affected in a wide range of ways, but the nature and extent of the impacts experienced vary and no two people are affected in exactly the same way. Sexual abuse can impact victims and survivors' physical and mental health, interpersonal relationships and many other aspects of their life.

Some survivors and victims may never talk about what happened to them, or might not feel able to tell anyone about the sexual abuse as a child. But, when asked, victims and survivors consistently report that they want professionals to ask them about their experiences of sexual abuse. In response, this workshop will offer professionals practical ways of supporting and talking to adults about childhood sexual abuse, and explore both the barriers they may face and the benefits of asking the question. It is suitable for professionals who work with adults, including those within Children's Services who may be working with the family.

E) Managing risk and trauma after online sexual offending

Shauna Breen

Each month hundreds of families find out a parent or carer has accessed child sexual abuse material. Understanding how and why this experience can be traumatising for families is the first step to effectively supporting them; getting the professional response right is pivotal in helping mitigate the impact.

This workshop will introduce participants to the CSA Centre's Managing risk and trauma after online sexual offending guide. It will highlight the research evidence on this type of offending and provide practical advice for professionals on how to safeguard and support families at a time of great emotional distress. This workshop is particularly suitable for social workers and police officers, and for those supporting either children or adults who are affected by online sexual offending.

3:00 PM

Break

3:15 PM
Workshops

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Dr Natasha Sabin

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C) Working with non-abusing parents and carers

Nici Evans

Research shows that the support the child receives from their main caregivers and wider family is one of the most significant factors in affecting the longer-term impacts of sexual abuse and will have a big influence on how a child will understand and respond to what has happened.

This workshop will introduce professionals to the CSA Centre's Supporting parents and carers guide, to give professionals guidance on how best to support parents in a range of different contexts of child sexual abuse in order to support their child. The impact on non-abusing parents/carers of discovering that their child has been sexually abused will be considered alongside the challenges which this impact can bring to parenting their child effectively. This workshop is suitable for all professionals working directly with children and families, including those who work only with parents.

D) Sibling sexual behaviour and abuse

Sharron Wareham

Child sexual abuse takes many forms, but research suggests that a significant amount is carried out within the family environment, including by brothers and sisters. Research indicates that identifying and responding to sibling sexual behaviour and abuse can feel particularly difficult, not least because it challenges commonly held perceptions of sibling relationships.

Despite having the core skills to respond to sibling sexual behaviour and abuse, many professionals report a lack of knowledge or experience to feel confident in doing so effectively. But responding to these issues actually requires the same skills needed for addressing other concerns in our practice. This session aims to build participants confidence in identifying and understanding sibling sexual behaviour and responding effectively, using our Sibling sexual behaviour guide. This workshop is suitable for all professionals working with children, young people, and families.

E) Harmful sexual behaviour in online contexts

Emma Hodgson

The internet and technology-based communications are now embedded in the daily lives of both adults and children. These digital platforms and devices can bring freedom and opportunity, but online contexts now feature in almost all types of child sexual abuse, so there is also the potential for harm. This can include harmful sexual behaviour displayed by under-18s, which may be harmful towards themselves or another child, young person or adult. In these situations, it is important that professionals can confidently build a detailed understanding of a child's broader behaviours – both online and offline – in order to intervene.

This workshop will provide a useful introduction to harmful sexual behaviour in online contexts. It will introduce participants to the context and emergence of this form of harm, and show why it is such an important subject for professionals to be aware of. While the session will have a specific focus on those who display these behaviours, we will also consider the impact on children and young people. This workshop is suitable for all professionals working with children and young people.

4:20 PM

Evaluation and ending

4:45 PM

Close

Speakers

Chris Frey-Davis

Head of Children's Services in Pembrokeshire

Known for an energetic, people-first approach, Chris finds real joy in working alongside colleagues, partners and communities to make a difference for children and families. A firm believer that uncertainty and ambiguity are opportunities for learning and growth, Chris brings optimism, curiosity and a sense of fun to tackling complex challenges - always with a focus on hope, collaboration and better outcomes.

Taryn Stephens

Deputy Chief Social Care Officer for Wales

Taryn Stephens is the Deputy Chief Social Care Officer for Wales, providing national leadership across social care and overseeing the National Office for Care and Support, including safeguarding and advocacy, workforce strategy, commissioning and market oversight, pathways of care, and citizen and sector engagement. She is a qualified Social Worker and former Head of Children's Services and Safeguarding, with significant experience in child protection, children looked after and system leadership. Taryn works closely with Ministers and the Chief Social Care Officer for Wales to support policy and legislative development and improvement across the social care sector.

Artie Meakin

National Independent Safeguarding Board member

Artie has an extensive background in fostering and adoption in both the local authority and voluntary sector. She has chaired various fostering and adoption panels in South Wales ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are robustly addressed. She also has considerable training experience relating to Looked After Children and safeguarding.

May Baxter-Thornton

Accomplished public speaker and trainer

May strives to raise awareness of complexities around child sexual abuse. Recently May was part of the Victims & Survivors Consultative Panel (VSCP) for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), in the capacity of both a survivor of child sexual abuse and for working with survivors of child sexual abuse, and was specifically recruited due to 15+ years working in the field of domestic violence, supporting child and adult survivors of child sexual abuse in refuges across the North East of England.

Emma Hodgson

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Emma is a qualified social worker and practice educator. Prior to joining the CSA Centre Emma worked for the NSPCC for almost two decades in the field of children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour and child sexual abuse recovery services; with 15 in direct practice and then as a development social worker. Her role as a practice educator focused on delivering training, workshops and resources for a wide range of professionals working with children and families. During this time she developed guidance and training for professionals working directly with technology-assisted harmful sexual behaviour, including completing an MSc in forensic psychology exploring this issue, and the tools and resources available to be used by professionals working with young people. Emma is currently undertaking a PhD in the same topic.

Lorraine Myles

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Lorraine is a qualified teacher with almost 30 years' experience in education, from key stage one to four. Starting out in mainstream schools, Lorraine moved into the special education sector where she worked extensively with children and young people who experienced abuse and trauma. During the course of her career, she has worked as an education advisor, headteacher of a Local Authority virtual school for children in care and then as the headteacher for three special schools in the South-East. This included day and residential school settings, pupil referral units and a secure school – each making dedicated provisions for children with social, emotional, and mental health needs.

Dr Natasha Sabin

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Natasha is a Forensic Psychologist with professional experience in child sexual abuse. She has worked within Youth Justice as a practitioner and manager specialising in harmful sexual behaviour. Natasha has also had roles within secure hospitals and custodial environments where she has predominantly worked with adult males who have committed sexual offences. Natasha is a visiting lecturer at the University of Birmingham, facilitating teaching sessions to Forensic and Clinical Psychologists in training.

Sharron Wareham

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Sharron is a qualified social worker with over 20 years' experience of working with children and families impacted by sexual abuse. Before joining the CSA Centre, she worked directly with children and families impacted by harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation, and supported children and families to recover following child sexual abuse. Sharron managed a multi-disciplinary team for 10 years, supporting responses to child sexual abuse assessment and intervention across six local authorities. She has managed several research projects, authored and co-authored statutory and non-statutory practice guidance for Welsh Government to improve understanding and responses to child sexual abuse and is the chair of the Wales Internet Safety Partnership group, whose work focuses on increasing digital resilience with children, young people and families in Wales, and chair of the National Organisation for the Treatment of Abuse (NOTA) Cymru.

Paul Burnside

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Paul is a retired Public Protection Detective Inspector with Lancashire Police and was an Inspector on the HMIC Child Protection inspections. He authored the first Lancashire Standard Operating procedures for child sexual exploitation, creating the first Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan, and the first Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) manual. Paul's current role at the CSA Centre involves working with police forces across England and Wales to better understand their effectiveness in tackling and preventing child sexual abuse and influencing good practice. As well as this, using our research and resources, Paul works with the wider team to inform national policy and response.

Nici Evans

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Nici has worked in healthcare for more than 25 years, initially working as a nurse and lecturer specialising in cancer and palliative care. In 2007, she became immersed in the complexities involved in the delivery of public services as the Head of Partnerships for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and as the lead officer for addressing human exploitation for the Cardiff Public Service Board. In this role, she developed her passion for working with vulnerable people and set up robust multi-agency processes to support those working in the sex industry and victims and survivors of human trafficking and slavery in Cardiff. She continues to have strong links with nursing, health, social care and professionals working for criminal justice agencies across Wales. Nici is a UKCP registered psychotherapist, and works at a local comprehensive

school in Cardiff to ensure that she remains connected to children and young people and remains grounded in practice. Using her knowledge and experience of working in adult sexual and criminal exploitation – including supporting survivors of child sexual abuse – Nici joined the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse in 2019 as the Practice Improvement Advisor in Wales. This role brings together a lifetime of working experience to support the continued development of an evidence-informed approach to child sexual abuse at both operational and strategic levels across Wales.

Shauna Breen

Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre

Shauna is a specialist in child sexual exploitation, having spent 16 years supporting children; including working directly with young people, strategically, and in management. She has experience developing, delivering and evaluating voluntary sector programmes as a service manager and securing funding support to help children and their families facing difficulties. Over the course of her career, Shauna has worked in a number of organisations such as Barnardo's, The Children's Society and Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid. She has also worked for statutory organisations, where she specialised in both extra and intra-familial harm and focused on shaping systematic change to improve the response to children and young people affected by issues such as child sexual exploitation, trafficking and serious youth violence.

Support:



New Pathways

In Swansea, we will be joined by **New Pathways**: an organisation who provide specialist support for adults, children and young people who have been affected by rape, sexual assault or abuse.

Speak to them on the day to learn all about the service they offer to those affected by child sexual abuse, and feel free to have a supportive conversation with them if you have been impacted by any of the subjects raised during the presentations and workshops.

Guest Organisations:

In addition to our speakers and presentations, we will also be joined by a number of other statutory and voluntary sector organisations who operate in South Wales and can support you in responding to child sexual abuse. You can visit their stands during breaks between presentations to have conversations about their work and how it can support you.



Newid Plentyndod.
Newid Bywydau.
Changing childhoods.
Changing lives.

Visit the CSA Centre website www.csacentre.org.uk to access all of their resources and research and sign-up to their monthly newsletter www.csacentre.org.uk/newsletter/ to learn about their latest work.

