

**Centre of  
expertise  
on child  
sexual abuse**



# Prioritising child sexual abuse

**15<sup>th</sup> September 2026 – Venue Cymru**

**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 PARTNERIAETH RHANBARTHOL  
GOGLEDD CYMRU  
NORTH WALES  
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD**



**SWYDDFA COMISIYNYDD HEDDLU  
A THROSEDD GOGLEDD CYMRU  
OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER NORTH WALES**

## **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.

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| 9:30 AM               | <b>Welcome</b><br>Dilwyn Morgan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 9:40 AM               | <b>Introduction</b><br>Andy Dunbobbin and Taryn Stephens                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 10:00 AM<br>Keynote 1 | <b>Impacts of child sexual abuse</b><br>May Baxter-Thornton<br><br>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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 10:50 AM              | Break and networking                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 11:15 AM<br>Keynote 2 | <b>Child sexual abuse in Wales: Key challenges and opportunities in practice</b><br>Nici Evans and Sharron Wareham<br><br>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.<br><br>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**

Suzanne Taylor

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  
Breakout  
Session

## **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) Working with non-abusing parents and carers**

Suzanne Taylor

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.

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3:00 PM

Break

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3:15 PM  
Breakout  
Session

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4:20 PM

**Evaluation and ending**

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4:45 PM

**Close**

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## Speakers

### Councillor Dilwyn Morgan

#### Chairman of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board

Dilwyn is Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being. Since April 2023, Dilwyn has been Chairman of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board. One of Dilwyn's key priorities as Chair is to try to raise awareness of the Board's work by hearing and sharing health and social care stories directly with the people of North Wales. Dilwyn also strongly believes in events such as today. It is an opportunity to help you and your colleagues identify and respond effectively to child sexual abuse, and support children and families in the best way.

Dilwyn is also a familiar face and voice on S4C and the radio. His main interests are rugby and sailing. He was born and raised in Bala, and he still lives there to this day.

### Andy Dunbobbin

#### Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for North Wales is the local governing body for policing in the region. The holder of the post has an overarching duty to secure an efficient and effective Police Force, which demonstrates value for money and, above all, cuts crime. The Commissioner has four main responsibilities which are: to set out the priorities for policing in North Wales; decide the budget for North Wales Police; hold the Chief Constable to account; and to listen and respond to the public's views on policing. The current PCC, Andy Dunbobbin, was initially elected in May 2021 and was re-elected in May 2024. As part of his role, Mr Dunbobbin, has published a Police and Crime Plan for North Wales which will

guide policing in the region over the coming years. His priorities within this plan are for a local neighbourhood policing presence; supporting victims, communities and businesses; and a fair and effective criminal justice system.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Suzanne Taylor**

#### **Practice Improvement Adviser, CSA Centre**

Shauna is a specialist in child sexual exploitation, having spent 16 years supporting children; including Suzanne is an experienced strategic leader who has worked across the statutory and charity sector over the last 20 years. A proud Youth Worker by profession, she has experience in practice and leadership of highly successful specialist services for children, young people and their families.

Prior to joining the CSA Centre, Suzanne led Barnardo's national work on placed based systems change to support improvements in the response to children who have been sexually abused or criminally exploited. Much of her career has been spent in the leadership of Youth Justice Services across the North West, holding many additional responsibilities including Greater Manchester Resettlement Consortium Coordinator, Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Board member and member of the Youth Justice Board Workforce Development Council. She is experienced in working collaboratively to influence wide-scale cultural change by focusing on co-production with children, families, and professionals and bringing research closer to practice.

## Support:

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre North Wales provides information, specialist support and therapy to anyone aged 3 and over who has experienced any kind of sexual abuse or violence either recently or in the past. We also provide specialist support and therapy to partners and family members of those who have been affected by sexual abuse and violence.



## Stands:



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

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