

## 6. Case studies for training and professional development

This section presents case studies of a range of HSB incidents that may take place between young people and that may come to the attention of schools and police. The case studies have been developed based on research evidence regarding the nature of HSB among young people with some adaptation of the incidents dealt with by Surrey Police that were reviewed for this project. They are intended to stimulate reflection on the scope and limitations of the law in understanding and responding to different types of HSB among young people and the need to clearly disentangle harmful and abusive elements of young people's sexual behaviour, in light of the contexts in which HSB takes place, distinct from binary framings of young people's sexual behaviour as either legal or illegal or as inherently risky and inappropriate. The case studies also address situations in which an 'all-or-nothing' approach precludes a more nuanced response; for example, if all young people involved in an incident of nude image sharing are considered to be breaking the law, there arise implications for specifically addressing non-consensual or otherwise abusive elements.

We hope that the case studies are helpful in stimulating reflection and discussion about effective prevention and response to HSB among young people, across the range of incidents. The case studies can be presented to professionals and practitioners attending training and professional development sessions on HSB among young people, including police officers and school staff, as well as other members of the statutory and non-statutory children's workforce.

When considering each case study, professionals and practitioners should focus on:

### 1. What is the harm?

- Would this incident constitute HSB? If so, what type of HSB, where along the continuum [see Hackett's (2010) continuum in appendix I] may it sit and why? If not or if it is ambiguous, outline why.
- Would this incident potentially be illegal? What may be the challenges in determining the legal status, including regarding whether the law is 'fit for purpose' (e.g., regarding image-based sexual abuse and harassment).
- How risky or harmful is this incident? What factors are significant in deciding the level of risk and harm?
- What are the potential causal factors? For the individuals, wider peer group, social and cultural norms, etc.

### 2. What should the response be?

- Map out the possible responses to the incidents and identify the most appropriate response to this kind of incident. Please consider:
  - o Reporting of the incident, support for all the young people involved, potential involvement of parents/carers, recording and remedial action.
  - o The reasons why the response is deemed most appropriate.
  - o Who has responsibility for the response and the partnership/multiagency working that is required.
  - o Any potential counter-productive consequences of responding in this way and where identified, ways of addressing these consequences.
  - o Potential alternative or additional responses.
  - o Is the most appropriate response likely or feasible within current working conditions (e.g., as pertain to resources, working cultures, professional roles, etc.)?

### 3. Reflect: current practice and prevention:

- Reflect on current practice – is the most appropriate response reflected in what actually happens in most cases? If not, why not? What needs to be in place to respond effectively?
- Have you reduced the risk factors AND boosted any potential protective factors for the young people involved?
- What action could have been taken proactively to prevent this kind of incident occurring? Who needs to be involved in taking the action? What partnership/multiagency working would have supported this action?

#### Case study 1

A year 10 girl has told a friend that she felt pressured to engage in unwanted sex with her boyfriend (also a year 10 pupil at the school) at a party over the weekend. Both the girl and boy had been drinking alcohol at the party and the girl told her friend that while she fancied him, she wasn't ready to have sex, but after agreeing to go to the room with him, she felt he expected her to do so. When he started kissing and touching her on the bed, she initially liked it, but when he pushed things further, she said, 'not here' and tried to push him away, but after he said that he really liked her and was turned on, she felt she had to 'go along with it'. The boy has since told friends about them having sex.

#### Case study 2

A group of 15-year-old girls at a sleepover decide it would be 'funny' to 'catfish' a girl they go to school with, who they deem to be 'unpopular' and 'weird'. They pretend to be a boy from school and message the girl saying that 'he' fancies her and would they like to exchange nudes. After several increasingly sexualised exchanges, the girl sends a nude image. The group then reveal their identity to the girl and post her image and the messages on social media. The girl feels suicidal and refuses to leave her bedroom following the incident.

#### Case study 3

Two 13-year-old girls are spending time together in one of their bedrooms, chatting and listening to music. They start talking about boys they fancy and one of the girls says that she is worried about having her first kiss. She says to the other girl that they should 'practice' on each other first, but the other girl says she doesn't want to. The girl then tells her to lighten up and proceeds to try to kiss her. The girl's mother walks into the room and is confused about what is happening.

#### Case study 4

A 16-year-old girl discloses to a friend that she was physically forced into performing oral sex on her boyfriend after he had been drinking. The girl's friend reacted angrily and said that the boy is 'out of order' and 'can't get away with it'. The friend then shared a post on social media stating that the boy is a 'rapist' and 'makes her sick'. Other young people online are commenting on the post and spreading rumours about what may have happened. The boy is now being threatened by some young people at the school and is worried that he may be attacked, so isn't leaving his house.

### Case study 5

Two 16-year-old boys were having sex at a party. They were in a relationship but had only told a few close friends that they were gay. The sexual activity at the party was consensual and took place in a private room. However, some other young people at the party saw them and filmed them without their knowledge. The video has since been posted on social media, with other young people from the school and some anonymous internet users posting homophobic comments under the video. The boys are now both scared to come into school.

### Case study 6

A 15-year-old boy is hanging out with some friends at a party and his friends start talking about the girls they have had sex with. They ask the boy for his 'stories' and the boy looks embarrassed and doesn't say anything. They start teasing him for being a 'virgin' and point out girls at the party who may have sex with him. They call over to one of the girls and there is some sexualised 'banter' between them all. Later, after consuming a lot of alcohol, the girl says to the boy that she's 'up for it if he is' and that it'd be a good idea for him to just get 'losing his virginity' out of the way. They go upstairs to a bedroom and the boy feels increasingly anxious. He proceeds to engage in kissing and sexual touching upon initiation by the girl, but then struggles to maintain an erection. The girl laughs at him and goes back to the party telling everyone that he has a 'micro dick' and 'can't get it up'.

### Case study 7

A group of 15-year-old girls at a sleepover decide it would be 'funny' to trick a boy in their class for nudes. One of the girls pretends to be on her own and starts to flirt with him saying that she fancies him and after several increasingly sexualised exchanges, they ask him to send a picture of his penis. He obliges, the group laugh and share the picture amongst themselves and laugh about the size of his penis and call him a perv who sends unsolicited dick-pics to girls.

### Case study 8

A group of boys are coming out of the changing rooms on to the field ready to do PE. They see one of their classmates in front of them and run up behind him and debag him (pull his jogging bottoms down). As a result, his genitals and bottom are exposed to not only his 'friends' but also the girls in his year who are coming out of their changing rooms at the same time. Everyone laughs at him and he is mortified that everyone has seen him, but feels he has to laugh along and shrug it off otherwise he will be ridiculed even further for not being able to take a joke.

### Case study 9

There are a group of eight year 10 boys, who individually are mostly polite and respectful; however, when together, unaware of their new-found size they take up a lot of space and are intimidating to other pupils and some staff. They are loud and seem to wind each other up, becoming more boisterous and showing off in front of each other to be the alpha male. This includes trying to flirt/harass girls in the corridors, using inappropriate sexualised language and generally being a nuisance. As a result, staff are always watching them and quick to shut down their behaviours and giving out detentions. The boys feel like they are treated unfairly and are becoming more combative as a result. One of the boys has started answering back and being highly misogynist to female members of staff who try to reprimand them. Their behaviour is escalating.

### Case study 10

A group of year 9 pupils have been sharing clips of pornography on their phones. This started in a group at lunch, where they all laughed and tried to find the most disgusting clip they could to 'freak each other out'. It is now largely taking place outside of school in the evenings. The clips are escalating and getting more and more extreme. A boy who has ASD is included in the group. A complaint has been made to the school by a parent after their child showed them the images the boy had sent which included indecent images of young children. They want something done as they think he is clearly a 'paedo'.

### Case study 11

A year 9 girl is sent a close-up dick pic and torso (faceless) from a boy she fancies and asked to send one back. She does so with an image including her face. The boy shares the image with his class explaining he sent a fake image he googled. The girl is 'slut shamed' by her classmates and told she 'has no respect.'

### Case study 12

A year 8 boy sends a dick pic to another boy he thinks might be gay in his year group, saying he's 'curious.' The boy responds with a dick pic saying he's 'interested.' The first boy sends the image to his friend group with homophobic slurs and comments about penis size.

### Case study 13

A year 11 boy sends a dick pic to a girl he's met online asking 'wanna trade?'. The girl says she's not interested. The boy feels rejected and retaliates by posting details about the girl on an Instagram page exposing 'sluts and slags.'