

Information for professionals, parents and carers

who have concerns about a young person's online sexual behaviour



If a young person's online sexual behaviour has raised concerns about sexual harm to them or others, what can you do?

What's the problem?

At the Lucy Faithfull Foundation we know that young people are increasingly getting into trouble online. We often receive calls on our free, confidential Stop it Now! Helpline (0808 1000 900) from worried parents. The worries parents most commonly call us about include:

- their child has been looking at adult pornography
- their child has been sending or receiving sexually explicit pictures
- their child has been arrested for viewing indecent images of under 18s.

For most parents, discovering that their child has been engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviour online is initially shocking, and quickly followed by fears for their child's welfare and confusion about what to do.

The behaviour may have resulted in sexual harm to the young person themselves or to other children or young people, and it could be illegal; sometimes it is all three. Whether the discovery was made by you, or was brought to your attention by a school, the police or another professional, it is likely you will have some urgent questions about how you can help your child and what might happen next. Knowing who you can talk to is the first step to getting the right help and support. We want to give you that help and support.

You can talk to us – Stop it Now! Helpline 0808 1000 900

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is a leading child protection charity dedicated entirely to tackling child sexual abuse. We have extensive experience of providing assessment, intervention and training services within child protection and criminal justice systems as well as running public education and awareness activities. We prevent sexual abuse by working with those perpetrating it, those affected by it and with protective adults to keep children safe.

We run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline for adults concerned about child sexual abuse, including adults worried about the behaviour of young people or another adult – and people worried about their own thoughts or behaviour.

Calling the Helpline might be an important first step towards working out what to do next, including discussing our Inform Young People's programme for young people with concerning online behaviour (please see overleaf).



Working to Protect Children

We are here to help. Please call us 0808 1000 900, 01372 847160, or email contact@lucyfaithfull.org.uk

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What is the Inform Young People's Programme?

The Inform Young People's programme is a voluntary programme designed for young people who have got into trouble online.

We offer one initial meeting followed by up to five sessions of work with the young person and their family tailored to their needs. Each session is delivered by an experienced practitioner either by telephone (through our Helpline) or face-to-face.

Content is tailored to address issues around a young person putting him/herself at risk, as well as potentially causing harm to others. The work aims to:

- Provide information, advice and support to the young person and their parents or carers
- Alleviate the young person's (and parents'/carers') distress and anxiety arising from their concerning sexual behaviour coming to light
- Give practical advice on strategies to prevent a re-occurrence or escalation of the concerning sexual behaviour – including aids to responsible use of technology
- Give sound information about the law in this context, especially as it applies to young people
- Facilitate more open communication between the young person and their parents or carers

What will the service cost?

The Foundation is able to deliver the Inform Young People's Programme free of charge if certain criteria are met. We also welcome donations to support the costs of delivery. Please call us to discuss.

What families say about the Inform Young People's programme

A young man who had been accessing indecent images of children online: **"Absolutely brilliantly delivered in a safe and warm environment. I wasn't sure what to expect, other than it to address the offending. These expectations were exceeded, it was more individualised than expected."**

A father: **"Overall, the advice given has been used and I have noted positive changes in Shaun and our family"**

A mother: **"I noticed a big change in Darren after his sessions"**

A young man who had been accessing indecent images of children online: **"Sessions really helped me understand myself"**, his mother added: **"He struggles with his emotions. Since his work with Tracy he now talks very openly with me and his step-dad. This all stemmed from Tracy."**

Other services for young people

In the event that the young person requires more in-depth intervention and/or safeguarding procedures need to be implemented, this will be discussed with you. The Foundation can provide additional assessment, intervention and consultancy services provided funding is available.

They will help you explore options, including managing future behaviour. This service is available to anyone with concerns about potentially abusive situations, whether that be online or offline.

What to do now

Police officers and other professionals who provide services for children and young people, as well as parents and carers, can contact us for further information or to discuss a referral.

For help and advice please get in touch.

Telephone: 01372 847160

Email: contact@lucyfaithfull.org.uk

Stop it Now! Helpline: 0808 1000 900

Please quote: Inform Young People when you contact us.

Visit: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk

www.stopitnow.org.uk

www.parentsprotect.co.uk

Download the Parents Pack

You can download our guide for parents and carers faced with dealing with inappropriate online behaviour from our Parents Protect website:

www.parentsprotect.co.uk

The guide gives advice and information about risk taking behaviour, such as viewing adult pornography or 'sexting', or where children or young people have been arrested for viewing indecent images of children.



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