

## The quarterly Stop it Now! UK and Ireland activity update

### PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE – MAKING IT EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS

Working together to tackle child sexual abuse and protect children from harm was the focus of four regional conferences hosted by Stop it Now! UK and Ireland in March.

Held in partnership with police services and Local Safeguarding Children Boards, events took place in Hampshire, Lincolnshire, West Mercia and Taunton and brought together more than 350 representatives from the host of organisations who have contact with children or families or deal with child protection issues.

Called ‘Preventing Child Sexual Abuse – Making it Everybody’s Business’, the conferences aimed to explore some of today’s key issues surrounding child sexual abuse and featured workshops conducted by specialist staff from child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation.

Delegates were given the opportunity to develop their understanding of internet abusers, women abusers, and children & young people with sexually harmful behaviour. In addition, all delegates were able to participate in a multi-agency workshop which encouraged them to examine, together, the level of **preventative** work being done in their own patch – an activity which revealed significant areas for development.

As a result of these events, Stop! is now engaging with groups of practitioners in each region – to identify activities that can be developed and delivered locally and that facilitate the prevention of child sexual abuse. We will also explore how the Stop it Now! campaign can further support them.

Director of Stop it Now! UK and Ireland, Donald Findlater, said: “Preventing child sexual abuse is everybody’s business – it cannot be left to one agency or organisation to address. The sooner abuse is identified, the sooner the healing process can begin for all



Detective Superintendent Martin Lakeman and Donald Findlater

concerned. More importantly still, if we can prevent it from happening in the first place, so much the better.”

Opening the West Mercia conference, Superintendent Martin Lakeman said: “The Lucy Faithfull Foundation and Stop it Now! UK and Ireland play an important role in child protection and we are pleased to offer our support by providing a venue for today’s

conference. Increased awareness of child sexual abuse is vital and the force currently works extremely closely with this charity in raising awareness, particularly of internet safety, through the four Local Safeguarding Children Boards.”

Due to high levels of interest, a second Hampshire conference is already planned for July 5 and further events are being planned for London, the North West and North East at the end of the year.

Any police service or LSCB interested in delivering one of our conferences should contact England campaign manager, Liz Maslen on [lmassen@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:lmassen@stopitnow.org.uk). Anyone interested in attending an event should check [www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk) for the latest information.

“An excellent information packed day, high quality presentations. Challenging thinking.”

“An invaluable conference which should be compulsory for all those working with children.”

“One of the best events I’ve been to.”

### EDITORS NOTE

#### Empowering communities

The new Prime Minister’s alternative to ‘Big Government’ is ‘Big Society’ - something we at Stop it Now! can relate to.

One of our principal aims is to empower and enable individuals, families and communities to look to themselves to address key community concerns, such as tackling child sexual abuse. There are things all adults can do to protect a child – if they have access to sound advice, support and information. And that’s where Stop it Now! steps in.

Key to our work is building community strength and spreading child protection messages, making sure that every family knows what steps they should take to keep their children safe and ultimately how to implement a family safety plan.

To do this we need assistance - we’re a small organisation working across the whole of the UK and Ireland and the more ambassadors we have the better. Volunteers are essential to our work and more information about this can be found on page 4.

#### Future activities

We’re busy working on our helpline report - due out soon - so watch this space. What I can say now, though, is that we are delighted to see the helpline continue to grow from strength to strength and we’re receiving more calls than ever from our target groups - offenders, potential offenders, their family and friends, and parents and carers.

We’re also planning a range of public engagement activities for October and will give more details about this in our next edition.

Finally, I’d like to send thanks to all those who are currently fundraising for us. We’ve got runners taking part in marathons and people climbing mountains (see page 4) all for a great cause! We’d be delighted to hear from anyone else interested in supporting us in this way. Best wishes,

Donald Findlater  
Director

# Stop it Now! England takes to the road

Having come into post just before Christmas last year, the new Stop it Now! England Manager, Liz Maslen, has wasted no time in getting to grips with the challenge of spreading the Stop it Now! prevention message across England.

## Regional Conferences

March, saw the delivery of four regional conferences (see page one) and Stop! staff threw their energies into each event. Such was the demand for places at our Hampshire conference – a second event will be held there on July 5<sup>th</sup>, and it is envisaged that at least another three such events will be delivered between now and March 2011.

## The campaign trail

With the conferences completed, Liz was set to commence her national networking programme – to raise awareness of the Stop it Now! campaign, look for opportunities to develop new Stop! projects around the country, and to meet with local volunteer candidates.

She headed first for the North-East, travelling up to Newcastle to re-ignite existing links there – meeting with LSCB members, PCT staff, Children's Centre leads, Probation, faith groups and other children's charities in the area. From Newcastle, Liz moved on to Leeds – networking with a similar mix of local representatives and identifying, with them, the best ways of getting the Stop it Now! message into communities. Back at base, at the Alvechurch office, Liz is now busily following-up the many action-points from her Northern visits, and exploring options for a Northern conference – or two – between September and December.

All in all then, it's been a busy, but very productive first four months in post – and with a networking visit to Manchester & Oldham scheduled for May – and follow-up meetings planned with our regional conference delegates in June, the campaign trail won't go cold!

If you want to find out when Liz will be in your area – just give her a call on 01527 406915 or 07540 690314.



England Campaign manager, Liz Maslen addresses the Taunton conference



Stop it Now! London has launched a new prevention programme for parents and carers called 'Let's Start Talking'. The initiative took off in November 09 and was launched in collaboration with the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board.

Working in partnership with children's centres across the capital the programme can be delivered free to parents, carers and professionals. So far 9 events have taken place with over 70 people attending.

The presentation aims to raise awareness of the everyday steps people can take to prevent child sexual abuse and encourages parents to talk...to each other, to their children and even to people whose behaviour they are concerned about.

The programme helps parents to :- recognise the characteristics of abusive behaviour; identify 'family rules' they can use with their children to help protect them from sexual abuse; put into place an 'action plan' should they notice inappropriate behaviour and identify three prevention steps they can take action on within the

next week.

A key tool used in the presentation is a DVD called 'Too Good To Be True', which portrays a case study and is used to facilitate discussions. Produced by the award winning *Eye Witness Theatre Company*, the DVD tells the story of Natalie, a woman concerned about her friend Erica's new boyfriend who seems to be displaying too much interest in Erica's 14-year-old daughter. Once shown, participants are asked to consider a series of questions about what might happen next... exploring the emotions that Erica and Natalie are feeling. The aim of the piece is to show that talking about potentially worrying behaviours can stop abuse from happening.

London Regional Campaign Manager, Helen Veitch said: "Talking about our concerns is the first step towards prevention and this DVD helps reinforce that."

Anyone wanting more information about this project should contact Helen Veitch or Chris Pummell on 0207 428 1080, 07872601786 or 07912 514808 or [helenveitch@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:helenveitch@stopitnow.org.uk) or [cpummell@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:cpummell@stopitnow.org.uk).

What participants thought of 'Let's Start Talking'...

"It was really helpful to me."

"I liked the way it was made simple to help think about how to talk to my kids."

"I thought I'd be scared about what it was about, but it's common sense really."

## Follow us on Facebook!

Search for Stop it Now! UK and Ireland or click on the icon below to follow us on Facebook for immediate updates, news and information about our campaign and tips on how to keep children safe from harm.

Spread the word! Let your friends and networks know about Stop it Now's! work and help build community strength and safety.



Find us on  
Facebook

# Marking Safer Internet Day

Stop it Now! marked European Safer Internet Day (SID) (February 9) by hosting a number of internet safety seminars in Surrey schools for parents, carers, teachers and children. The annual day of action is organised by Insafe, supported by countries throughout Europe and aims to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones.

“Many parents feel out of their depth or look to technical safeguards such as filters and blocking software to help protect their children – but these can only do so much. Our seminars are not technical at all and focus solely on practical advice and guidance so parents can instigate safety measures immediately,” said Donald Findlater, Director of Stop!

### **Packed with practical content**

The seminars cover a range of areas including:- how to help children understand the importance



Photography by istock photo

of not giving out personal information; how to respond to worrying or abusive contact; the difference between real world friends and ‘online friends’ or ‘e-

buddies’; the importance of children knowing not to meet people they have only met online and how to encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if anything or anyone causes them concerns.

The seminars also cover cyber-bullying, something which can be far more damaging than the playground taunts experienced by the older generation. “In the past, bullying often stopped when the end of day bell rang. Now it can continue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, both online and through mobile phones,” explained Donald.

### **Find out more**

We are looking to arrange plenty more Internet Safety events over the coming months. Anyone interested in attending a seminar, or schools that are keen to host either a parent or student event, can contact Seminar Co-ordinator, Steph Hunter on 01372 847160 or email [shunter@lucyfaithfull.org.uk](mailto:shunter@lucyfaithfull.org.uk).

# Working with Parents Networks in Wales

**A course designed to help parents, carers and guardians protect children from sexual abuse is now available in Wales thanks to a partnership between Stop it Now! Wales and a number of parents networks.**

The 5-week course entitled Parents Protect, is organised by Campaign Manager Rebecca Wasinski and is being delivered to parents and carers identified by the parents networks. Since the programme began in September 2009, four courses have taken place reaching 40 parents and carers.

### **Learning**

The course allows those taking part to learn about the signs of child sexual abuse, gain confidence to act upon any concerns they have and help them to develop preventative strategies that help to protect children.

Rebecca Wasinski said: “Child sexual abuse affects more children than anyone would like to imagine and it’s vital we all know what we can do to help protect children. It’s not an easy subject for people to talk about. But, talking about it is essential if we are to address the problem.”

The course has a number of aims, including helping people to:- understand some of the barriers to identifying and preventing abuse and how to overcome them; understand abuser behaviour and why people sexually abuse children; become familiar with behaviours and indicators of sexual abuse and implement practical strategies that help prevent abuse from taking place.

### **Online safety**

The course also covers how the internet can put children and young people at risk. Something Sian

Northy, Caerphilly Parent Network Assistant, says is extremely important. “Many parents see the internet as a threat and do have concerns about what their children do online. This course shows them how they can help mitigate some of those risks.”

### **Working in partnership**

The Caerphilly Parent Network has so far supported two courses and Sian says the organisation is delighted to be involved in such an important subject. “We did see some reluctance from parents to be involved with the course as it’s a subject they didn’t know how to handle and didn’t want to be involved with. But those who have come forward gave really positive feedback. In addition to learning about child sexual abuse, some found it opened other doors and gave them the confidence to talk with their children about a host of sensitive issues such as privacy, trust, sex and relationships.”

### **More information**

Anyone wanting to find out more about the Parents Protect course should contact National Campaign Manager, Rebecca Wasinski on [rwasinski@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:rwasinski@stopitnow.org.uk) or 07989 378 220.

Photography by Communities First, Bedlinog



Rebecca Wasinski delivering a course at Communities First, Bedlinog

## Stop! Volunteer makes national 100 'Happy List'

Congratulations to Stop it Now! Birmingham and Black Country volunteer, John Farmer, who has been named on a list of the nations 100 people who make Britain a better and happier place to live.

The 73-year-old grandfather of eight and father of three from Cradley Heath was included on the list compiled by the Independent newspaper and published on Sunday 25th April.

John has been volunteering for three years with the campaign, and supports events, distributes literature and generally helps to raise awareness about the Stop it Now! campaign to help safeguard local children.

Born into a low income family, and one of three children in West Bromwich in 1937, John's philanthropic nature came out early on in life when he started volunteering at the local green-grocers and delivered vegetables to poor families in the war.

He left school at 15 years old and went into carpentry and joinery, then worked at Chances Glass at Smethwick, Mitchells and Butlers Brewery and then as an HGV driver, before retiring at 65.

According to wife, Val, John has always looked for ways to help others. "He knows there is a bigger world out there of voluntary and social care and wants to contribute. His key motivation is to give back."

Commenting on his inclusion on the nation's 'happy list', John said: "I'm totally surprised by all this. I didn't expect anything like this. We used to help out when we were younger anyway, that's what people did. We'd help at the local Co-op and the scouts and in the local community generally."

Campaign Manager Martine McFadden, who nominated John, said: "John is a highly valued member of our team who can always be relied upon and will always go that extra mile. We are proud that he chose to contribute his time and make a difference with us. Nominating John was our way of showing our deep gratitude to his contribution and welcomed support."



John Farmer

## Volunteers at hand!

With the challenge of communicating Stop it Now!'s prevention messages across most of the UK, the National Managers for Wales, Scotland and England, certainly have their work cut out for them!

Therefore, it's a real priority to identify people across the regions, who are interested in giving some of their time on a voluntary basis, to helping ensure that local communities are aware of our helpline, the resources we have available and the support we can offer.

### Volunteer support

With this in mind, Stop it Now! has recently put in place its own Volunteer Strategy – outlining how we hope to develop our volunteer-base over the coming year, and how we will support those volunteers. We've also given some thought to the types of activities that people might like to be involved in, and are in the process of compiling a new Volunteer Information Pack which we can send out to interested parties.

### Variety

At a local level, we may need people who can ensure that local community venues have supplies of our posters and leaflets; other volunteers may want to take a more public-facing role by staffing an information stand at a community event or assisting us at one of our regional conferences; and our busy central office on the Birmingham-Worcestershire border is always glad of some general administrative support – so we hope to have a range of roles to suit different skills and interests. And, for those who enjoy the zest of a more "active" volunteering role – there is always the option of organizing a local fund-raising event – be that a fun-run, a fashion show, or a quiz night!

### Get involved

If you feel you would like to play a part in helping the Stop it Now! campaign, by becoming one of our volunteers – contact the National Manager for your part of the country, and discuss your ideas with them:

**Wales: Rebecca Wasinski**

07989 378220

[rwasinski@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:rwasinski@stopitnow.org.uk)

**Scotland: Martin Henry**

07881 824871

[mhenry@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:mhenry@stopitnow.org.uk)

**England: Liz Maslen**

07540 690314

[lmassen@stopitnow.org.uk](mailto:lmassen@stopitnow.org.uk)

## Climbing Mt Kilimanjaro

In September, Christine Platt, a mental health practitioner from Blackburn, Lancashire, and enthusiastic supporter of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and Stop it Now!, will travel to Tanzania to attempt to climb Mt Kilimanjaro. Mt Kilimanjaro is in north-eastern Tanzania and is the tallest free standing mountain in the world with a height of 5,895m (19,341 ft or 3.6 miles high).

She's hoping the climb will take 8 days in total via the Rongai route. She'll be trekking through a range of terrains and temperatures, starting out with an average of a toasty 30 degrees C, while the summit could see temperatures of around -15, not quite so toasty in a tent!

Christine is raising funds for three charities, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and Stop it Now!, The Anthony Nolan Trust, and Papyrus. More information and sponsorship opportunities can be found at:

<http://www.sponsor-me.org/christinekilimanjaro>

Good luck Christine!!!

## Newsletter name competition!

Congratulations to Sarah Taylor, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training and Support Officer Children and Young People's Services, North Somerset Council, for your winning entry; Stop Press! A posh box of choccies is winging its way to you!

## Dorking Quakers

Our thanks to Dorking Quakers for nominating us 'Charity of the Month' for May!

We are delighted to have been chosen and send our regards to the group.