



Over 2,800 people from Wales seek charity's help in last year to stop viewing of sexual images of children online

- **National helpline and self-help website Stop It Now! reports a doubling in contacts from people in Wales in the last 12 months compared with a year ago**
- **The helpline – run by the charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation – aims to help people address their illegal and damaging online behaviour and stop viewing sexual images of under 18s**
- **Latest independent evaluation highlights positive changes that reduce offending behaviour**

Stop It Now!, the UK's first confidential helpline that supports people to stop viewing sexual images of under 18s, has reported a 97 per cent year-on-year increase in the number of people using the specialist helpline (0808 1000 900) and self-help website during the last 12 months, either for themselves or someone they know.

In the 12 months from November 2018, a total of 2,804 callers and web users from Wales contacted the anonymous Stop It Now! UK and Ireland helpline and self-help website. This number compares with 1,421 callers and web users in the year following November 2017.

Through the Stop It Now! confidential helpline and website people can understand what triggers their illegal behaviour and get support to stop for good. The helpline is run by The Lucy Faithfull Foundation, the only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse (1) both offline and online.

Callers agree actions they can take to manage their short- and long-term online behaviour. Helpline operators also discuss the possibility of any direct risks to children, including in the caller's own family, to ensure these children are protected. Calls remain confidential and anonymous, unless identifying details are known and a child is deemed to be at risk of harm.

The helpline also supports adult family members and friends of those offending online or offline, as well as anyone worried about the sexual behaviour of children and young people. The biggest risk of child sexual abuse is within the family home (2), which is where parents and carers can best ensure their children's safety.

Independent evaluation of Stop It Now! reveals that after receiving advice callers who are offending take steps to control their behaviour. For some this means completely stopping using the internet or

pornography, installing controls and filters on devices and informing partners or family members of their illegal behaviour.

Viewing and sharing indecent images of children online is a serious and growing problem. In 2018 the National Crime Agency estimated that 80,000 people in the UK pose a sexual threat to children online (3). Police forces around the UK are making around 450 arrests each month relating to such behaviour. Many of these people go on to contact Stop It Now! and The Lucy Faithfull Foundation to start dealing with their lawbreaking. Police figures show that 346 people were arrested in Wales for offences related to indecent images of children in the 12 months from November 2018.

Since 2016, alongside pursuing all forms of online offending, police forces across Wales have promoted Operation Netsafe, which raises awareness of the consequences of illegal online behaviour and directs those offending and their families to the confidential help available through the Stop It Now! helpline.

The Stop It Now! campaign has won praise from National Police Chiefs' Council, whose lead for child protection, Chief Constable Simon Bailey, said: "The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has a pivotal role in helping to ensure offenders and those who are yet to offend have access to the appropriate services to support them in preventing behaviour that causes harm to children. I am glad to see that more people than ever are coming forward to seek help for their behaviour."

Donald Findlater, director of the Stop It Now! helpline, said:

"The success of the last twelve months shows that the growing problem of viewing sexual images of under 18s online can be tackled by charities, police and other organisations working together. Targeting both supply of and demand for the images is vital to preventing the harm to children that they cause when they are first made and when they are viewed and shared again.

"People need to know the facts: viewing sexual images of anyone under 18 is illegal and brings huge personal consequences, including possible arrest, imprisonment, being on the sex offenders register, and losing family and friends.

"But help is available to stop. These figures show that some people realise they have a problem and do want to change. If you're worried about your own online behaviour or that of anyone around you, you can get in touch with the Stop It Now! helpline for advice and support. Many thousands of people have contacted us over recent years. Calls are confidential and anonymous. Asking for help might seem like a huge step, but the alternatives can be so much worse."

-Ends-

For further information, and to discuss interview opportunities with a spokesperson from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation, please contact:

Michael Walsh (Media and communications manager): 01372 847 169 / 07540 690 315 / mwalsh@lucyfaithfull.org.uk

Jennifer Ames: jennifer.ames@kindredagency.com / 0207 010 0817

Courtney Grover: courtney.grover@kindredagency.com / 0207 010 0876

More information about the campaign can be found [here](#), including [videos](#) and [posters](#).

More information on the Stop It Now! campaign to deter people from viewing indecent images of children online, including campaign films that have been viewed over 23 million times, is available [here](#).

(1) The Lucy Faithfull Foundation's staff includes former probation officers, social workers, psychologists and ex-police officers. They help prevent children from being sexually abused by working with victims, families and sex offenders themselves, as well as by training professionals. The charity also runs [Stop It Now!](#) – a public campaign, confidential helpline and online self-help resources.

(2) <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/protecting-children-from-harm/>

(3) <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-online>

About The Lucy Faithfull Foundation

Named after its founder, Baroness Lucy Faithfull of Wolvercote, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is the only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to preventing child sexual abuse. It works with entire families affected by or concerned about abuse including: adult male and female sexual abusers; young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours; victims of abuse and other family members; front-line workers and professionals. It also runs the Stop it Now! campaign and helpline (0808 1000 900).

lucyfaithfull.org.uk

stopitnow.org.uk

parentsprotect.co.uk

About Stop It Now! UK and Ireland

Stop It Now! UK and Ireland is a national campaign, confidential helpline and website run by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation. Stop It Now! works with the government and child protection agencies, to promote public education and prevent child sexual abuse. The Stop It Now! helpline has been operating since 2002 and aims to prevent child abuse by encouraging abusers and potential abusers to seek help and by giving adults the information they need to protect children safely.

Since 2002 the helpline has provided advice and support to 46,000 callers and emailers, who together, make up 86,000 contacts. 55% of contacts were from people concerned about their own behaviour.

stopitnow.org.uk and get-help.stopitnow.org.uk

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