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Lucy Faithfull Foundation welcomes NSPCC call for action to deter people from viewing sexual images of children online

Child protection charity, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, welcomes a NSPCC report on the growth in demand for, and supply of, child sexual abuse images online in the UK. The report, published today, calls for urgent Government action to tackle the problem by reducing both supply and demand.

Welcoming the NSPCC report, child sexual abuse prevention expert and founder of Stop it Now! UK & Ireland (*a child sexual abuse prevention campaign run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation*), Donald Findlater, said: **“If we want to tackle demand for sexual images of under 18s, then we have to work harder to prevent people from looking at these images in the first place. We must also get those who are already viewing this material to stop. Now! That’s why Stop it Now! is working so hard to make people struggling with this type of behaviour aware that there is anonymous and confidential help available – either via the Stop it Now! Helpline or self-help website. We have worked with thousands of men involved in this illegal online behaviour, many after arrest; but a growing number before. Some were simply unaware of the law. Many of them started by looking at adult pornography, but ended up looking at sexual images of increasingly younger people, including children. With the right help, many such men can, and do, stop their illegal and harmful behaviour.”**

The help for offenders to stop looking at illegal images is being provided by Stop it Now! – a child sexual abuse prevention campaign set up by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation in 2002. In the year up to 13 October 2016, 1,615 people with concerns about their online behaviour called the confidential [Stop it Now! Helpline](#) to get advice, information and support. Over the same period, a further 12,057 visited the [Stop it Now! Get-Help website to access self-help resources](#). As a result of the advice they received, callers and web visitors reported taking steps to control their behaviour, including stopping all internet or pornography use, installing controls and filters on devices and informing partners or family members.

The charity’s current UK-wide campaign launched in October 2015. In the past 12 months there have been 3 million online views of campaign films designed to deter illegal behaviour and direct people towards the Helpline and website (1).

In the second year of the campaign, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation will be working closely with professionals within the health and education sector, as well as the police, to encourage more people with concerns about their online sexual behaviour to seek confidential, anonymous help to stop.

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For further information, and to discuss interview opportunities, please contact:

Matt Whitticase (Media and Communications Manager): t: 01372 847169 / 07515 788456
mwhitticase@lucyfaithfull.org.uk

Hannah Mackenzie t: 020 3697 4270, Hannah.Mackenzie@consolidatedpr.com,
LucyFaithfullFoundation@consolidatedpr.com

Notes to Editor:

(1) The campaign films can be viewed on the Stop it Now! Homepage: <http://www.stopitnow.org.uk/> The films are based on key findings from a Lucy Faithfull Foundation survey of men arrested for accessing indecent images of children. The survey identified many of the reasons people both access indecent images, and persist in downloading and sharing them. These include a failure to understand that all indecent images of children under 18 are illegal and a lack of awareness of the harm their actions caused to the children involved, as well as the damage which could be done to their own family and friends should they be arrested. Many expressed a desire to stop, but had little awareness of Stop it Now! which can help. Key messages include:

- viewing or sharing sexual images of anyone under 18 is a crime
- that these aren't "just pictures", children are harmed when they are first made and also when they are viewed
- the many consequences for offenders who come to attention are serious, including arrest, loss of job, loss of family and friends becoming a registered sex offender
- and that confidential and anonymous help to stop is available.

CASE STUDY: An offender's journey to Stop it Now! - 'Sean'

'Sean' first heard about Stop It Now whilst watching BBC news, where he saw a film clip which depicted an offender walking blindly past a series of stop signs before falling into darkness. For years Sean had told himself that his actions were wrong, but he felt powerless to change his ways on his own.

The film prompted him to visit the Stop it Now! website and then build up courage to call the helpline. After explaining his fears, Sean was given advice about steps he could take to reduce the risk of reoffending in future, including visiting the Get Help section of the website and working through the self-help modules.

Sean called back several weeks later and said he felt much more positive about his ability to change. He had confided in his girlfriend, and now only uses the internet when she is there. He has also worked through the online Get Help modules and said **he now understands that looking at indecent images of children is not a victimless crime.** He says this gives him another reason not to lapse back into his old habits.

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. Drawing on expert knowledge about child sexual abuse the charity offers a broad range of services for professionals and members of the public. These include: assessments, intervention and treatment of known offenders, case specific advice and support, training and development courses and workshops, educational programmes for internet offenders and their families, circles of support and accountability, internet safety seminars for schools (teachers, parents and children) and Parents Protect! training for professionals, parents, carers and other adults. It also runs the Stop it Now! Campaign and Helpline (0808 1000 900). www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk, www.stopitnow.org.uk and www.parentsprotect.co.uk

About Stop it Now!

Stop it Now! UK and Ireland is a national campaign, Freephone confidential Helpline and website run by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation. It aims to prevent child sexual abuse by increasing public awareness and empowering people to act responsibly to protect children. Stop it Now! believes that it is the responsibility of all adults to take positive action to prevent the sexual abuse of children. 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 31,500 callers and emailers, who together, made 60,000 contacts. 55% of contacts were from people concerned about their own behaviour. www.stopitnow.org.uk and www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk

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<https://www.facebook.com/stopitnowukandireland>