



**\*\*Embargoed until 00.01 GMT, 1 December 2016\*\***

## **Over 1,400 people from Yorkshire and Humberside seek charity's help to stop online viewing of sexual images of children**

1,456 people from Yorkshire and Humberside visited the Stop it Now! Get Help website in the last 12 months to access online help to stop either their own viewing of online sexual images of children, or that of a loved one.

The Get Help website ([www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk)) is operated by Stop it Now!, a sexual abuse prevention campaign run by child protection charity, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation. The website offers self-help tools and resources to help users address their behaviour and stop looking at online sexual images of children. It also provides information and support to partners and friends of people arrested for, or suspected of, accessing online child abuse images.

In addition, a further 99 men from Yorkshire and Humberside called the confidential Stop it Now! helpline (1) over the same period to get help to stop viewing sexual images of children online. The helpline offers anonymous, effective support for those worried about their own or someone else's online sexual behaviour.

The calls from Yorkshire and Humberside make up 6.7% of the 1,461 calls received from across the UK from adults concerned about their online behaviour during the same 12 month period. And in addition to the 99 men who rang the Stop it Now! Helpline, a further 41 adults from Yorkshire and Humberside rang over the same period to express their concerns about the online behaviour of another adult. These calls are typically from wives or parents. *(A table with a breakdown of caller totals from West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Humberside and North Yorkshire for 2014-15 and 2015-16 is available in Notes to Editor – below)*

The figures for people accessing help through the Stop it Now! helpline and website come at a time when the police are reporting an escalation, across the UK, in online viewing and sharing of child abuse images. In 2013 the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) estimated that as many as 50,000 individuals in the UK were involved in downloading or sharing sexual images of children (2). But in a BBC TV interview in October 2016, National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Lead for Child Protection, Chief Constable Simon Bailey, said that at least 100,000 people in the UK were now regularly viewing online sexual images of children.

### **Safeguarding experts gather in Wakefield to discuss how to protect children in the digital world**

To help address this growing online threat, a major conference takes place in Wakefield today (1 December) to discuss latest developments in preventing online abuse of children. [Safeguarding Children in the Digital World](#) has been organised by West Yorkshire Police in collaboration with the Marie Collins Foundation (3), a UK charity that helps children to recover from sexual abuse and exploitation experienced online. The conference is being attended by over 250 safeguarding practitioners from across the UK and will be chaired by Chief Constable Simon Bailey, the NPCC's Lead on child protection.

Detective Superintendent Darren Minton of West Yorkshire Police, said:

**“This is an excellent opportunity for key strategic partners to come together to focus on the digital world and how offenders are adapting their techniques to groom young people. “By working together we can help to make a real difference.”**

Looking forward to addressing the conference, child sexual abuse prevention expert and founder of Stop it Now!, Donald Findlater, said:

**“Over the past 14 years Stop it Now! has worked with thousands of sex offenders, including many men who had been arrested for viewing sexual images of under 18s online. We help them change their behaviour and get their lives back on a decent track. Most had not thought that others would ever find out - seeing their online lives as somehow separate from the real world. Few had considered the consequences of getting caught. Following arrest, their lives are often in turmoil.**

**“Imagine what it is like for a husband and father to have to tell his wife and children that he has been arrested for viewing sexual images of children online. To have to tell his Mum and Dad. Then having to tell his boss. And then his friends. Most have bitter regrets about the harm they have done to their families, to the victims in the images they viewed, and to themselves. But they also tell us they might never have stopped their illegal online behaviour if they’d not been caught.**

**“We need the tens of thousands of men still viewing these images today to realise that what they are doing is illegal and harmful and to make sure they stop. Here at Stop it Now! we give them all the help we can – by phone and online. And it is confidential. If this is you, please make that call.**

**“But we also want to hear from wives, partners, parents who are worried about a loved one’s sexual behaviour online. We must not turn a blind eye to this behaviour. Confidential help and support is available from Stop it Now! “**

### **Stop it Now’s current UK-wide campaign to tackle the viewing of sexual images of children online**

People from Yorkshire and Humberside accessing help to stop looking at indecent images of children are part of an overall figure of over 15,000 people from across the UK who have taken similar action to stop their offending behaviour since October 2015. Many of these people are seeking help thanks to a Stop it Now! public awareness campaign. The campaign has gained significant attention by releasing a series of innovative films, viewed over 3 million times since the campaign launched in October 2015. The films (4) aim to deter those who are already offending by making clear that:

- There are no grey areas – viewing or sharing a sexual image of someone under 18 is illegal.
- This isn’t a victimless crime – the experience is extremely harmful to the children involved.
- The consequences can be devastating to the family, partners and friends of people who access sexual images of children, and may include: arrest, loss of job, prosecution and becoming a registered sex offender.
- There is confidential help to stop.

The films can be watched on the Stop it Now! Youtube channel [here](#).

The success of the Stop it Now! campaign in encouraging people to get help to stop looking at illegal images has won praise from the police. The NPCC’s Lead on child protection, Simon Bailey, said: **“there are many people who offend or who are yet to offend and want help to stop their**

behaviour; the work of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation is vitally important in supporting these people and giving them access to appropriate services. “

Images (stills) taken from the films are available on request.  
 Audio clips taken from the films are available on request.

-Ends-

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

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**Notes to Editor:**

**Data:**

*Table showing regional breakdown of caller totals from Yorkshire and Humberside for 2015-16 and 2014-15*

15 November 2015 – 14 November 2016 (12 months)		
	Total adult callers concerned about their own online behaviour	Total adult callers concerned about the online behaviour of another adult
North Yorkshire	19	4
South Yorkshire	15	8
West Yorkshire	35	16
Humberside	12	1
Yorkshire*	18	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>41</b>
15 November 2014 – 14 November 2015 (12 months)		
North Yorkshire	19	6
South Yorkshire	7	11
West Yorkshire	27	13
Humberside	13	2
Yorkshire*	30	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>49</b>

\* These callers gave their county as Yorkshire only.

15 November 2015 – 14 November 2016 (12 months)	
City	Visitor totals to Stop it Now! online self-help resources

Leeds	482
Sheffield	413
Bradford	130
Hull	126
York	95
Huddersfield	70
Rotherham	52
Doncaster	50
Wakefield	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1456</b>

- 1) Stop it Now! is a public education campaign run by The Lucy Faithfull Foundation - the only UK-wide charity focused solely on reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. It runs a confidential helpline – **0808 1000 900**. 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.
- 2) This estimate was based on file sharing activity alone, and did not include open web searches or activity in the dark net.

The CEOP threat assessment is available in full [here](#). The 50,000 figure comes from the CEOP threat assessment published in 2013, shortly before CEOP became a Command of the National Crime Agency.

It should be noted that this is an estimate based on available information and intelligence analysis at the time. The relevant paragraph reads: "Although it is clearly not possible to establish a precise figure, CEOP estimates that there were around 50,000 individuals in the UK involved in downloading and sharing IIOC during 2012."

The 50,000 figure was a hypothecated total number based on different data sources and was not a list of individuals.

The most recent NCA threat assessment covering child sexual exploitation and abuse can be found here:

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/560-national-strategic-assessment-of-serious-and-organised-crime-2015/file>

- 3) More information on the work of the Marie Collins Foundation is available via the charity's website: <https://www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk/mcf>
- 4) The campaign 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 caused to the children involved, as

well as the damage to their own family and friends. Many expressed a desire to stop, but had little awareness of organisations like Stop it Now! that can help.

### **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](http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk), [www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk) and [www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://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](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk) and [www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk)

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