

## University Network: Children Challenging Sexual Violence (CCSV)

### Third Briefing paper

#### Introduction

Dear all,

I am aware that this is a strange time to be sending out a briefing paper on the work of the **University Network: Children Challenging Sexual Violence (CCSV)** as Covid-19 impacts on us all. Many of us will be working in isolation, and we will all be personally affected by the virus struggling with the horrible impact on self, family, friends and community. I do hope that you are OK and if there is anything that you think this university network might be able to do to help, please let me know.

Despite the current situation, I am sending the briefing paper as work is continuing and there are some future plans that I'd like to consult colleagues about.

I have divided the briefing paper into three sections:

- (1) A summary from our last webinar (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020) on 'Ethical considerations for universities working with children challenging sexual violence against children'.
- (2) An overview on progress to date with the proposed University Framework: CCSV.
- (3) A request for any further information to be added to '*Get on the Map!*'

If you have any questions or comments or feedback on either of these, please do contact me on [Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk](mailto:Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk)

1. **Summary of our last webinar (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020) on 'Ethical considerations for universities working with children challenging sexual violence against children'**

With fantastic support from colleagues, and in partnership with the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, we ran a webinar on 3<sup>rd</sup> February to address questions about ethical considerations in work with children and young people challenging sexual violence. The slides are available as is the [webinar recording](#).

As noted in the recording, the focus for this webinar arose from previous consultation with colleagues in the network who noted that there were

- inconsistencies in composition and function of ‘ethics committees’ with a focus on natural rather than social science; and questions of whether ethical advice is supportive or detrimental to participatory research;
- a domination of ideas and approaches to ethical considerations from high income countries that might not accommodate issues for low and middle income countries;
- questions about ethics in engagement with children affected by sexual violence and the need to work better in partnership with (I) NGOs and other agencies who may be engaged in direct work with children affected by sexual violence;
- concerns about commitment from senior managers and leaders at the ‘top levels’ of university hierarchies to support research development in this field;
- worries that research into sexual violence against children is overlooked and underexplored in some subject areas such as tourism, business studies, sport;
- under explored questions about researcher welfare: including the need to support staff to better understand and manage the impact of vicarious trauma and; and recognition of support needs for staff who have a diagnosed disability.

You will hear the discussion in the link to the recording above. The webinar included consideration of specific ethical concerns including excellent practice examples from Elisabetta Biffi from the University of Milan Bicocca and tools and resources from the work of Camille Warrington and colleagues from the [International Centre](#) at the University of Bedfordshire. The discussion moved on to look at the development of a University Framework for CCSV (The University Framework CCSV). It then considered possible future activities of the CCSV such as (a) creating new publications and (b) piloting The University Framework in a number of universities across low, middle and high income countries.

The webinar ended with a question and discussion section. I summarise below some of the main themes emerging from this discussion with action points against each:

- The University Framework CCSV might be strengthened by connecting with other existing University policies or frameworks, such as universities safeguarding policies; staff and student wellbeing policies; policies on harassment, specifically sexual harassment.

**Action:**

- ***the University Framework CCSV to cross reference with other relevant policies;***



- ***the potential pilot of the University Framework CCSV to make use of these connections and to give feedback on progress.***
- Researchers undertaking work with children challenging sexual violence need to be aware of any local, national or international legislation that may impact on their access to children, their research activity and the use of their findings. Research into sexual violence against children can be taking place within politically charged settings and these could have significant implications for both researchers and the researched if not appropriately considered and addressed in the planning and enactment of research.  
***Action: the CCSV to establish an online location for members to send case scenarios where the political/legislating framework has been addressed within research with children affected by sexual violence. The CCSV to then consider, possibly with the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, creating a 'checklist' for researchers of considerations of political and legal contexts that they may address when developing their research.***
- There may be links with work that universities are doing about preventing sexual violence on their campuses.  
***Action: Jenny Pearce to link with colleagues working on preventing sexual violence on campuses and explore connections between this work and the CCSV***
- Researchers noted the isolation they often feel when carrying out work on sexual violence against children.  
***Action: ensure that as the CCSV develops, it:***
  - ***facilitates focused discussion on researcher welfare,***
  - ***shares ideas and approaches to worker welfare;***
  - ***supports the development of networks for self-help initiatives.***
- Ethically sound research with children challenging sexual violence often takes place either in partnership with (I) NGOs or is led by (I) NGOs. Universities need to:
  - have partnership arrangements ready for work in partnership with stakeholder agencies that are providing direct services to children;
  - have procedures in place to ensure equally high ethical standards safeguarding children thorough research in partnership between universities and stakeholder agencies supporting children;
  - have clearly defined roles and tasks for researchers and for child care practitioners identifying boundaries between 'research' and 'ongoing practice support' when research takes place in partnership between universities and service providers;



- be open to learning from, and offering learning to, stakeholder agencies with whom they undertake research in partnership.

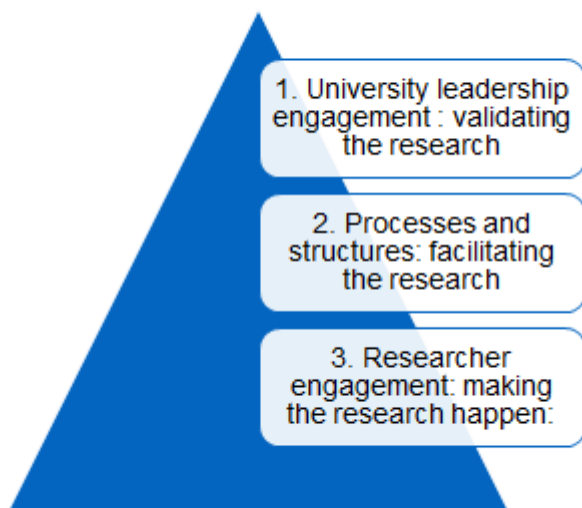
***Action: the CCSV develop a resource bank of sample partnership arrangements and papers on considering ethical dilemmas when Universities are working in partnership with stakeholder agencies on challenging sexual violence against children, particularly including those that address questions of children's participation in both research and service delivery.***

**(2) An overview on progress to date with the proposed University Framework: Children Challenging Sexual Violence (CCSV)**

The University Network CCSV has sent out a draft framework for colleagues to consider for supporting research that challenges sexual violence against children

The draft framework is below.

**DRAFT: Framework for university engagement with challenging sexual violence against children**



## **DRAFT: Framework for university engagement with challenging sexual violence against children**

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### **1. University leadership engagement:**

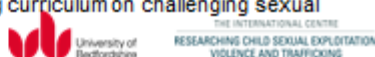
The role of Universities as charitable organizations; Responsibility to challenge the impact of sexual violence within and outside university; awareness of relationship with other safeguarding policies, procedures and legislative requirements; provision of incentives to improve safeguarding children and child protection locally, nationally and globally;

### **2. Processes and structures:**

Reviews of all academic disciplines engagement with the topic area in terms of research and curriculum content; presence of effective ethics committees with awareness of sensitive research with children; policies on researcher wellbeing; knowledge and dissemination of information about funding and dissemination opportunities; partnership arrangements with youth agencies

### **3. Researcher /staff engagement:**

Staff teams with reflective supervision and work group discussions; ; time aware engagement with partner agencies and children; awareness of relationship between personal, local, national and international drivers and challenges; working knowledge of ethical considerations for researching and developing curriculum on challenging sexual violence against children



We will be finalising The Framework CCSV by the end of April 2020. The framework will then be ready for use early May 2020 and we will be looking for Universities to help us to pilot its use and record learning as we go!

Suggestions for improvement to date have been that we create a circle, rather than a triangle showing the integration of each of the steps. It has also been suggested that we incorporate some means of acknowledging the role that stakeholder agencies, who are working with children, play in the delivery of this research.

I will be incorporating these suggestions in the final version of the framework. If you have any further suggestions or comments, please let me know ([jenny.pearce@beds.ac.uk](mailto:jenny.pearce@beds.ac.uk)) by 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

And finally.....

### **(3) A request for any further information to be added to "Get on the map!": The University Network: Children Challenging Sexual Violence**

One of the original aims of the network was to create a map of the world identifying universities who are interested in research activity challenging sexual violence against children.

Importantly, this does not identify any names of academics or practitioners. Universities do not have to be engaged in research activity to “Get on the map!”; just express an interest in the work. The idea was that we could see, at a glance, where interest lay, which subject areas were engaged and perhaps in the longer term, offer up opportunities for networking across subject disciplines and geographical locations.

Titled “*Get on the map!*” this project is now developing. The below includes universities who have, to date, given permission to be noted. This does not reflect all universities engaged with the network, only ones that have, to date, been able to confirm that they are happy to be included on the map. It is likely that the Covid -19 crisis is delaying responses from some who would want to be identified on the map as many more colleagues had already expressed an interest. If you would like your university, or a university you have worked with, to ‘get on the map’ then please could you confirm participation and send me details of


Name of University:

Subject area:


Information to [Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk](mailto:Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk) by 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

To view details on the map please visit [‘Get on the Map!’](#)

**Get on the Map!**



**University Network: Children Challenging Sexual Violence**



To get on the map, contact: [Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk](mailto:Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk)  
Find out more: [our-voices.org.uk/university-network](http://our-voices.org.uk/university-network)



### **In conclusion**

I do hope that the above is of interest to you and your colleagues.

Subject to funding, future activities of the network will include following up on actions above that arose from the webinar on ethical considerations; piloting The University Framework CCSV; developing 'Get on the map!' and links between our work across the globe and across subject disciplines; actively seeking to develop research activity in subject areas where it has, to date, been underdeveloped (with specific focus on sport, tourism and business studies); and collaborating with colleagues in the network to produce a 'Global Handbook : universities challenging sexual violence against children'

Please do keep in touch. It is lovely to be able to share and develop these ideas and this work with colleagues. I appreciate that this is a very difficult time and do so hope that everyone is as OK as possible. Again, if anyone is aware of anything that the network can do to support each other through this difficult time, please do let me know

With all best wishes

Jenny (Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk)