

FURTHER INFORMATION CHIPS (Children in a Place of Safety)

Child Trafficking

A recent report (March 2017), released by the National Crime Agency (NCA) indicated there were 3,805 victims of trafficking referred to the national referral mechanism (NRM). This represents a 17% increase from figures recorded in 2016. Of the total number of victims referred 1,278 were children. This represents a 30% increase from the 982 children identified in 2015.

Modern Slavery, the recruitment of human beings for the purpose of exploitation, is the fastest growing international crime worth an estimated \$150 billion. The UK is a prime destination for traffickers who exploit hundreds of children daily in cannabis factories, on farms, in private houses, in nail salons and in the sex industry. Children are easy targets for criminals to control and exploit and our current systems for trafficked children are severely failing to offer any protection.

Statistics indicate around 60% of trafficked children go missing from local authority care. Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre reported out of 942 trafficked children taken into care over the past three years, 301 went missing in the first 72 hours.

A report authored by ECPAT and Missing People (November 2016) reported that trafficked children and unaccompanied child asylum seekers (UASC) are going missing from UK care homes at an 'alarmingly' high rate. Latest figures show 600 children disappeared last year with more than 200 of them still missing. A quarter of all trafficked children went missing at least once within a 12 month period. Unseen's CHIPS project fundamentally aims to reduce the number of children going missing, reducing their vulnerability and providing them with appropriate support.

In the South West partner agencies have informed us that children do go missing and that social workers, with current caseloads, are not in a position to provide the support that trafficked children need, nor do they have the training, understanding and knowledge to deal with cases of trafficking effectively.

Rationale for Project

It is well-documented that social care departments favour the placement of children with foster carers rather than in residential settings as the former provide greater consistency, a family atmosphere (Vanderfaillie *et al.*, 2015), lower delinquency and behaviour problems (Heflinger *et al.*, 2000) and a lower financial outlay (Barton, 2002).

However, residential care is considered a suitable alternative for children who are very high risk e.g. who exhibit significant emotional and behavioural difficulties. Unseen believes that this will be the case for children who have been trafficked.

Foster care may not be an appropriate option for the most at risk children, but in order to retain the positive aspects of foster care within a group setting, Jones (2009) recommends the use of house-parents. Young people living in group homes with house parents have reported increased over-all satisfaction with their placement compared to staff on rota.

They have commented that house-parents provided “consistency, a family atmosphere and they’re less likely to leave”. It was also found that house-parents offered greater consistency and a lower turnover of caregivers than a staff team. Whilst not usual in the UK as a model used with vulnerable children a family-style care model known as ‘Teaching Family Model’(TFM) is in line with Unseen’s project and has scientific evidence for its effectiveness. In TFM house-parents, usually a married couple, combine with support “assistants” to provide intensive 24/7 care with clinical, medical and educational supervision.

Needs of children who are victims of human trafficking:

The complex psychological needs of children who have been trafficked are likely to include:

- Trauma associated with experiencing substantial harm (physical and sexual) and being removed from their family
- Depression, hopelessness, guilt, shame and low self-esteem
- Problems forming relationships: withdrawal, attachment difficulties, mistrust.
- Behaviour problems: Aggression, self-harm, drug and alcohol use, sexualised behaviour.

It has been identified that the most important aspects of care for children who have been trafficked are:

- Support with boundaries and trust issues
- Stability
- A sense of belonging and family.

In consultation with staff working with children who have been trafficked (in the United States) the most important qualities of carers are outlined as:

- Flexible
- Organised
- Predictable
- Open to learning
- Knowledgeable re social media (due to risk of re-trafficking)
- Able to recognise inappropriate behaviours
- Non-judgemental of other cultures.

Staff described the features of ideal care provision for children who have been trafficked as:

- A continuum from therapeutic group living to foster care to independence
- The transition to independence would be slow
- Provision would include stay at home parents
- Resources would be kept within agency rather than relying on community services. Extensive training relating to trafficking for all staff
- Sufficient information on referral to avoid re-traumatisation.

Our mission is to provide all the young people in our care with safety, hope and choice.

Values and Principles towards Children

The values and principles underpinning our approach to care are:

Child-centred – listening closely to the voice of each young person, and acting upon what they say to inform our action and to continually improve.

Leading by example – having a team who continually demonstrate respect, trustworthiness and dignity in all of their interactions with the young people, the other staff members and visitors to the house.

Flexible – we do not believe that ‘one solution fits all’ and recognise the importance of being able to tailor our service to the needs of each individual.

Multi-agency – encouraging the participation of all external agencies that can add maximum value to the young person and actively help them to build a supportive network of relationships.

Empowerment – ensuring that the home and our care/support structures always empowers the young person by helping them to understand their options, assess the pros and cons and reach a decision themselves. Making choices on behalf of a young person does not ultimately help them with the confidence they need to take control of their own lives.

Equality - ensuring that the services and facilities of the home are accessible and available to all. The support provided should not judge any young person’s circumstance, background or lifestyle. It should not discriminate on the grounds of race, culture, language, religious beliefs, gender, sexuality or disability. Individuality and diversity will be valued and there will be a strong commitment to treat young people fairly.

Quality – striving for excellence and always looking to go above and beyond the standards we are required to meet legally and in terms of good practice. A commitment that every member of the team will always follow through and do what they have said they will do.

Our approach to care evolved thorough research and consultation with experts in child care, child psychology, and knowledge gained directly through five years of experience working with victims of trafficking. These approaches have informed every aspect of the CHIPS house including the structure of the day, the physical environment, staffing/voluntary arrangements and the activities we promote.

Children in a Place of Safety – CHIPS

The aim of CHIPS is to maximise the advantages of foster care, offering a familial environment and the advantages of a residential setting, highly skilled staff and a safe location.

CHIPS is a residential home with a model of care designed specifically to accommodate, safeguard and care for up to three child victims of trafficking, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The gender mix of the house will be determined by the needs and risk assessment process.

The model comprises of an accommodation and care service, operating within a four bedroom family house, which accommodates up to three young people and two live-in volunteer House Parents (a couple). Support and care is also provided through the Service Manager, a team of specialist therapeutic Support Workers, who will be able to provide specialist and tailored support, and a clinical psychologist.

The home will provide a place in which a trafficked child can live in a family home, with parents present, experiencing domestic life in a shared and supportive environment whilst also benefiting from professional and enhanced support services offered by Unseen's highly trained team.

House parents, supported by paid staff, will offer trafficking-specific support (support workers), education and therapy on-site to up to 3 young people (16+)

We would envisage young people residing with us for up to 6 months.

Unseen want to make the mainstream, existing system better for this population group and work towards providing a range of options that are available to trafficked children.

The basic provision, that isn't working for this population group is financed by social care placements. We want to evidence our model working and then be able to present this to social care commissioning as a validated therapeutic placement and a viable, sustainable option for trafficked children that meets all the criteria necessary under the children's act. We aim for this project to then become part of a local authority's placement framework.

NB: This project will be considered by Local Authorities as an Enhanced and Specialised Supported lodgings service. Support Lodgings are not regulated within the meaning of the terms the Care Standards Act 2000 and are not, therefore, inspected by OFSTED. For the purposes of this project we are using the definition of the The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Communities and Local Government) Supporting People publication Guide to Accommodation and Support Options (2003). Who describe supported lodgings as a service which "can allow an individual to live in a family home, experiencing domestic life in a shared and supportive environment".

Aims of CHIPS

The overall aims of this service are to:

- Increase positive outcomes for young people who've been trafficked
- Reduce the number of trafficked young people who go missing from care
- Increase the number of trafficked young people who have access to appropriate accommodation, support and care.
- Reduce young people's short-term and long-term vulnerabilities
- Provide a safe family environment within which trafficked young people can develop, grow and become independent, productive individuals.
- Reduce the number of trafficked young people who become re-exploited

This service is designed to facilitate safety, hope and choice. We want to see the following positive outcomes for all the trafficked young people who access CHIPS:-

1) Increased feelings of safety and security.

Young people will;

- be safely housed in a loving, caring and protective environment
- no longer experience physical and emotional violence and abuse

- be provided the space to safely recover from trauma and physical injury
- feel less anxious, stressed, experience fewer panic attacks and sleep better
- begin to regain feelings of trust
- be less likely to go missing

2) **Re-gain feelings of hope towards their future and a belief that they can achieve their dreams.**

Young people will;

- feel an increase in their self-belief and capacity to achieve
- gain new experiences that are joyful, reducing feelings of depression and helplessness
- see their skills increase and potential obstacles reduce
- understand services available to them and how to access them
- process and accept past experiences, enabling them to move forward

3) **Gain confidence to make choices and express themselves.**

Young people will;

- increase their confidence and self-esteem
- gain the ability to make choices and state preference
- learn how to map options, balance pros and cons and reach their own informed decision
- reduce factors which make them vulnerable to exploitative relationships
- regain a sense of control over their life
- develop a positive mental attitude
- increase integration with their peer groups

Young people being referred

These are an indicative list of issues we believe young people may be facing. The home will likely have young people who may have:

- Specific medical needs
- Unclear/unknown medical prognosis
- Speech/language difficulties
- Need for special educational provision
- Developmental progress issues
- Been physically abused
- Been emotionally abused
- Been sexually abused
- Been neglected
- Been abandoned
- Over sexualised behaviour towards adults and other children
- Overt behavioural difficulties
- Difficulties developing connections and relationships
- Difficulties bonding
- A different ethnicity to the house parents

- A different faith/religion to the house parents
- A complex legal situation
- A lack of information regarding family history, current family situation or family health issues

About Unseen

Unseen was founded in 2008 with a mission to work towards a world without slavery wherever it existed and provide safety, hope and choice to survivors. To achieve this goal, we are both evidence based and delivery focused; a highly practical approach that has made us leaders within our field, creating models of best practice nationally and internationally.

We work in three main ways:

1. Equipping: we deliver training to frontline professionals, such as the police and health workers, so they have the confidence and knowledge to identify victims. We train around 1,000 staff annually and create tailored action plans for them so that there is a coordinated response within and between organisations.

2. Supporting: in June 2011 Unseen opened its first safe-house in the Bristol area for women survivors of human trafficking. As the only safe-house in the South West for women and one of only two in the country offering 24-hour support, it is vital to ensuring women survivors begin to recover from their ordeal. Then in 2016, we opened our new men's safe-house, also in the South West.

We specialise in helping the most vulnerable survivors with complex needs. We offer access to medical care, legal support, counselling, therapeutic activities and emotional support. In-house courses include maths, English and computing, plus sessions on safe relationships and confidence-building. We also encourage men and women to take up training, education and volunteering in the community.

When it's time for survivors to move on, our dedicated Resettlement and Outreach service (RIO) supports survivors to reintegrate back into society and continue their recovery. Unseen's Resettlement Service and safe-houses have been hailed as models of best practice by the Home Office and Ministry of Justice.

To date, we've supported over 250 men and women from 37 different countries.

At the end of last year, Unseen also launched a new national Modern Slavery Helpline. Aimed at providing advice and support to potential victims, members of the public, businesses and frontline professionals, it has already received over 800 calls, of which 291 are being followed up as cases of modern slavery.

3. Influencing: we believe the only way to tackle slavery is by working collaboratively. We help shape policy by working with law enforcement, local authorities, government agencies, NGOs, businesses and individuals to share information and create joined-up responses to trafficking, not only in the UK but also worldwide.

Locally, we work closely with Avon and Somerset Police (supporting officers to plan and execute operations to raid massage parlours, nail-bars and cannabis factories), plus Bristol City Council, legal and judiciary representatives and local authorities. Unseen is the driving force behind a regional Anti-Slavery Partnership (ASP) in the South West, bringing together all five police forces in the region to tackle adult and child trafficking. We are now looking to replicate this model across the country.

Nationally we work with National Policing, The Salvation Army, Home Office Visa and Immigration Services, UK Human Trafficking Centre, The Modern Slavery Unit (Home Office) and the National Crime Agency. Unseen also sits on the EU Civil Society Platform, which enables us to help shape local, national and EU policy at the highest level.

Unseen's Values

Collaborative

We acknowledge our own areas of expertise, but actively encourage contributions from others. We continually seek to work alongside people to build lasting partnerships that are able to challenge and support each other going forward.

Honourable

We recognise the best in people, and actively promote an environment of respect for each other and our partners. Where we encounter the dishonourable treatment of individuals we are compelled to act to restore honour, dignity and value. We are straightforward, trustworthy and truthful in all our work.

Ambitious

We go further than what is expected of an action based charity. We strive for the highest standards in all areas of the organisation. Our conduct, treatment of others and provision should aim to exceed expectations.

Dynamic

We are driven by the plight of others to deliver results that change lives. Through an energetic and bold approach, we encourage innovation to drive solutions forward. We are motivated, enthusiastic and maintain a positive attitude.

Insightful

We are knowledgeable, informed and up to date. We always seek to identify the genuine need and make decisions based on the thorough investigation and scrutiny of all details. We consider the whole story and look at possibilities from all perspectives, both near and afar.