



**Date:** Tuesday 21 January 2020  
**Time:** 9.30am – 1pm  
**Venue:** Ty Seren, Whitchurch High School (Upper School), Penlline Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff, CF14 2XJ.

## **County Lines**

### **Exploring the vulnerabilities and risks to children and young people in care**

#### **Overview**

County lines refers to the expansion of criminal, drug dealing gangs from cities to smaller towns and rural areas. These gangs will specifically exploit the vulnerable, including children and young people in care at all points of their drug supply routes. This seminar will help attendees understand the methodologies of county lines whilst identifying the vulnerabilities and risks to young people in care.

#### **Key Speakers**

##### **Drugs and Gangs**

##### **Helen King, Director of Education - Praesidio Safeguarding**

Criminal gangs will exploit the vulnerable, including children and young people looked after, as well as those with mental health or addiction problems. They are groomed with the promise of gifts, money, alcohol and friendship. However, they can quickly become isolated from their carers, friends, family and support networks, falling under the control of gangs through substance misuse, threats and violence.

This seminar will provide a foundation for attendees to understand the nature of gangs, why young people in care become involved in them and the behaviours and exploitation that they may be subject to.

Helen was the founding Head of Education and then the Head of Communications at the National Crime Agency's CEOP command. Helen has recently completed a campaign on County Lines for the National Crime Agency. Her expertise, up-to-date information and data will be shared through this event.

##### **Schools and Exclusions**

##### **Siriol Burford, Regional Lead PDG for children and young people looked after – Central South Consortium**

Recent studies suggest that exclusion from school appears as a highly significant trigger point for the escalation of county lines involvement for children and young people in care. Pupils with poor behaviour and low attainment are particularly vulnerable, as gangs will specifically target those who are excluded from school to groom them.

Presenting from an educational perspective, this talk will highlight the significant role of the teacher as a trusted adult and will explore the importance of building positive therapeutic relationships with children and young people in care. The talk will also raise awareness of the current issues that schools face in tackling county lines and how and where to access support and guidance.

Siriol's current remit involves improving the educational outcomes for care experienced children and young people. Previously to this, Siriol led on the Adverse Childhood Experiences work for the Police and Public Health Wales for educational settings and for the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office in which she led on a joint project between South Wales Police, the Police Commissioner and Barnardo's to appoint child advocates.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

**Dr Sophie Hallett - School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse that can happen to any child or young person – regardless of their background, age, gender, race or sexuality or where they live. However, it is known that children and young people whom are looked after are more vulnerable and at higher risk of experiencing child sexual exploitation.

Sophie's specialist field is the study of child sexual exploitation and she is significantly involved in the development of CSE policy and guidance in Wales. She will be facilitating a workshop based on the key findings of her current research and how this work will help to address gaps in knowledge in relation to prevention, intervention and solutions to this complex problem.

## **Who should attend**

This seminar is suitable for foster carers, special guardians, social workers, team managers, teachers and school staff, health professionals, residential/supported accommodation workers and housing associations, practitioners working with children and young people in and leaving care, youth justice and substance misuse teams, supported accommodation and housing association staff.

## **Booking your place**

To book your place, please register for the event at [Eventbrite](#).

If you work for an organisation and would prefer to be invoiced, please email [jessica.jones@fostering.net](mailto:jessica.jones@fostering.net) or telephone 029 20440940.

Please ensure to have a purchase order number to hand when making your booking. This should be obtained from your finance department.

**Price** £40.00 + VAT per person

## **Access and parking**

The venue is located within easy reach of the M4 J32 and the A470. It is also accessible by bus and is within walking distance of Llandaff North railway station. Car parking is available in two Pay and Display car parks nearby.