

Safeguarding Newsletter 5

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'Exposure' documentary

Colleagues will hopefully be aware that BSA was asked to contribute to a recent ITV documentary on abuse, particularly sexual abuse, in boarding schools. BSA was represented by Chief Executive, Robin Fletcher. Following the documentary BSA has continued to develop our relationship with NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood) and has been contacted by individual survivors. Please see below for details of training NAPAC will be providing for BSA. In addition, a "help" page is now available on BSA website for schools receiving disclosures from survivors, **which can be accessed here.**

Following requests from some member schools, BSA has now issued a Safeguarding Statement. This is available as a signed pdf with related links **by clicking here.**

UK GOVERNMENT OUTLINES STRENGTHENED PLANS TO TACKLE CHILD ABUSE

The UK Government has issued a response to the 2016 consultation "Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect", **available here**, which included questions on mandatory reporting. Despite introducing measures to "improve joint-working and decision making", which BSA certainly welcomes, there will be no introduction of mandatory reporting, nor indeed of the other proposal, a "duty to act". BSA believes that, regardless of the consultation outcome, every boarding practitioner has a clear "duty to act" on any concerns. This is supported not only by safeguarding and child protection practice in schools, but also by the requirements and expectations of the BSA **Commitment to Care Charter** which, in the light of this consultation response, the documentary above and the findings of the report from the USA below, is more relevant than ever before. A full statement will be issued in this Friday's main BSA Newsletter.

PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

TABS, our sister organisation in the USA, has kindly shared a copy of the joint TABS/ NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools) report on preventing and responding to child abuse. As with the Australian report before Christmas, BSA recommends responding to each finding in a reflective, self-critical manner. **The full report can be accessed here**, and a brief **BSA summary of the main points here**, but the following lines from the report will hopefully resonate with member schools worldwide:

- Fixated abusers work hard to be likable. Popularity and likability are often confused with trustworthiness. When a fixated abuser is accused, victims protect them, parents refuse to believe the accusations, authorities discount the reports, communities support the predator, and juries acquit
- It is a common misconception that children lie about being sexually abused. Researchers have found that false reports are statistically uncommon, and estimates range from less than 1 percent to 10 percent of cases →

- Some schools have responded to incidents of educator sexual misconduct in ways that have further harmed survivors and failed to protect future students from abuse...Other schools, by responding promptly, equitably, and transparently when incidents of misconduct came to their attention, were able to help victims find restitution and healing and strengthen the long-term health and resilience of the school.

XANAX

BSA has been made aware of a growing concern about the recreational use of the prescription drug Xanax, which has the brand name Alprazolam, which is prescribed to treat anxiety. It has become a popular recreational drug used illegally, and was the subject of a feature on the BBC "Victoria Derbyshire" programme. BSA is grateful to Drug Sense UK for providing some up to date guidance, which is available [through this link on the BSA website](#). BSA would also be grateful to receive, in strictest confidence, information of any specific concerns in member schools, so that we can keep the sector abreast of any developments.

ENERGY DRINK SALES BANNED FOR UNDER-16S

The major UK supermarkets, Asda, Aldi, the Co-op, Lidl, Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsbury's and Waitrose have banned the sale of caffeine drinks (containing 150mg of caffeine per litre or more) to anyone under 16. BSA supports this development, but colleagues will be aware that boarders buying tuck during their town leave quite often gravitate towards other budget suppliers, so continued vigilance is advised.

NSPCC CONCERNS ABOUT ALCOHOL ABUSE BY PARENTS

The NSPCC has reported a 30% increase in calls to their helpline relating to concerns about the wellbeing of children who may be affected by parents misusing alcohol or drugs. They are now receiving on average 200 calls a week. [Click here to access the report on their website](#)

BSA SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

BSA has developed bespoke safeguarding training for practitioners in boarding schools. As well as covering the essential items such as the legal framework, signs and symptoms of abuse and knowing what action to take, the training also takes a boarding specific focus, and considers how staff working in boarding can best protect themselves. The training is delivered by BSA Head of Safeguarding and Standards, Dale Wilkins. Although the training can be tailored to each individual audience, a full morning or full afternoon is recommended so that the full content can be delivered. An online resource for those "hard to reach" boarding colleagues is in development. To enquire about booking for the summer or for the autumn term, please contact dale@boarding.org.uk

OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

NAPAC is providing training to professionals working in schools in how to respond effectively to disclosures from survivors of abuse. The training will be in central London on May 14, 2018, and is being offered at £125 per delegate.

Co-author of the recent **Education for a Connected World framework**, Karl Hopwood, is delivering training on the new guidance, and on wider internet safety issues on May 25, 2018.

Please save the date also for the BSA annual Safeguarding conference, which will be at the Courthouse Hotel in Central London on November 21. There will be information about a bespoke prep school event, in conjunction with IAPS, very soon.

To book or for further details of any of these opportunities, please access the BSA website, or contact bethan@boarding.org.uk