



CSE Aware bulletin

Issue 2: Safety

Women who sell or exchange sex find their safety constantly challenged not only by the violent behaviours of punters and pimps, but also by the abuse they may encounter from partners, family and friends, as well as the stigma that remains in our society. This is why having to consider the risk and fear of harm - and taking steps to minimise these - is an integral part of their lives.

Following on from our [housing bulletin](#), this month the focus is on safety. Specifically, how abuse and violence manifest in all aspects of the lives of women who sell or exchange sex and the impact on their wellbeing. In this issue you will find an interview with a support worker from Another Way, insights on abuse and violence toward women who sell sex and a wealth of safety information and research for both workers and women.

We hope you find this bulletin helpful and that it opens up reflections on how best to support women to access the services they need.

The CSE Aware Resource Worker

“I don't know if you can make [selling sex] safer for the women. I don't think you really can. You can just make the girls aware that there is help there if they need it, there are services. There are ways out.”

– Katie, *Inside Outside*



Safety insights

Abuse and violence when selling or exchanging sexual activity



It is well-known that women involved in the 'sex industry' are at heightened risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse; and many may have a prior history of abuse, including childhood abuse, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The risks that women face when selling or exchanging sex and the trauma they may carry can impact on their needs, the level of support required and whether they access support. Read on to find out the issues affecting the safety of women who sell or exchange sex.

[Read more](#)

A WORKER'S PERSPECTIVE

Another Way

We spoke to Zara Wynn, a support worker at Edinburgh-based service [Another Way](#), to discuss the risks and harms that women selling sex can face in different settings, their support needs and removing barriers for women to disclose abuse and get the support they need.

[Read more](#)

A worker's perspective



with
Another
Way

ON THE GROUND

Violence against women services supporting women who sell or exchange sex in Scotland

Our colleague Heather did a survey of women's aid groups and rape crisis

centres in Scotland to find out whether women selling or exchanging sex access their services, the specific experiences of selling and exchanging sex and the needs women have. In this blog she describes her findings.

[Read more](#)



Safety resources

These resources were developed for women involved in selling or exchanging sex. You can share them with women so they can consider safety planning and/or read them yourself to consider how to support women to create their own safety plans:

- [Encompass: Safety planning leaflet](#) - available in [Polish](#) & [Romanian](#).
- [Think safety when exchanging sex - Vice Versa safety tips](#)
- [Ugly Mugs - app to report buyers/ client's behaviour](#)
- [Client eye - app to report buyers/ client's behaviour](#)
- [Safety tips for sex workers](#)
- [The Esther Project safety tips](#)
- [Beyond the Gaze - Safety and privacy for online sex workers](#)

Safety research and information

- [CLiCK bitesize - online safety](#)
A training resource exploring the safety needs of women involved in the 'sex industry'. Includes PowerPoint slides and training notes.
- [CLiCK Cast Episode 3: Online safety](#)
This podcast episode by CLiCK Scotland discusses how selling/exchanging sex online, women's safety concerns and what the law says. See show notes.
- [Encompass Focus On... briefings](#)
These briefings are based on the snapshot of Encompass services and the needs presented by the 150 women they support. Each leaflet includes a section relevant to safety. They can be found under the 'CSE briefings 2022' section.
- [Assisting Trafficked Women - best practice principles](#)
- [Working Girls: Abuse or Choice in Street-Level Sex Work? A Study of Homeless Women in Nottingham](#)

- [Violence against sex workers in the UK](#)
- [Umbrella Lane Needs Assessment – Summary September 2020](#)
- ['I feel trapped' – WISE Women report on public sexual harassment](#)

“When I first started, I didnae really cope 'cos I was still like scared. No-one ever gave us no safety tips. Well, a couple of wee tips. One girl that I know says to like carry tweezers or even a wee pair of like a nail file with scissors. That was my safety. I'd bring my condoms obviously, something to protect yourself. A rape alarm. I wasn't prepared for that life, not at all. If anything did happen, I didnae have any'hing to protect myself wi'. I had a nail file. That was it.”

– Natalia, *Inside Outside*



Events and training

CSE AWARE EVENT

Safety and women involved in selling or exchanging sex



Safety
and women involved in
selling or exchanging sex

27 July 2022
11:30am - 1pm

A free event for front-line workers and support services



27 July, 11:30am - 1pm

Our second CSE Aware event will complement this bulletin, offering an introduction to the safety and support needs of women involved in selling or exchanging sex in Scotland, as well as examples of good practice when responding to those needs. There will be a mix of presentations and speaker inputs along with the opportunity for attendees to participate through polls, questions and case studies.

[Register here](#)

ONLINE TRAINING

Alongside? Exploring tools to support women in the sex industry

13 October 2022 @ 10am

Beyond the Streets are offering an interactive session exploring engaging with women in various contexts and how we can support women to make the change they are looking for.

[Register here](#)

Interesting reads

[Landlord jailed following first sex-for-rent conviction in England](#)

[PODCAST: Why should youth workers be talking about porn?](#)

[Third of revenge porn cases dropped by victims in England](#)

[Prostitution, racism and colonialism](#)

[UK's visa schemes 'creating and heightening' trafficking and exploitation risks](#)

[Women's bodies during wartime, but not only.](#)

Updates from services

Homelessness charity launches women's harm reduction app

Designed for women, by women, the By My Side app features resources such as mental health guidance, support for those affected by domestic or sexual violence, and

information for women who sell/exchange sex.

[Read more](#)



Support launched for migrant women who are experiencing abuse and are at risk of destitution

Glasgow Women's Aid have launched a new service for migrant women who are experiencing any form of abuse or violence who have No Recourse to Public Funds and need a safe place to stay.

[Read more](#)

Leaflets available for Ukrainian refugees at risk of trafficking and exploitation

Created by TARA and JustRight Scotland, the leaflets can help refugees to better understand the role of a home sponsor and what to do if they are in a situation that feels uncomfortable. The leaflet is available in Ukrainian and Russian.

[Read more](#)

New HIV PrEP resources for women who sell sex

HIV PrEP is one of a range of options to prevent the transmission of HIV and there are now new resources for most at risk groups, including women who exchange sex for payment.

[Read more](#)

Creative spotlight

Unique pottery challenges the myths of female prostitution

'And the Door Opened,' is a collection of pots, made in partnership with women@thewell, a service based in Kings Cross that provides support to women in prostitution and those at risk. The pots illustrate the lives of the women they work with, based on accounts provided by the women themselves.

[Explore the artworks here](#)



THEATRE PLAY: Salamander

This year's Edinburgh Fringe will feature a play which tells the story of the brutal murder of Sheila Anderson, a woman involved in street prostitution, in 1983 and

how this led to the introduction of the first Prostitution Liaison Officer in Edinburgh.

[Read more](#)

“I used to find out about the services there, you know the places where you can get free condoms and you have access to nurses and stuff like that ...

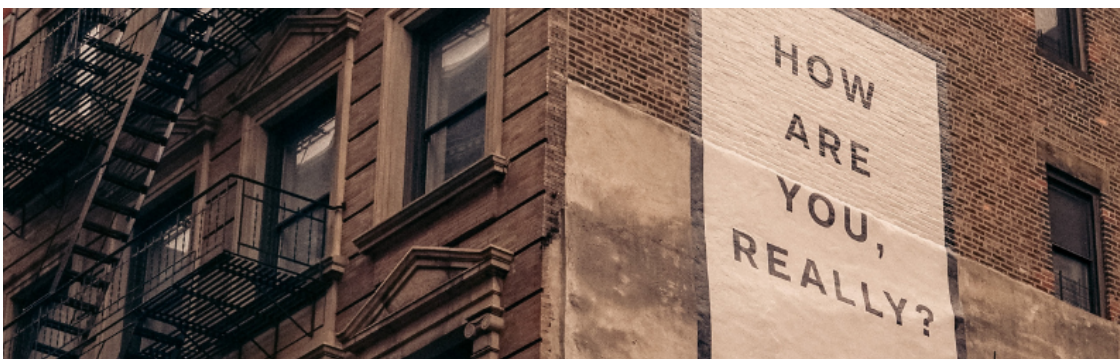
There is one that stands out from the rest, it was the best one I ever went to. The reason for that was honestly the woman who worked there, she was just so lovely ... You didn't feel judged. She just used to make you feel so normal really, she would have really done anything for any of the women I think, if you needed something, she would bend over backwards to make sure you'd get it. She had that kind of attitude and was really compassionate, really understanding.”

– Barbie, *Outside*



Grab a cuppa, let's talk about...

Why workers' wellbeing is central to trauma-informed practice



A crucial element of responding to trauma, and one which very often is missing, is the wellbeing of staff. The Scottish National Trauma Training Framework recognises that workers' past experience of abuse and trauma can impact on their capacity to respond to people affected by trauma.

This statement becomes even more relevant when we see that there is a high level of adverse childhood experiences among the Scottish population. The 2019 Scottish Health Survey [showed](#) that 71% of adults reported having experienced at least one adverse childhood experience, the most common being verbal abuse (47 %), physical abuse (28%) and domestic violence (24%).

In other words, the chances that staff within services may carry traumatic experiences of abuse from childhood, not to mention situations like domestic abuse

and sexual violence during adult life, are very high. This is why healing from trauma is as vital for workers as it is to the people they support. This doesn't mean that people who carry trauma are less capable of being a supportive worker. Indeed, we all carry some level of trauma to a greater or lesser extent. Yet it is essential that any trauma-informed service, and indeed any organisation, has adequate training, supervision and support in place for its staff.

When these support mechanisms are lacking or inefficient, the trauma reactions of staff can increase. Like we have seen throughout the pandemic, more staff will [experience](#) burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, and vicarious trauma.

One of such mechanisms is "support and supervision," which [as we saw in our previous bulletin](#), is often the first thing that goes when staff workload increases. We want to reflect and talk more about what good support and supervision is and what workers feel would be effective and we would really love your help with this: please use the section below to tell us three things that you think are key in good s + s. On our next bulletin we will discuss the key principles of effective support and supervision and share some of your anonymised responses.

Over to you!

Tell us: what does effective support and supervision look like for you?



Follow the link or scan the QR code to tell us 3 words that for you describe what would be good and effective support and supervision at work.

Share your thoughts

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