

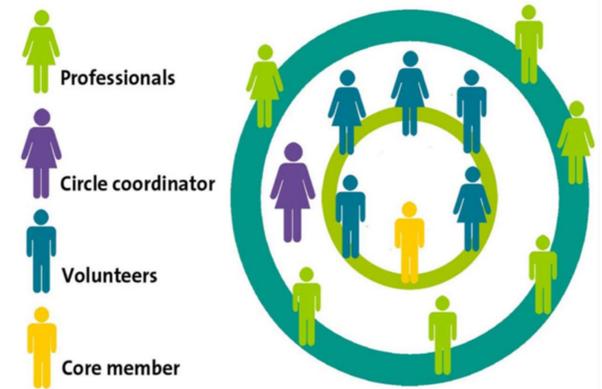
# An Evaluation of Young People's Circles of Support and Accountability.

## Introduction

- The Safer Living Foundation, a charity dedicated to reducing sexual (re)offending, began running Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) for young people aged 10-21 in 2017 (YPCoSA).
- CoSA are made up of a circle of volunteers that provide psychological, social and practical support to a core member (CM) who has a sexual conviction as they begin to reintegrate back into the community over approximately 12-18 months.
- CoSA are found to be effective in reducing sexual recidivism by 83% (Wilson, Cortoni & McWhinnie, 2009<sup>1</sup>).
- Around a third of child sexual abuse is committed by other young people (Hackett, 2011<sup>2</sup>), implying a need for an intervention.
- The establishment of YPCoSA could address this need, therefore the current research aims to provide the outcome and process evaluation required to validate this CoSA model.
- This poster therefore presents preliminary data from an ongoing longitudinal study.

This evaluation aims to:

1. Examine the effectiveness of YPCoSA across a range of outcome variables, including dynamic risk factors for young people with harmful sexual behaviour and reoffending rates.
2. To explore the experiences of those involved in the YPCoSA.
3. To contribute to best evidence-based practice for the implementation and evaluation of YPCoSA.



The management and running of CoSA take a multidisciplinary approach.

## Method

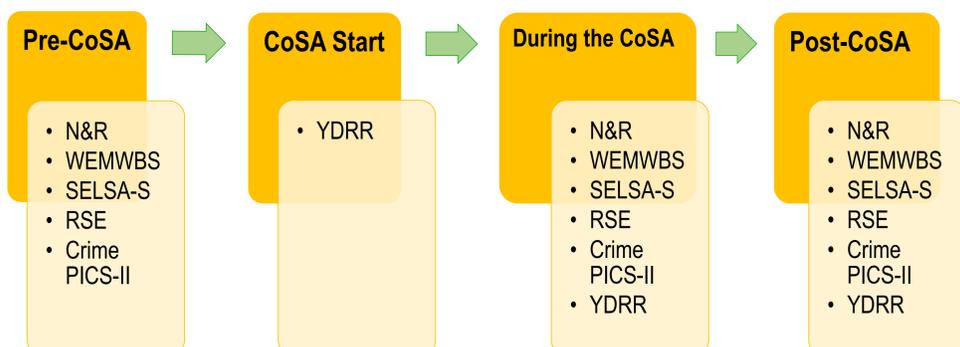
### Participants

Core Member	Age	Offence	Volunteers	Circle started	Estimated end date
W	16	Rape	3	2017	2018
Aa	18	Rape & sexual assault	2	2017	2019
Bb	18	Accessing prohibited images	2	2017	2019
Dd	18	Penetrative sex with girl aged 13-15	3	2017	2018
LI	20	Indecent images of children	4	2018	2019

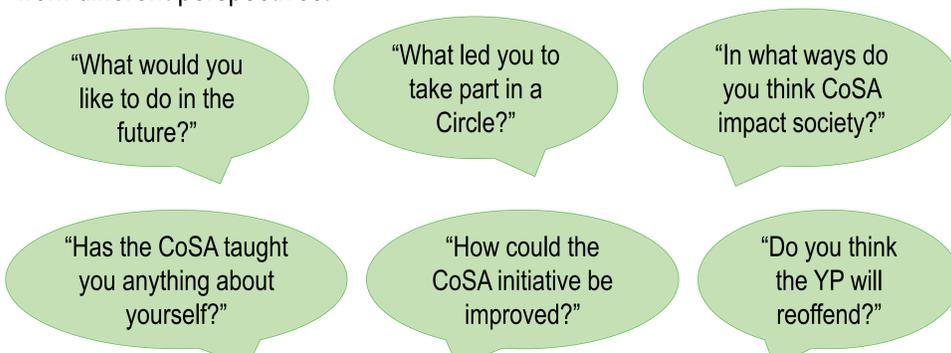
### Measures and procedure

Quantitative measures include the following psychometrics taken at particular time points by coordinators:

- Crime PICS-II (Frude et al., 1994<sup>3</sup>);
- Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965<sup>4</sup>);
- Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (short) (SELSA-S; DiTommaso et al., 1999<sup>5</sup>);
- Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS; Tennant et al., 2007<sup>6</sup>);
- Youth Dynamic Risk Review (YDRR; adapted from Prentky & Righthand, 2003<sup>7</sup>);
- A bespoke Needs and Resources tool (N&R).



Qualitative interviews are also conducted with the CM, the CM's parent/guardian and volunteers to explore the individual experience of being involved in a CoSA from different perspectives.



## Data Analysis

### Quantitative Data

- Early quantitative data has been collected and will be analysed using SPSS.
- Plans for analysis include statistical tests to determine changes in psychometric scores and measures of risk over time, and the significance of these will be complimented by descriptive statistics on demographic data.

### Qualitative Data

- Interviews with YPCoSA volunteers have begun and interviews with the Young People (core members) are planned.
- Qualitative analysis is underway.
- Thematic analysis (TA) will be used to understand and interpret the individual's experience of being involved with a YPCoSA.

## Preliminary Results

- The initial quantitative and qualitative data we have collected are in preparation and under analysis.
- Preliminary emergent themes focus around:



## Potential Implications

Intended outcomes:

- That we uncover whether YPCoSA have an effect on psychological and social wellbeing, and both sexual and general (re)offending rates.

Applications:

- The quantitative strand could validate the effectiveness and reliability of the YPCoSA model as a rehabilitative intervention;
- The qualitative strand could inform a process evaluation to reform the model.

Extended impact:

- Improved knowledge and awareness of rehabilitating people with sexual convictions;
- Reduction in rates of (re)offending;
- Adoption and establishment of more YPCoSA nationally and internationally;
- Dissemination and funding to achieve these aims.

## References

1. Wilson, R.J., Cortoni, F., & McWhinnie, A.J. (2009). Circles of Support & Accountability: A Canadian National Replication of Outcome Findings. *Sexual Abuse*, 21, 412-430.
2. Hackett, S. (2011). Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours. *Children Behaving Badly?: Peer violence between Children and Young people*, 121-135.
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5. DiTommaso, E., & Brannen-McNulty, C. (1999). *Validation of the short version of the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (SELSA)*. University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada.
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7. Prentky, R., & Righthand, S. (2003). *Juvenile sex offender assessment protocol- II (J-SOAP- II) manual*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.