THE AMBIGUITY OF JUVENILE SEXUAL OFFENDERS

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this dissertation was to explore, explain and evaluate the responses of professional organisations when they have to coordinate a multi-agency response to deal with juvenile sexual offenders. Past literature has often ignored the issue of juvenile sexual offenders and therefore, this dissertation has provided a critical literature review which has attempted to rectify this problem. The findings of this dissertation showed that whilst there has been an attempt to coordinate a multi-agency response, the government has jeopardised this response by the introduction of difficult and confusing laws, policies and organisational arrangements. This has affected juvenile sexual offenders to their detriment, as practitioners have to negotiate the ambiguity of these diverse policies and legislations, and this has put at danger the arrangements already in place for juvenile sexual offenders. However, there has been at attempt to resolve this predicament and practitioners, in Greater Manchester, have established the AIM (Assessment Intervention Moving-on) project. The AIM project has successfully strengthened this multi-agency response and improved policies and practices, for the organisations that have to deal with juvenile sexual offenders. But, several problems have emerged within this multi-agency response and the government still have a lot of work to do, in order to improve the services for juvenile sexual offenders. As a result, items for consideration and future recommendations for policy-makers have been based on these problems.

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Chapter 1: An Introduction to Juvenile Sexual Offenders

This dissertation will provide a critical literature review, which has been designed to explore, explain and evaluate the responses of vital, professional organisations when they are obliged to coordinate a multi-agency response to deal with the issue of juvenile sexual offenders and these organisations include the police, social services and youth offending teams. However, before this, this dissertation will describe and clarify numerous factors, which includes firstly; how the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has offered the background to all the further legislations, which have been activated in the UK: secondly; how the actions of practitioners have been prescribed by the policies, which relate to three specific areas including child welfare and protection, youth justice and sexual offending: and thirdly; how the government's responses to youth crime has affected juvenile sexual offenders.

It is a useful starting point for this dissertation to introduce and provide a brief summary of sexual assault, before providing a background about juvenile sexual offenders and exploring the relevant theories that relate to why juveniles may commit sexual assault. This chapter will conclude by exploring the methodology, which has been used in this dissertation and clarifying the remaining structure.

1.1. The Dilemma of Juvenile Sexual Offenders

Children are being sexually assaulted in every country around the world and 'sexual assault is now recognized as one of the more significant problems in modern Western society …' (Barbaree and Langton, 2006: 1), with experts stating that the seriousness '… of the problem of sexual assault is the result of the number of individuals who are victimized and the degree of harm they suffer by their victimization' (ibid). In fact, the research into the topic of child victims of sexual assault has been considerable. But, despite this, the statistics in this area have never been easy to obtain, especially since '… there is no agreed definition of child sexual abuse upon which to base an estimate of its incidents …' (Morgan and Zedner, 1992: 7). However, the most commonly used definition defines child sexual assault as '… the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violates the social taboos of family roles' (Richards, 1998: 1). These activities can range from indecent exposure and fondling of genitals to buggery, oral and vaginal intercourse and rape.

In Britain today, statistics vary because of the difficulty of gathering current information on sexual assault of children, particularly since '… it is still a greatly under-reported crime' (Home Office, 2007). But, reports have suggested that '… exposure to some form of unwanted sexual experience during childhood is by no means uncommon' (Fergusson and Mullen, 1999: 95) and estimates (based on adults recalling events in their childhood) have declared that in the region of 15-30 per cent of females and 5-15 per cent of males have reported some form of exposure to sexual assault. However, 'as child abuse becomes more widely recognized and identified, and media attention grows, more and more survivors of abuse are coming to therapists … for help' (Walker, 1992: 3-4) and many practitioners now

suspect that the estimates of child sexual assault are significantly greater than was previously understood. What's more, these statistics have allowed practitioners to realise that this is a major problem which causes massive distress, psychological ill-health, unhappiness and vast developmental damage. Therefore, they have argued that what-ever the complications in defining assault and in reaching an agreement on the accurate figure of child abuse cases, these impacts should be enough to shock society to recognize an undeniable fact that abuse of children exists and that it is not an unusual occurrence, especially since 'the sexual abuse of children has been discovered and rediscovered throughout history' (Olafson, Corwin and Summit, 1993 cited in Fergusson and Mullen, 1999: 2).

In fact, during the first half of the 20th century, there was little interest in the topic and despite the publications of several surveys in the 1940s and 1950s that indicated a considerable occurrence of sexual assault, the '… accusations of sexual abuse originating from children were interpreted either as maliciousness, or more commonly, as the product of the child's fantasy life' (Glaser and Frosh, 1993: ix). These allegations were seen as instances of children's failure to differentiate between their own sexual desires and reality, and this resulted in '… most cases of child sexual abuse being overlooked, even when a child tried to tell someone about what was happening …' (ibid). It was not until a decade later that interest once again focused on the issue of child sexual assault, when adult women provided accounts of their own personal experiences of child abuse. These accounts were often directly, or indirectly, linked to topics emerging from the women's movement and '… the voice of the sexually abused child belonged to the adult survivor and, through her, to the women's movement and the therapist' (ibid). This attracted the media's attention and 'sexual assault on children first came on to the national – and international – agenda in the early 1980s' (Naylor, 1989: 395) when child abuse was recognised as a major social problem. At around the same time, a number of women's magazines ran articles about child sexual assault and also began to poll their readers, usually through voluntary questionnaires, about their individual experiences of child abuse. These polls saw public opinions ranging '… from shocked disbelief to shocked acceptance …' (ibid) and researchers who were motivated by the growing evidence of significant levels of abuse, recommended and even produced change. Changes, which have – despite the continuous problems of secrecy and denial – seen '… professionals working in the child-care field … become sensitised to the reality of child sexual abuse and … believe in children who confide in them, and … attempt to take appropriate action' (Glaser and Frosh, 1993: ix). As a result of this, there is now a entire ease with which modern-day journalists, professionals and politicians speak of child sexual assault and the belief '… that it exists as an easily recognizable object out there in the world, with its defining features known to all' (Fergusson and Mullen, 1999: 8).

However, despite this, the issue of child sexual assault is still far from understandable, particularly since recent research - conducted in the late twentieth century - has revealed '… that between 25-40 per cent of all alleged sexual abuse involves young perpetrators' (Lovell, 2002) and that these sexual acts are considered '… just as serious as that committed by adults' (Langstrom, 2008). It seems that 'for whatever reason, many researchers have ignored juvenile sexual offences' (Howitt, 2006: 86), which '… is a surprise given the intense research activity into child victims of sexual abuse' (ibid). But,

perhaps it is because this is a controversial subject, which '… evokes intense and contradictory reactions' (Woods, 2003: 13) and if truth be told, there is a spectrum within society. At one end, society holds the desire to punish, based on a fear perhaps that the young perpetrator must be prevented from becoming a habitual and dangerous adult sex offender and at the other end, there is a desire to restore the emotional harm the young perpetrator has encountered in their personal life, especially as '… society may recognise that offenders are not born but created through a history of neglect and violence' (Gilligan, 1996 cited in Woods, 2003: 13). Therefore, contradictions have emerged within society especially as the former has argued '… that if young people are prepared to break the law they should also be prepared to take responsibility for their actions and that this might well mean incarceration in the same institutions as adults' (Hopkins Burke, 2008: 1), whilst the latter have argued that '… young people should be dealt with differently than their elders' (Pitts, 2003 cited in Hopkins Burke, 2008: 1) because after all, juvenile sexual offenders are still adolescents particularly when they are aged seventeen years-old or below.

As a result of this contradiction, new research has materialized stating that in the past 'there has been reliance on adult-based theorising, but now it is recognised that there are important distinctions between juvenile and adult sex offenders' (Rudd and Herzberger, 1999 cited in Lovell, 2002). These distinctions hold a significant impact on how juvenile sexual offenders are treated within the criminal justice system (CJS) and there are a number of factors. Firstly, 'the sexual behaviour of young people can be seen on a continuum from mutually agreed experimentation to very serious crimes such as … rape' (Lovell, 2002) and many children engage in non-offensive activities that develop a normal part of their sexual development, whereas other types of behaviour are offensive and not suitable. But, defining what behaviour is suitable and what is harmful can be complex, particularly as little is known about normal sexual development and also because there is a lack of comprehensive research on children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviours. However, most definitions have '… acknowledged that abuse is bound up with concepts of consent, power and exploitation and define sexual abuse as meaning that force or coercion have been used upon another child to ensure participation' (ibid). But the problem of defining force still remains. So '… when a 15-year-old youth has sexual intercourse with his 13-year-old girlfriend, is it criminal sexual activity or normal adolescent sexual development?' (Barbaree and Langton, 2006: 4). Secondly, 'the Committee of Enquiry report suggests that there is cause for concern if there is an age difference of more than two years, or if one of the children is pre-pubertal and the other post-pubertal' (NCH, 1992 cited in Lovell, 2002) and therefore, some acts are clearly abusive, e.g. for an adolescent to have intercourse with a five year old. But, the issue of whether an action is abusive becomes less apparent as the age gap narrows and the sexual acts become less physically invasive. Finally, 'there are various legal definitions of what constitutes a sexual offence as well as differences in the age of criminal responsibility (Bala and Schwartz, 1993 cited in Lovell, 2002). But, a '… legal definition does not apply to children below the age of criminal responsibility (10 years in England and Wales)' (Lovell, 2002) and true consent (which is based on choice and equal power) is not necessarily the same as legal consent. So, legally, a child under the age of 13 cannot give approval to sexual activity but 'this does not mean that consent to certain activities never occurs, nor should it imply that those over 13 are able to consent freely' (ibid). This, actually, fits into a wider debate known as 'Doli Incapax' and this is the presumption that children under fourteen do not know the difference between right and

wrong, unless the court can be satisfied that the child knew that the activity was seriously wrong, not merely naughty or mischievous (House of Commons, 2009).

Therefore, as a result of these factors, 'the issues involved in managing young sex offenders are different from those for adults' (Home Office, 2007) as these young offenders are still growing in maturity and have a better chance of altering their behaviour. So, to manage juvenile sexual offenders as effectively as possible, a multi-agency response should occur which will help to ensure that all the agencies liable for managing young sex offenders are united to work together to protect the public, in the most efficient way possible.

1.2. Theories of Sexual Assault

There have been various explanations provided, which attempt to comprehend the rationality of why male abusers sexually assault children. But, despite this, there has been a lack of theoretical explanations offered for female abusers. However, literature has shown that child sexual assault is an offence that women are much less likely to commit than men and for that reason, it has been '… assumed that women do not commit sexual offences against children' (Davidson, 2008: 60). Therefore, as a result of this, this dissertation makes no apologies for these theories relating primarily to male sexual offenders and there are three studies of importance.

Biological theories focus on the '… existence of brain abnormalities and testosterone levels in male sex offenders in an attempt to explain sexual abuse' (ibid: 68) and researchers (such as Langevin, 1990) have '… claimed to show a link between temporal lobe impairment and deviant sexual behaviour in male sex offenders' (Davidson, 2008: 68). They have also looked at testosterone levels in male sex offenders and stated that high levels of testosterone prompt sexual abuse. This has been confirmed by other researchers who have declared that higher levels of testosterone exist in child sexual abusers. However, these theories relate solely to adult sex offenders and '… should be treated with caution, as the broad generalisations made are in fact based on very small clinical samples and findings are often incomplete' (ibid).

Psychological theories originated from the work of Sigmund Freud who stated '… that all personality disorders, such as sexual deviance, arose from unresolved sexual problems in childhood' (ibid: 69) and this is a concept which is still widely accepted in psychology today. In fact, researchers have argued that abusers are motivated by unresolved life issues occurring in childhood, and are characterised as either fixed (this is where abusers have sexual interest in children and are unable to maintain a long-term relationship with adults) or regressed (this is where abusers have created relationships with adults but will regress into relationships with children in certain situations, such as when abandoned by an adult). But, again, these theories relate only to adult sex offenders and suffer from institutionalised bias because they blame the mother's poor parenting skills, for the origins of abuse within the abuser.

Behavioural learning theories originated from the '... work of Pavlov in the late nineteenth century and Skinner in the 1920s …' (ibid: 72) and learning theorists recognised that child sexual abuse was the misdirected learning of behaviour. One theorist - in particular, Wolf

(1984) - suggested that a childhood history of emotional, sexual or physical abuse leads to the increase of a tendency towards sexual deviancy and it is through these experiences that children learn inappropriate behaviour because these abusive experiences act as 'potentiators'. Wolf states that the more potentiators there are, then the bigger the risk of the child becoming a sexual offender and this presence combined with other stimuli (such as pornography or alcohol) leads to deviant sexual fantasies. These deviant sexual fantasies, which are only further reinforced by emotions of worthlessness and powerlessness, often result in masturbatory acts that act as a rehearsal for future offending. Following the work of Wolf, Bandura was a leading figure in social learning theory because Bandura's research was '… an extension of behaviourism …' (Banyard and Grayson, 2000: 246). The foundation of this theory was the notion of observational learning and 'observational learning starts with witnessing a behaviour, which is then imprinted in memory and modeled by the youth' (Burton and Meezan, 2005: 75) alongside with the incorporated patterns of verbalised thoughts and expressed emotions of the person modeling the behaviour. Bandura argued that four processes determine successful observational learning and these are:

1. Attentional Processes

This relates to how much interest is paid to both the modeled event and the person modeling the behaviour. However, '… if an event is particularly salient to a youth, then he may be more likely to learn the behaviour' (ibid). This gets further reinforced when the event is unusual (such as severe violence or abuse), modeled by those who are more important to the youth (such as parents, friends or siblings) or if the youth is in a chaotic environment where he has the chance to witness unsuitable behaviours more often, more clearly, and in greater detail.

2. Retention Processes

This refers to the features involved in absorbing information from a modeled event, and the youth must store the information he has learned in his own memory so that he can compare his own behaviour to the observed behaviour when trying to repeat it. This process occurs '... through visual, oral, or other types of memories that, when put together, allows a person to recall a behaviour they have witnessed' (ibid). However, these memories have to be toughened by behavioural rehearsal of the event, which means that when a youth experiences pleasant feelings (such as daydreams, masturbation or orgasms) then this will further the chance that the youth will recall a modeled event.

3. Production Processes

This is where, after an event has been witnessed and retained, it must be re-enacted and the '… youth must somehow organised his memories into a step-by-step set of behaviours, and then compare what he has done with what he has experienced in order to understand if he has produced the initial behaviour properly' (ibid: 76).

4. Motivational Processes

This associates to the incentives that a youth receives from their behaviour and these motivations will range from the rewards that a youth sees another person receive for their behaviour, to feelings of confidence and self-efficacy. Those with greater self-efficacy will continue to work towards their ambitions, even in light of failure and damaging social

feedback. So, because of the youth's inaccurate perception, the youth may adapt a modeled behaviour in the hope that he will eventually receive the positive consequence.

Therefore, as a result of this theory, sexually aggressive behaviour should increase if one has experienced or observed sexual abuse and '... exposure to pornography, criminality, chaotic environments, and other forms of aggression should be related to the development of sexually aggressive behaviour' (ibid: 76-77). This, of course, confirms the previous work of Wolf. However, alongside these theories, there are also two models for understanding the processes whereby sexually abusive behaviour occurs and these theories were developed in North America in the early 1980s. They still remain influential today because the theories are drawn on by practitioners and they are the Four Preconditions Model created by Finkelhor (1984), and the Sexual Abuse Cycle created by Lane and Zamora (1982, 1984).

1.2.1 Finkelhor's Four Preconditions Model

This model relates primarily to adult male abusers but has been adapted to juvenile sexual offenders, and '… Finkelhor was seeking a comprehensive theory that addressed the range of knowledge about sexual abusers without being specific to a particularly school of thought' (Erooga and Masson, 2006: 11). The model offers four preconditions which must be experienced before sexual abuse can occur. Firstly, the abuser must have some *motivation* to abuse because the victim meets some important emotional need and sexual contact with the victim is sexually rewarding. But, other sources of sexual pleasure are either less satisfying or not accessible. Secondly, the abuser must overcome any *internal inhibitions* against acting on that motivation and this relates to the 'cognitive distortions' that the abuser has, which allows the abuser to view the victim as responsible for their own actions. Thirdly, the abuser must overcome *external impediments* to committing sexual abuse and this means that the abuser must have '… the opportunity to have access to the potential victim in an environment where the abuse is possible' (ibid). Finally, the abuser must overcome or undermine a *victim's possible resistance* to the abuse and this indicates that the abuser must weaken '… a complex set of factors involving personality traits which inhibit the targeting of a particular child as well as more straightforward resistance to the abuse itself' (ibid: 12). As a result of these preconditions, this model has allowed practitioners to realise that there are a number of possible barriers to abuse, the first two relating to the abuser and the second two relating to external factors to the abuser. Thus, this model offers a way of beginning to understand the dynamics of the abuser as well as the abuse process and this is a feature of the next model.

1.2.2 Sexual Abuse Cycle

This model has been created specifically for juvenile sexual offenders and is widely used, with the model's responses being based on distorted perceptions relating to power and control which then become sexualised. In fact, 'the sexual abuse cycle for adolescents … represents cognitive and behavioural progressions prior to, during and after sexually abusive behaviour' (ibid) and – as shown cyclically in Appendix A – the juvenile sexual offender will develop through the cycle one step at a time. Firstly, the young person's life experiences, outlooks and beliefs influence them to respond to an event or problem with feelings of vulnerability (the event), which are experienced as stressful and now anticipated

as unsafe (negative expectations). Secondly, these feelings of hopelessness are accompanied by an aspiration to avoid the issue, the feelings and the probable outcomes (avoidance). Thirdly, if this has not been accomplished successfully then '… this leads to feelings of resentment and defensiveness and attempts to exert power over others in a non-sexual way as compensation (power/control)' (ibid). Fourthly, whilst this compensation is effective, it is only temporary, so the offender will think about further behaviours which might feel good, such as sex (fantasy/arousal). Fifthly, the application of control or dominance is eventually articulated sexually (sexual abuse). Sixthly, there is then a requirement to cope with the knowledge of the behaviour and the fear of external consequences of being caught (fugitive thinking); and finally, the inability to accept this anxiety or embarrassment leads the behaviour to become integrated through a serious of cognitive distortions or 'thinking errors'. Therefore, this cycle '… represents a series of maladaptive coping mechanisms that temporary alleviate discomfort but do not resolve the problem' (ibid). However, because the young person becomes aware of their patterns of thinking and behavioural responses, this cycle allows the young person to '… develop other methods of coping with stress or abusive stimuli and thus decrease the likelihood of further abusive behaviour' (ibid).

1.2.3 Associated Concepts

These two models (the four preconditions model and the sexual abuse cycle) have created a number of associated concepts that must be fully understood and tackled professionally, so that practitioners can fully understand the dynamics of sexually abusive behaviour and avoid the possibilities of the abuser re-offending within adulthood. Firstly, there is the idea of *denial and protection of blame* and this serves to prevent emotional discomfort, and ranges '…from outright denial of the abusive act(s) through denial of responsibility for the behaviour: 'I was drunk'; denial of intent: 'I just got carried away'; to minimization of harm or seriousness: 'It wasn't anything bad I did'' (ibid). Secondly, there is the concept of *cognitive disorders* and these thinking errors refer to the '… pro-offending beliefs or attitudes that justify, rationalize or support the sexually abusive behaviour' (ibid). These beliefs often distort the roles of their victim in the abuse, by exposing them as in some way responsible for promoting or initiating sexual contact and serve to comfort the abuser that they have done nothing wrong and certainly not something damaging. Examples of this include, 'I liked it when it happened to me', 'I did no more than what occurred to me', 'she never said no', and 'women are all the same – I know what they want'. Thirdly, there is the notion of *deviant sexual arousal* and researchers have stated that there seems to be some connection between deviant sexual fantasies in juveniles and the selection of young boys as their sexual abuse victims. However, it is important to note here, that this research has mainly focused on adult sex offenders and empirical evidence is limited to therapist ratings or adolescent self-reports. Finally, *victim empathy* is an important factor to consider because this lack of empathy with the experience of their victims will be an important element in becoming suitably disinherited to abuse. Therefore, there is an important relationship between the lack of victim empathy and cognitive distortions, with the latter contributing '… to the absence of understanding, cognitively and emotionally, of the impact of their abusive behaviour' (ibid: 15).

1.3. Methodology

This dissertation is a critical literature review which provides an analysis of data in the public domain and means that a new researcher can investigate secondary data (such as journals, books and the internet) by comparing past studies before producing new, more detailed and more updated conclusions than original reports would have suggested. As a result, this makes secondary analysis '… a very useful tool of social research and an indispensable one, particularly when the research is focused on past events' (Sarantakos, 2005: 299) or past studies and – in these cases – this makes secondary analysis the only means of collecting suitable data on these concerns.

Therefore, a critical literature review has many advantages which include: firstly, the fact that it is less expensive than conducting primary research; secondly, the fact that it takes less time for data collection; thirdly, the fact that researchers can access information more effortlessly and avoid problems that get linked to primary research, such as rejection; fourthly, the fact that data will be of extreme high quality, which will result in high quality conclusions (Bryman, 2004); and finally, the fact that it allows new researchers the opportunity to offer different accounts of the data. However, a critical literature review will only be as skilled and high-quality as the literature that is available in the public domain and therefore, this dissertation will recommend future suggestions which need to be investigated further by a researcher who has more time and resources available to them than an under-graduate student.

1.4. The Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation has three further chapters: Chapter 2 addresses the difficult and ever-changing policies, legislations and organisational arrangements which must be followed when practitioners deal with juvenile sexual offenders; Chapter 3 will analyse how effective a multi-agency response really is when dealing with juvenile sexual offenders, by looking at a past intervention program know as the AIM project. Chapter 4 summarizes the findings of this dissertation before providing recommendations for further research, and for the professional organisations that have to work with juvenile sexual offenders.

Chapter 2: The Complicated and Ever-Changing Policies, Legislations and Organisational Arrangements

The preceding chapter showed that the concept of juvenile sexual offenders is, even now, far from understandable. It seems that juvenile sexual offenders confront many practitioners and adult's conceptions about normal childhood sexual development as-well as the basic and dichotomous notions of children, whereby they are either considered as 'innocent victims' or 'immoral and guilty criminals'. This 'splitting' is less clear in the cases of children who are under the age of criminal responsibility, especially as practitioners have argued that children are not deemed liable for their actions and are just in need of care and protection. But, in the cases of those who are criminally responsible, the impact of adult's undecided and often biased attitudes becomes apparent. In fact, these attitudes have presented further problems for those who formulate policies because juvenile sexual offenders are perceived as having 'dual status' (this is where the offender needs both care *and* control) if they are over the age of criminal responsibility and this has created ongoing challenges and tensions in the guidance, legal provisions and organisational arrangements.

Therefore, this chapter will briefly introduce the ever-changing and complex policies, legislations and organisational arrangements which must be considered and followed when practitioners deal with juvenile sexual offenders and there are three vital aims. Firstly, there will be an explanation of how practitioners are bound by policies which relate to the areas of child welfare and protection, and youth justice. Secondly, there will be a clarification of the coordination between the child welfare and protection approach alongside with the youth justice approach, before an explanation of the subject of sexual offending. Thirdly, there will be a clarification of the government's response to dealing with youth crime and how this has influenced practitioners who deal with juvenile sexual offenders. However, it is a useful starting point to simplify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child because this convection has provided the backdrop to all the further legislations introduced in the UK.

2.1. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was accepted by the UN Assembly in November 1989 and 'it is an international human rights treaty … (Children's Rights Alliance for England, 2007), which includes the full range of human rights (such as civil, political, economic and social rights) for children and young people up to the age of 18 years-old. These rights are set out in 54 articles of the Convention, which have been all designed to create national standards in the organisations suitable to children and young people. These organisations include social services, health care, education and legal and civil services. However, in relation to juvenile sexual offenders, the articles of significant importance are Articles 19, 34 and 37. Article 19 declares that the 'government must do everything to protect children and young people from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment' (ibid); Article 34 demands that the 'government must do everything to protect children from sexual exploitation … and sexual abuse' (ibid); and lastly, Article 37 covers the rights of children in regards to the CJS. In fact, article 37 states that '… imprisonment of children should be used only as a last resort and that where this occurs,

children must … be detained separately from adult offenders, must have access to their families and must have prompt access to legal and other assistance' (Masson, 2006: 20). These particular articles and indeed the remaining articles have all '… set baseline standards against which all policy, legislations and services for children and young people who have sexually abused others or who are exhibiting sexually harmful behaviours should be measured' (ibid) and when the UK government became a signatory to this Convention, in 1992, it agreed to provide the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child with a report (every five years) to state how it is meeting the contracts of this Convention.

2.2. Child Welfare and Protection Approach

Under this approach, there is a vital and central piece of legislation which came into power in November 1991, and this is the Children Act 1989. This act was '… interpreted as a vehicle for children's empowerment …' (Smith and Woodhead, 1999: 23) because it had two essential goals, which were designed to keep children well and safe. These goals included the fact that the child's welfare was of paramount concern and that where possible, any intervention should allow the child to continue living with their family as-long as these were appropriate to the child's needs. The act, itself, '… covers many aspects of public and private childcare law but Sections 17 and 47 and schedule 2 of the Act are particularly relevant in respects of allegations of sexual abuse or harm by children or young people' (Masson, 2006: 22). Section 17 states that every local authority must '… safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need … and … promote the upbringing of such children by their families … by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs' (Office of Public Sector Information, 2009). Section 47 then declares that where local authorities are notified that a child who lives, or is discovered, in their area '… is the subject of an emergency protection order; or … is in police protection; or … have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering … (ibid) or is likely to suffer from significant harm then the local authority should make enquiries as they consider essential to allow them to decide what action they should take to safeguard or encourage the child's welfare. Finally in schedule 2 (paragraph 7) it announces that local authorities should take sensible steps to firstly, reduce the needs to bring criminal measures or care in respect to children within its area; secondly, to persuade children within its area to not commit criminal offences; and thirdly, to avoid the need for children within its area to be placed in secure accommodation.

Therefore, it is obvious that '… it would be perfectly possible to deal with all potential or actual instances of sexual abuse by children and young people within the provisions of the Children Act 1989, either to prevent … abuse or to respond to it when it is alleged' (Masson, 2006: 22) and the publication Working Together under the Children Act 1989 proposed this exact course-of-action. But, this publication neglected a crucial factor, the fact that children who were over the age of criminal responsibility would also be subjected to the conditions of the youth justice approach. As a result of this, another publication, Working Together, was published, which attempted to correct this problem and it also sought to deal with the growing concern that local authorities were spending most of their resources on investigations of child abuse, instead of assisting all children and families in hardship. In fact, this publication and it's associated 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' sought to rebalance the work of child welfare and

protection, by directing more resources and '… efforts on supporting children in need and their families through the provision of flexible and non-stigmatising services' (ibid). This, of course, is all creditable but it can be argued that the notions of harm and risk have been removed from the agenda, and these notions are of significant value in the evaluation of children and young people with sexually abusive behaviour.

2.3. Youth Justice Approach

In conjunction with the developments in the child welfare and protection approach, there has also been a radical reversal in regards to the youth justice approach and this has significantly impacted on the development of services for children and young people who have sexually abused others. In fact, at the start of the 1990s, the approach to youth crime was normally diversionary in emphasis and promoted decriminalisation, the diversion from court processes and the use of more community sentences. This diversion existed for two main purposes. Firstly, practitioners claimed that '… prosecution should only be used only as a last resort, with a greater use of cautioning to avoid net-widening' (Gelsthorpe and Morris, 1994 cited in Hopkins Burke, 2008: 72); and secondly, specialists also wanted to reduce the costs in court processing and custody, especially when 'in 1990 – 1, it was estimated that keeping an offender in custody for three weeks was more expensive than 12 months of supervision or community service' (Hopkins Burke, 2008: 72). However, this altered drastically in 1998, when the Crime and Disorder Act got passed into law, following '… the Audit Commission's 1998 Report *Misspent Youth '98: The Challenge for Youth Justice* and the publication of the government White Paper *No More Excuses* …' (Masson, 2006: 23). This White Paper recommended a clear approach to avoid both offending and reoffending by making offenders face up to their behaviour and take responsibility for their actions. It also encouraged the need for a better partnership between the different organisations to deliver a quicker and superior system and therefore the thrust was '… on interventionist and not diversionary approaches' (Calder, 2002: 280). This was a concept which got fully implemented by the 1998 Act and the legislation had been designed to provide a more punishment oriented approach to crime. In actual fact, the Act abolished the presumption that children under fourteen did not know right from wrong (Doli Incapax) and also stated '… a new framework for the governance of youth crime' (Gray, 2005: 939). This included new measures such as: the quicker processing of offenders, the greater use of secure accommodation, the use of more tagging for relentless offenders, the series of new orders (for example, curfew and reparation orders) and the introduction of reprimands and final warning instead of cautions.

More importantly, the 1998 Act introduced Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in every local area to deal with youth crime, including juvenile sexual offenders. These YOTs '… are made up of representatives from the police, Probation Service, social services, health, education, drugs and alcohol misuse and housing officers' (Youth Justice Board, 2009) and 'because the YOT incorporates representatives from a wide range of services, it can respond to the needs of young offenders in a comprehensive way' (ibid). This is normally through a national assessment, which allows practitioners the chance to identify '… the specific problems that make the young person offend as well as measuring the risk they pose to others' (ibid), before identifying '… suitable programmes to address the needs of the young person with the intention of preventing further offending' (ibid). It is important

to note here, that the 1998 act, also created the national Youth Justice Board (YJB) and 'the YJB oversees the youth justice system in England and Wales' (Youth Justice Board, 2009) by providing national standards and inspections, grants to local authorities and funding of developmental projects. These projects relate specifically to juvenile sexual offenders and one of these projects was the AIM project, which will discussed and explained in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

2.4. The Coordination of the Child Welfare and Youth Justice Approach

It should be apparent now, that in the cases of children and young people over the age of 10 who have sexually abused others, the agencies that are most closely associated to the child welfare and protection approach (for example, social services) should now make links and collaborate with YOTs. This was recognised in the publication Working Together (Department of Health, 1999) and this publication acknowledged the need for agencies across child welfare and youth justice approaches to coordinate together in the development of suitable methods of response. In fact, in relation to juvenile sexual offenders, the publication stated '… that child welfare agencies and YOTs must together address the task of putting an operational framework in place so that cases of children and young people who have sexually abused can be assessed and managed effectively' (Masson, 2006: 24). Therefore, this means that child welfare and youth justice agencies must consult one another in advance about making any decisions regarding criminal procedures, child protection conferences, or action plans which address the young person's welfare and abusive behaviour. As a result, this means that this multi-agency response can allow juvenile sexual offenders a chance to experience an appropriate level of care and protection; alongside with the intervention needed to alter their behaviour, particularly as juvenile sexual offenders suffer from a range of developmental, family and relationship problems.

2.5. Sexual Offending

As if work to establish services for children and young people who have sexually abused was not complex and confusing enough, practitioners now also have to deal with the expansion of policies and legislations, in regards to the general area of sexual offending. In fact, following professional concerns, media publicity and public anger about adult sexual offenders and paedophiles, the Sex Offender Act was passed in 1997 followed by the implementation of the Sexual Offences Act in 2003. These acts have impacted significantly on all sexual offenders, including juvenile sexual offenders, because these offenders are now placed on a sex offender registration and receive schedule 1 status. As a result of this status, every sexual offender must '… register with the police in the area in which they live, and … provide and keep up to date information about their whereabouts' (Longo and Calder, 2005: 335). This means that the police have the chance to '… undertake risk assessment of all convicted sex offenders living in the community and … monitor the activities of those who are considered to represent a significant risk' (ibid). However, in relation to juvenile sexual offenders, critics have argued that there are a number of problems associated to the sex offender registration and these include: firstly, the fact that the registration cannot prevent future sex crimes; secondly, the fact that the register provides the general public with a false sense of security and safety; and finally, the fact

that the registration damages many lives, including the juvenile sexual offender and those linked to the offender (for example, the offender's family). Thus, these critics are basically arguing that no law can stop this behaviour and that '… these laws may go on to not only damage these young lives, but also further delay their individual potential for healthy recovery' (ibid: 340).

Additionally, a further piece of legislation - the Criminal Justice Act 2003 - has launched local multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) which have been designed to ensure the close monitoring of registered sexual offenders, in their local area. This will include juvenile sexual offenders because a wide range of services (including the police, YOTs, children services, probation and prison services) coordinate together to safeguard the public, '… minimise the risk posed by the offender and reduce the chances of re-offending' (MAPPA, 2007/08). In other words, all of these legislations are another forum to which juvenile sexual offenders are subjected.

2.6. More Policies, More Confusing Legislations

The different policies, legislations and organisational arrangements in the diverse areas of child welfare and protection, youth justice and sexual offending have all demanded important responses from the practitioners and organisations that deal with juvenile sexual offenders. But, regardless of this, even more publications and legislations have emerged which serve to confuse this complex matter further, by providing future recommendations in regards to the future development of services for juvenile sexual offenders. In fact, the paper 'I think I might need some more help with this problem …' (Lovell, 2002) reviewed the essential troubles with the current system for responding to juvenile sexual offenders and concluded that while there had been some progress in policies and practices, '… the lack of a joined-up, strategic approach by government has resulted in poor co-ordination and inadequate service provision' (Lovell, 2006) for juvenile sexual offenders. This, ultimately, means that the majority of juvenile sexual offenders are not receiving the type of support they require. As a result, the government responded by introducing some new initiatives (for example Sure Start and Children's Trusts) and these initiatives increased '… the potential number of agencies and organisational arrangements which must be included in the network aimed at safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including those sexually abused or sexually abusing …' (Masson, 2006: 27) and the difficulty of the work involved.

But, more importantly, following the death of Victoria Climbie who '… died in February 2000 after a horrific catalogue of abuse by her guardians' (AOL News, 2008), Lord Laming presented a report into the state of services for the safeguarding of children in need and at risk of harm. This resulted in the government producing the Green Paper, Every Child Matters (Every Child Matters, 2003) and this paper admitted dreadful flaws in the case of Climbie. It stated that '… the fact that a child like Victoria Climbie can still suffer almost unimaginable cruelty to the point of eventually losing her life shows that things are still very far from right' (ibid: 1) and because of this, a new range of procedures were pioneered to improve children's services. For example, the government wanted to ensure that intervention occurred before situations reached boiling-point and they also wanted to prevent children from falling through the net. Following this publication, the government

then introduced the response to the Green Paper which was entitled Every Child Matters: Next Steps (Every Child Matters, 2004) and they also implemented the Children Act 2004. This act pushed forward the main proposals of the Green Paper, encouraged the better accountability of the key organisations so that the common goal was to improve the well-being of children and young people, and appointed a children's commissioner for England. Two years later, in 2006, the government offered another edition of Working Together (HM Government, 2006) and this document set out '… how organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (ibid: 9). This, of course, has significantly impacted upon juvenile sexual offenders because the document has declared that there should be a co-ordinated response of all children's services alongside with youth justice and other agencies, that '… the needs of children and young people who abuse others should be considered separately from the needs of their victims …' (ibid: 200) and that assessments should be conducted in every case, especially as many of these children have unmet developmental needs and more specific needs arising from their behaviour. However, all of these new improvements '… are requiring local areas to re-position themselves in line with government expectations, possibly putting at risk the relatively fragile arrangements already in existence, particularly in relation to children and young people who have sexually abused others …' (Masson, 2006: 27-28). The government has also admitted that they missed a crucial opportunity, to combine the policies and services for children and young people who are in need of both care *and* control, when the document Every Child Matters was published individually from the companion document Youth Justice – The Next Steps (Home Office, 2003). But, since then, the documents Every Child Matters: Change for Children in the Criminal Justice System (Home Office, 2004) and the Green Paper, Youth Matters (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2005) have attempted to rectify this problem by demonstrating that a much more integrated approach is needed to deal with the needs of all youths, including those who have serious problems.

Therefore, it appears that the government has accepted that juvenile sexual offenders need this crucial balance of care *and* control. However, despite this, it has become apparent that there has been a paradigm shift in the criminal process, which sees the concept of the 'old penology' (this is where the individual offender gets punished) transform into the concept of the 'new penology' (this is where the groups, who are risk of offending, are identified, classified and managed). This shift has affected juvenile sexual offenders to their detriment, particularly as several documents have displaced the 'need' and welfare considerations. For example, juvenile sexual offenders are automatically placed on the sex offender registration and obtain schedule 1 status. But, this status and indeed the sex offender registration, itself, is primarily concerned with the risk that this group poses to society. This means that many juvenile sexual offenders' lives are damaged because there is no longer the balance of care *and* control. As a result, practitioners will not only have to handle the ambiguity of negotiating very diverse policies and legislations, but they will also have to deal with the emergence of this new penology and this could put at danger the delicate arrangements already in place for juvenile sexual offenders. This notion of risk can be seen in the multi-agency response and this will become apparent as the next chapter (Chapter 3) explains a multi-agency response, which is known as the AIM project.

Chapter 3: The AIM Project

The previous chapter illustrated that professional organisations – who are liable for juvenile sexual offenders - have to negotiate complex policies and legislations, which have descended upon them from the government and which they are forced to uphold. But, regardless of this, it has now become apparent that these policies have created and coordinated a multi-agency response to deal with the matter of juvenile sexual offenders more efficiently and effectively. Therefore, this chapter has been designed to explore how successful a multi-agency response really is, by analysing a past response known as the AIM (Assessment Intervention Moving-on) project.

3.1. An Overview of the AIM Project

A study which was conducted by the Youth Justice Board, in 1998, identified and confirmed what working practices existed for juvenile sexual offenders and the study identified five problematic issues. Firstly, there was in-adequate training for practitioners who worked with juvenile sexual offenders; secondly, there was a lack of access to the relevant services; thirdly, there was poor monitoring and no long-term follow up of out-comes; fourthly, it was left to "interested" workers to deal with juvenile sexual offenders and this caused further problems (i.e. if these workers left); and fifthly, there was a lack of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies for juvenile sexual offenders. As a result, '… a multi-agency group of experienced managers in Greater Manchester, committed to developing this area of practice, established a steering group' (Morrison and Henniker, 2006: 31) and this steering group submitted an application for developmental funding from the Youth Justice Board. The group was, eventually, awarded pathway status in the recognition of its commitment for ground-breaking and effective multi-agency responses to tackling youth crime and this award brought money to the YOTs, with which they funded the AIM project.

The AIM project '… represents one of the largest whole system developments in the UK …' (ibid) and it includes the key organisations, who deal with juvenile sexual offenders, such as social services, YOTs, the NSPCC, mental health teams and the police. The project, itself, has the overall purpose of developing and maintaining clear, consistent inter-agency assessments and treatment responses for juvenile sexual offenders and this goal is achieved by practitioners following a specific framework. In fact, this framework allows specialists the chance '… to open a dialogue between partner assessors, young people and their families …' (Griffin and Beech, 2004) by offering practice proposals for assessors, supporting decision-making about the intervention or disposals and increasing practitioner's confidence when working with juvenile sexual offenders. The framework has ten vital steps, which have been designed '… to assist and encourage practitioners to gather and analyse information that is relevant to the concerns posed by the young person and their strengths or needs' (ibid). These ten steps are:

1. To identify the assessors, consultants and dates needed for the completion of the report and to discuss the multi-disciplinary meeting;
2. To watch the victim's interview or read the victim's statement;
3. To listen to the young person's interview or any other explanation given by the young person in regards to their behaviour;

4. To read the relevant files and collect any other information that is detained by other professionals;
5. To use the AIM project assessment model to identify what is known and not known;
6. To plan the interview with the young person and their family, aiming to provide any absent information and prepare them for the assessment process;
7. To interview the young person;
8. To interview the young person's family;
9. To draw conclusions about the young person's risk, needs, ability to change and the amount of support the family can provide the young offender; and
10. To take the completed report to the multi-disciplinary meeting.

These ten different steps '… seek to ensure that regardless of which agency or local authority identifies a child or young person with sexually harmful behaviour, the case will receive a standard multi-agency response' (Morrison and Henniker, 2006: 34) and this framework, essentially, provides the structure for the AIM assessment. However, it is important to state here, that the framework exists within a restricted timespan, particularly for the referrals from the criminal justice route as these referrals are limited to a 28-day agreed police bail period.

3.2. The AIM Assessment

There are currently two national assessments which help practitioners to manage young offenders and these are Asset (Home Office, 2000) and the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment, Home Office, 2000). These assessments are essential as they allow professional organisations the chance to identify specific factors which link to the young offender, such as developmental issues and risk levels. However, these assessments do not provide practitioners with a correct language or a suitable understanding of the issue of sexual abuse. The AIM project has thus attempted to draw on the domains of these national assessments, by providing guidelines to practitioners from a wide range of agencies (such as; YOTs, the police and social services) with a familiar language and a combined approach to tackling sexually harmful behaviours, and this can be observed in the assessment model.

The assessment model was based and developed on the work of Gail Ryan (1999) and it '… sought to develop a continuum of responses ranging from early community based intervention with low concern cases to intensive work with the most high concern groups …' (Morrison and Henniker, 2006: 34). The model, itself, is shown as a pyramid (see Appendix B) with the levels of responses being linked to a mixture of strengths, concerns and struggles in each young person's situation. There are four levels in total:

▪ Level One
There is an early appearance of non-aggressive sexually inappropriate behaviour and 'the intervention here is of an educational and support nature, in which practitioners help parents manage the emotional crisis and provide them with information and counselling … to work through with the child, focusing on issues of consent, empathy and boundaries' (ibid: 36).

- Level Two

There is a 'referral to a psycho-educational group for parents where there have been more concerning sexual behaviour problems and where there is a need to bolster parents' skills and commitment' (ibid). There may also be a need for brief, educational work with the young person on issues such as sex education, consent of sex and the penalties of abusive behaviour.

- Level Three

There are referrals to more community-based treatment programmes and this will involve both the young person and the young person's parents.

- Level Four

There is a 'referral to a specialist community/residential programme for the most complex and high-concern group where there are multiple problems and serious abusive behaviours' (ibid).

These four different levels allow practitioners the opportunity to '… form opinions and recommendations based on information they have collected or what is clinically/empirically known to them' (Griffin and Beech, 2004). Practitioners will then use a separate tool to analyse the levels of concern and the degrees of strengths which are unique to the young person and the more information that practitioners can collect, then the more accurate the model is. However, it is important to note here, that practitioners are prevented from making assumptions about the young person and should instead only apply factors from the scale to the young person when they know them to be true. This separate tool is known as the Outcome Grid (see Figure 3.1).
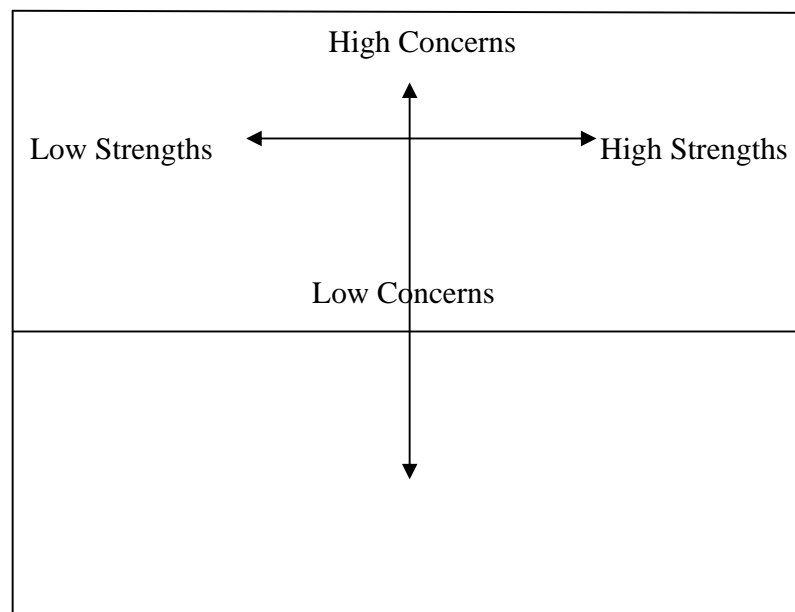

Figure 3.1 - The Outcome Grid (Youth Justice Board, 2009)

When practitioners use this grid, there is a scoring system and the number of factors which apply to the young person and their situation (in each column) are calculated. But, 'a score is only provided for those factors which apply and once the continuums of 'strengths' and 'concerns' have been scored, the young person's characteristics are plotted on an outcome matrix ...' (ibid) in an attempt to inform appropriate treatments or sanctions for the young person (see Appendix C for the AIM Outcome Matrix).

3.3. An Evaluation of the AIM Project

In 2004, there was a two-year evaluation of the AIM project which was financed by the Youth Justice Board, and the overall purpose of the evaluation was '… to evaluate the effectiveness of the AIM framework' (Griffin and Beech, 2004). The evaluation also had many other goals which included; evaluating the usefulness of the AIM model, assessing the levels of accuracy concerning the continuums and the outcome matrix, and recognising how the ten step framework is used in procedure and how it affects practitioners. The evaluation declared that the AIM project has five specific strengths:

1. that the AIM assessment procedure has achieved all of the overall objectives;
2. that the AIM framework has significantly improved policy and practice, in dealing with young people who demonstrate sexually inappropriate behaviour;
3. that practitioners have been trained successfully to use the AIM project and this was helped by the fact that the process was recognisable to practitioners, as the assessment model was based on the current national assessments;
4. that these frameworks have helped practitioners to realise that these young people have more in common with other troubled young people than initially presumed, and this will help to reduce the anxiety and/or isolation which can result in over-or-under estimating the risks of these young people; and
5. that the AIM assessment has increased the cooperation of an inter-agency response.

However, despite these strengths, the evaluation has also concluded three crucial criticisms and the first relates to the inter-agency response. In fact, '… inter-agency working is still problematic for reasons that go beyond the scope of the AIM project' (ibid) and some of these reasons include poor shift patterns, extensive work loads and a lack of entrance to the different but relevant organisations. The second criticism is that the project had not helped with young people in temporary care or dual environments (this is where the young person lives at home with his mum, but will visit with his dad at the weekends or vice versa) and the last criticism is that the project had wrong timescales, which some felt was unacceptable on the young person. As a result of these criticisms, the evaluation has made several recommendations. Firstly, that the project needed to provide permanent training and support for practitioners; secondly, that the project should provide assistance on the quality and quantity of the report; thirdly, that there needs to be more support on how to complete the assessment for those in care or dual environments; fourthly, that the abilities of practitioners need to be continually enhanced in this area of work; and lastly, that the project should consider the possibilities of medium strengths and medium concerns. These recommendations have led to the assessment model being revised and there has been a '… launch of the revised AIM Initial assessment model, now referred to as AIM2' (AIM Project, 2009). However, this new version has yet to be evaluated so it is impossible to comment on how effective this new assessment is when dealing with young people who

show sexually harmful behaviour.

Therefore, this project has developed a national assessment, which has provided a standard multi-agency response to all children and young people who show sexually harmful behaviour. This means that the AIM project has not only tightened-up this multi-agency response, but it has also reduced the risk that these young offenders pose to themselves, others (i.e. possible victims) and society. However, the project has received several criticisms and these have been rectified by a new updated version of the assessment model. But, because this new revised edition has not yet been evaluated, it is extremely hard to comment whether these recommendations have been fully implemented and whether juvenile sexual offenders are receiving the care *and* control that they desperately need.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Future Recommendations

Evidently, child sexual assault has advanced dramatically within current society and this can be traced back to the influential work of the women's movement, when the themes of the women's movement allowed survivors with the chance to provide personal accounts of their own experiences of child sexual assault. These accounts, united with the media's influence, allowed society to comprehend that child sexual assault was a serious social problem which had affected thousands of children and would continue doing so, unless suitable action was taken. This resulted in large amounts of research, which attempted to explain the subject of child victims of sexual assault. The research concluded that, in the majority of cases, adult males were guilty for committing these offences against children. However, as society has evolved and research has developed within this area, it has emerged that young perpetrators also commit sexual offences against children (Lovell, 2002) and this has caused various dilemmas within modern society.

The first dilemma links to the fact that juvenile sexual offenders have evoked intense and contradictory reactions (Woods, 2003), with these reactions creating a continuum within society. In fact, many have argued that juvenile sexual offenders should be punished for the crime and receive imprisonment; whereas others have disagreed stating that juvenile sexual offenders are still adolescents so should be managed differently than their elders. However, the government has recently acknowledged that juvenile sexual offenders are different to adult sex offenders and require a multi-agency response (Home Office, 2007), particularly as these young offenders are growing in maturity and are supposedly able to change their behaviour. But, this is where the second dilemma emerges because this multi-agency response has resulted in juvenile sexual offenders needing both care *and* control and this has produced ongoing challenges and tensions in the guidance, legal requirements and organisational arrangements (Masson, 2006). These ongoing challenges and tensions have only been made worse by the fact that the contemporary governmental approach (to tackling youth crime) is based on a punishment oriented response, and this will put at risk the delicate arrangements which are already in place for juvenile sexual offenders.

Therefore, despite the fact that the government has made a positive step in helping to deal with juvenile sexual offenders by this multi-agency response, there still seems to be a great deal of ambiguity around the issue of juvenile sexual offenders. But, the central factor is that society should provide this crucial balance of care *and* control and support as many juvenile sexual offenders as possible, given the terrible consequences should they re-offend within adulthood. As a result, the Home Office and relevant organisations still have a lot of work to do, in order to prove that they are successfully dealing with juvenile sexual offenders. The items for consideration and future recommendations for policy-makers, which need more argument outside the remit of this dissertation, have been suggested based on these conclusions.

4.1. Items for Consideration

- More work needs to be conducted, in regards to the age of criminal responsibility and a decision should be made over whether children really know right from wrong, when they are ten-years old. This links to the concept of 'Doli Incapax' and

questions still remain over whether this assumption (that children do know right from wrong) should have been removed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

- Further effort is needed by professionals to successfully implement this multi-agency response because literature has suggested that this multi-agency response is still problematic (Griffin and Beech, 2004). This can severely impact on juvenile sexual offenders, especially when they do not receive the help and support they need and commit more offences in adulthood which means that they may end up unnecessarily in the adult prison system.

- The 'new penology' has resulted in new policies and laws, which are designed to control the risk that certain groups pose to society, e.g. juvenile sexual offenders. But, the government needs to consider the importance of certain policies and laws because some (such as, the sex offender registration) have removed the vital notion of care, from the balance of care *and* control. Therefore, juvenile sexual offenders are affected to their detriment because they are not receiving the care *and* control that they desperately need.

4.2. Future Recommendations for Policy-Makers

- More research needs to be conducted into the areas of juvenile sexual offenders and 'normal' sexual development, as literature has suggested that these matters have been ignored in past studies. This will help practitioners to recognise sexually harmful behaviour and understand the individual needs of the offender, as-well as the more specific needs arising from the offending behaviour.

- There is still an ongoing debate within society, which announces that the age of criminal responsibly is to low. Therefore, more research is needed within this area and this could significantly impact on the multi-agency response, which governs practitioners when they deal with juvenile sexual offenders.

- Research should be carried out, to establish if the AIM2 project has been successful in responding to the recommendations of the AIM project. This research could also help to establish if juvenile sexual offenders are now receiving the care *and* control that they desperately need.

- There needs to be research conducted, which explains what offences in childhood will result in offences in adulthood. This could benefit practitioners, as it will improve the multi-agency response and allow successful intervention to occur within childhood, which could stop further and more harmful offences occurring in adulthood.

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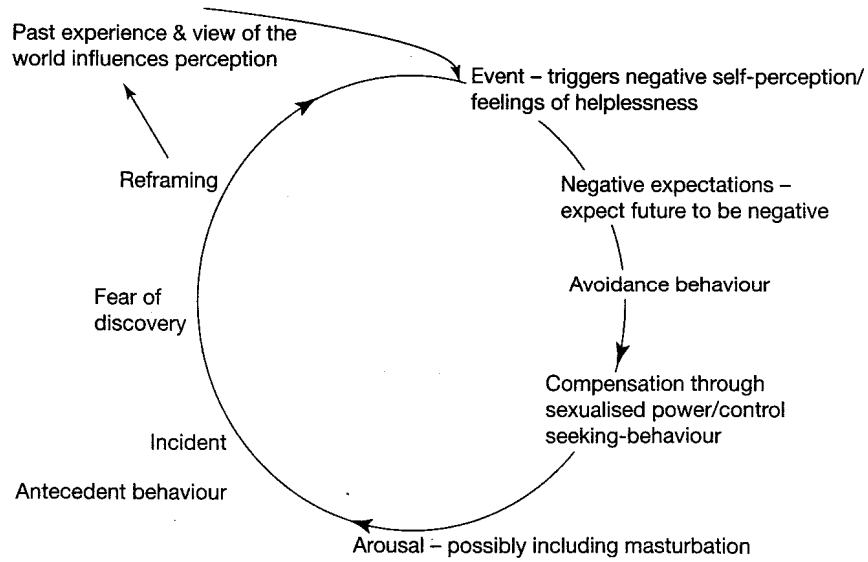
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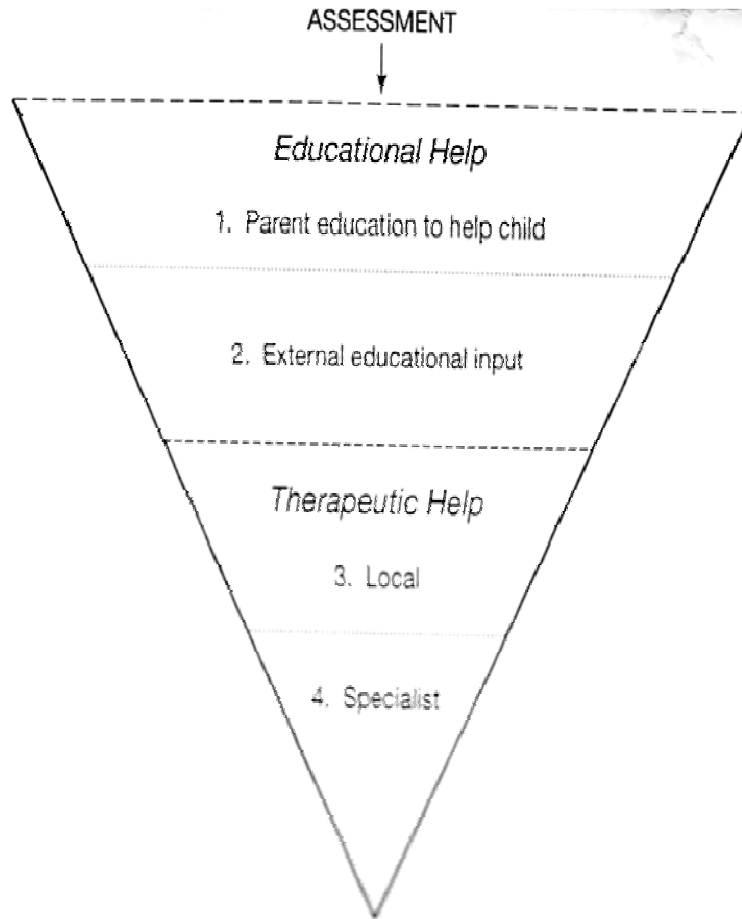
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Appendix A

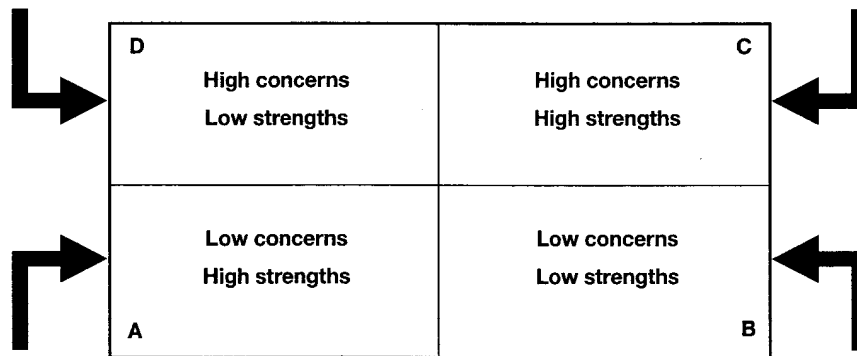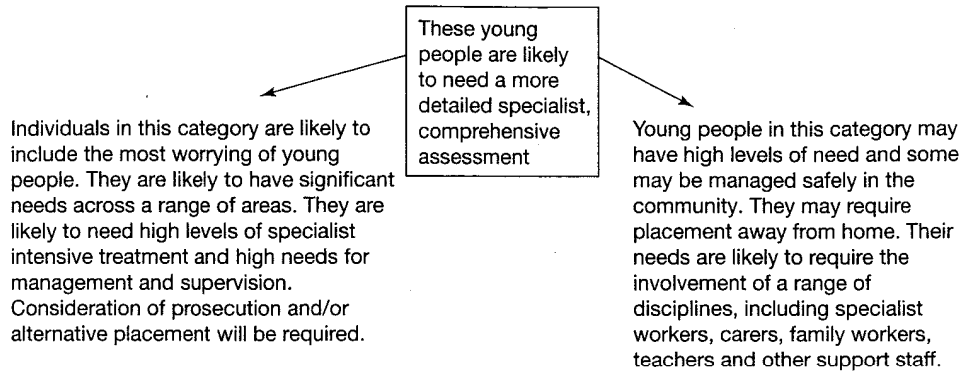Sexual Abuse Cycle (Erooga and Masson, 2006: 13)

Appendix B

ASSESSMENT

Educational Help

1. Parent education to help child

2. External educational input

Therapeutic Help

3. Local

4. Specialist

The Assessment Model (Morrison and Henniker, 2006: 36)

Appendix C

These young
people are likely
to need a more
detailed specialist,
comprehensive
assessment

Individuals in this category are likely to
include the most worrying of young
people. They are likely to have significant
needs across a range of areas. They are
likely to need high levels of specialist
intensive treatment and high needs for
management and supervision.
Consideration of prosecution and/or
alternative placement will be required.

Young people in this category may
have high levels of need and some
may be managed safely in the
community. They may require
placement away from home. Their
needs are likely to require the
involvement of a range of
disciplines, including specialist
workers, carers, family workers,
teachers and other support staff.

D	High concerns		High concerns	C
	Low strengths		High strengths	
	Low concerns		Low concerns	
A	High strengths		Low strengths	B

Young people in this category are likely to
require help in meeting a range of needs
and may require a full needs-led
assessment. Intervention may include
involvement in a brief programme of
education regarding healthy sexual
behaviours. Parents/carers are likely to
require support. Emphasis may need to be
placed on increasing resilience factors,
family work, family support.

Young people in this category may
require limited intervention. They
can usually remain at home and
parents/carers are often the best
people to help the young person
with any information, advice or
behavioural change required.
Parents may need professional
support and information. Review
after three months.

AIM Outcome Matrix (Morrison and Henniker, 2006: 40)