Working with Children and Young People who Display Sexually Harmful Behaviour
1 Inter-Agency Procedures

1.1 Introduction
Work with children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour towards others requires a co-ordinated multi-agency response. It is important that all agencies work closely together to enhance communication and ensure consistency of approach. The welfare of children is paramount and the primary objective is the prevention of future victims and perpetrators.

Children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour are likely to have experienced emotional neglect or abuse and some will have been physically or sexually abused themselves and in some cases the sexual abuse of others may be a part of their own abuse.

Definition
Sexually harmful behaviour by young people includes a wide range of behaviours, in a variety of situations, and can be defined as: Sexually harmful under the Sexual Offences Act 2003: ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2010 (chapter 12). (Page 322)

1.2 Information Sharing
Matters of information sharing, confidentiality and data protection are covered in the Government guidance ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ (and in the summary version of the same document).

1.3 AIM2 Assessment Framework
The AIM2 assessment framework and procedures are designed to assist professionals in assessing children and young people who have committed a sexual assault or undertaken sexually harmful behaviour.

The framework adopts a partnership approach, which is essential for the development of effective practice. It incorporates the concepts of the DoH ‘Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families’ used by Children’s Social Care and other agencies, as well as the ‘Asset’ framework used by Youth Offending Teams. Its use is intended to fit within the timescales agreed by the criminal justice and child welfare systems.

The AIM2 initial assessment model is the first stage in gathering and analysing information, which will assist practitioners to consider what further assessments and interventions might be required to support the young person and their parents or carers. It recognises the importance of parents and family support for the child or young person throughout, therefore adopts a holistic approach to assessing the young person and their family.

The framework provides a model to assist all professionals within Children Social Care, Youth Offending Teams and other agencies or services, who have contact with children and young people, to conduct an initial assessment in order to:

- Identify potential risk of re-offending
- In child protection terms identify risk to either the young person or their actual or potential victim(s)
- Identify the young person’s needs
• Assess the young person’s motivation and capacity to engage in services and plans
• Identify the capacity of the parents or carers to support the young person
• Suggest priorities for initial response
• Consider referral into the public protection system

In assessing the distinction between behaviour that is experimental in nature and behaviour that is abusive, the notions of consent, power, equality and authority need to be considered by the assessors.

It may be that the child or young person cannot remain living with their family during the assessment or treatment process as they may be considered a risk to other children in the household. The AIM2 model recognises the importance of parents and family for the child or young person throughout, therefore adopts a holistic approach to assessment.

The model does not make decisions for assessors but will support decision-making by focusing on strengths and concerns.

Please refer to AIM2 Assessment Guidance documents for further information.

1.4 Process

Note that if a child or young person is subject to family court proceedings, the permission of the court should be obtained before undertaking an AIM2 assessment.

Where a male child or young person (10 years or over) admits an offence of sexually harmful behaviour, he and their parents will be informed by the Police Officer that the young person is to be bailed for 28 days, to allow for an AIM2 assessment to be undertaken. AIM2 Process is not applied to young women and girls.

All processes below allow for the completed AIM2 assessment report to be duly considered by all involved within the 28 day bail period.

The investigating Police Officer will refer the child or young person to the Youth Offending Team. This will trigger the AIM2 Assessment process, for which the Youth Offending Team Worker will take lead responsibility.

The completed AIM2 assessment report must be shared with the investigating Police Officer responsible for the bail arrangements within 20 working days of the Strategy Meeting.

The AIM2 Assessment report will make a recommendation to the Police regarding an appropriate disposal for the child or young person. However, the Police maintain the right to make a final decision in consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service, having fully considered the recommendations and any other relevant information which has been collated.

An AIM2 assessment must be completed on all young people before being sentenced. If necessary an adjournment must be requested in order to carry out the assessment, which will inform the pre-sentence report.
1.5 **Referral to Children’s Social Care**

The Youth Offending Team, when notified about a child or young person, who is alleged to have sexually offended, is to immediately refer to Children’s Social Care. Any other practitioner is also to refer to Children’s Social Care any child or young person where there is reason to suspect that s/he is a risk to children (Working Together To Safeguard Children 2010).

1.6 **Response by Children’s Social Care**

A child protection Strategy Meeting, (not a Strategy Discussion), is to take place within one working day. This is to be separate to any Strategy Meeting or Discussion held in respect of the victim of abuse, except where the abusing child or young person and the victim are siblings, members of the same household or family.

It is essential that appropriate agency representatives are invited to the Strategy Meeting. This must include the Youth Offending Team, and may include a representative from young people’s service who work with children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour.

1.7 **Tasks of the Strategy Meeting**

The Strategy Meeting will produce a shared multi-disciplinary plan, which will address:

- How the Section 47 enquiry will be conducted in respect of the child or young person who is demonstrating sexually harmful behaviour
- Safety of the young person
- The criminal investigation and how this is conducted
- Whether an AIM2 assessment is to be undertaken
- The safety of potential victims including siblings
- Risk management at home, in school and in the wider community
- Future living arrangements for the young person
- School attendance and related education issues
- Support for this child or young person and their family
- The needs of this child or young person
- Relevant victim issues
- The roles, tasks and expectations of different professionals and agencies
- Letter into the public protection system is required

In situations where the AIM2 framework **must** be applied the Youth Offending Team Worker will take the lead. Children’s Social Care will identify the name of the co-worker.

In situations where a criminal prosecution is not progressed a decision can be made to conduct an AIM2 assessment which will be led by Children’s Social Care. The YOT will identify a named Co-Worker.

If the section 47 enquiry indicates that the young person has been subject to significant harm and is at risk of ongoing significant harm a Child Protection
Conference will be convened within 15 working days of the strategy discussion. The Initial Child Protection Conference will be combined with the AIM2 Panel and chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

If the result of the Child Protection enquiry is that a Child Protection conference is not necessary the AIM2 assessment can be completed and an AIM2 Panel convened within 20 working days to consider the completed assessment.
Flowchart: Child or Young Person who Sexually Abuses

Child or Young Person (male 12-18) who Displays Sexually Harmful Behaviour

- Police/Other are notified of incident
- Referral received by YOT
- Active Communication / Information Sharing
- Referral/CCN received by CSC

Co-workers allocated to undertake first stage of AIM2 assessment (led by YOT AIM2 assessor) and confirm risk of harm

Inter-agency Child Protection Strategy Meeting to be held within one working day of referral. Decisions re: How to proceed with Core Assessment and whether to complete AIM2

If an AIM2 assessment is to be undertaken: Are the police instigating a criminal investigation?

- Yes
  - YOT lead in completion of AIM2 assessment
- No
  - CSC undertake core assessment (s17 or s47) in relation to the Child or Young Person. (s47 in relation to the victim to be conducted separately)
  - CSC undertake core assessment (s17 or s47) in relation to the Child or Young Person. (s47 in relation to the victim to be conducted separately)

CIN Planning meeting / Child Protection and/or Multi-disciplinary AIM2 Panel combined Conference within 20 working days of Strategy meeting

Young Person made subject of a CIN / CP Plan?

- Yes
  - Core Group Meetings/ Child Protection Review Meetings/ Multidisciplinary AIM2 Review meetings, as necessary depending on outcome of assessment(s)
- No
  - Young Person is being supervised by the YOT
  - Young Person is not being supervised by the YOT
  - Further support and signposting if required
3 Information For Good Practice: The AIM2 Model

3.1 Roles and Tasks (Youth Offending Team and Children Social Care)

It is essential that only people trained in the use of the AIM2 model undertake assessments, or at least one co-worker should be trained in its use.

If a Youth Offending Team Worker acts as the ‘appropriate adult’ in a PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence) interview of a child or young person, it is not appropriate for that worker to subsequently undertake the assessment.

Where there is an immediate decision to charge the child or young person, the Youth Offending Team Worker who undertakes the AIM2 assessment will also complete the pre-sentence report.

If the victim has a Social Worker, he or she must not be directly involved in the assessment.
Approval, Implementation and Implementation plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Working with Children and Young People who Display Sexually Harmful Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version number</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>29.03.2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approval has been given for this Procedure to be implemented with immediate effect.

**Implementation plan**

NSCB member organisations, through their Policy and Procedure Committee representative are responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff are made aware of the revised procedure and how and where to access it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval given by whom and when</th>
<th>Policy &amp; Procedure Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planned Implementation Date</td>
<td>January 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Signed Off By</td>
<td>Alison Steele, Committee Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>17.01.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>