

Fraser's Story



Fraser's Story demonstrates how women, as well as men, can be perpetrators of child sexual exploitation. It also highlights that boys, as well as girls, can be trafficked for the purposes of exploitation. In Fraser's case, despite displaying many vulnerabilities for exploitation including, absconding, substance misuse, inappropriate use of the internet, he was not identified as a victim by services until he finally disclosed being abused. The story underlines the need for professionals to be alert to the signs of exploitation, as well as the impact that such abuse can have on a child's mental wellbeing.

It was his key worker in the residential unit that recognised that Fraser was a victim of sexual exploitation only after Fraser disclosed being abused. Fraser's story shows how women, as well as men, can be perpetrators of CSE.

As a young child, Fraser lived with his mum and two older brothers. The children are known to services due to their mum's alcohol use. When he is 8, Fraser and his brothers move to live with their dad because of their mum's increasing substance misuse.

After only a few months with his dad, Fraser discloses to a teacher that his dad hits him. He is moved to live with his uncle and his brothers remain with their dad.

His school notes that Fraser often appears withdrawn and lacks friends. The placement with his uncle breaks down after a few months and he returns to live with his dad. During this time, Fraser had only very limited and sporadic contact with his mum.

When Fraser is 9, he is again assaulted by his dad and is moved to temporary foster care. His dad is convicted of this assault, and Fraser is referred to the Children's Reporter. Grounds of referral are established and a CSO made with a measure of residence in foster care.

Fraser's behaviour in school becomes challenging and he is often disruptive and aggressive in class. Inappropriate material from the internet, including pornography, is found on his phone. Fraser threatens to assault his foster carer.

After only a few weeks in foster care, Fraser fails to return to his placement and is reported missing to the police. Fraser's placement breaks down and he is moved to a residential unit on an emergency basis.

Fraser stays in the residential unit for 6 months. His behaviour at school continues to be challenging and he is regularly sent back to the unit, he is also placed on a reduced timetable. Staff at the unit are concerned about his mood and he has self-harm cuts on his arms. During this time, his mum gets back in touch with him and social work start an assessment on whether Fraser could be placed in her care.

Fraser returns to his mum's care when he is 13. Six months later, Fraser absconds and is found by the police in the early hours of the morning, he tells them that his mother has been drinking excessively and is very drunk.

He is accommodated in foster care on an emergency basis. Almost straight away Fraser is absconding, and several times the police find him in a local park intoxicated.

Fraser's CSO is varied to require him to stay in a residential unit. Shortly after arriving in the unit, Fraser starts talking of having suicidal thoughts.

He continues to abscond regularly and staff are concerned about his use of social networking sites, talking to older peers and the possibility of him being groomed.

Fraser goes missing from the unit overnight when he is 15. On returning, he tells staff that he was staying at an adult female's address and refuses to provide further details. Concerns continue to be raised about Fraser's use of the internet, with limits first being imposed on his access and then his computer being removed due to him accessing pornography.

When Fraser is 16, he allegedly inappropriately touches a young person in the unit. As a result, he is moved on an emergency basis to another unit in the same area. Staff in his new unit raise concerns about his mental health as he presents as having low mood and notes are found in his room which state that he no longer wishes to live. They try to talk to him about his feelings and a referral is made to CAMHS, but Fraser is reluctant to talk.

Over the following weeks, he regularly absconds from the unit including overnight, and the police are contacted. Fraser often returns under the influence of substances and refuses to say where he has been or who he has been with. On one occasion, he returns with a new pair of trainers and refuses to disclose how he got them. His behaviour in the unit deteriorates and he becomes disruptive and challenging towards staff.

A multi-agency planning meeting takes place which concludes that Fraser should be moved to secure accommodation; this is agreed at an emergency Children's Hearing.

Fraser initially struggles with secure accommodation. However, he gradually starts to settle and builds a good relationship with one staff member over their shared passion for football.

Over a number of weeks, Fraser slowly builds up the confidence to speak to this staff member about his feelings and past experiences. He describes sexual activity with older men and women whilst at 'parties' in adults' houses when he absconded. He would often be given money and gifts in return for carrying out sexual acts or he would be allowed to stay the night.

He also said they tried to encourage him to get other young people involved. With the support of his key worker, Fraser reports the abuse to the police and the police commence an investigation.

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