

Youth Produced Sexual Images/Sexting: An overview of best practice and policy



Aims of the session:

- To understand what youth produced sexual images are
- To understand the current legal framework and best practice in dealing with incidents
- To raise awareness of local policy guidance
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNSXxf-luKM>

Take a moment to consider...

- What is sexting?
- Is it common-place among young people?
- What are the consequences?

What is sexting?

- There are a number of definitions of youth produced sexual imagery but the simplest is:

“Images or videos generated by children under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature. These images may be shared between children and young people and/or adults via a number of devices such as phones, tablets, webcams or published to social media websites.”

Definitions - types

It is likely that no two incidents of youth produced sexual images will be the same. However, two categories have been established:

Aggravated incidents

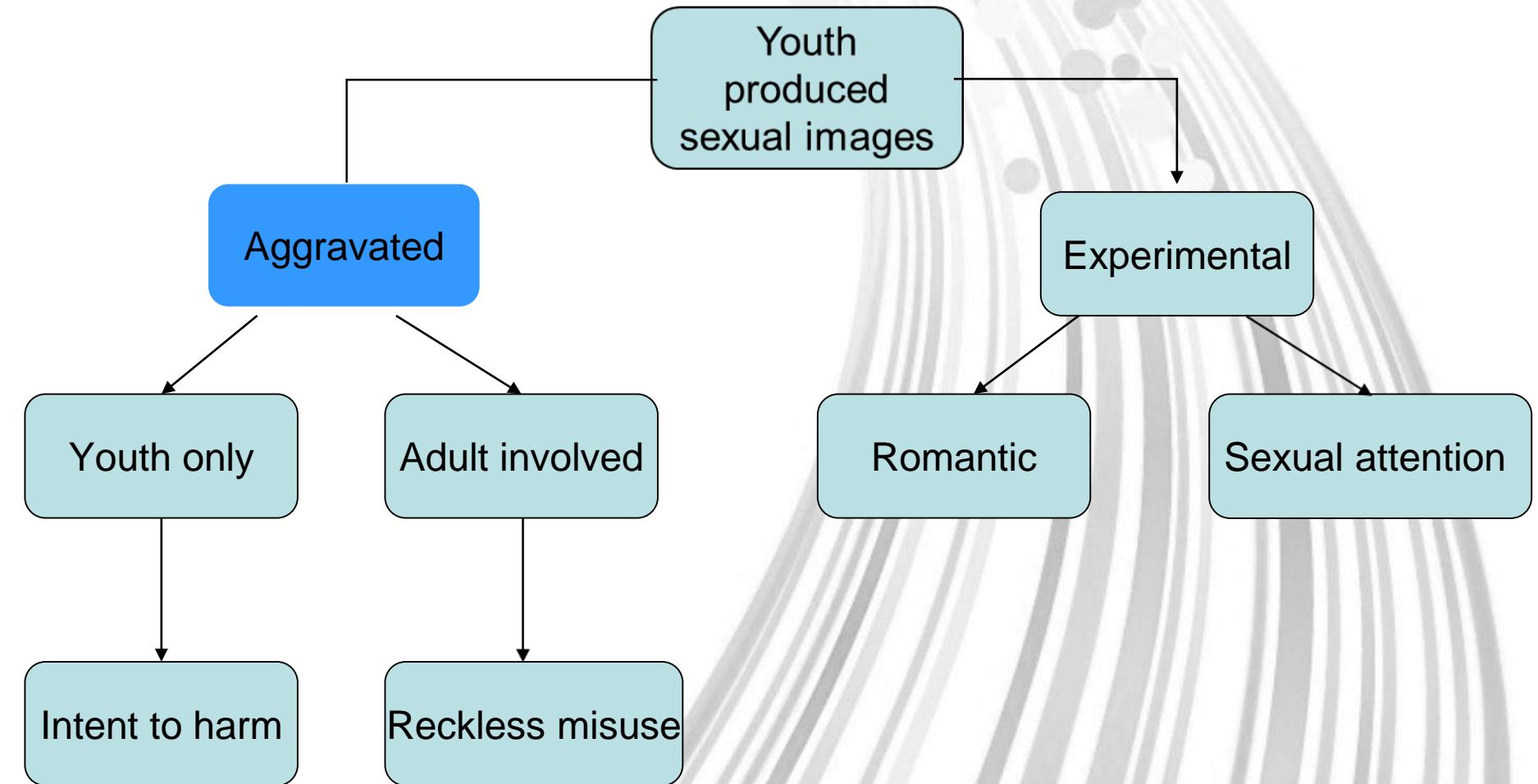
- These incidents involved criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation of an image.

Experimental incidents

- These incidents involved youths taking pictures of themselves to share with established boy or girlfriends, to create romantic interest in other youth, or for reasons such as attention seeking.

(Wolak and Finkelhor 'Sexting: a Typology' March 2011)

Typology of youth-produced images



Children as young as SEVEN are being investigated for sexting in schools as teachers learn to combat 'dangerous activity'

A total of 1,581 pupils out of 5,032 in Nottinghamshire said they had received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3902058/Children-young-SEVEN-investigated-sexting.html#ixzz4PF5NoW4J>

Parent warned after primary school pupil encouraged to send photographs of herself over the internet

Parents are being warned to check their children's social media accounts after a primary school pupil was sent messages encouraging her to send pictures of herself.

http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/14796362.Parent_warned_after_primary_school_pupil_encouraged_to_send_photographs_of_herself_over_the_internet/

Health Related Behaviour Survey

KS1

- 42% of pupils said they are allowed to go on the internet when their parents are not in the room
- 20% said ‘no’ when asked if they’d been taught how to keep safe online

KS2

- 15% of pupils say they have been bullied on-line
- 48% use social networking sites for:
 - Posting messages – 67%
 - Posting pictures and videos of yourself – 42%
 - Posting pictures & videos of others – 21%

Health Related Behaviour Survey

Secondary

- 12% of pupils said they worried about keeping safe online
- 91% of pupils use social networking sites to chat to:
 - Friends – 96%
 - Friends of friends – 38%
 - Other people you don't know – 10%
- They also use these sites for:
 - Posting messages – 83%
 - Posting pictures and videos of yourself – 56%
 - Posting pictures and videos of others – 36%
 - Arranging to meet people you don't know – 3%

LTT e-safety survey

Have you ever received inappropriate images of another person over the internet or as a message?

Primary: Yes – 13% (approx. 195 pupils)

Secondary: Yes – 27% (approx. 184 pupils)

Have you ever been asked to send an inappropriate image/video of yourself or others via the internet or via a phone?

Primary: Yes – 8% (approx. 121 pupils)

Secondary: Yes – 21% (approx. 144 pupils)

Have you ever actually sent an inappropriate image/video of yourself or others over the internet or via a phone?

Primary: Yes – 5% (approx. 76 pupils)

Secondary: Yes – 8% (approx. 55 pupils)

Issues for children

- Peers v 'strangers'
- Consequences?
- Unrealistic expectations
- 'Digital footprints'

Issues for schools

- Issues migrate back into school
- Sexting and the Ofsted inspection framework
 - Personal Development, Welfare & Behaviour
 - Effectiveness of Leadership & Management
 - Safeguarding – ‘sexting’ now specifically mentioned in latest guidance
- Policy **and** practice!

What the law says

- Making, possessing and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is ‘indecent’ is an offence. This includes imagery of yourself if you are under 18.
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales) defines a child, for the purposes of indecent images, as anyone under the age of 18.
- Whilst it is unlikely to be considered in the public’s interest to prosecute children, young people need to be aware that they may be breaking the law and can be prosecuted.

What the law says

- The National Police Chiefs Council advice - treat as safeguarding issue.
- Schools (and other organisations) may respond to incidents **without** involving the police.
- Where the police are notified of incidents they are **obliged** to record the incident on their crime systems.
- The incident will be listed as a ‘crime’ and the young person involved will be listed as a ‘suspect’ - this is not the same as having a criminal record.

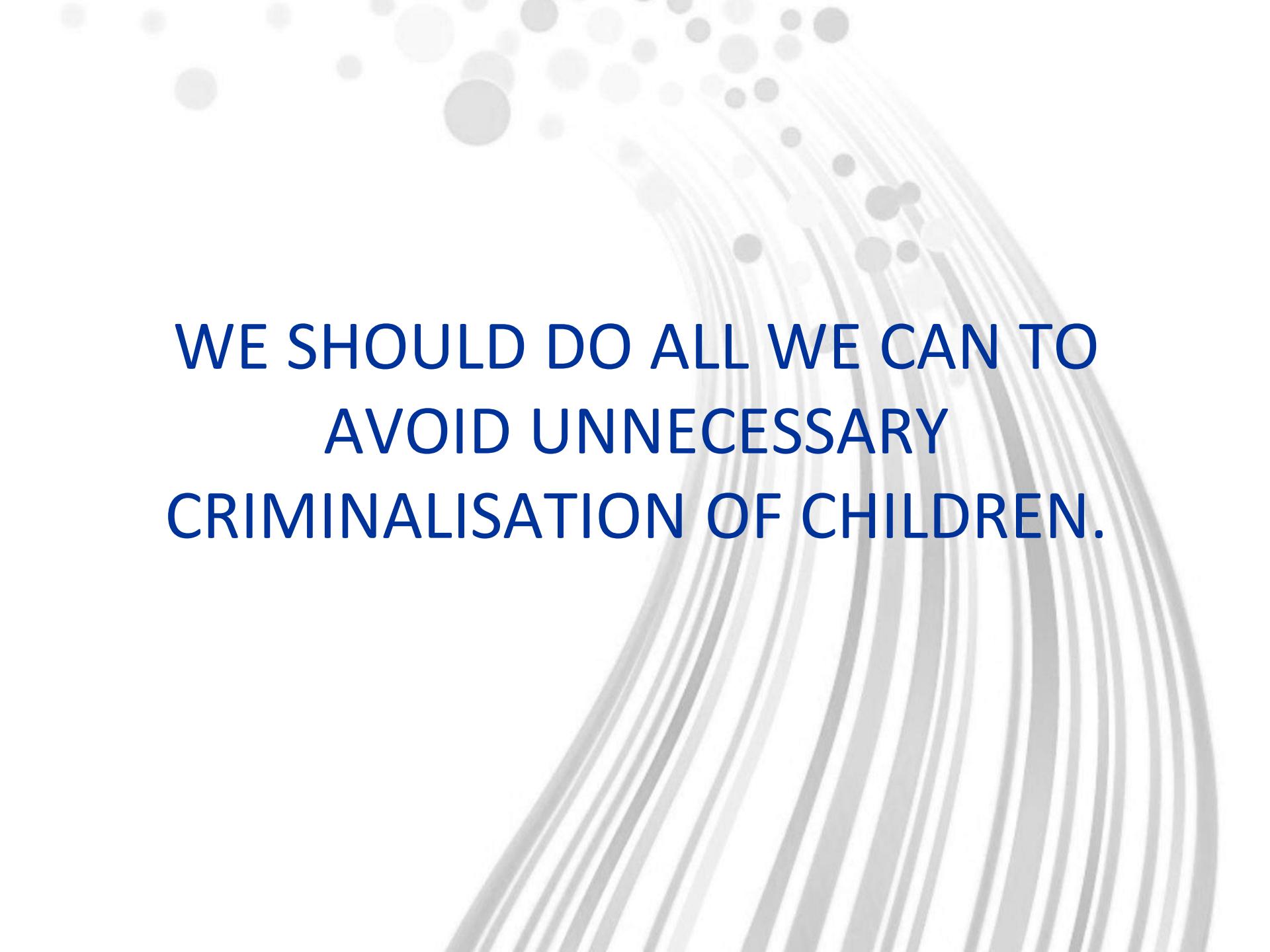
Outcome 21

- New way of recording the outcome of an investigation into youth produced sexual imagery – Outcome 21.

“Further investigation, resulting from the crime report, which could provide evidence sufficient to support formal action being taken against the suspect is not in the public interest. This is a police decision.”
- **It is not possible to categorically say that an incident recorded on police systems with Outcome 21 would never be disclosed on a DBS certificate.**
- Schools need to consider this when deciding on their response!

Responding to incidents

- The following guidance is designed to give an overview of how you should think about responding to an incident of ‘YPSI’ – most importantly, you should follow any appropriate policies that are in place in your setting.
- The response to these incidents should be guided by the principle of **proportionality** and the primary concern at all times should be the welfare and protection of the young people involved.



WE SHOULD DO ALL WE CAN TO
AVOID UNNECESSARY
CRIMINALISATION OF CHILDREN.

Local Policy Guidance

The locally produced guidance covers:

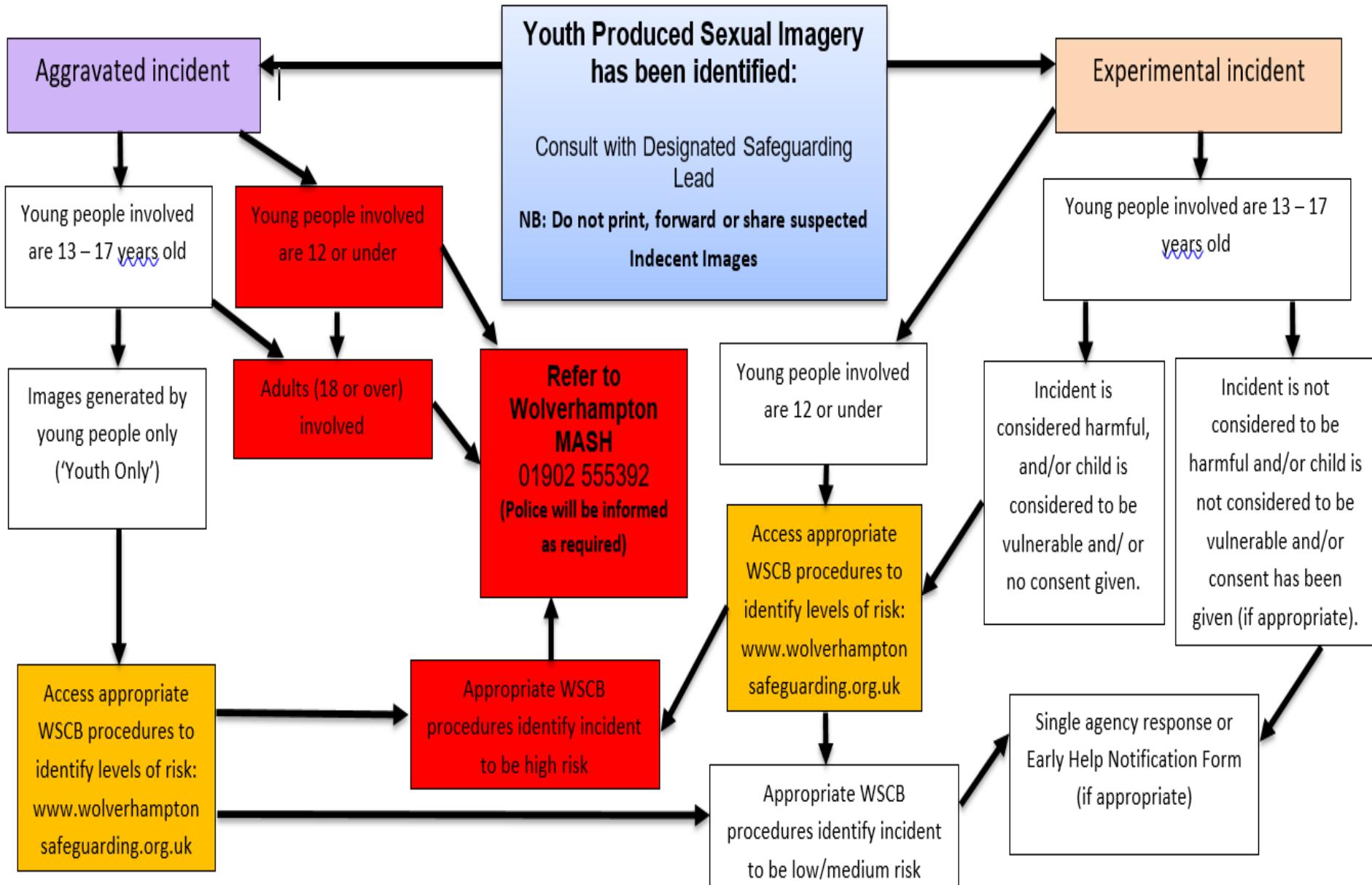
- Initial response
- Disclosures
- Initial review meeting
- Assessing the risks
- Informing parents/carers
- Reporting incidents to the police

Local Policy Guidance

The locally produced guidance covers:

- Securing/confiscating devices
- Searching devices, viewing and deleting imagery
- Social care contact and referrals
- Interviewing the young people/person involved
- Recording incidents
- Reporting youth produced sexual imagery on-line
- Educating children and young people

Responding to incidents



Useful sources of information

For schools

- UK Council for Child Internet Safety
- www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
- SWGfL – 360 self-evaluation toolkit, staff CPD & teaching resources
- www.swgfl.org.uk

For young people

- SWGfL - 'So You Got Naked Online
- www.swgfl.org.uk/sextinghelp
- ChildLine
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/>
- Zipit app
- <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/zipit/id721031543?mt=8>

For parents/carers

- Childnet
 - <http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics/sexting>
- Vodafone
 - www.vodafone.com/parents
- Parentinfo
 - <http://parentinfo.org/articles/sexting/all>
- CEOP
 - www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/

Local partners

- WSCB - www.wolverhamtonsafeguarding.org.uk
- Learning Technologies Team – www.lttonline.net
- Children & Young People's Health Improvement Team – www.wolverhamptonhealthyschools.org.uk
- Believe To Achieve – www.b2a.btck.co.uk

Final thoughts

- Sexting is a complicated and sensitive issue for all schools – there is no single solution and the consequences for young people, their families and schools can be devastating.
- There are certain steps that you should always take in order to ensure that you are abiding by the law.
- Always operate within the context of your own child protection and safeguarding procedure.
- Always put the welfare of the young person first.

Final thoughts

- Raise awareness of the issue of sexting across the school via your curriculum, particularly PSHE, SRE & Computing.
- Make sure that your policies, practices and procedures have been updated to reflect how you will handle and prevent incidents – share these with your school community.
- Ensure that you create an environment in school that is supportive for young people if an incident occurs so they know where to go, and an expectation around behaviours in and out of school.



THESE
'TERRIBLE TWOS'
CAN REALLY
BE TRYING.



JUST WAIT
UNTIL THE
'SEXTING'
YEARS.

AAAWWWWWWA

A small child with curly hair, wearing a striped onesie, is lying on their stomach on the ground. They are kicking their legs and arms, with a large, stylized speech bubble above them containing the text "AAAWWWWWWA".

STAHLER.
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH
2009