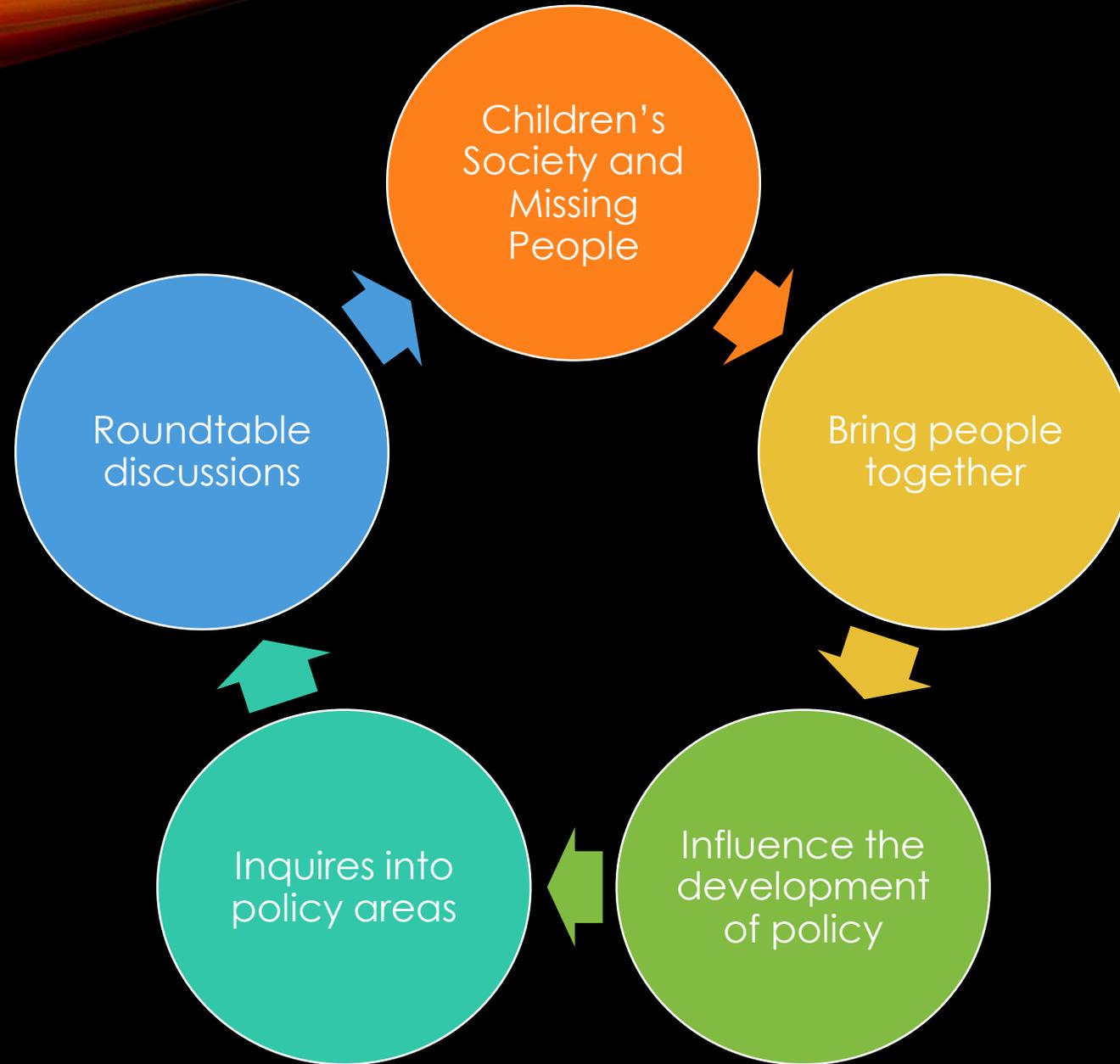




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# APPG FOR MISSING AND RUNAWAY CHILDREN AND ADULTS <sub>2</sub>



## June 2012

Report on Children missing from home and care out of borough placements

## July 2017

Children who go missing and are exploited by gangs to sell drugs ... seen to make a choice in the same way as victims of CSE 'child prostitutes' ....grooming not understood response to both parents and young people inadequate

## May 2016

Inquiry into the safeguarding of 'absent children' boys seen as low risk lack of awareness of extent of gang exploitation

## December 2017

An APPG meeting brought together experts to discuss how children and young people could be better safeguarded from involvement in county lines following a survey to police forces asking them to identify increases in violent crime attributable to rise in county lines activity

- Contacted each UK territorial police force
- Organised crime can make more profits in new markets drugs not so easily available
- 80% who responded said there had been a significant increase in violence
- Vulnerable victims are targeted
- \*Targeting of children in care, Out of Borough and in Pupil Referral Units
- \*Strong links to missing
- Communities, children and parents are a resource
- Ofsted to begin collecting data on children experiencing and at risk CCE in children's homes inspections – in addition to CSE

# MEETING IN RESPONSE TO SURVEY

- Early Identification is vital
- Fragmented system – need to stop working in silos
- Work with Pupil Reduction Unit's – Dean Coady
- Parents are a resource

*“It became so **frustrating** as all services that were assigned to working with my son in this period... were **all working as separate entities** – with this came, on many occasions, **lack of communication, oversight or duplication of what was meant to be done or not take place**, this caused me great **distress.**” – Mother of groomed child*



WHERE IS THE EVIDENCE THAT  
PLACING CHILDREN OUT OF  
BOROUGH REDUCES THEIR RISK OF  
HARM?

# CHILDREN IN OUT OF AREA PLACEMENTS —Department for Education statistics:

## Looked after children

- 64% of children now placed away from their home area (increase of 77% since 2012)
- Rate of children going missing has increased by 100% since 2015
- Lack of data on outcomes for children - Are they safer? Are other children safer?
- Isolated, more difficult for SW's to support
- Notifications still not working

## STOCKPORT MISSING 2018 — Greater Manchester Police data

- A quarter of children's homes in England are in the North West – Ofsted social care data 2018
- **73% of the children reported missing** from children's homes in Stockport were from out of borough placements.
- In the first two months of 2019, 80% of out of borough missing incidents from children's homes were from other Greater Manchester Local Authorities.

## ACHIEVING CHANGE TOGETHER

- In their first 8 months ACT provided intensive early support to 25 young people working with them and their families. These were predominantly girls under 16 with a range of complex difficulties. All of the young people were assessed as either being ‘on the edge of care’, or in care placements that were at risk of breakdown.
- The evaluation of the project said that escalation has been avoided and no secure placements were used.
- One of the features of the project was involving the girls in co –designing the services that they thought would work for them and social workers responding to the young people’s priorities which was not necessarily their exploitation.
- The project also challenges the view that children and young people need to be moved from their local communities to manage risk of exploitation.
- The organisation of the safeguarding system is historic with responsibilities divided between the DFE and Home Office
- This is how it felt to a parent who gave evidence to our roundtable in March whose 14 year son was being used to carry and supply drugs

# INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN MISSING FROM CHILDREN'S HOMES – ONGOING

- Does distance make a difference?
- Children missing from out of borough children's homes more than doubled since 2015
- Government promise to stop 'placing [children in children's homes] out of sight out of mind'
- The number of privately owned homes has increased year-on-year 73% of all children's homes in England
- 55% of children's homes clustered in just 3 regions – North West, South East and West Midlands
  - London only has 5% of children's homes but 14% of population of children in care
- Contacting every police force, Ofsted, Children's Commissioner, National Crime Agency, Home Office
- Call for evidence from public, practitioners and children in care
- Roundtable and report due later this year.

# GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE RESPONSE TO INQUIRY

- In their response to the ongoing inquiry GMP explained highlighted concerns about placing authorities failing to notify relevant Local Authorities within Greater Manchester, or the police that a child is being placed in the area.
- Former gang members who were involved in CCE would target children in children's homes for exploitation
- Greater consideration should be given to the risks to other children already placed in a children's home - a number of young people at risk of CSE could be placed together within a children's home which would only increase their risk.

# WHAT WE NEED TO DO

- Data sharing – what for?
- Work together
- Put children at the centre of services
- Change attitudes towards children – example removal of the term child prostitute
- Develop trusting relationships with children
- Work with the community, parents and young people to prevent and disrupt exploitation