

CSE Principles #6. Offer us opportunities to develop as people.



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Young people affected by child sexual exploitation (CSE) want professionals to recognise that they are more than victims, and have talents and abilities that can be developed. CSE is one part of a life story, and acknowledging this will help services treat young people as though they have a past, present and future. Development opportunities can involve being part of groups with other young people, as well as going outside of the service environment for trips and visits to different places. Creative methods like drama, music, art and poetry may all contribute to recognising young people's strengths, developing their resilience, self-expression and self-esteem and offering them new opportunities.

“The workshop that they give to us – afterwards they give us like interviews about it. So when we said ‘this should be changed’, ‘that should be changed’ – they said ‘well why don’t you deliver it?’...It was an amazing experience. It felt good because...the young people [that we delivered it to] thought it was better being delivered by us.”
(Young person, ‘Helping me find my own way’)

“A couple of weeks back I did interviews for a person here, for a new [member of staff] here and that just put me on cloud nine that because I thought - no-one’s ever really trusted me that much before. I just felt that bit more responsibility and stuff...so it were scary – you know growing up a bit – but fantastic.”
(Young person, ‘Helping me find my own way’)

This is one of ten principles for working with young people who are affected by sexual exploitation, created as part of The Alexi Project by the 'International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking' at the University of Bedfordshire. Comic illustrations were produced by Una and supported by the Young Researcher's Advisory Panel. To learn more and view the other postcards visit www.alexiproject.org.uk
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